

SOUTHERN MIDDLE ENGLISH *HISE* AND THE QUESTION OF
PRONOMINAL TRANSFER IN LANGUAGE CONTACT

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1. *Introduction*

In the recent book on language contact and genetic linguistics by Thomason & Kaufman (1988), Kaufman discusses in some detail an alleged case of late, medieval, cross-Channel contact, which, in his view, resulted in the transfer of a pronoun from Flemish into various, coastal dialects of Middle English. The discussion appears in his extended analysis of the historical development of English and in particular of the nature and effects of the contacts English had with Norse and French. While his treatment of the relations between English and what he calls 'Low Dutch' (i.e., Dutch and Low German) forms but a relatively secondary part of the discussion of the development of English, he presents his conclusions concerning 'Low Dutch' influence on English as strong support for certain, specific theoretical claims concerning contact between genetically related languages.

In two recent works (Buccini 1990, 1992) and again in a forthcoming paper (forthcoming a), I have argued that the phonological and morphological structures of the western Dutch dialects can only satisfactorily be explained if we view them as the products of intimate linguistic contact between Ingvæonic or North Sea Germanic dialects and Frankish* during the late Merovingian and early Carolingian periods. These Dutch dialects can be shown to be the descendants of a form of Frankish, acquired by the original Ingvæonic coastal population of the Low Countries, which contain numerous features imposed from the original Ingvæonic substratal language as well as very clear and general marks of contact-related simplification in both the phonological and morphological systems. More specifically, I have argued that, in the course of the linguistic shift to Frankish, the native Ingvæonic population of Flanders, Zeeland and Holland failed to acquire the then incipient, morphophonemic rules associated with *i*-umlaut and the conditioned split of the Germanic diphthongs, a failure which led directly and indirectly to almost all of the structurally significant isoglosses within the Dutch language area.

Kaufman's claims concerning 'Low Dutch' influence on English have direct bearing on my own work on the early formation of the Dutch dialects: first, his claim that the clearly casual contact between Flemish and Middle English could result in the transfer of a pronominal form with an essentially morphological function, if accepted, calls into question much of the evidence which I have offered in support of my claims

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* The author prefers this usage to the more common *Franconian*.

—Ed.

concerning the Frankish/Ingvæonic contact along the eastern Channel coast. In particular, the notion that the transfer process of borrowing can involve linguistic material from any structural domain undermines the utility of the notion of imposition (transfer occurring under language shift). Second, Kaufman's conclusions concerning the role of dialect contact in the process of simplification are also at odds with my own. In downplaying the role of the contact with Norse in the history of English, he argues that similar degrees of simplification in other Germanic languages, such as Dutch, show the process to be largely unrelated to dialect contact. In my view, however, such a conclusion is patently wrong, since the simplification of phonological and morphological structures in Dutch must itself be seen as being to a great degree the result of the early contact between Frankish and Ingvæonic.¹

In this paper, I will address briefly these theoretical issues and attempt to demonstrate that the claim that the feminine and plural accusative pronoun *hise* and related forms in Middle English cannot be reasonably viewed as borrowings from Flemish, but rather must be seen as native forms. Indeed, a close examination of the philological evidence reveals a very interesting dialectal distribution of these forms which ultimately can be shown to be related to the settlement of the earliest wave of Germanic speakers in Britain. This discovery lends further direct support to my claims concerning the Ingvæonic population of the western Low Countries and helps us to define more precisely the tribal and linguistic relations which formed the foundations of English and Netherlandic.

2. Kaufman's Claims

(1) shows the third person pronouns in the major northern and southern dialects of Old and Middle English, as interpreted by Kaufman.

(1) Old English and Middle English Third Person Pronouns (slightly adapted from Thomason & Kaufman 1988:324)

Old Northumbrian				Northern Middle English			
m.	n.	f.	pl.	m.	n.	f.	pl.
N. <i>hē</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hīo</i>	<i>hīe</i>	subj. <i>hee</i>	<i>it</i>	<i>shoo</i>	<i>they</i>
A. <i>hīne</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hīe</i>	<i>hīe</i>	obj. <i>him</i>	<i>it</i>	<i>hir</i>	<i>theim</i>
D. <i>him</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>hir</i>	<i>him</i>				
G. <i>his</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>hire</i>	<i>hīora</i>	poss. <i>his</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>hir</i>	<i>theire</i>

¹ The other Germanic languages which show degrees of simplification similar to that of Dutch and in this regard stand roughly halfway between the morphologically conservative and complex standard German and Icelandic on the one hand and the relatively drastically simplified English on the other have all at some point in their histories been in close contact with some other Germanic language (continental Scandinavian with Low German, Frisian with Low German and Dutch, Low German with High German etc.). Indeed, Dutch has been the only language of this group which had not been generally implicated in such strong, intra-Germanic contacts and thus, if it can be shown that Dutch has also undergone such contacts, the claim that simplification is unrelated to dialect contact becomes vacuous. I should add that before my own work on the development of umlaut in Dutch, others have argued in favor of an important substratal influence by Ingvæonic in the west but, aside from Heeroma, few have looked at the structural implications of that influence.

Old West Saxon				Southern Middle English			
m.	n.	f.	pl.	m.	n.	f.	pl.
N. <i>hē</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hīo</i>	<i>hīe</i>	subj. <i>hee</i>	<i>it</i>	<i>hōō</i>	<i>hīi, hīi</i>
A. <i>hīne</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hīe</i>	<i>hīe</i>	encl. <i>hīne</i>	<i>it</i>	<i>hīse</i>	<i>hīse</i>
D. <i>him</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>hir</i>	<i>him/heom</i>	obj. <i>him</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>hire</i>	<i>hōm/hām</i>
G. <i>his</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>hire</i>	<i>hīra/heora</i>	poss. <i>his</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>hire</i>	<i>hōrel/hare</i>

At issue here are the feminine and plural accusative forms in -s which appear in a number of southern Middle English texts. Given the apparent lack of any direct ancestors of these forms, Kaufman concludes that the forms must be borrowings from so-called 'Low Dutch', which he claims to be the obvious source.

Kaufman's discussion of the alleged Low Dutch influence on English begins with a brief survey of the historical background of the situation. Following Bense's (1939) research on the topic, he claims that considerable numbers of Flemish and Dutch immigrants took up residence in various parts of England during the eleventh and twelfth centuries (1988:322).² Particular concentrations of Flemings are known to have been in the area around the Wash, where they were engaged in dike-building and land reclamation, and in southwestern Wales, where they were used to strengthen the English crown's presence and influence among the troublesome Welsh. Kaufman also points to a significant Flemish colony in the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed in Northumberland by the Scottish border and states that "Flemings settled in smaller numbers in towns throughout England" (Ibid.). Presumably following Bense's findings, he states that Flemings were thus to be found in all parts of England with the following exceptions: "in the twelfth century the East Northern and Southeast Midland areas had few or no Flemings, and the same was true of the counties of Sussex, Gloucester, Somerset, Dorset, Hertford, and Nottingham" (Ibid.).

Regarding the linguistic effects of this alleged wide-spread and significant Flemish presence in England, Kaufman notes that English and Dutch were structurally still very similar during the early Middle English period. In light of the structural compatibility and the considerable opportunity for contact, it seems odd then that "the number of [loan] words of Low Dutch origin recorded in ME down to 1400 does not exceed 100" (p.323). Among these borrowings, however, Kaufman finds a "striking grammatical influence of Low Dutch on ME" which has gone unnoticed on account of its dialectally and chronologically (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) limited attestation. The following is a citation of his central claims concerning this grammatical influence (see also Map 1).

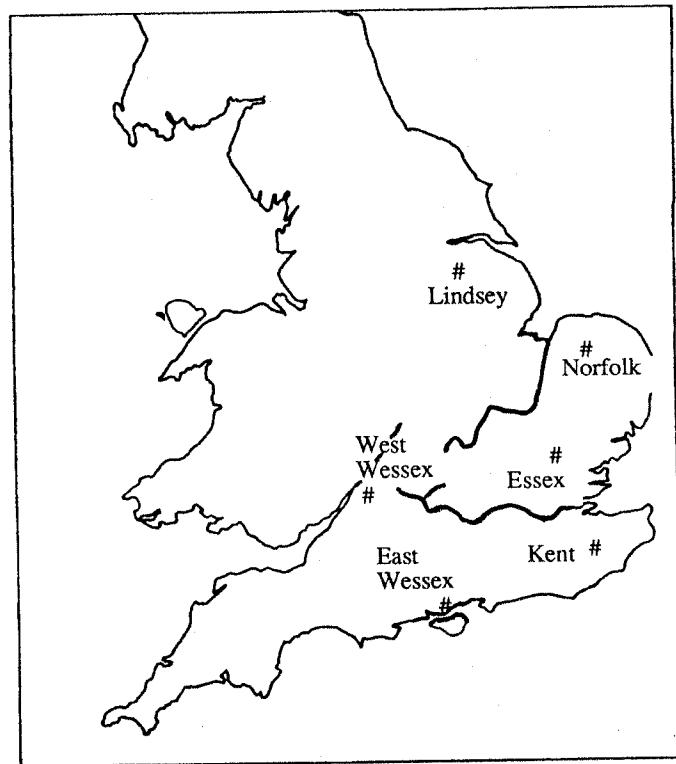
In the Lindsey (Grimsby?), Norfolk, Essex, Kent (Canterbury and Shoreham), East Wessex (Southampton?), and West Wessex (Bristol?) dialects of ME, attested from just before 1200 down to at least 1375, there occurs a pronoun form that serves as the enclitic/unstressed object form of SHE and THEY. Its normal written shape is <(h)is> or <(h)e>, presumably /əs/; one text occasionally spells it <hīse>. This pronoun has no origin in OE. It does have one in Low Dutch, where the unstressed object form for SHE and THEY is /sə/, spelled <se> (this is cognate with High German *sie*). If the ME <h> was ever pronounced it was no doubt

² For further discussion of the topic of Dutch influence on English, see Llewellyn (1936). For additional references, see Murison (1971).

on the analogy of all the other third person forms of English. We do not know whether Low Dutch speakers settled in sizable numbers in all the dialect areas where this pronoun occurs, but there is one striking correlation: all these dialect areas abut on the sea, and after 1070 the seas near Britain, along with their ports, were the stomping grounds of the Flemings, Hollanders, and Low German traders. These facts should remove all doubt as to whether this pronoun is foreign or indigenous (and just happened not to show up in OE texts!) (Thomason & Kaufman 1988:323).

Kaufman also claims to find another instance of 'Low Dutch' grammatical influence on Middle English, namely the use of the diminutive suffix *-kin* in the formation of names and other nouns, such as *Watekin* 'Little Walter, Wally', *Wilekin* 'Little William, Willy' etc. He cites, moreover, an instance of the possible spread of a phonological development across the Channel from Flemish to Kentish and beyond, namely the development of [ð] to [d], as discussed by Samuels (1971). In the first case, there seems to be little reason to consider the borrowing of the diminutive suffix a case of grammatical influence: it can more reasonably be seen in the context of casual lexical borrowing. To anyone familiar with Dutch, the use of the diminutive in that language is unquestionably one of its most salient features and in many contact situations with Dutch we find more or less marginal borrowing of this highly expressive suffix. It should be noted too that the borrowing of the diminutive suffix may occur indirectly: that is, it might first be borrowed already bound to individual lexical items and (especially) personal names, and then secondarily find some success as a derivational morpheme. Such a scenario is quite plausible for the Middle English/Middle Dutch contact. As regards the question of the development of [ð] to [d], space restrictions make it impossible for me to address the issue in this article. I will therefore be limited to stating that this specific development can only be properly understood when viewed in a far broader context of the entire phonological system and my own research (forthcoming b) on the question finds no reason to believe that the development represents a borrowed feature.

These putative influences aside, the Dutch element in early Middle English was quite limited. In light of this fact, the implication of Kaufman's discovery of the transfer of a Flemish pronominal form into English seems clear: "This phenomenon raises the question of just how telling the borrowing of pronouns between closely related languages is. Maybe it is not noteworthy" (p.323). He concludes that the coastal dialects of Middle English in which the allegedly Flemish prounoun occurred "added a foreign prounoun form to their system with no apparent need", since in the southern Middle English dialects there had been no phonological merger and pernicious homophony involving the relevant third person pronominal forms. In Kaufman's view "only fashion and a fairly good knowledge of Low Dutch would seem to be able to account for this" (p.325). From the evidence of this apparently clear-cut case, he further concludes that the borrowing of the third person plural forms *they*, *them*, *their* from Norse into Northern Middle English, where pernicious homophony had arisen, need not be seen as indicative of a complex and far-reaching Norse-English contact (pp.324-325).



Map 1: Distribution of *hise* in Middle English
(Thomason & Kaufman 1988)

Before proceeding on to a discussion of the theoretical issues involved here, we should note that although Kaufman states that Middle English *hise* and related forms have gone unnoticed, several Anglistics have commented on them. Among these are Heuser, who already in 1902 (p.177) proposed that the forms were borrowings from Dutch and Frisian, and, more recently, Smithers, who in his 1987 edition of *Havelok* follows the same line of reasoning that Kaufman does and thus also arrives at the conclusion that the forms can only be borrowings from Dutch.³ Indeed, it seems reasonable to consider this view the received opinion. The dissident view, that these forms must be native, for which I will argue here, has, however, already been proposed by another scholar, namely by Wallenberg (1923:114) in his study of the *Ayenbite of Inwyt* text, though he discusses the issue only very briefly.

3. Theoretical Considerations

With respect to theoretical aspects of language contact, we need to consider the following points. First, central to an understanding of the dynamics of any contact situation is a recognition of the two basic and distinct forms of transfer which can take place. This important distinction, which was first formulated in 1988 by Thomason & Kaufman (hereinafter T&K) and also, independently that same year, by Van Coetsem, concerns the questions of who the agents of transfer are and on which language they are acting. Specifically, T&K distinguish between those contact situations in which transfers take place while the agents of transfer maintain their original or native language, a process which they call 'borrowing', and those situations in which transfer takes place in the course of a population's acquisition of a target language, a process which they call 'shift-induced interference' (see especially T&K (1988:35-64). Van Coetsem's almost identical formulation distinguishes between 'recipient language agentivity' or borrowing, that is, transfers in which the agent of transfer acts upon his own, native, linguistically dominant language, and, on the other hand, 'source language agentivity' or 'imposition', in which the agent of transfer imposes features from his own native, linguistically dominant language on some other foreign, target language (1988:7-23). These transfer typologies are illustrated in (2), along with my own attempt to show how they can be combined.

Though the two formulations are very similar, there is an important difference: whereas Van Coetsem, focussing on the behaviour of the individual, perceives a strong structural factor in the processes of transfer, T&K, while certainly recognising some structural element, view it as very much secondary to social factors in the

³ Smithers (1987:112-113): "Its [the accusative pronoun *in-s*] striking peculiarities are the restricted distribution, and its use enclitically in forms analysable as reduction to *-s* beside another type, in independent position [...] Essentially the same phenomenon occurs in MDu., where the personal pronoun *se* (acc. sg. fem. and acc. sg. pl. in all genders) is reduced to *-s* in enclitic use. In ME, when the *-s* had followed and coalesced with final *-e*, new independent forms with an initial vowel were evolved [...] The facts suggest beyond reasonable doubt, that the two new pronouns were adopted from MDu."

(2) Recent Transfer Type Typologies (T&K 1988, Van Coetsem 1988)

	<i>Language Status</i>	<i>Transfer Type</i>	<i>Agentivity</i>	<i>Linguistic Domains Affected</i>
T&K	maintenance	shift	borrowing interference	least stable most stable
	borrowing	imposition	Recipient language Source language	most stable
Van Coetsem	shift	borrowing	Recipient language Source language	least stable most stable
	imposition	shift	Recipient language Source language	most stable
Buccini	shift	borrowing	Recipient language Source language	least stable most stable
	imposition	shift	Recipient language Source language	most stable

regulation of transfer. More specifically, Van Coetsem sees a clear link between the traditional notion of linguistic stability to the transfer types, with borrowing generally involving only the least stable and least structured domains and elements of language, especially the lexicon, and imposition, typically involving the more stable and more structured domains, especially the phonology (see especially pp.25-46). In contrast, T&K seem to place relatively little in the way of structural restrictions on what they call 'borrowing' so that it comes to be far less clearly distinguished from imposition, a practice which surely lies behind their misinterpretation of the Middle English/Flemish situation.⁴ The source of this blurring of the two transfer types in T&Ks' formulation is, in my view, a result of the great emphasis they place on cases such as *Media Lengua* and *Ma'a*, cases which involve rather particular and exceptional social situations. In my estimation, the special character of these cases crucially depends on the fact that in these situations the primary agents of transfer were relatively highly accomplished bilinguals for whom the notion of 'linguistic dominance' was largely neutralised.⁵ I have suggested elsewhere that we treat these situations as involving a third form of transfer which I have termed 'selection' and which is illustrated in (3).⁶

(3) Characteristics of the Three Transfer Types (Buccini forthcoming b)⁷

	<i>Borrowing</i>	<i>Selection</i>	<i>Imposition</i>
AGENTIVITY	RL-agentivity	Neutralised	SL-agentivity
SOCIAL ATTITUDE	more	variable	less
CONSCIOUSNESS	more	variable	less
DOMAINS AFFECTED	less stable	variable	more stable
SYSTEMATICITY	less	variable	more

Since the notion of selection crucially depends on the neutralisation of linguistic dominance for the agent of transfer, this less predictable form of transfer ought to occur more easily in contacts between relatively closely related dialects than in

⁴ This broad range of use of the term 'borrowing' can be clearly seen in T&K's borrowing scale and the following discussion (1988:74ff.).

⁵ Note that Van Coetsem recognises and discusses the potential effect of the neutralisation of linguistic dominance (1988:87). I also call attention to the discussion of the *Media Lengua* case (pp.90-91), in the formulation of which this writer participated.

⁶ I have discussed this question at some length in a conference paper, "On the Gallo-Romance/Frankish Linguistic Contact and the Formation of the Northern French Dialects," Sixteenth Annual Minnesota Conference on Language and Linguistics, University of Minnesota, October 1990. The question will also be discussed in Buccini (forthcoming b, section 2.4). The factors included in (3) are employed and briefly discussed in a more general typology of socio-linguistic language change by Guy (1990). It must be acknowledged here that the terms 'consciousness' and 'social attitude' have become increasingly controversial and their use needs some general discussion and theoretical justification. Space restrictions, however, make such a discussion impossible in this article.

⁷ Social attitude: the degree to which social attitudes influence the transfer of linguistic material; consciousness: the degree to which the transfer is a conscious act; domains affected: the domains (subdomains) in which transferred material is most prominent; systematicity: the degree to which the transferred material is systematic or structured.

contacts between less closely related dialects or unrelated languages: in contacts between closely related languages it would be less difficult for speakers to develop a neutralised dominance in so far as there would be fewer foreign linguistic features for them to acquire.

While the general patterns of transfer in a given contact situation are determined according to the type of agency involved, that is, borrowing from less stable domains in recipient language agency and imposition from stable domains in source language agentivity, there is a separate though related process of the spread of transferred material from an original point of entry into some section of a language area or 'dialect diasystem'. Such language internal treatment of foreign linguistic features, like the original contact itself, necessarily has both important social as well as structural aspects, as shown in (4).

(4) Factors in the Survival and Spread of Transferred Features
(Buccini forthcoming b)

SOCIAL FILTER: demographic strength + social prestige = social viability of transferred material

LINGUISTIC FILTER: acquirability + integrability = linguistic viability of transferred material

The two filters are linked through the relationship of acquirability to social factors of opportunity and motivation for acquisition.

LINGUISTIC FEATURE >[SOCIAL FILTER]>[LINGUISTIC FILTER]>RECEPTION OF FEATURE⁸

Failure to distinguish between the process of initial transfer and the subsequent process of dialect spread or elimination is an error that has often rendered claims about historical contacts difficult to reconcile with the nonlinguistic historical facts available to us. Such is, without doubt, the case in much of the work on the contact between Frankish and Gallo-Romance and also in discussions of the English contacts with Norse.

Turning now specifically to the question of pronominal transfer, I will be forced by space constraints to limit my remarks to the conclusions which I have reached on the basis of fairly extensive studies of pronominal transfer within Germanic.⁹ First, following Van Coetsem, I must emphasise again the importance of the notion of the stability gradient in determining what kinds of materials are transferred in the two basic contact situations. Virtually all discussions of the stability gradient have taken the lexicon as the least structured and least stable domain in language contact; thus, lexical items are obviously the most easily borrowed features while the relatively low stability of the lexicon makes acquisition of a target language's lexicon relatively

⁸ Rosina Lippi-Green (personal communication) has pointed out that the ordering of the two filters may well be the opposite of that shown here. This issue will be addressed in Buccini (forthcoming b).

⁹ Much of this research was first presented in a conference paper ("Pronominal Systems in Language Contact: Evidence from Limburgish, Berlinish and English," Second Symposium on Germanic Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, October 1986).

easy. Such broad statements are, however, of little practical use and thus most studies on language contact discuss at length the relative stabilities of subdomains of the lexicon. For the most part, it is agreed that nouns are generally more easily borrowed than adjectives, adjectives more than verbs, verbs more than pronouns and prepositions (for a brief review of the issue, see Appel & Muysken 1987:170-171). The reasons for this widely attested pattern are not hard to see: borrowings must be integrated into the morphological and syntactic structures of the recipient language and therefore will be subject to a structural filtering which clearly can involve various language-specific features.

For the western European languages at least, it is necessary to subdivide pronouns according to whether they are relatively more or less contentive and more or less functive. In so far as some forms are more contentive, such as honorific pronouns, they resemble more closely elements of the general lexicon, while forms which are wholly functive, such as third person pronouns, tend to behave more like morphological features. In effect, we find a distinction which closely resembles Benveniste's (1966) distinction of first and second person pronouns which he called 'indicators' on the one hand, and third person pronouns which I have called 'referentials' on the other. Despite the general view that pronominal borrowing is rare, it can, in fact be shown that borrowings of first and second person pronouns, and here most especially honorifics, are actually fairly common in western languages. It can also be shown, however, that genuine cases of borrowing involving third person pronouns are vanishingly rare in these languages. Indeed, the only clear and widely known example of which this writer is aware is that of the third person plural forms *they*, *them*, and *their*, which by all accounts entered English from Norse during the period of the widespread Danish presence in central and northern England. I will return to this case in a moment.

Given the general role of the stability gradient in linguistic transfers, it is not surprising that, while few if any instances of the borrowing of third person referential pronouns can be found in Western Europe, the imposition of such forms can be found in a number of situations where there has been a widespread case of language or, in some cases, dialect shift: that is, in the course of the language acquisition associated with shift, speakers seem to acquire indicators more easily than they do referentials. To this I must add, however, a further observation, which, though fairly obvious, seems to have escaped totally the general literature on language contact: this is, namely, that unaccented or clitic forms display a far greater stability than do accented forms, and thus, tend to be imposed in language shift, but rarely, if at all, borrowed in language maintenance. With this in mind we can better understand the English acceptance of the Norse forms. In my view, these pronouns were not directly borrowed but rather first imposed by native Norse speakers upon their acquired version of English. These Norse forms, once within the English dialect continuum, subsequently gained considerable popularity and were able to spread by means of 'selection' out of Norsified English into other (native) varieties. The spread

of the new forms was driven by the language internal factors of the growing homophony of the old native forms with *h-* and social factors of the strong Norse presence in central England. In this regard, I should point out that to this day, except in some far northern dialects, the unaccented form of *them* is the native '*em*', as in "give '*em*'" (Wright 1905:274).¹⁰

On the basis of these considerations, the alleged case of the English borrowing of third person object clitic pronouns from Flemish demands very clear historical support. As I will now attempt to demonstrate from the actual facts, however, a more plausible explanation can be offered.

4. *Philological Considerations*

We will now turn to the actual philological evidence for the *hise* forms in English. Please note that space limitations will not permit a detailed discussion of the material at this time. There are, moreover, certain relevant texts which I have thus far not been able to examine fully. In (5) is a list of all the Middle English texts that I have found in which *s*-form pronouns occur.¹¹

(5) Middle English Texts with *hise* -Forms

TEXT	PROVENANCE
<i>The Bestiary</i>	East Midlands
<i>Havelok</i>	East Midlands (Norfolk)
<i>Genesis and Exodus</i>	East Midlands (Suffolk/Essex)
<i>Vices and Virtues</i>	Essex
<i>Poema Morale</i> (Trinity Ms.)	Essex
<i>Arthour and Merlin</i>	London
<i>Kyng Alisaunder</i>	London
<i>Ayenbite of Inwy</i>	Kent
<i>The Kentish Sermons</i>	Kent
<i>A Parable</i>	Kent
<i>The Poems of William of Shoreham</i>	Kent/Sussex

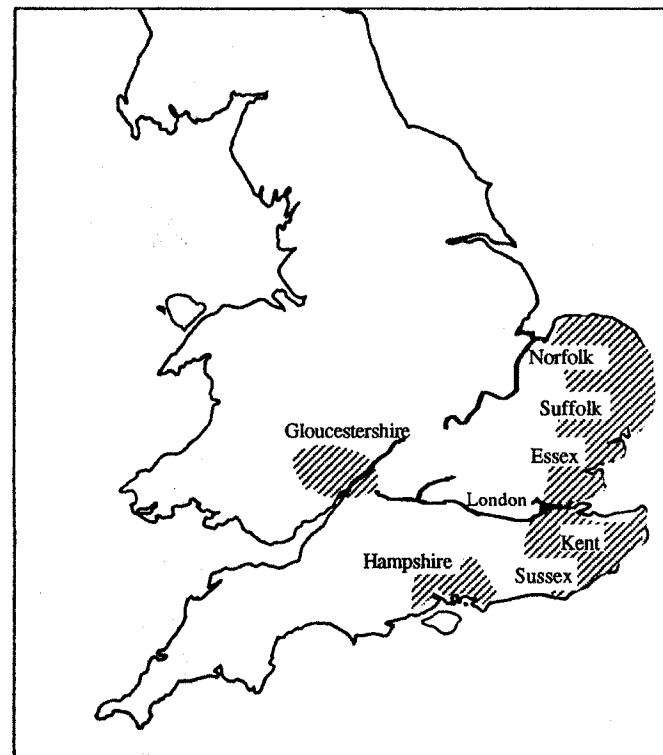
¹⁰ Some of the cases of the transfer of pronouns in contacts between German languages or dialects are the following: 1) imposition in Berlinish (and Missingsch) of the Low German neuter pronouns in *-i* (*et/it*, *wat*, *dei/dat*) as well as *ick* in Berlinish which functions as a solidarity marker (covert prestige of 'Berlinishness') next to *ich* of the High German target language; 2) 'borrowing' or, more accurately, selection in Limburgish of *iech*, *niech*, *diech*, *uech* (cf. NHG *ich*, *ich*, *dich*, *euch*) from the closely related Ripuarian Frankish dialects; 3) imposition in Stadsfries of the Frisian masc. nom. clitic *-er* on the target Dutch system; 4) the development of the mod. West Frisian fem. and pl. acc. *sy* which is found alongside (variation according to several parameters) the reflex of Old Frisian *hiu* (fem.) and *hia* (pl.) and probably represents a language internal change (formation of a new independent form based on the old clitics in *-s*), supported by influence of Dutch and Stadsfries, an influence which can be considered an instance of 'selection' as defined above).

¹¹ The following editions and studies of these works have been consulted: *The Bestiary*: Morris (1898), Hall (1920), Dickens & Wilson (1951), Bennett & Smithers (1974); *Havelok*: Skeat & Sisam (1915), Smithers (1987); *Genesis and Exodus*: Morris (1865); *Vices and Virtues*: Holthausen (1888); *Poema Morale* (Trinity Ms.): Hall (1920); *Arthour and Merlin*: Macrae-Gibson (1973); *Kyng Alisaunder*: Smithers (1952, 1957); *Ayenbite of Inwy*: Morris (1866), Grdon (1979); *The Kentish Sermons*: Morris (1898), Bennett & Smithers (1974); *A Parable*: Hall (1920), Dickens & Wilson (1951); *The Poems of William of Shoreham*: Konrath (1902); *Poema Morale* (Lambeth Ms.): Hall (1920); *South English Legendary*: D'Evelyn & Mill (1959), Görlich (1974); *Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester*: Wright (1887).

<i>Poema Morale</i> (Lambeth Ms.)	Hampshire
<i>South English Legendary</i>	Gloucestershire
<i>Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester</i>	Gloucestershire

Since Kaufman does not give detailed references to the works on which he based his study, it is difficult to determine exactly how he arrived at his view of the dialectal distribution of the forms. The specific points on which I disagree with his views are the following. First, he takes the *Havelock* text as being unproblematically associated with the town of Grimsby in Old Lindsey, while scholars generally agree that the one major extant manuscript (there are fragments of another) is of mixed character, showing features typical of both the area around Grimsby in Lincolnshire and also of East Anglia, more specifically Norfolk (Smithers 1987:lxix). While it is unclear to which stage of the transmission the *hise*-forms in this text actually belong, it seems reasonable to go on the assumption, albeit cautiously, that they may well represent the East Anglian stage, especially given the strong likelihood that two other texts with *s*-form pronouns come from East Anglia, whereas other texts from Lincolnshire do not have *s*-accusatives. Kaufman's reference to a text with *s*-form pronouns from 'East Wessex' surely must refer to the Lambeth manuscript of the *Poema Morale*, which can be located with a reasonably high degree of certainty to the southern, coastal area of Hampshire. His reference to a text from Bristol remains for me unidentified, and I must for now assume that he is referring to some version of the *South English Legendary*. Most scholars place the origins of the *Legendary*, which is actually a composite text including parts from various places in southern England, not in Bristol but rather to the north, in Gloucestershire, an area explicitly mentioned by Kaufman as not having had any significant Flemish immigrant population — see the citation above (1988:322). I should also call attention to his statement concerning the absence of a Flemish presence in the "Southeast Midland" area in light of the fact that several texts with *s*-pronouns are generally regarded to be from the Suffolk-Essex-London area, which forms the eastern border zone between the Midlands and the South. My own findings concerning the geographical distribution of the *hise*-forms are shown on Map 2.¹²

The most powerful evidence offered by proponents of the Flemish origin of the accusative pronouns in *s* is that in all the relatively enormous corpus of Old English, no single *s*-form pronoun of the type found in Middle English occurs. Superficially at least this fact does indeed seem quite convincing, but a more careful consideration of the Old English corpus, especially with an eye toward its dialectal distribution and its relationship to the dialectal distribution of Middle English *s*-pronouns is clearly needed. Even a cursory comparison of the two distributions shows that we must first reformulate the statement that no *s*-accusatives occur in Old English and say instead that it is virtually certain that no such forms occurred in the West Saxon dialect of Old English and unlikely that they occurred in the Anglian dialect area, though in this latter case, of course, the small number of Anglian texts and the vast size of the



Map 2: Distribution of *hise* in Middle English
(Buccini 1991)

¹² Cf. the dot map presented in McIntosh, et al (1986, vol.I:317, map 50).

Anglian dialect area leave room for the possibility that they could have occurred somewhere and not been recorded in any of the surviving documents.

This leaves yet one of the traditionally recognised dialects of Old English to be considered, namely Kentish. Taking Old English materials from dialect areas which show *s*-accusatives in Middle English, we find that the only area with texts that show features deviating to a significant degree from the West Saxon and Mercian 'standards' is Kent, as shown in (6).

(6) Old English Dialectal Evidence

<i>Mercian Charters</i>	<i>West Saxon Charters</i>	<i>Native Charters & Minor Texts</i>
East Anglia	—	—
Essex	—	—
Gloucestershire	—	—
—	Sussex (?)	—
—	Hampshire	—
Kent	Kent	Kent

I should also point out that the area of southern Hampshire, as well as the Isle of Wight, like Kent, are known to have been settled by the Jutes. Thus, more than a third of our Middle English texts with *hise*-forms belong to areas which can probably be associated with the Jutes and the Kentish dialect of Old English.¹³ The question is then, why are there no attestations of *hise*-forms in Old Kentish? To answer this question, we must examine the actual pronominal forms attested in the Old Kentish texts, which are shown in tabular form below in 7.¹⁴

(7) Pronominal Evidence from Old Kentish Texts ([NA] = not attested)

The Kentish Glosses, The Kentish Psalm and The Kentish Hymn:

	3. m.	n.	f.	pl.
N.	<i>he/he</i>	<i>hit/[NA]</i>	<i>hio, hi/[NA]</i>	<i>hio, hi/hio</i>
D.	<i>[NA]/him</i>	<i>[NA]/[NA]</i>	<i>hire/[NA]</i>	<i>[NA]/hiom</i>
A.	<i>hine/hine</i>	<i>[NA]/[NA]</i>	<i>[NA]</i>	<i>[NA]/[NA]</i>
G.	<i>his/his</i>	<i>[NA]/[NA]</i>	<i>hi(o)re(-a)/[NA]</i>	<i>hio [-ra]/hiora</i>

¹³ In discussing the Venerable Bede's account of the Germanic settlement of Britain, Blair (1963:168-169) states the following: "From the Jutes, he wrote, were descended the people who lived in Kent and the Isle of Wight, as well as on the mainland opposite the Isle of Wight. Bede's remarks about Jutes settling in part of what is now Hampshire is confirmed by a chronicler of the late eleventh century who records that the New Forest was known to the English as *Ytene*, the genitive plural of a late Old English form *Ye* which corresponds with Bede's Latin form *Iutae*." For a discussion of the association of the *Poema Morale* with the south of Hampshire, see Hall (1920 Part II:329).

¹⁴ The data offered here are from my own readings of these texts, with the exception of the *Glosses*, of which I have read only excerpts. The editions of the *Psalm* and *Hymn* consulted were those in Van Kirk Dobbie (1942). In the case of the *Charters*, the data are based on readings of the material presented in Sweet's *Oldest English Texts* (1885). The evidence from the *Glosses* is from published studies of Old Kentish, namely, Kemp (1953), and Williams (1905). Specifically on the *Charters* are Bryan (1915) and Taxweiler (1906).

The Kentish Charters (especially early 9th century):

	3. m.	n.	f.	pl.
N.	<i>he</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hia, hio</i>	<i>hie, hiae, hia</i>
D.	<i>him</i>	<i>[NA]</i>	<i>hire</i>	<i>[NA]</i>
A.	<i>[NA]</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hia [x1, reflex.]</i>	<i>hie [x1, prep.]</i>
G.	<i>his</i>	<i>[NA]</i>	<i>hire</i>	<i>hiora</i>

The fact is, the Old Kentish corpus is quite limited both in genre and volume. Moreover, almost all the Old Kentish texts show clear signs of influence from the Mercian and later West Saxon scribal traditions which were imported with Mercian and West Saxon political ascendancy over Kent. This factor aside, however, an actual examination of the Kentish texts available reveals that it is not just fem. and pl. accusative *s*-forms of the third person pronoun that we lack but, in fact, with but a very few exceptions, we find no fem. and pl. accusative pronouns at all. This apparent oddity has to do not only with the limitations of the size of the Old Kentish corpus but also with the nature of the subjects discussed in the texts. In any event, it is clear that the claim that *s*-accusatives could not have occurred in Old English is wildly exaggerated and seems to be based on the notion that the literary West Saxon dialect can be taken as representative for all the Old English dialects.

A detailed review of the actual attestations of feminine and plural accusatives in -*s* in Middle English is obviously needed. Unfortunately, space restrictions make it impossible to include such a review in this paper and I will therefore be forced to offer only the following observations and refer the reader to the fuller treatment to appear in Buccini (forthcoming b).

First, it should be noted that *s*-form pronouns for the accusative plural are found in many more texts than *s*-form feminine accusatives. The feminine pronouns appear to have been restricted to the more southerly regions (i.e., Essex, Kent and Hampshire) and the Severn valley (*Vices and Virtues, Poema Morale* (Trinity Ms.), *Ayenbite of Inwyt, A Parable, Poema Morale* (Lambeth Ms.), *South English Legendary, Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester*), though a more detailed analysis of the material must be carried out in order to determine the degree to which such a conclusion can be maintained. Plural *s*-form accusative pronouns are, however, found in all of the texts in which *s*-form pronouns occur.

In almost all texts in which *s*-form accusatives occur, other forms are also attested. Of these other forms the most common competitors are the old dative forms, *hem* for the accusative plural and *hire* for the feminine accusative. It should be noted, however, that it is perhaps not wholly accurate to speak of a clear accusative/dative distinction in the 'synchronic' grammar of Middle English. The inherited case system was clearly in a state of flux, with the formal marking of accusative and dative apparently tending to be gradually given up first after prepositions in favor of the old dative forms. Eventually these dative forms ousted completely the old accusatives, yielding the situation which still obtains in English.

It is striking that a great many of the occurrences of the *s*-accusatives in southern Middle English are unambiguously clitics, a fact already noticed by others who have

discussed the forms, including Kaufman (e.g., *Havelok* <settes> 'set them'; *Poema Morale* (Trinity Ms.) <mes> 'me them'; *The Kentish Sermons* <has> (=ha + s) 'he them'; *A Parable* <letes> 'let them'). Many of the other occurrences could well represent clitics hidden beneath idealised, fleshed-out spellings. Of particular significance is the fact that s-form pronouns generally do not occur after prepositions, where independently accented pronouns could be expected; instead *hem* and *hire* type forms are used in this position. The occurrence of a non-s-form accusative in the Old Kentish *Charters* after a preposition is therefore of dubious significance with respect to the existence of such pronouns even in that stage of the language. It should also be noted that in the Middle Kentish *Ayenbite of Inwyt*, fem. reflexives are never rendered with a *hise*-type pronoun, but rather always with the *hire*-type (<hare, hyre>) or even *hem* (Gradon 1979:83-84). In light of this fact, the one instance of a non-s-form fem. accusative pronoun which my preliminary study of the *Charters* uncovered is of similarly dubious significance. Judging from the Middle English evidence, it seems quite possible that s-form accusative pronouns were originally (i.e., in the Old English period) clitics which may well have never or only rarely occurred after prepositions and as reflexives. Furthermore, we must bear in mind the possibility that any of the very few Old Kentish fem. and pl. accusatives attested might represent the accented or independent forms: such forms may well have been favored in legal documents over clitic s-forms with a local or provincial flavor.

If we now turn to (8), it should be clear that very much the same distribution reigned and still reigns to a large degree in Frisian, the continental language most closely related to English.

(8) Third Person Pronouns of the Channel/North Sea Area

Middle Flemish

	3. m.	n.	f.	pl.
N.	<i>hil</i> -i	<i>hetl</i> -(e)t	<i>su, soe, sil</i> -se	<i>sil</i> -se
D.	<i>heml</i> -em, -en	<i>heml</i> -(e)t	<i>haerl</i> -er(e)	<i>hem, henl</i> -en
A.	<i>heml</i> -(e)n(e)	<i>heml</i> -(e)t	<i>haerl</i> -se	<i>hem, henl</i> -se
G.	<i>sijsnl</i> -(e)s	—	<i>haerl</i> -er(e)	<i>haerl</i> -(e)(e)

Middle Kentish (Dan Michel of Northgate, *Ayenbite of Inwyt*).

	3. m.	n.	f.	pl.
N.	<i>he, ha</i>	<i>hit, hyt</i>	<i>hi, hy</i>	<i>hi, hy</i>
D.	<i>him, hym</i>	[* <i>him, hym</i>]	<i>hire, hyre</i>	<i>ham</i>
A.	<i>hine, hyne</i>	<i>hit, hyt</i>	<i>his(e), hys(e)</i>	<i>his(e), hyse</i>
G.	<i>his, hys</i>	[* <i>his, hys</i>]	<i>hire, hare</i>	<i>hyre, hare etc.</i>

Old Frisian (Steller 1928:53; Heuser 1903:29; Sjölin 1969:34-35).

	3. m.	n.	f.	pl.
N.	<i>hi, hel-re, -(e)r</i>	<i>hit, hetl</i> -(e)t	<i>hiu, (ja, jo)</i>	<i>hia (ja)-s(e)</i>
D.	<i>him (hem)-em</i>	<i>him (hem)-em</i>	<i>hire, her</i>	<i>him, hiam etc.</i>
A.	<i>hine, en(e)-ne</i>	<i>hit, hetl</i> -(e)t	<i>hia (ja)-s(e)</i>	<i>hia (ja)-s(e)</i>
G.	<i>[sin]</i>	<i>[sin]</i>	<i>hire</i>	<i>hara</i>

Indeed, the situation to be inferred from the Old and Middle Kentish evidence resembles the Frisian situation far more closely than it does the Flemish, for in both Kentish and Frisian, the independent forms of the feminine and plural pronouns all have initial *h*, a feature which forms one of the best known isoglosses within the West Germanic branch of Germanic between the Ingvaonic or North Sea dialects and the continental dialects. Though this might lead one to wonder if we ought to consider the Middle English forms as cross-Channel borrowings from Frisian (as Heuser has done), theoretical considerations as well as historical considerations render that view no more attractive than Kaufman's. It should also be noted that there is a striking structural difference between the English on the one hand, and the Flemish and Frisian on the other: in Middle English, s-clitics never occur for feminines or plurals in the nominative. If English had gotten the s-pronouns from either Flemish or Frisian, the restriction of their use to the accusative would seem highly strange and need some manner of explanation. Of course, it is quite possible that the Old Frisian distribution of the feminine and plural s-pronouns was originally more like that of Middle Kentish and that, through internal change (conceivably but not necessarily supported by the strong influence of Low German and, later, Dutch), their range of use was extended to include the nominative as well as the accusative. In this connexion it should be remembered that 'Old' Frisian was the contemporary of 'Middle' Kentish. Finally, we must bear in mind the possibility that details of the distribution of the s-pronouns in the southern Middle English dialects may be secondary, local developments (e.g., the peculiar treatment of reflexives in the *Ayenbite of Inwyt*), which I will discuss in detail in my forthcoming study of the problem.

Taking these points into consideration, it seems far better to conclude that the s-accusatives of Middle English were native forms belonging to politically, and thus literarily marginal regions of England during the Old English period. The geographical distribution points to the feature possibly having belonged to a wave of Germanic immigration to Britain that was both ethnically (i.e., tribal affiliation) and linguistically different from the wave or waves that resulted in the establishments of the West Saxon and Anglian settlements in Britain. The concentration along the East Anglian and southeastern coasts coincides very much with the extent of the *Litus Saxonicum* which implies some connexion either to the Germanic mercenaries hired to help man the coastal fortifications or to the Germanic invaders against whom those fortifications were originally constructed, or perhaps both. From a geographical standpoint, the one oddity which needs explanation is the apparent island of s-pronouns in Gloucestershire. Gloucestershire lies, of course, in and about the Severn valley, but it is fairly unlikely that a migration to Britain was carried out directly to this area. Gloucestershire lies also at the headwaters of the Thames and, given the fact that some of the peoples who ultimately became the West Saxons almost certainly arrived in central England along the Icknield Way and perhaps also from the Thames estuary and gradually expanded inland along the Thames valley (Copley 1954:113ff.), it

seems worth considering the possibility that Gloucestershire and environs was at least partially settled by groups which had arrived with the first wave of settlers in Kent and East Anglia and had migrated further inland along the Thames valley, probably under pressure from the later arriving (future) West Saxons. It should be pointed out here that in Old English times, the Severn valley was the territory of the Hwicce, an English tribe under the political control of both the Anglian Mercians and the West Saxons at different times, but clearly ethnically distinct from both of those groups.¹⁵

This proposal that the *s*-pronouns should be seen as relics of an early wave of Germanic settlement in southern Britain receives striking confirmation when we compare the distribution of the *s*-accusatives with the distribution of the most typically Kentish phonological development, that of the unrounding of [y] to [e] (see Map 3, from Samuels 1972:122). Of especial importance is the fact that this development is also known on the continent but there only from Frisian and the Dutch dialects of Holland and Zeeland, dialects for which an Ingvaeronic substrate with specifically Frisian-like features must be posited.¹⁶ I should also call attention to the fact that a number of historians, basing their conclusions on both archaeological and literary evidence, have claimed that the Jutes came to England from the region of the Rhine estuary in Zeeland and Holland, where, as remembered in the *Finnzburg* poetic tradition, they lived in close association with the Frisians.¹⁷

5. Conclusion

The immediate goals of this paper were several. First, I hoped to show that the claim that the pronoun *hise* and related forms in southern Middle English cannot represent borrowings from Middle Flemish, as recently claimed by Kaufman. Second, in demonstrating that this alleged discovery of a clear-cut case of pronominal borrowing in a relatively casual language contact is not in accord with the philological facts, I hoped to call in question the promiscuous use of the term 'borrowing' that mars Thomason's and Kaufman's otherwise sound and valuable discussion of transfer types in language contact and to draw attention to the centrality of the notion of the stability gradient in contact studies, as emphasised by Van Coetsem. Third, I hoped to show that it is important that Anglicists look at Old English more in the manner that Netherlandicists look at Old Low Franconian, namely, by studying Middle English dialects and then reconstructing back into the earlier period. As can be clearly seen in the case at hand, serious errors can be made by placing too much

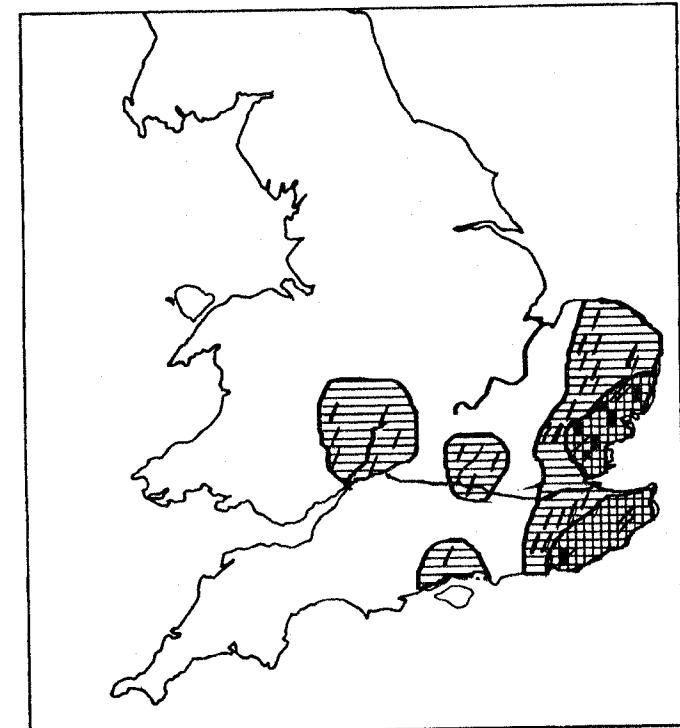
¹⁵ For an historical study of the Hwicce, see Hooke (1985).

¹⁶ In Buccini (1990), I argue this point on the basis of the distribution of the umlaut isoglosses in the Dutch language area. Concerning the Ingvaeronic features in the Dutch language area, see Taeldeman (1982).

¹⁷ Stenton (1989:14-15): "The evidence which points to an early connection between the Jutes of Kent and the Franks of the Rhineland greatly increases the difficulty of believing that the Jutes came to England from Jutland [...] [I]t was not from the western fjords of Jutland but from the mouths of the Rhine that they descended upon England." See also the more detailed argument in favor of this view in Witney (1982, Chap.1). Cf. Chadwick (1905, Chap. 5). For a comprehensive treatment of the *Finnzburg* material, see Tolkien (1983).

confidence in our knowledge of Old English which, from a dialectal standpoint, is extremely limited.

This third of the immediate goals is a link to the broader implications of this study for Germanic. Space restrictions have made it impossible for me to do much more here than sketch the possible significance of the striking correspondence of the two isoglosses, one morphological (the *s*-pronouns) and one phonological (the unrounding of [y] to [e]) and their analogues across the Channel. I believe that this discovery is of central importance to a much needed reassessment of the Germanic settlement of Britain and the historical and linguistic connexions of English to the continental Germanic dialects, an undertaking which I hope to accomplish in a book-length study (Buccini forthcoming b).



Map 3: Occurrence of *fell(e)* (◊) "fill" and *hell(e)* (●) "hill" in later Middle English (Samuels 1972)

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