Pons-Sanz, Sara M., and Louise Sylvester, eds. 2023. *Medieval English in a Multilingual Context: Current Methodologies and Approaches*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. 549. ISBN 9783031309465.

Reviewed by Lindy Brady
Edge Hill University

This excellent volume contains individually strong chapters that have been thoughtfully curated by editors Sara M. Pons-Sanz and Louise Sylvester to produce a comprehensive and multidisciplinary study of Middle English in its many multilingual contexts. *Medieval English in a Multilingual Context* goes beyond the well-trodden ground of English, French, Latin, making clear the impact of other languages (e.g. Welsh, Dutch, Frisian) on England in the high and later medieval periods. Crucially, this book is not just for linguists: the volume offers a range of approaches including literary studies, digital humanities, and history of the book. The editors are to be commended for compiling such a strong collection of essays, as are the individual contributors for the high quality of the studies within. *Medieval English in a Multilingual Context* presents cutting-edge research that will appeal to a broad audience, making clear how much exciting work is ongoing in the field as well as the rich potential it offers for future studies.

Following a brief editorial introduction, the volume is divided into four sections. The first part, "Research Contexts," contains two broadly methodological chapters; the other three—"Medieval Multilingualism and Lexical Change," "Medieval Multilingualism and Morphosyntactic Change," and "Textual Manifestations of Medieval Multilingualism"— contain five chapters apiece, largely in the form of case studies on one aspect of multilingualism and Middle English, apart from a brief editorial afterword. One of the virtues of this collection is its high percentage of collaboratively-authored chapters, at a ratio of twelve collaborative to six single-authored contributions. To be clear, the latter are also excellent, but it is exciting to see how much genuinely interdisciplinary work is reflected in this volume, much of it produced by precisely this collaboration: as Pons-Sanz and Sylvester explain in their introduction, "collaboration and sharing, often across disciplinary boundaries, underpin the entire endeavour" (4). Such collaborative work has been rare in Middle English studies as a whole, and the volume is much the richer for this approach.

The volume's first section contains two substantial methodological surveys that place the study of multilingualism and Middle English in broader disciplinary contexts. "Contact Theory and the History of English," written by Susan Fox, Anthony Grant, and Laura Wright, offers a comprehensive historiographical survey of major theoretical approaches to language contact which will be particularly useful to those coming to the volume from literary or historical rather than linguistic backgrounds. A case study of the multicultural influences on modern spoken London English offers a useful point of comparison for many of the approaches taken throughout the volume as a whole. Chapter 3, "From Original Sources to Linguistic Analysis: Tools and Datasets for the

Investigation of Multilingualism in Medieval English," by Carola Trips and Peter A. Stokes, offers an up-to-date and comprehensive survey of the range of digital humanities tools and projects that one could draw upon at every stage of a study involving multilingualism. This detailed and knowledgeable chapter will be of great value to those new to digital humanities approaches or wishing to embark upon a large-scale multilingual study for the first time.

The second cluster of chapters in this volume, "Medieval Multilingualism and Lexical Change," offers a variety of approaches to lexical change in a multilingual context that will interest scholars working across a range of topics and approaches. "Contact-Induced Lexical Effects in Medieval English," by Richard Dance, Philip Durkin, Carole Hough, and Heather Pagan, offers a detailed survey of the challenges inherent in attempting to determine the direction of linguistic influence when two closely-related languages come into contact, as well as useful strategies for overcoming these challenges. This chapter will be of particular value to non-linguists interested in the cultural, historical, or literary aspects of multilingualism, who may be surprised to realize how difficult it is to determine the direction of linguistic influence between closely-related languages. Arjen Versloot's contribution, "The West Germanic Heritage of Yorkshire English," offers a practical illustration of some of these issues by reconsidering the degree of Norse influence on English, arguing for a greater proportion of inherited West Germanic vocabulary than has heretofore been understood. Versloot explores the development of Yorkshire English in the context of the rich history of contact and trade across the North Sea in the medieval period. By focusing on other potential Germanic influences, such as Frisian, Versloot seeks to reassess the relatively straightforward received narrative of Norse influence on northern English. Chapter 6, "Reframing the Interaction between Native Terms and Loanwords: Some Data from Occupational Domains in Middle English," by Louise Sylvester and Megan Tiddeman, explores the relationship between native terminology and loanwords in Middle English and French, focusing on words falling within the lexical field of trade. Their study finds a high proportion of native terms and loanwords coexisting as synonyms throughout the medieval period, rather than an immediate process of relexification, as has often been suggested.

The last two chapters in this section are fascinating illustrations of how multilingual approaches can offer new insights to historical and literary studies. Helen Fulton's lively chapter, "Cheapside in Wales: Multilingualism and Textiles in Medieval Welsh Poetry," mines the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Welsh "poetry of the gentry" for borrowings from French and Middle English by focusing specifically on the lexis of the cloth trade. Fulton traces the rise of French and English loanwords into Welsh to the growth of Wales's urban economy, finding a significant impact of long-distance trade "as a sociocultural factor in linguistic developments" (188). The final chapter on "Caxton's Linguistic and Literary Multilingualism: English, French and Dutch in the *History of Jason*," by Ad Putter, offers a meticulous and innovative study of Caxton's *History of Jason* as the unique product of his own multilingual background. Putter pushes back against the perception that Caxton sought to standardize English, arguing instead that Caxton's richly multilingual background—he translated from Latin, Dutch, and French; is known to have written in English, French, Latin, and Dutch; and spent about 30 years in Flanders, where Dutch and French were the main languages spoken—is evident in his

printed works. Putter explores the *History of Jason* as reflective of Caxton's own multilingualism, in particular his fluency in French and Dutch.

Part III of the volume focuses on medieval multilingualism and morphosyntactic change. "An Overview of Contact-Induced Morphosyntactic Changes in Early English," by George Walkden, Juhani Klemola, and Thomas Rainsford, compares morphosyntactic changes in early English caused by the three historically significant "contact situations" with Celtic, Old Norse, and Old French languages, finding three historically-determined outcomes: "acculturation, bilingualism and eventually language shift, with the effects best characterised as instances of imposition" in the case of Celtic languages; koineisation in the case of Old Norse; and borrowing rather than imposition in the case of French (269). Chapter 10, "Traces of Language Contact in Nominal Morphology of Late Northumbrian and Northern Middle English," by Elżbieta Adamczyk, studies the impact of Anglo-Scandinavian linguistic contact on morphological changes in English (particularly in case and grammatical gender), finding that late Northumbrian texts evince contact-induced simplification but northern Middle English examples instead reflect long-contact bilingualism. Marcelle Cole and Sara M. Pons-Sanz's chapter on "Origin and Spread of the Personal Pronoun *They*: *La Estorie del Evangelie*, a Case Study" focuses on *th-* and *h-* forms of the third-person plural pronouns in one text (written in Middle English, despite its French title), arguing that—contrary to long-held opinion—the *th-* forms are not due to Norse influence alone, but rather are the product of polygenesis in which Old English demonstrative pronouns were also crucially influential.

The chapter on "Language Contact Effects on Verb Semantic Classes: Lability in Early English and Old French" by Luisa García García and Richard Ingham explores the effect of Anglo-French linguistic contact through a case study of labile verbs. Contrary to previous arguments that the greater degree of lability in Middle English verbs was caused by a high rate of borrowing from French, this chapter's authors again demonstrate the importance of nuance in multilingual studies, concluding that the same pattern does not hold true for all labile verbs but rather that the impact of linguistic contact differed depending upon the number of preexisting native verbs. Finally, "Exploring Norn: A Historical Heritage Language of the British Isles," by Kari Kinn and George Walkden, is a case study exploring the syntax of Norn, a now-extinct language descended from Old Norse which was spoken in the Orkneys and the Shetland Islands until roughly the eighteenth century. Kinn and Walkden approach Norn as a heritage language: that is, a still language spoken at home but which is not the dominant language outside the home (in this case, the latter was Scots). Kinn and Walkden focus on possessive constructions, and their methodology draws upon the modern analogy of American heritage Norwegian, finding features of Norn that reflect its status as a heritage language.

The volume's final section, "Textual Manifestations of Medieval Multilingualism," offers a series of fascinating case studies which uncover literary and codicological payoffs for studying Middle English from a multilingual perspective. Chapter 14, "Textual and Codicological Manifestations of Multilingual Culture in Medieval England," by Ad Putter, Joanna Kopaczyk, and Venetia Bridges, surveys both the historiography of the field and directions for future research by using London, British Library, MS Harley 2253 as a useful illustration of the issues they discuss: the editing of multilingual texts, revisiting the idea of trilingual England, and code-switching both within texts and in the layout of manuscripts. As in the earlier chapter by Trips and Stokes, readers will find

current research alongside the rich potential that this field of study has yet to offer. David Callander's chapter on "Adapting Winefride in Welsh, Latin and English" is a fascinating contribution in and of itself, but also a useful methodological illustration of one of this volume's overarching themes that the effects of multilingualism cannot be predicted, but must be studied on a case-by-case basis in order to fully grasp their nuances. The cult of northern Welsh saint Winefride/Gwenfrewy, as Callander notes, is "trilingual insofar as there is substantial material surviving in Latin, Welsh, and English," "yet it is striking when we turn to the texts themselves that they are most commonly monolingual" (446). Studying the extent and direction of multilingualism within these texts offers rich evidence for how and why a saint's cult crossed geographic and linguistic borders.

Chapter 16, "Let Each One Tell its Own Story: Language Mixing in Four Copies of *Amore Langueo*" by Mareike Keller and Annina Seiler, studies language mixing within the *Amore Langueo*, a bilingual Lenten sermon whose Latin base is supplemented with English insertions made relatively consistently across its four known manuscripts. The authors find evidence of practical code-switching in the context of a sermon, with English used to translate or paraphrase, clarify the sermon's structure, and give more precise definitions and explanations of key concepts. Emily Reed's chapter on "The Materiality of the *Manières de langage"* also focuses on manuscript tradition, though her emphasis is variance. By studying differences in the manuscript layouts of the *Mani*ères (a medieval French language-learning text for English speakers), Reed explores how medieval language learners "may have physically engaged with the texts, and thereby the process of learning French" (504). Finally, a brief "Afterword" by Sara M. Pons-Sanz and Louise Sylvester discusses the theoretical and methodological approaches of the volume in light of broader historiographical developments in the field.

Overall, this is an impressive collection that moves the field forward in exciting ways while also making clear the rich potential for future studies. The chapters are uniformly of high quality and interest, and the international span of the volume's contributors is also to be praised. One main theme that emerges strongly from this collection is the complexity of the relationship between Middle English and multilingualism. In each case study, the volume's contributors have made clear the importance of nuance when it comes to studying multilingualism—an important lesson applicable not only to Middle English. Many perceived patterns concerning multilingual contact have been questioned by the conclusions of this collection, not least those concerning the degree of change brought about by contact with Old Norse and French and the speed with which these changes took place. This collection consistently opens up new avenues for research at the same time as its authors present their own conclusions: the chapter by Trips and Stokes is a gift-wrapped toolkit for any PhD student interested in multilingualism and the digital humanities, while the contributions by Fulton, Putter, Callander, Keller and Seiler, and Reed offer clear blueprints for multilingual approaches with literary, historic, cultural, economic, and codicological payoffs. *Medieval English in a Multilingual Context* is a valuable contribution to the field in far more than a linguistic context.

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