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Peter J. Lucas, 2024. *Printing Anglo-Saxon from Parker to Hickes and Wanley. With a Catalogue of Early Printed Books Containing Anglo-Saxon 1566–1705*. Library of the Written World 105. Leiden: Brill. Pp. xxiv + 708. ISBN 97890045169-77.

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Unfamiliar letter forms are the first hurdle that needs to be jumped by anyone wishing to become familiar with text written in Old English (the language of the Germanic invaders who settled in England in the fifth and sixth centuries), and letter forms are, therefore, a standard item at the beginning of any grammar of Old English or history of the English language. In most critical editions of Old English texts, voiced and voiceless dental fricatives are rendered by *þ* and *ð*; the lower front vowel between *a* and *e* is written as *æ*; for the upper-case letters we use *Þ*, *Ð* and *Æ*, respectively. For semi-diplomatic editions of early medieval documents containing Old English, editors and printers also make us of *ƿ* and *Ƿ* for *w*; *ꝥ* for *þæt*, *ꝛ* for *and*, as well as medieval punctuation marks such as the virgule (*/*), *punctus elevatus* (*⁘*) or *punctus versus* (*⁖*). A look at earlier—including the earliest—printed editions of Old English texts reveals that editors and printers from the sixteenth century onwards reproduced not only the graphemic additions to the standard Latin alphabet, but also allographic variants from manuscript writing: the shapes of the letters written by Anglo-Saxon scribes, writing Insular minuscule or English Caroline hands: for example, *ꝺ* for *d*, *ꝼ* for *f*, *ᵹ* for *g*, *ſ* for *s* and *ẏ* with a superscript dot. The study of the conventions, methodologies and achievements of early modern printers of Old English is the subject of Peter Lucas's comprehensive and monumental new monograph.

The double title of this book indicates that Lucas is giving us two for the price of one. Its first part (1–184), titled *Printing Anglo-Saxon with Special Sorts from 1566–1705*, contains a synthesis of many years of outstanding research on the history of Old English studies, and particularly the intriguing aspect of printing Old English in early modern books. Lucas's knowledge of this field of studies is second to none. Of the twenty publications by him listed in his 63-page bibliography many concern his pioneering work on the printing of Old English during the early modern period—the earliest one dating from 1997. *Printing Anglo-Saxon* should therefore rightly be considered the culmination of three decades or more of dedicated scholarship on this topic. Coming to this project as

an Anglo-Saxonist, medievalist and manuscript scholar (many readers will associate him with his work on Old English poetry and his contributions to Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts in Microfiche Facsimile), Lucas explains that a good understanding of the technology of early printing is an important basis for his research (23–28). While mechanisation and computers have moved printing into the domain of operators and programmers, early modern printing originated in the (gold)smith's workshop, where letter designs were carved in mirror image at a pre-set size onto the tips of small steel bars known as punches. Subsequently, punches were impressed into matrices (small copper ingots with the imprint of a letter), which were then used to create large numbers of types (single letters) made from a lead alloy to enable printing. "Each variety of a letter in a fount" is then referred to as a "sort" (188, Lucas's *Glossary of Printing*). Punch cutters were highly skilled and highly paid workers (Lucas lists only twelve who were involved with the creation of Old English sorts; 601–4), many of whom were operating in France, England and the Low Countries. The complication of creating Old English sorts consisted not only in the design of the letters and their conversion into punches, but also in creating punches which could be combined in terms of design and size with sorts of an existing Latin alphabet. Failing to do so yielded aesthetically flawed lines in which letters of different shapes and sizes were used in lines of various heights (see illustration 38 on 151).

In six chapters, part one of *Printing Anglo-Saxon* takes us through the entire history and development of printing Old English from its inception in the 1560s at the behest of Archbishop Matthew Parker (1504–75) to the creation of George Hickes's (1642–1715) *Thesaurus* in Oxford in 1703–5. It is preceded by a convenient table of Anglo-Saxon Type-Designs (xxiii–xxiv), nine of which were used by predominantly English and Irish printers, while nine others constituted continental attempts to print Old English with the help of Anglo-Saxon sorts. Of the types used in England, the Junius types (AS6) were produced and first used in the Netherlands. The first chapter, "Anglo-Saxon and its Uses," surveys the history of Old English scholarship from the point of view of the antiquarian efforts to write and print Old English—an approach which has not been explored by other historiographic overviews. It shows how from the mid-sixteenth century antiquarians were confronted with a variety of written Old English which became wider and wider with the increasing collecting efforts of Parker and, slightly later, Sir Robert Bruce Cotton (1570/71–1631). Intriguingly, early antiquarians such as Parker were happy to claim that "texts printed in the Anglo-Saxon types 'will restore for you the memory of the ancient but once familiar language and will provide no little household furniture for [previously] concealed knowledge'" (17), underlining thereby the need for and importance of Anglo-Saxon type-design. This is one of many instances in which *Printing Anglo-Saxon* elicits new questions about the history and motivation of printing Old English with the help of special sorts. As we can read in the subsequent chapters, Parker went to great

lengths, sparing no expenses in the process, to supply his printer John Day, with first one and then another set of Anglo-Saxon sorts for the printing of English (and occasionally Latin). At the same time, the potential and the need for developing special sorts for the printing of languages or language varieties increased, and Lucas points to the printing of Irish and Welsh with the help of special sorts. However, the sixteenth century also witnessed an increased interest in exotic alphabets, or letter sequences such as *futhorcs*, and sample texts (versions of the Lord's Prayer) in ancient and oriental languages. Although printed mostly from woodblocks, such samples illustrate a broader humanist effort to connect text sources with unfamiliar letters. One wonders, therefore, whether Parker's initiatives were inspired not only by his interest in Old English, but also by a more widely shared notion that letters were not only to be seen as signs but also as images. The Anglo-Saxon type designs reflected the *littera antiqua* of the English Renaissance.

In the subsequent chapters of Part 1, the history and characteristics of each type-design are discussed in great detail, with some 66 helpful illustrations in monochrome; the book would certainly have deserved illustrations in colour. The discussions stand out for the thoroughness with which Lucas approaches his material and reflect the extensive period of research at the basis of this book. The main ingredients of his research are biographical minutiae, supported by highly informative footnotes, and meticulous technical observations from manuscripts and printed books, visible, for example in the tables of manuscript features (Tables 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). On this basis Lucas is able (as in the case of the Parkerian Great Primer) or not (as in the case of the Wheelockian Great Primer) to suggest (not determine) which manuscript or manuscripts were used for the design of the respective sorts. Some of this research had already been published earlier, as Lucas acknowledges, which may account for the somewhat uneven distribution of pages per type-design, but the whole of this book is greater than the sum of its parts. For the initiated, the detailed discussion of Abraham Wheelock's (1593–1653) Great Primer, a completely new seventeenth-century type-design (93–127), is one of the highlights in this part of the book, but it is equally fascinating to see how it compares with the Great Primer cut for Sir Henry Spelman (c. 1562–1641) a few years earlier (87–92), which was modelled "with some notable differences" on Parker's initial design of Anglo-Saxon sorts. For many type-designers, printed books were the most prominent exemplars for new sorts; not manuscripts—a development that is still ongoing in the digital age.

Chapter 5, on "Continental Anglo-Saxon Type-Designs," offers a pioneering study of Anglo-Saxon sorts designed and cut in the Low Countries, France and Germany in the seventeenth century and used in books produced by continental printers, such as pirate editions of books by John Selden (1584–1654), atlases by the Amsterdam geographer Johannes Blaeu (1598/99–1673), or Charles Du Cange's (1610–1688) dictionary of Latin. Bringing these different type designs

together, Lucas shows the enormous lengths to which continental printers were prepared to go to print Old English with appropriate sorts even if this meant shoddy design or tricks such as the use of Hebrew final *tsade* ץ for lower case Anglo-Saxon *s*, *caph* ך for the Tironian ⁊ or the use of an inverted *2* for the letter ȝ. It is clear that printing Old English in its original form had become traditional some 50 years after Matthew Parker had introduced it, and that this tradition had crossed the Channel, particularly into the Low Countries which had a history of supplying books for the English market. This chapter, too, sheds new light on the roles of some of the printers and scholars involved, particularly that of the Dutch historian Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612–1653), who printed Old English in several publications just a few years before Franciscus Junius (1591–1677) began publishing. In December 1649 Boxhorn inherited the now lost manuscript dictionary of Old English compiled by the Amsterdam polymath Johannes de Laet (1581–1649), so that he could oversee the printing. Lucas's synthesis demonstrates that the means (i.e. special sorts) to print the dictionary were available in the Low Countries at the time, increasing the mystery of why Boxhorn never jumped at the opportunity of printing De Laet's dictionary.

While part 1 of *Printing Anglo-Saxon* offers a synthesis of Lucas's impressive research, part 2 (185–1598), titled *Catalogue of Early Printed Books Containing Anglo-Saxon to 1705* lays out the massive amount of data that underlie part 1. Beginning with an indispensable glossary of terms, a list of type-designs, and a list of abbreviations, the *Catalogue* presents a chronologically organised survey of all early printed books containing Old English, whether they were printed with special sorts or by replacing special characters. Each book is identified by its year of publication and a serial number, the combination of which is used as the unique reference to a publication. Depending on the significance of a particular book for the history of Old English scholarship and on whether or not the book features for the first time in the *Catalogue* (Lucas includes all reprints), the amount of information differs, but the order of the various items of information remains similar. Thus, the reference number is followed by the title, place, date of publication, printer(s) and references to other catalogues, for example, the *English Short Title Catalogue*. This is followed by a global description of the contents and a codicological description, including a collation of the quire structure. Subsequently, Lucas presents an overview of the sources of text passages for which printers used Anglo-Saxon types and a survey of the types used. Each entry concludes with references to the "copies seen" for this entry and a list of abbreviations of other libraries possessing copies of the book, plus a list of bibliographical references (selective, as Lucas points out) and sometimes a reference to a printed facsimile. Where necessary, the sub-entries are interspersed with notes providing extra information or contextualisation; the *Catalogue* contains no footnotes.

The form, quantity and detail of the information in Lucas's *Catalogue* are a novelty in the secondary literature on Old English scholarship, and its value to the field is enormous, therefore. While, as its title suggests, the aim of *Printing Anglo-Saxon* is the interplay between editors and printers and the use of type-designs for the printing of Old English, the *Catalogue* extends far beyond this aim by combining information on printing Old English with lists of the sources used for each section of Old English printed in early modern books. The number of hours of work invested in these source studies must have been astronomical, and although a substantial amount of earlier scholarship on these books is included, the verification of earlier work in a large number of manuscripts will have made the work more labour-intensive rather than less. While the source references take up a substantial amount of space in the *Catalogue*, the descriptions and analyses of the types remain at the centre of Lucas's research. For each book printed with Anglo-Saxon sorts, Lucas lists the types used for the main text, including its size, as well as the Anglo-Saxon sorts including the type-design they were combined with. For example, in 1666.1 Sir William Dugdale's *Origines Juridicales*, printed in London by Francis and Thomas Warren, the main text is printed in "Pierre Haultin's [the punch cutter's] English-size Roman (Body 93.5)" (471), while the Old English sections were printed with thirteen sorts from the Lambardian Pica Anglo-Saxon in combination with a Pica Roman font for the other letters. Lucas observes that in this book a form of *s* with the shoulder broken off is used for the letter *d*. For each book with printed Old English, there is a similarly detailed inventory of the Anglo-Saxon sorts, sometimes of a single type-design, at other times of a mixture of type-designs, sometimes with only few Anglo-Saxon sorts, at other times with many. A small minority of books listed contain Old English printed without special sorts, in standard Latin characters replacing the Old English ones: these are now somewhat hidden by the large majority of books with special sorts; a separate category of such books might have made it easier to draw conclusions on the where and why of this group.

The final part (601–708) of Printing Anglo-Saxon contains lists of punch cutters, printers and booksellers, and bibliographies of medieval manuscripts, post-medieval (early modern) manuscripts and printed books, followed by the index. They are an essential element of this book and will for many researchers be the start of their explorations. Particularly convenient are the references to identification numbers of the catalogue items which have been added to the various bibliographies and the index. A book like this remains difficult to index, however, and full searches may also be conducted with the help of the e-book (helpfully provided by Brill) that can, no doubt, be found in most university libraries.

With the publication of *Printing Anglo-Saxon*, the wish for "a full list of books using Saxon type" and "a full and illustrated account of such type" expressed by the former Oxford Rawlinson and Bosworth Professor Eric Stanley in 1987 and

reprinted in Lucas's preface (ix–xv) has now been fulfilled. An early attempt to compile such a list can already be found in the first modern monograph on the study of Old English, Eleanor N. Adams's *Old English Scholarship from 1566–1800* (Adams 1970), which includes at the end a short, rudimentary appendix on "the use of Anglo-Saxon types" and a list of books containing printed Old English (156–81).[1] Lucas's *Printing Anglo-Saxon* plus the *Catalogue of Early Printed Books* has now superseded such early publications and will be a major tool for historiographers of Old English and Old Germanic studies for a long time. Lucas has set an important standard in the study of early modern printed books containing Old English, and in the terminology to be used in such studies. New in Lucas's *Printing Anglo-Saxon* is the degree of detail with which these books are described and, most prominently, the collection and discussion of a much larger number of books containing just one or more passages of Old English, or only a few words. Hitherto, many of these books went unnoticed or were hardly noticed, and they had never been considered together. The fruits of Lucas's labours reminded this reviewer of Hickes's *Thesaurus*, a study of Germanic languages in various sections followed by Humfrey Wanley's *Catalogus criticus* (1672–1726), the first attempt at a comprehensive inventory of all manuscripts containing Old English. When Neil Ker praised Wanley's achievements in his *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, he remarked that "less than a dozen manuscripts containing a considerable amount of OE have been found in English Libraries since Wanley wrote" (Ker 1957, xiii). Similarly, a few more printed books containing Old English may in the future be found in addition to those listed in Lucas's *Catalogue*, but likewise, there will not be many that he has overlooked. Peter Lucas's *Printing Anglo-Saxon* is a treasure house of knowledge accumulated over three decades, which has now been made accessible to all.

References

Adams, Eleanor N. (1917) 1970. *Old English Scholarship in England from 1566–1800*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Ker, Neil R. 1957. *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

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[1] Eric Stanley's personal copy (in the reviewer's possession) of Eleanor Adams's *Old English Scholarship* contains a xerox of *Printing with Anglo-Saxon Types 1566–1715. Catalogue of a Small Exhibition at Corpus Christi College Cambridge* (13 pp., undated), compiled by Bruce Dickins. This catalogue is not included in Lucas's bibliography.