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Lucas, Peter J. 2024. *Old English Poetry from Manuscript to Message*. Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 58. Turnhout: Brepols. Pp. xviii + 398. ISBN 9782503600314.

Reviewed by Mark Griffith
New College, University of Oxford

Most Anglo-Saxonists will be familiar with the work of Peter Lucas, especially from his edition of the OE *Exodus*. This collection of twenty-two of his articles (all but one previously published) will be a necessary addition to many an early medievalist's bookshelf. The overriding focus is on Old English—his forays into Middle English, his extensive work on Capgrave and on the early modern reception of Old English by Minsheu, Camden, Spelman and others play no part here (although Junius does). Because Lucas's work moved in recent decades more towards these later periods, all but one of the previously published pieces selected for inclusion here (that one being a description of the Vercelli Book) first appeared before the year 2000. There is, accordingly, a slightly historical air to the volume and one is left feeling a little curious that the author seemingly became disengaged from the subject which forms his current book. Maybe this publication marks a re-engagement with it.

There are four main Sections and a Postscript; each has its own Foreword. The first contains four pieces on OE poetic manuscripts, two of them on the Junius Manuscript, one on the Vercelli Book and one on the *Beowulf* Manuscript. The second has two on metrical-grammatical issues (enclisis and adverb-particles) and two on Junius's representation of metrical boundaries in his transcriptions of *The Metrical Epilogue to the Pastoral Care* and *Judith*). The third contains seven short notes which offer either emendations or alternative explanations of problematic words and phrases in the corpus (*Beowulf* 224a *eoletes* > *eolet*, *Andreas* 733b *þy sceolon gelyfan* > *þy sel gelyfan*, *Christ III* 1476b *þæs þe ic iu þe min* > *þæs þe ic iu þa min*, *Genesis B* 623a *hire* > *incre*, *Daniel* 276a *deaw drias* > *deawdryre*; *Exodus* 265a *ægnian*, 480b *mod gerymde*), together with the one previously unpublished piece (on *The Seafarer* 62b). Of these only the piece on *ægnian* is unpersuasive: why is there a need to postulate a *hapax legomenon* meaning "thresh" when OE *agnian* "own, possess" has attested forms with initial *æ*- and the sense fits the context (see *DOE*, s.v. *agnian*)? Section D "Theme and Meanings" has five essays of a more literary-critical character on various topics, images and sources of the poetry (on obedience and loyalty in *Genesis A* and *B*, the cross in *Exodus*, the liturgy in Felix's *vita* and *Guthlac B*, the

female hero in *Judith*, and one on individuality in *Guthlac A*, *Beowulf*, the elegies and *The Dream of the Rood*). The final chapter, the Postscript, discusses the role played by Old English in the first stanza of Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky*, "Twas brillig and the slithy toves," which Carroll first wrote (parodically) as "A Stanza of Anglo-Saxon Poetry." Overall, OE biblical poetry, especially *Judith* (a page of which is depicted on the cover) and the poems of the Junius Manuscript, attract the most attention. Why some of Lucas's other articles on Old English are not included (e.g. Lucas 1988) is not explained and seems odd in this instance given that the author states that it gives "a fuller discussion of issues raised" (306) in that chapter. Before the first Section there is a Preface and Acknowledgements, a List of Illustrations, a List of Abbreviations, and an Introduction; after the final chapter there is a list of the author's Publications, a Select Bibliography, and two Indices (General Index and Index of Manuscripts). Numerous footnotes have been updated throughout to include reference to more recent publications, several chapters have updating Postscripts (3, 7, 13 and 21) and the new context has prompted a few added cross-references, but the substance of most of the re-published pieces remains essentially unchanged, even though that occasionally involves needless repetition (for example the description of Kuhn's three categories of Germanic verse words and his two laws of word order in the verse-clause at the start of chapters 5 and 6). The author, for better or worse, does not appear to have changed his mind about any of the issues addressed (although the absence from chapter 3 of the material on Malmesbury in the original article may suggest that Lucas has abandoned his view that MS Junius 11 was produced there).

There is space only for remarks on a few of the most substantial and/or influential papers, together with a consideration of the one new piece. The first chapter argues forcefully that *Judith*, which cannot always have followed *Beowulf* in the Nowell Codex as it now does (because of wormholes at the end of *Beowulf* which do not carry over into *Judith* and signs of exposure on the last folio of *Beowulf*), originally preceded *The Life of St Christopher* at its start. As the items before *Beowulf* are in indivisible sequence, this is, pragmatically speaking, the only other place in the Codex where the biblical poem could have been situated. The argument is mainly codicological, but also partly orthographic (the shared absence of <*io*> spellings from *Judith* and *Christopher* in contrast with the others of the Codex). Alternative hypotheses—that *Judith* did close the Codex but was for a period removed from that position, a period in which the wormholes and marks of exposure were made, before being restored to its original position—or that *Judith* was originally a separate work copied by Scribe B and recognized as such by some later compiler who then brought it together with the end of the Nowell Codex—seem less probable and fail to explain the orthographic situation. The suggestion that the Codex was assembled for someone with an interest in

monsters is less convincing if *Judith* originally headed it, rather than ended it. The article is elegant and persuasive.

Chapter 5, "Some Aspects of the Interaction between Verse Grammar and Metre," is a substantial contribution to our knowledge of OE metrical grammar and the most thoroughgoing study to date of the role of enclisis in the metre. Lucas formulates a rule for it: "A particle may be enclitic on a preceding stress-word, with which it has a close grammatical / semantic relationship, in the same verse phrase" (116), although this hardly does justice to the detailed arguments on which it depends, for he shows clearly that in some types of verses enclisis must occur, in other types that it must not, and that it is ambiguously present or absent in others. Briefly and rather crudely summarized, Lucas shows that various kinds of exceptions to Kuhn's First Law or breaches of it are normalized if enclisis is operative: in particular, where a particle in the first dip after a stressed element ought not to be stressed by that Law but has often, and arbitrarily, been taken to be so (e.g. *Beowulf* 142b "heold hyne syðþan"), and where a particle in the second dip either violates the metre, if stressed by displacement, or the metrical grammar, if not stressed and without enclisis (e.g. *ChristC* 1476a "Ac forgield me þin lif"). Lucas's lists and scansions of verses with enclisis show that a disproportionate number belong to rare, or even anomalous, metrical types and also that relatively few occur in *Beowulf*. The chapter is not, however, limited to the topic of enclisis and contains also an interesting final section on Sievers' Rule of Precedence. It is probably the most important article in the collection.

Chapter 12, the only previously unpublished piece in the collection, reconsiders the problem of the meaning and scansion of *The Seafarer* 62b "gielleð anfloga." The first element of *anfloga* is either the numeral *ān* ("one," "alone"), with the compound having the sense "solitary flier," or the prefix *an-* < *and-* with the sense "off," "away," and the affixed form meaning "away-flier." The first of these is the usual view. Lucas, however, thinks that the context, which describes the soul travelling away from the body, better suits the latter analysis and attempts to support this by pointing out that the metre of the former—in Bliss's notation, 1D*3—would be "anomalous" in the b-verse, whilst, with the prefixed form, "the verse scans as Type 2E1, which is unexceptionable" (221). But Type 2E1 / x | x / is "unexceptionable" only to those who follow Bliss's view of the caesura, for a Sieversian would object to a verse with three positions (stress, dip, resolved stress) rather than the necessary minimum (in that theory) of four, and, in an earlier chapter, Lucas acknowledges that the occurrence of Type 2E1 is, in any case, "not large enough to convince all metrists of the authenticity of this type" (93). Transference of stress to the prefix is general in a prefixed noun (as in, for example, *andsaca* ("adversary"), which never alliterates on *s-* in the poetry; see *OEG*, Campbell 1959, §73) and gives here a Blissian scansion of Type 1D*1,

which would also be anomalous in the b-verse, but not as anomalous as Type 1D*3. If in addition to such transference, however, syncope were to be permitted in the opening verb, then an "unexceptionable" b-verse scansion would emerge (Type 1D1), and, though unsyncopated forms are normal in *The Seafarer* and confirmed by metre at ll. 13b, 27a, 49b, 51b, etc., Lucas argues in the same earlier chapter for the occasional use of syncopated forms by Anglian poets where "necessary or appropriate" (92). The metre of line 62b, then, is not, as Lucas appears to believe it is, decisive in this debate, but, if a scansion is to be preferred (as opposed to labelling the verse a remainder, or even defective), then it is not Type 2E1, if it exists, but Type 1D1, which certainly exists. If this is the case, then this scansion would confirm Lucas's preference for "away-flier."

Chapter 18, "*Sengeley in synglere*," responds to the claims of some medieval historians, not always very exactly defined, that the discovery of the individual post-dated the Anglo-Saxon period. To challenge this view, Lucas addresses three aspects of the presentation of the individual in OE poetry: the individual as loner, the emotional characterization of the individual, and the idea of personal development in the individual. For the second, he follows the work of others. The third, he exemplifies straightforwardly from the spiritual growth of the dreamer in *The Dream of the Rood*: the vision stimulates in him a change from grief and apprehension to a confident optimism. Lucas shows readily enough in the first area that the poets present solitary experience, often emphatically isolated, though whether much of this demonstrates the quiddity of individuality as opposed to the normative experiences of various types, such as heroic exiles, ascetics and heroes, given first-person voice or identified as characters in a story may be questioned. But Lucas develops his argument in two thought-provoking directions, first, arguing that the *Beowulf*-poet treats identical types in comparable situations in different ways, with individuality emerging from the contrast. The example given is that of Hrothgar and Beowulf as aged kings (both having reigned for fifty years) attacked by murderous monsters—who yet react in quite different ways, the one passive, the other active (although, surely, the king indicated by l. 1885b "an cyning" quoted on 268 is Hrothgar and not Beowulf?). Secondly, he identifies a kind of negative individualization by which all the figures in a poem, excepting only one, display a shared emotion: dreamer, cross, disciples and all creation feel or express sorrow in *The Dream of the Rood* for the crucified Christ and so "the outstanding qualities of the individual [i.e. Christ] are defined by not expressing emotion" (274).

Footnotes and references are generally correct, but readers interested in Smithers' argument that *anfloga* in *Seafarer* 62b is a reference to a "disease-bringing malign influence" will not find it in Smithers (1957, 220, n. 7), but, rather, in the 1959 volume of that same journal (20–22). Typographical errors are relatively few; a cluster of them mars pages 102–103—a missing line-end

hyphen, three incorrect capitals, changed font size at the bottom of page 102, missing italics at the end of §24, and the misspelling "hypermetyric"—and the author will doubtlessly be dismayed by the two errors in the quotations from *Beowulf* (267). Of greater significance, however, is the erroneous change in the summary to the scansion of *Judith* (191) of the number of b-verse instances of Type 1A*1 from 38 to 18. The reproduction of the original articles fails more damagingly at two other points. First, in the omission of all of the italics to the line numbers in column 1.1/3 of Table 3 of chapter 6 (139 and ff.), so that it is not possible in the new context to distinguish verses where the listed adverb is the only particle in the initial dip (originally italicized) from those where it is accompanied by another or others, as could be seen in the original. Reference is also made throughout this chapter—bafflingly so, until one reads the original publication—to the "Appendix" (132, 133, 134, 135 and 138): that of the original has been converted here into Table 3 without the further necessary revisions to the text having been made. Probably because the print of the original of Table 3 is small and somewhat fuzzy, various abbreviated titles of poems have been misrepresented—for *Hm2* read *Hm1* (142), for *R22* read *Mx2* (147), for *WfL* read *WlE* (155), etc.—and these errors are repeated in the references to these poems in the final General Index. Secondly, Table 9 "Analysis of Errors and Omissions" (186) in chapter 8 is incomprehensible without recourse to the original publication: numbers which rightly sit side by side in the original have all been placed on top of one another, six of the eight full-stops after initial capitals to the rows are misplaced and the description of the concluding row ("Total no. of correct placements (ignoring rows F and G)" (383)) has been omitted. The distinction made in the "Select Bibliography" (369–89) between "Works of Reference" and those of "Literature" is opaque: Bliss's *An Introduction to Old English Metre*, for example, is listed in the former, but Kendall's *The Metrical Grammar of Beowulf* (with its analysis of every verse and verse-clause in the poem) is placed in the latter, or, again, the OE grammar by Sievers is a "Work of Reference" but those of Campbell, Luick and Jordan are merely "Literature." Various manuscripts listed in the "Select Bibliography" (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 389, Oxford, Bodley 614, Eng. Hist. C. 145, Hatton 115, etc.) do not appear in the "Index of Manuscripts," despite that being claimed to be "as comprehensive as possible" (391); their use in the volume is, accordingly, undiscoverable and the principle of selection behind the "Select Bibliography" unknown. Finally, the inclusion in the "General Index" only of Old English scholars "who wrote over a hundred years ago" (391) cannot be justified when the work of several is foundational to that here, with their names repeatedly cited in the course of the arguments (e.g. that of Bliss and Kuhn to chapters 5 and 6). Even that restriction does not explain the exclusion of James W. Bright (1852–1926) whose article (Bright 1912) on *Exodus* and the liturgy is the springboard for

chapter 20 here on *Guthlac B* and the liturgy. A separate "Index of Authorities" was needed. These errors and omissions, though occasionally arresting, are not so numerous as to intrude upon the reader's enjoyment of most of this book.

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