

A native origin for Present-Day English *they, their, them*

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It is commonly held that Present-Day English *they, their, them* are not descended from Old English but derive from the Old Norse third-person plural pronouns *þeir, þeira, þeim*. This paper argues that the early northern English orthographic and distributional textual evidence agrees with an internal trajectory for the ‘þ-’ type personal pronouns in the North and indicates an origin in the Old English demonstratives *þā, þāra, þām*. The Northern Middle English third-person plural pronominal system was the result of the reanalysis from demonstrative to personal pronoun that is common cross-linguistically in Germanic and non-Germanic languages alike.

Keywords: Old Northumbrian, Old English, Old Norse, Northern Middle English, personal pronoun, demonstrative, *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss, *LAEME*

1. Introduction

During the Middle English (ME) period, ‘þ-’ type personal pronouns supplanted the inherited Old English (OE) third-person plural personal pronouns *hīe, hira, him*.¹ The ‘þ-’ type pronouns encompassed a wide range of diphthongal and monophthongal spellings including a ‘þei(-)’ type in *-ei(-)* or *-ey(-)*, a ‘þai(-)’ type in *-ai(-)* or *-ay(-)*, a ‘þe-’ type in *-e(e)-* and a ‘þa(-)’ type in *-a(a)-*, all of which are

1. For ME my use of the term ‘þ-’ type corresponds to the ‘th-’ type in a *Linguistic atlas of early Middle English 1150–1325* (*LAEME*: Laing 2013) and an *Electronic version of a linguistic atlas of late mediaeval English* (*eLALME*: Benskin et al. 2013). The dental fricative onset of the OE and ME þ-forms will be represented as <þ> throughout this paper. For the ME period <þ> must be taken to stand also for <th, ð, y> spellings and for <t, d> spellings that were common following coronals. In excerpts taken from particular manuscripts, the exact spelling variant that occurs <ð, þ, y, t, d, th> will be reported. In my discussion of the Old Northumbrian data taken from the *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss, <ð> will be used in line with scribal practice in the gloss.

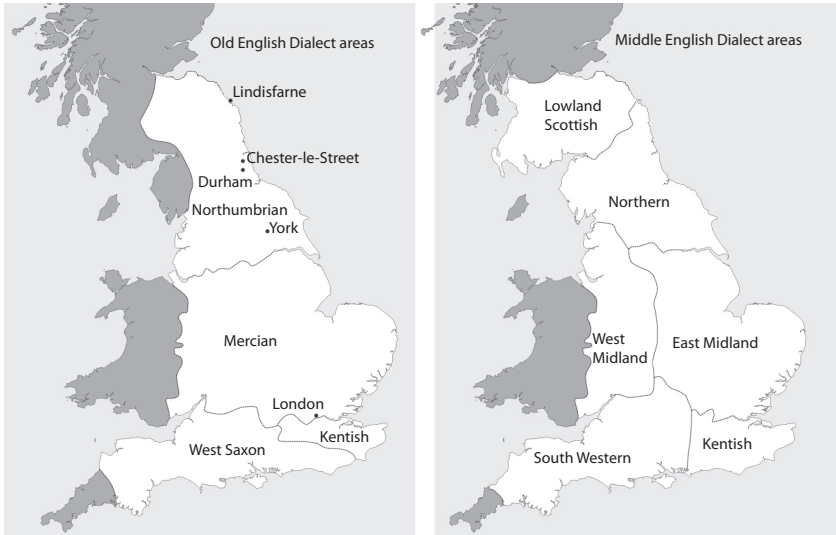
traditionally believed to have stemmed from the Old Norse (ON) pronouns *þeir*, *þeira*, *þeim* and their variant forms. This theory dates back to Kluge (1899:940) and Björkman (1900:36–53), who brought phonological evidence for the hypothesis. It has been asserted unequivocally by ME grammars, by handbook descriptions of the history of English and by in-depth research studies (Heltveit 1953; Strang 1970:§146; Hogg 1992:146; Howe 1996:154–157; Morse-Gagné 2003; *OED3* *they*, pron., adj. adv., and n.). Dense Scandinavian settlement in the North and East of England during the 9th and 10th centuries led to considerable language contact, and the imposition of such ON function words in English is considered indicative of both the intensity and the nature of Anglo-Scandinavian contact during the late OE period (Thomason & Kaufman 1988:275–304; Kroch et al. 2000:358).

The hypothesis is not without its flaws. Putting aside the fact that pronoun transfer from one language to another is in itself unusual given the closed-class nature of grammatical items, there are other incongruencies to the hypothesis. The monophthongal spellings of the ME *p*-type pronouns *þa/þe*, *þar/þer*, *þam/þem* cannot be easily explained on the basis of ON origin. There is also the difficulty in accounting for the differing degrees of diatopic diffusion of the *p*-pronouns across the North and East Midlands, the focal areas of Anglo-Scandinavian contact (see Map 1). The earliest ME text with consistent written use of *p*-pronouns is the *Ormulum*, written in the heavily Scandinavianised East Midlands in the late 12th century. However, an *Electronic version of a linguistic atlas of late mediaeval English* (*eLALME*: Benskin et al. 2013) indicates that, although the nominative *p*-pronoun was used across the country by the late ME period, the English oblique *h*-pronouns continued to be used extensively alongside the *p*-type, even in the East Midlands.² Only in the Northeast and the far North is the replacement of OE *hīe*, *hira*, *him* (near) categorical. The differing degrees of diatopic diffusion and the phonetic variation indicated by attested spellings in <ei/ey, ai/ay, e, a, ee, aa, ea> also suggest that the source of the *p*-pronouns in Northern Middle English (NME) need not have been the same as in the East Midlands.

Doubts have been voiced in the literature as to the wholly Scandinavian origin of the ME ‘*p*-’ type pronouns. Baugh (1957:120) alludes to the possible influence of the OE demonstratives *þā*, *þāra*, *þām* in determining the development of the ME personal pronoun paradigm. Similarly, Gericke (1934:84) and Moore (1969:95) accept a Scandinavian origin for Present-Day English (PDE) *they* and *their* but highlight the possible implication of OE *þæm* in accounting for ME *þam*. Refunctionalisation and mixture in pronominal systems is common. In the Germanic languages the most notable example is precisely that of ON where the

2. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 7, *THEY*: ‘*th*-’ type, all variants; Item 8, *THEM*: ‘*h*-’ type, all variants; and Item 9, *THEIR*: ‘*h*-’ type, all variants.

paradigms for the third-person plural personal pronouns and demonstratives were identical, with the historical demonstratives *þeir*, *þeira*, *þeim* fulfilling both functions (Gordon 1957: §§109, 111). Nonetheless, given the apparent mid-front diphthongal vocalism of the ME ‘þei(-)’ type, the vocalism in OE *þā*, *þāra*, *þām* is widely viewed as an impediment to an origin in the OE demonstratives (Moore 1969: 95; Morse-Gagné 2003: 78).



Map 1. Old English and Middle English dialect areas (schematic and simplified)

The present study reopens the dossier on a possible native derivation for the NME ‘þ-’ type personal pronouns by discussing pronominal usage in the Old Northumbrian (ONbr) gloss to the Latin text of the *Lindisfarne Gospels* (London, British Library, MS Cotton Nero D.iv). The gloss was written in the mid-10th century in Chester-le-Street in the Northeast of England and constitutes the main surviving witness of late OE northern dialect.³ Descriptions of the ONbr pronominal system in the literature are generally restricted to providing paradigm summaries with no textual analysis of the distribution of forms (Ross 1937: 114–118; Brunner 1965: 260, 262; Morse-Gagné 2003: 90–91). Some qualitative analysis is offered

3. The remaining late ONbr material comprises a few short inscriptions, the extensively abbreviated late-10th-century glosses and additions to the *Durham Ritual* (Durham, Cathedral Library, MS A.iv.19), and the Northumbrian part of the *Rushworth Gospels* gloss (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. D.ii.19), known as *Rushworth*², which relies heavily on the Lindisfarne gloss. Eleventh-century northern material consists of a 13th-century copy of the Cumbrian *Gospatrie’s Writ* and writs issued by the post-Conquest bishops of Durham, Ranulf Flambard and Walcher.

by Gericke (1934: 84), who notes that OE *þāem* is used as a personal pronoun in *Rushworth*² but erroneously asserts that only *him* occurs in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss. Morse-Gagné's (2003: 157–158) consideration of the ONbr material is restricted to *Gospatric's Writ*, a short text, which only survives in a 13th-century copy and shows heavy West Saxon influence. Using data from the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, Janecka & Wojtys (2011) consider the correspondence between the ONbr and Latin demonstrative and personal pronoun equivalents but from the perspective of translation theory.

Previous studies of OE pronominal usage have also tended to examine the personal pronoun in isolation. For instance, despite recognising that “an all-embracing study of the pronouns” would include reference to the demonstrative pronouns, Howe's summary of pronoun usage in OE focuses solely on the traditional ‘personal pronoun’ paradigm (Howe 1996: 3–4, 130–136). Terminological matters are also of importance here. The term ‘demonstrative’ is generally confined to distal and proximal deictic expressions. The distal demonstratives of the OE *se/sēo/þæt* paradigm, to which *þā/þāra/þām* belonged, were used dependently as determiners but also independently as anaphoric pronouns.⁴ The traditional paradigmatic label of ‘demonstrative pronoun’ (cf. Campbell 1959: §708) obscures the fact that the so-called ‘demonstrative’ pronoun was often deictically non-contrastive in OE. In order to avoid the impression of assumptions concerning the morphosyntactic and semantic nature of the *se/sēo/þæt* paradigm, I will use the terms ‘*se*-paradigm’ or ‘*se*-forms’, rather than ‘demonstrative’, and ‘*þ*-forms’ and ‘*þ*-pronouns’ to refer specifically to *þā*, *þāra*, *þām*.

This paper traces the development of the northern personal pronoun paradigm from ONbr to Northern Middle English (NME) and outlines a native derivation for the NME *þ*-forms. The northern focus means that questions pertinent to the development of personal pronoun usage in the East Midlands are outside its scope.⁵ Based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis of ONbr and NME data, I explore the role played by OE *þā*, *þāra*, *þām* in shaping the development of the NME personal pronoun paradigm. I present evidence to suggest that a cross-paradigmatic merger in function in ONbr led to the replacement of the inherited OE *h*-pronouns by *þ*-pronouns. The merger is unsurprising in that comparable developments are found cross-linguistically in both Germanic and non-Germanic languages, and *þ*-forms were already used as anaphoric pronouns in OE. Based on the ONbr

4. This paper focuses on the distal demonstrative *se/sēo/þæt*. It does not discuss the proximal demonstrative *þes/þēos/þis*.

5. Topics such as the slow replacement of the inherited oblique *h*-pronouns in the East Midlands and a contrastive analysis of *þ*-forms in ONbr and Mercian and in Northern and Midlands ME are discussed in Cole (forthcoming).

evidence and the demonstrable morphosyntactic and phonological continuity exhibited by the ONbr and NME *þ*-forms, I posit that a native system, which employed reflexes of OE *þā, þāra, þām* as personal pronouns, was already in place by the early NME period. Given the phonological similarity of the Scandinavian cognate *þ*-forms, a mixed origin NME personal pronoun paradigm in which Scandinavian variants coexisted alongside native *þ*-pronouns cannot be ruled out, but I argue that NME third-person plural personal pronoun usage can be accounted for from a native perspective without recourse to external influence.

2. Pronoun usage in Old English

I first describe the *se*-paradigm and its functions in OE in general, as a background to its specific use in ONbr (for which see §3). Tables 1 and 2 summarise the *se*-paradigm and the third-person personal pronouns of OE, respectively, using West Saxon variants.

Table 1. *se*-paradigm in West Saxon, based on Campbell (1959: §708)

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
Nom.	<i>se</i>	<i>sēo</i>	<i>þæt</i>	<i>þā</i>
Acc.	<i>þone</i>	<i>þā</i>	<i>þæt</i>	<i>þā</i>
Gen.	<i>þæs</i>	<i>þære</i>	<i>þæs</i>	<i>þāra, þæra</i>
Dat.	<i>þæm, þām</i>	<i>þære</i>	<i>þæm, þām</i>	<i>þæm, þām</i>
Inst.	<i>þon, þȳ</i>		<i>þon, þȳ</i>	

Table 2. Third-person personal pronouns in West Saxon, based on Campbell (1959: §703)

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
Nom.	<i>he</i>	<i>hēo</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hīe, hī, hēo</i>
Acc.	<i>hine</i>	<i>hīe, hī</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hīe, hī, hēo</i>
Gen.	<i>his</i>	<i>hire</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>hīra, heora</i>
Dat.	<i>him</i>	<i>hire</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>him</i>

OE used the forms of the *se*-paradigm dependently as determiners, as illustrated in (1) and (2).⁶

6. Citations of OE texts are taken from the *Dictionary of Old English corpus* (DOEC: di Paolo Healey et al. 2009), as are the line references and short titles employed. Modern English translations are my own.

- (1) *and þa licham-an arison þæra halig-ra sawl-a*
 and NOM.PL bodies-NOM.PL rose GEN.PL holy-GEN.PL souls-GEN.PL
 “and the bodies of those holy souls rose up” (HomS 18,229)
- (2) *On þæm dag-um þe Titus Sempronius & Gratias Gaius*
 in DAT.PL days-DAT.PL that Titus Sempronius and Gratias Gaius
wæron consulas on Rome
 were consuls in Rome
 “In those days when Titus Sempronius and Gratias Gaius were consuls in Rome”
 (Or 4,7.97.1)

The independent functions of the *se*-paradigm included that of relative pronoun, as in (3), and antecedent to restrictive relative clauses, as in (4). In fact, *se*-forms were the only third-person pronoun type that could function as antecedents to relativial *þe* in OE. Thus *se*-forms fulfilled an anaphoric function barred to third-person personal pronouns; compare *we þe beteran beon* “we who will be better” (ÆLS (Maurice) 0029,119) and *þu þe witegan ofslīht* “you_{SG} who kill wisemen” (Mt (WSCp) 23:37) but *þa þe* “those/they who”, as illustrated in (4), not *hie þe.

- (3) *Englas he worhte. þa sind gastas. & nabbað nænne lichaman*
 angels he made NOM.PL are spirits and not have no body
 “He made angels who/they/those are spirits and have no body”
 (ÆCHom I,20,335.12)
- (4) *Ða sind godes bearn gecigede þe hine lufiað swiþor þonne*
 NOM.PL are God’s children called REL him love more than
þisne middanearð
 this world
 “Those/they who love him more than this world are called God’s children”
 (ÆCHom I,8,247.177)

Notably, for the hypothesis that the *se*-paradigm supplied the new personal pronouns in *þ*-, OE also used *se*-forms pronominally and anaphorically, as in (5)–(7).

- (5) *Ac to ði he heold þa dolchswaðu þæt he wolde mid þam*
 but to you-SG he kept the scars that he would with DAT.PL
þa twynigendan getrymman
 the doubtful confirm
 “But he kept the scars for you so that he would convince the doubtful with them”
 (ÆCHom I,16,310.98)
- (6) *ac ðæra is nu to lyt. ðe wile wel tæcan.*
 but GEN.PL is now too few that want well to teach
 “but of those [men who teach] there are too few now that want to teach well”
 (ÆCHom I (Pref) 176.108)

- (7) *þa wæron þær ðry cnihtas swiðe gelyfede on þone soðan god.*
 then were there three boys greatly believed in the true god
þa wæron gehatene Annanias. Azarias. Misahel. þa
 NOM.PL were called Annanias Azarias Misahel NOM.PL
gecwædon þæt hi noldon bogan...
 said that they not wanted to bow...
 “Then there were three young men there (who) greatly believed in the true
 god who/they/those were called Annanias Azarias Misahel. They said that they
 would not bow...”
 (*ÆCHom* II,1,9.230)

As the alternative translations illustrate, *þa* in (3) and the first occurrence of *þa* in (7) could be analysed as either relativisers, personal pronouns or demonstratives. Distinguishing the independent pronoun and relational functions of *se*-forms is problematic in a language so given to parenthesis and parataxis. The tendency to interpret clause-initial *se*-forms as necessarily relative may mask the extent to which *þ*-forms functioned as anaphoric pronouns in OE. The use of the OE *se*-forms as relatives is believed to have a paratactic origin whereby the *se* subject of an independent clause in paratactic relation with a preceding independent clause was reanalysed as a relative (Fischer et al. 2000: 55–56). It is questionable nonetheless to what extent initial *se* was necessarily always intended as a relative rather than as an anaphoric pronoun. Mitchell (1985: §§327, 2109–2121) highlights the ambiguity inherent in distinguishing between the *se*-form’s pronominal or relative function, “lacking as we do a knowledge of the intonation patterns” (Mitchell 1985: §2019). In general both interpretations are possible because a comparatively large number of *se*-‘relatives’ retain certain features of a paratactic independent clause, such as verb-second word order rather than verb-final word order (cf. Mitchell 1985: §2110). Even when *se*-‘relatives’ have non-nominative antecedents, they are often marked for nominative case proper to a main clause and only agree with their antecedent in gender and number, as (8) illustrates. Furthermore, the *se*-form often occurs after the connective *and*, as in (8), making it difficult to interpret as a relativiser (see Mitchell 1985: §2119).

- (8) *þa wæs he sona gehrinen lichomlicre untrymness-e*
 then was he immediately attacked by physical illness-DAT.SG.FEM
& seo dæg hwamlice weox & hefigade
 and NOM.SG.FEM daily increased and grew worse
 “Then he was immediately attacked by physical illness, and it/that increased
 and grew worse daily”
 (*Bede* 4,3.266.34)

Mitchell (1985: §2115) notes that the proclivity within modern scholarship to interpret *se* as relative is often influenced by the biased view that hypotaxis is superior to parataxis. That paratactic syntax may have been intended, and was certainly

considered acceptable, is borne out by alternative manuscript readings involving personal pronouns; (9) illustrates how the *se*-forms found in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* in MS. Julius E. vii. are sometimes replaced by personal pronouns in MS. Bodley 343, lf. 45 [B].

- (9) *Ba læg þær sum creopere lama fram cildhade se [B.he] wæs dæghwamlice geboren to þam beorhtan gete*
 “Then lay there a cripple lame from childhood he was daily carried to the beautiful gate”
 (ÆLS (Peter's Chair) 25)

Numerous studies account for the choice between personal pronouns and the *se*-paradigm forms in OE in terms of information structure (Traugott 1992; van Gelderen 2013; Los & van Kemenade 2017). It has been argued that, in line with similar discourse-driven patterns of pronoun distribution in Modern Dutch and German (Comrie 2000; Bosch et al. 2003; Bosch & Umbach 2007), personal pronouns and *se*-forms in OE fulfil different discourse functions; personal pronouns tend to express the discourse topic whereas *se*-forms indicate a change in topic. Thus in the widely-cited example in (10), the personal pronouns *hi* and *him* continue previous topics, but *se* marks topic switch to the angel.

- (10) *Hi habbað mid him awyriedne engel. mancynnes feond. and they have with them corrupt angel mankind's enemy and se hæfð andweald on...*
 NOM.SG has power over...
 “They have with them a corrupt angel, the enemy of mankind, and he has power over...”
 (ÆCHom II,38,283.113, from Traugott 1992: 171)

There is nevertheless a degree of indeterminacy involved in explaining the exact nature of pronoun distribution in OE (cf. Mitchell 1985: §§320–321; van Gelderen 2013: 203; Cole 2017a). The differing discourse functions are a tendency rather than a hard and fast rule; *se*-pronouns do not necessarily pick up new topics like demonstrative anaphors do in Modern Dutch and German. Like personal pronouns, they can also continue discourse-old referents, as the second occurrence of *þa* in (7) and *se* in (11) illustrate (Cole 2017a: 391).

- (11) *ac se soða scyppend næfð nan angin forðan þe he is him sylf but the true creator has not no beginning because he is himself angin na gesceapen ne geworht. Se geworhte ealle þing...*
 beginning neither created nor made. NOM.SG made all things...
 “but the true creator has no beginning because he himself is the beginning, neither created nor made. He made all things...”
 (ÆLS (Christmas), 0027.63–0028.66)

Often there appears to be little semantic difference between the different pronoun types as the contrast in (12) and (13) illustrates (Mitchell 1985: §321).

- (12) *þæt we us gegadrian to his halgan gelaðunge. & on ðære ures*
 that we us gather to his holy congregation and in DAT.SG our
geleafan gafol mid estfullum mode him agifan.
 faith's tribute with devout mind him pay
 "so that we may gather ourselves to his holy congregation and in it pay the
 tribute of our faith with devout mind to him" (ÆCHom I,2,192.70)
- (13) *Betleem is gereht hlaþhus & on hire wæs crist se*
 Bethlehem is interpreted breadhouse and in DAT.SG was Christ the
soða hlaþ acenned.
 true bread born
 "Bethlehem is interpreted Bread House and in it was Christ the true bread
 born" (ÆCHom I,2,192.80)

Certainly, the semantic and syntactic overlap in function between OE *þ*-pronouns and personal pronouns, outlined above, was to create the necessary circumstances for cross-paradigmatic merger.

3. Pronoun usage in Old Northumbrian

3.1 Preliminaries

The present study takes its data from the mid-10th-century ONbr interlinear gloss to the Latin text of the *Lindisfarne Gospels* (London, British Library, MS Cotton Nero D.iv). The Latin source text is a version of St. Jerome's Vulgate.⁷ Given the glossarial nature of the text under scrutiny, pronominal phenomena in the gloss are examined from the perspective of the relation between the original Latin text and the corresponding ONbr glosses. The datasets upon which the analyses are based comprise pronouns gleaned from all four gospels including the preface material.

There are not great discrepancies between the West Saxon and ONbr *se*-paradigms and third-person personal pronouns (Tables 3 and 4, respectively).

7. The study relied on Skeat's (1871–1887) edition, checked against the online facsimile of the manuscript available at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton_MS_Nero_D_IV. The abbreviations used to refer to the *Lindisfarne Gospels* are those employed by the DOEC and identify gospel, chapter and verse. Biblical translations translate the OE text, as opposed to the Latin, and are my own.

Orthographically the Lindisfarne glossator favours <ð> over <þ>.⁸ Early analogical extension of the ð- onset led to ONbr developing new nominative singular masculine and feminine forms: *ðe* and *ðīu/ðīo* alongside *se* and *sīo* (the ONbr variant of West Saxon *sēo*). Apocopated accusative singular masculine *ðon* and genitive/dative singular feminine *ðæ̅r* and *hir* frequently occur instead of *ðone*, *ðæ̅re* and *hire*.

Table 3. ONbr *se*-paradigm in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss, based on Cook (1894); Campbell (1959: §708)

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
Nom.	<i>se, ðe</i>	<i>ðīu, ðīo (ðȳ, ðȳu, sīo)</i>	<i>ðæt</i>	<i>ðā</i>
Acc.	<i>ðon(e), ðene</i>	<i>ðā (ðīu, ðīo, ðȳ)</i>	<i>ðæt</i>	<i>ðā</i>
Gen.	<i>ðæs</i>	<i>ðæ̅re (ðæ̅ra, ðāra)</i>	<i>ðæs</i>	<i>ðāra (ðæ̅ra, ðæ̅re)</i>
Dat.	<i>ðæ̅m</i>	<i>ðæ̅r (ðæ̅re)</i>	<i>ðæ̅m</i>	<i>ðæ̅m</i>
Inst.	<i>ðȳ, ðīo</i>		<i>ðȳ, ðīo</i>	

Table 4. ONbr third-person personal pronouns in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss, based on Cook (1894); Campbell (1959: §708)

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
Nom.	<i>he</i>	<i>hīu, hīo, hīa</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hīa (hēa, hīæ, hī, hie)</i>
Acc.	<i>hine</i>	<i>hīa (hīæ, hēa)</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hīa (hēa, hīæ, hī, hie)</i>
Gen.	<i>his</i>	<i>hire (hiræ)</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>hiora (heora, heara, hiara)</i>
Dat.	<i>him (hī)</i>	<i>hir (hire, hiræ)</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>him (hī)</i>

The unmarked praxis for Latin is not to use pronominal subjects. OE, unlike Latin, does not generally omit referential subjects (Hulk & van Kemenade 1995: 245; cf. van Gelderen 2000: 137). Hence, pronouns are added to the ONbr translation where they do not exist in the Latin original, e.g., the insertion of *hīa* in *þæt hīa on rode genæglede* “so that they might nail (him) on a cross” (L *ut crucifigerent* MtGl (Li) 27.31).⁹

The present examination focuses on the three most extensively represented Latin pronoun sets *is/ea/id*, *ille/illa/illud* and *ipse/ipsa/ipsium*, whose plural forms

8. The ONbr gloss in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* has traditionally been attributed to the scribe Aldred (Ross et al. 1960: 24). To what extent Aldred wrote the gloss singlehandedly, or was entirely responsible for its composition, is a contentious issue. See Brown (2003) and Cole (2016). I use the term ‘glossator’ in the singular throughout this paper for simplicity’s sake, in full awareness that the question of authorship is complex.

9. There is evidence to suggest that the OE dialects differed with regard to their licensing of referential null subjects. Walkden (2016) has demonstrated that referential third-person null subjects were a syntactic possibility in ONbr.

are summarised in Table 5. It also considers the translation of contexts involving the absence of an overt pronoun in Latin.

Table 5. Third-person plural pronouns in Latin, based on Panhuis (2009:35–37)

Nom.	<i>illi/illae/illa</i>	<i>eī/eaē/ea</i>	<i>ipsī/ipsae/ipsa</i>
Gen.	<i>illōrum/illārum/illōrum</i>	<i>eōrum/eārum/eōrum</i>	<i>ipsōrum/ipsārum/ipsōrum</i>
Dat.	<i>illis</i>	<i>eīs</i>	<i>ipsīs</i>
Acc.	<i>illos/illās/illa</i>	<i>eōs/eās/ea</i>	<i>ipsōs/ipsās/ipsa</i>
Abl	<i>illis</i>	<i>eīs</i>	<i>ipsīs</i>

A feature of the ONbr interlinear gloss is the glossator’s preference for double glosses; he often provides grammatical alternatives for a single Latin lemma separated by *l*, the abbreviation for Latin *vel* “or”, such as *hia saueð l sauas* “they sow” (L *seminantur* MkGl (Li) 4.18). The translation technique of double glossing provides us with an insight into the range of linguistic variants available in the scribe’s own productive use, making the gloss particularly interesting for an inquiry into variable usage. Double glosses involving personal pronouns and *p*-forms also occur, such as *soðlice hia l ða saegdon him* “indeed they said to him” (L *at illi dixerunt ei* MtGl (Li) 2.5) and *e behead him l ðæm* “and (he) commanded them” (L *et praecepit eis* MkGl (Li) 6.8). The double glossing technique also extends to third-person singular contexts with *se/ðe, ðone, ðæm, ðæs* occurring as alternatives to *he, hine, him* and *his*, respectively, and *ðiu, ða, ðære* as alternatives to *hīu, hīa, hire*, respectively.

When dealing with data taken from OE glosses of Latin manuscripts, it is essential to assess whether the linguistic phenomena observed could be due entirely, or in part, to the influence of the Latin original: in this case, whether the distribution of OE demonstratives in Lindisfarne is the result of a Latin priming effect. Firstly, the Lindisfarne gloss cannot be assumed to be a slavish translation of the Latin that tells us nothing about ONbr morphosyntax. A growing stream of studies has unearthed a number of (morpho)syntactic phenomena that demonstrate independence from the original Latin text.¹⁰ With regard to double glosses, it should be borne in mind that they provide acceptable grammatical alternatives. In other words, they always ‘make sense’, so *hia saueð l sauas*, cited above, comprises an ONbr third-person plural present-indicative form *sauas* alongside the more conservative *saueð*. Similarly, double glosses involving personal pronouns and *se*-forms reflect the overlap in

10. Studies which have demonstrated the validity of the gloss for the study of OE linguistic phenomena include Kroch & Taylor (1997) and Nagucka (1997) on word order; Nagucka (1997) and Ingham (2006) on negative concord; Nagucka (1997) on finite clause use; van Bergen (2008) on negative contraction; Cole (2012, 2014, 2015, 2017b) on verbal morphosyntax; Walkden (2016) on null subjects and Kotake (2006) on a number of syntactic phenomena including the subjunctive.

function of these items more broadly in OE. Even though influence from the Latin text appears to motivate scribal practice on occasion, it never leads to erroneous structure. Compare *cuoeð him* “(he) said to them” (L *dicit illis* MtGl (Li) 27.22) with *cuoeð to him 1 ðæm* (L *dixit ad eos* LkGl (Li) 8.21), where the inclusion of *to* appears to be triggered by *ad* in the Latin original. Such analytical constructions were perfectly acceptable in OE and occur in non-glossarial texts (see *HomS* 12.56, 85; *Exod* 8.1, 9.1 for examples of *cweð to him*). A truly faithful translation of the Latin *ad* + accusative construction, at the expense of OE grammatical cogency, never occurs, e.g., **cuoeð to hia 1 ða*.

Janecka & Wojtys’s (2011) survey of pronoun usage in the gloss also highlights the lack of systematic approach to the glossator’s translation of Latin pronouns. Latin third-person pronouns are rarely glossed consistently using the same OE equivalent, and the gloss frequently fails to convey the semantic and pragmatic distinctions of the different Latin pronouns (Janecka & Wojtys 2011: 91, 97). Example (14) is illustrative of the ambiguous reference that results from the OE gloss not retaining the emphatic/clarifying nuance of the demonstrative *ille* (Janecka & Wojtys 2011: 91). On other occasions, like (15), the glossator’s use of a *se*-form dissolves pragmatic ambiguity. The occurrence of double glosses involving both a *se*-form and a personal pronoun, as in (16), confirms what examples like (14) and (15) suggest, that *se*-forms and personal pronouns were used interchangeably in the glossator’s dialect – as they were to an extent in OE as a whole – and are not calques of the Latin text.

- (14) ONbr *ne mæhtun gebrenga hine him fore menigo*
 not able to bring ACC.SG.MAS DAT.SG.MAS for crowd
 L *non possent offere eum illi prae turba*
 “(they) were not able to bring him [the paralysed man] to him [Jesus]
 because of the crowd” (MkGl (Li) 2.4)
- (15) ONbr *þætte beleede hine ðæm*
 that betray ACC.SG.MAS DAT.PL.MAS
 L *ut proderet eum illis*
 “so that (he) might betray him to them/those” (MkGl (Li) 14.10)
- (16) ONbr *soð ða ilco honda gewurpon on hine*
 indeed those hands laid on ACC.SG.MAS
 L *at illi manus iniecerunt in eum*
 ONbr *∫ gehealdon ðene 1 hine*
 and held ACC.SG.MAS OR ACC.SG.MAS
 L *et tenuerunt eum*
 “indeed those (people) laid hands on him and held him”
 (MkGl (Li) 14.46)

3.2 Old Northumbrian data

3.2.1 Old Northumbrian nominative pronouns

Table 6 summarises the distribution of plural *hia* and independent *ða* in a sample of 234 third-person plural contexts in the gloss.¹¹

Table 6. Distribution of plural *hia* and *ða* in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss in relation to Latin forms ($N = 234$)

	Latin null subject	<i>illi</i>	<i>ipsi</i>	<i>ea</i>
<i>hia</i>	181	26	3	–
<i>ða</i>	–	6	4	1
<i>ða</i> † <i>hia</i>	–	3	3	–
<i>hia</i> † <i>ða</i>	–	4	1	–
<i>ða</i> <i>ilco</i> † <i>hia</i>	–	–	1	–
<i>hia</i> † <i>ða</i> <i>ilco</i>	–	1	–	–

The glossator favours the insertion of *hia* where no pronominal subject occurs in the Latin, but both *hia* and *ða* gloss Latin pronouns.¹² The personal pronoun *hia* glosses Latin *illi* (34x, including double glosses), as does *ða* (13x, including double glosses). Interestingly, 35 of the 40 instances of *illi* in the Latin text are preceded by *at*, rendered *soð* or *soðlice* by the glossator, as in *soð ða cuoedon* “indeed they said” (L *at illi dixerunt* LkGl (Li) 19.34). In the formula *at illi*, the demonstrative *illi* typically marks a change in topic (Panhuis 2009: 33). The choice of ONbr pronoun, however, does not appear to be discourse driven. All but one of the instances of

11. The data do not include contexts involving antecedents to the relativiser *þe* as *þ*-forms and personal pronouns did not alternate in this context, as noted above. The data include instances of the indefinite pronoun *ða ilco/ilca* “the same”.

12. There are 5 examples of *ða* at MtArgGl (Li) 4, MtGl (Li) 13.13, MtGl (Li) 26.8 and MkGl (Li) 4.12 where *ða* appears to have been inserted with an anaphoric function in contexts involving Latin present participles with no overt subject, of the type *ð ða geherdon ne heras hia † ne sciolon gehera ne oncnauas hia* “and they/those heard they neither hear/shall hear nor do they understand” (L *et audientes non audient neque intellegunt* MtGl (Li) 13.13). A comparison of *ða geseende uutedlice* “but they/those seeing” (L *uidentes autem* MtGl (Li) 26.8) and *uutedlice hia geherdon* “but they heard” (L *autem audientes* MtGl (Li) 12.24) suggests that *ða* is used pronominally as an alternative to *hia*. Compare also *ð ða miððy geherdon* “and when they/those heard” (L *et illi audientes* MkGl (Li) 16.11) where *ða* glosses the Latin pronoun *illi* and the usage found in the Mercian part of the *Rushworth Gospels* gloss (*Ru*¹) where both *ð hia geherende* “and they hearing” at MtGl (Ru) 22.22 and *ð þa geherende* “and they/those hearing” at MtGl (Ru) 27.47 gloss L *et audientes*. Nevertheless, these tokens were not included in Table 6, as an adverb rather than pronoun reading cannot be ruled out.

illi are used emphatically or to mark topic switch, and yet the ONbr translations alternate arbitrarily between *hia* and *ða*, as (17) and (18) illustrate.

- (17) ONbr *cuom uutetlice ðe hælend in dalum [caesareae philippi] & gefrasade ðegnas his cuoð huelcne cueðas menn sie sunu monnes soð hia cuedon oðero [iohannen baptistam] oðero...*
 L *Unenit autem iesus in partes caesareae philippi et interrogabat discipulos suos dicens quem dicunt homines esse filium hominis at illi dixerunt alii iohannen baptistam alii...*
 “indeed the Saviour came into the regions of Cesarea Philippi and asked his disciples, said: Who do men say is the Son of man? Indeed they said: Some John the Baptist, some...” (MtGl (Li) 16.13–14)
- (18) ONbr *& cuoð to him huæt wallað gie me sealla & ic iuh hine sello soð ða gesetton him ðrittih scillinga*
 L *et ait illis quid uultis mihi dare et ego uobis eum tradam at illi constituerunt ei triginta argenteos*
 “and (he) said to them: What do you want to give me and I will give him to you. Indeed they set for him thirty shillings” (MtGl (Li) 26.15)

Glosses for Latin *ipsi* involve both *hia* and *ða* (8x each, including the forms found in double glosses). Once again, independent *ipsi* in the Latin text is used either emphatically or to indicate a topic shift (Hertzenberg 2011: 178), but the glossator employs both *ða* and *hia*, as in (19) and (20).

- (19) ONbr *& cuoð to him huæd is þætte mec gie sohton ... & ða ne oncne aun word þætte sprecend wæs to him*
 L *et ait ad illos quid est quod me quaerebatis ... et ipsi non intellexerunt uerbum quod locutus est ad illos*
 “and he said to them: How is it that you looked for me? ... And they did not understand a word that was spoken to them”
 (LkGl (Li) 2.49–50)
- (20) ONbr *& miððy wæs se stefn gemoetad wæs se hælend he ana & hia suigdon*
 L *et dum fieret uox inuentus est iesus solus et ipsi tacuerunt*
 “and when the voice was, the Saviour, he alone, was found and they were silent”
 (LkGl (Li) 9.36)

The occurrence of double glosses involving *hia* and *ða*, as in (21) and (22), further substantiates the view that the pronouns could be used interchangeably.

- (21) ONbr *ƿ aworden wæs miððy gebloedsade him eftfoerde from him ƿ wæs gefered in heofnum ƿ ða ƿ hia geworðadon eftfærendo woeron in hierusalem mið glædnisse miclo*
 L *et factum est dum benediceret illis recessit ab eis et ferebatur in caelum et ipsi adorantes regressi sunt in hierusalem cum gaudio magno*
 “and it happened when he blessed them, he departed from them and was taken to heaven and they worshipped were returning into Jerusalem with great gladness” (LkGl (Li) 24.51–52)
- (22) ONbr *ƿ gesomnade alle ða aldormenn biscopa ƿ mesapreasta ƿ uðuutta ðæs folces georne gefraignade ƿ geascade ƿ gefrasade from him huer crist accenned were soðlice hia ƿ ða saegdon him [in bethleem iudeae]*
 L *et congregans omnes principes sacerdotum et scribas populi sciscitabatur ab eis ubi christus nasceretur. At illi dixerunt ei in bethleem iudeae*
 “and he got together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people; he eagerly asked of them where Christ would be born. Indeed they said to him in Bethlehem of Judea” (MtGl (Li) 2.4–5)

Example (23) illustrates that *ða* also occurs as a translation for the Latin personal pronoun *ea*.

- (23) ONbr *ða ðe uutedlice ofcymes from muð of hearte utgaas ƿ ða widlas ðone monno*
 L *quae autem procedunt de ore de corde exeunt et ea coincinant hominem*
 “but those (things) that come from the mouth come out of the heart and they pollute the man” (MtGl (Li) 15.18)

Studies that have analysed the order of the multiple glosses in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* posit that double glossing serves to provide two distinct alternatives, with the first item comprising a more literal translation that reflects the grammatical properties of the Latin equivalent and the second item a more interpretive translation (Nagucka 1997: 180; Kotake 2006: 47; Bolze 2016: 297). This analysis does not hold, however, in the case of doublets involving *ða* and *hia*. The figures in Table 6 indicate a slight preference for *ða* to precede *hia* in double glosses translating the demonstrative pronoun *ipsi*, but no such pattern is found in the double glosses to *illi*.

There would appear to be considerable overlap in the function of the different pronoun types in the glossator’s dialect. The co-occurrence of *hia* and *ða* in double glosses and the anaphoric use of both pronoun types in identical contexts suggests that either pronoun could be employed without affecting the semantics of the sentence. Nor is the distribution of *þ*-forms and personal pronouns discourse driven in ONbr, despite the potential priming effect Latin could have had in this respect. All this points to the incipient cross-paradigmatic merger in function of

the demonstrative and personal pronouns whereby the use of *p*-forms as personal pronouns lacking deictic force becomes increasingly common. The functional distribution of the ONbr *p*-forms is in line with Diessel's (1999:21) observation that anaphoric demonstrative pronouns lose their ability to track "emphatic, contrastive and unexpected discourse topics" as they grammaticalise, and their use is extended to all topics. There are other commonalities in the behaviour of nominative *se*-pronouns and personal pronouns that further highlight the pronouns' morpho-syntactic similarity; *se*-pronoun and personal pronoun subjects in ONbr behave similarly to each other, and contrastively to all other subject types, in favouring the present-tense *-s* marker (e.g., *doas*) over the inherited *-ð* suffix (e.g., *doað*) (Cole 2014: 108–112, 2017b: 8–9).

Van Gelderen (2013) posits that the transition between OE and ME witnesses the anaphoric strengthening of the personal pronoun through external change, i.e., contact, via the borrowing of new third-person pronouns. I argue that the anaphoric strengthening of the personal pronoun takes place but is achieved through internal change. Working from a cross-linguistic perspective, Howe (1996: 101) notes that "[t]he origin of demonstrative pronouns in personal pronoun use seems often to be as strong forms, and perhaps it is best to view the demonstrative and personal pronouns as stronger and weaker third-person forms respectively A demonstrative can be said to have a stronger reference than a corresponding personal pronoun, and often also a stronger phonetic form". The clitic properties of personal pronouns (van Kemenade 1987; Pintzuk 1991) also fit with reduced referentiality (van Gelderen 2013: 200). There is evidence to suggest that pronouns were being reanalysed as subject-agreement markers in ONbr.¹³ Subject doubling in which a pronoun subject is inserted even when a nominative pronoun or full NP subject already exists in the same clause, as in (24)–(26), is common in the gloss.

- (24) ONbr *forhwon ðegn-as iohannis & [pharisaeorum]*
 why disciples-NOM.PL of John and of Pharisees
 L *quare discipuli iohannis et pharisaeorum*
 ONbr *hia=fæst-að*
 they-NOM.PL=fast-3PL
 L *ieiunant*
 "Why do John's and the Pharisees' disciples fast?" (MkGl (Li) 2.18)

13. See Givón (1976) on the historical development of anaphoric pronouns into agreement markers.

Tables 7–9 provide quantitative data on the distribution of ONbr dative and accusative pronouns in relation to the Latin forms that they gloss.

Table 7. Old Northumbrian dative and accusative pronouns in relation to Latin *illis*, *illos/illas/illa* in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss

	DAT/ABL.PL <i>illis</i>	ACC.PL <i>illos/illas/illa</i>	PREP + ACC.PL <i>illos/illas/illa</i>
<i>hia</i>	1/181 (0.5%)	24/42 (57%)	–
<i>him</i>	97/181 (54%)	–	19/41 (46.3%)
<i>ðæm</i>	60/181 (33%)	2/42 (4.7%)	13/41 (31.7%)
<i>ðæm † him</i>	14/181 (7.7%)	–	6/41 (14.7%)
<i>him † ðæm</i>	5/181 (2.8%)	–	–
<i>ða</i>	–	5/42 (12%)	–
<i>ða ilca/ilco</i>	–	7/42 (17%)	1/41 (2.4%)
<i>hia † ða</i>	–	1/42 (2.3%)	–
<i>ða ilca † hia</i>	–	2/42 (4.7%)	–
<i>ðæm ilcom</i>	4/181 (2%)	1/42 (2.3%)	2/41 (4.9%)

Table 8. Old Northumbrian dative and accusative pronouns in relation to Latin *ipsis*, *ipsos/ipsas/ipsa* in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss

	DAT/ABL.PL <i>ipsis</i>	ACC.PL <i>ipsos/ipsas/ipsa</i>	PREP + ACC.PL <i>ipsos/ipsas/ipsa</i>
<i>him</i>	–	–	5/8
<i>ðæm</i>	13/16	–	1/8
<i>him † ðæm</i>	2/16	–	2/8
<i>ðæm † him</i>	1/16	–	–
<i>ða ilca/ilco</i>	–	1/3	–
<i>ða ilco † hia</i>	–	1/3	–
<i>hia</i>	–	1/3	–

The ONbr pronouns used to gloss the Latin dative plural *illis* indicate an overall preference for *him* at 58% ($N = 116/200$) but also a high rate of *ðæm* at 39.5% ($N = 79/200$).¹⁴ The case marking of the ONbr pronouns employed to translate Latin accusatives preceded by a preposition is dictated by syntactic structure; prepositions generally require dative complements in OE. Once again, *ðæm* at 40.4% ($N = 19/47$) competes as an object pronoun with the personal pronoun *him* at 53% ($N = 25/47$). The figures in Table 8 are too low to be conclusive, but they indicate that both *ðæm* and *him* occur as glosses to the Latin dative plural *ipsis* and when

14. In the overall totals here, double glosses were interpreted as involving two contexts.

Table 9. Old Northumbrian dative and accusative pronouns in relation to Latin *eis, eos/eas/ea* in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss

	DAT/ABL.PL <i>eis</i>	ACC.PL <i>eos/eas/ea</i>	PREP + ACC.PL <i>eos/eas/ea</i>
<i>hia</i>	2/250 (0.8%)	5/24 (20.8%)	1/22 (4.5%) ¹⁵
<i>him</i>	193/250 (77.2%)	–	11/22 (50%)
<i>ðæm</i>	30/250 (12%)	–	6/22 (27.3%)
<i>him † ðæm</i>	17/250 (6.8%)	–	3/22 (13.7%)
<i>ðæm † him</i>	8/250 (3.2%)	–	1/22 (4.5%)
<i>ða</i>	–	11/24 (45.8%)	–
<i>ða ilca/ilco</i>	–	6/24 (25%)	–
<i>hia † ða (ilco)</i>	–	2/24 (8.4%)	–

ipso/ipsas/ipsa function as the complements of a preposition. ONbr glosses to the Latin pronoun *eis* largely involve *him* ($N = 218/275$, 79%), but *ðæm* is also used at a rate that is far from dismissible ($N = 55/275$, 20%). When *eos/eas/ea* function as the complement of a preposition in Latin, *him* occurs as a translation at 58% ($N = 15/26$) and *ðæm* at 38% ($N = 10/26$).

The distribution of *ðæm* and *him* in the gloss suggests that the pronouns were used interchangeably as dative personal pronouns in ONbr, a view corroborated by the co-occurrence of both variants in double glosses. The use of both *ða* and *hia* to gloss Latin accusatives also highlights the interchangeable nature of the different ONbr pronoun forms, although the accusative forms were to disappear during the transition from OE to ME as English lost its case distinctions. The high rate of interchangeability between *ðæm* and *him* indicates that the cross-paradigmatic merger in function was at an advanced stage in the dative. There were certain mechanisms at work which would have advanced such a merger. The syntactic requirement whereby prepositions generally triggered dative complements would have interacted with the analyticalisation of the language and the already well-advanced breakdown of the inflectional system in ONbr to further propagate the spread of dative pronouns at the expense of other case forms. For example, instead of the expected partitive genitive *an hiora* or *an þara* “one of them/those”, partitive *of* + dative phrases, such as *an of ðæm*, start to appear in late OE as glosses to Latin *unus ex eis/illis* but also in non-glossarial texts (e.g., *an of þam ÆLS* (Sebastian) 317). Furthermore, contexts comprising PREPOSITION + PRONOUN OBJECT appear to be a favouring environment for *ðæm*. The statistically significant difference between *him*

15. The use of the accusative pronoun is justified in this particular context because the accusative marks traversal of space in *ðene sende to hia † him* “(he) sent him to them” (L *illum misit ad eos* MkG1 (Li) 12.6).

and *ðæm* as translations of *illis* (χ^2 13.699, $p < 0.001$) and *eis* (χ^2 193.225, $p < 0.001$) does not hold when *him* and *ðæm* function as the complements of a preposition (PREP + *illos/illas/illa* χ^2 1.538, $p = 0.214$; PREP + *eos/eas/ea* χ^2 1.926, $p = 0.165$). This suggests that the increasingly analytic structure of English between the OE and ME periods promoted the spread of *ðæm* as a personal pronoun.

3.2.3 Old Northumbrian genitive pronouns

Before surveying the plural genitive form *þara* in ONbr, it is necessary to briefly discuss the distribution of genitive pronouns and possessives in OE more broadly. Genitive pronouns in OE are traditionally distinguished from possessive adjectives/pronouns. OE used genitive pronouns in partitive genitive constructions, as in *ælc hira* ‘each of them’ (CP 34.233.2) or as the complements of prepositions and verbs that governed genitive case, e.g., *efne þa se hælend beseah wið hire* ‘likewise then the Saviour looked towards them’ (ÆCHom I,33,459.8). Partitive genitives involve a relationship of complementation rather than modification, so genitive pronouns rather than possessive forms are used, i.e., uninflected genitive forms rather than agreeing forms. Allen (2008: 85) provides the following examples to illustrate the use of the uninflected genitive *ure* in a partitive (30) instead of the agreeing form *urum*, which would indicate a relation of modification (31):

(30) *Gif ure ænig-um sum ungelimp becume*
 if 1PL.GEN any-DAT.PL some mishap comes
 ‘If a mishap befalls any of us’ (ÆCHom II,35,267.234)

(31) *for ur-um synn-um*
 for OUR-DAT.PL sin-DAT.PL
 ‘for our sins’ (ÆCHom II,5,50.265)

First- and second-person genitive pronouns in OE served as the basis for the corresponding ‘possessive adjectives’, which were inflected to agree in case, number and gender with the noun that they modified, as in (31). Third-person forms (*his*, *hira*/*heora* etc.) were not inflected to agree with the possessum, but the genitive forms of the third-person pronouns were used in the same positions as the inflected forms of the first- and second-person possessive pronouns, as illustrated in (32). I follow Allen (2008) in referring to the pronouns that fit into this attributive position as ‘possessives’.

(32) *for his synn-um*
 for his sin-DAT.PL
 ‘for his sins’ (ÆCHom II,12,2,125.517, taken from Allen 2008: 67)

OE *hira* and *þara* did not alternate as possessive pronouns in attributive position, i.e., *heora halga bisceop* ‘their holy bishop’ but not **þara halga bisceop*. The

distribution of *para* in ONbr, however, seems to record the reanalysis of the genitive pronoun as a possessive. In the vast majority of cases, the Latin genitive forms *illorum*, *eorum*, *ipsorum* are rendered *hiora* in the ONbr glosses, but in nine instances double glosses involving *hiora* *ǫ* *ðara* also occur, of the type illustrated by (33) and (34), in which the demonstrative appears to be used attributively.¹⁶

- (33) ONbr *ǫ* *heonu gebrohtun him eorðcrypel liccende in bere ǫ gesaeh ðe hælend geleafa hiora ǫ ðara cueð ðaem eorðcrypple getriuwue ǫ gelefla sunu*
 L *et ecce offerebant ei paralyticum iacentem in lecto et uidens iesus fidem illorum dixit paralitico confide fili*
 “and behold they brought to him a paralysed man lying in a bed and the Saviour saw their faith, said to the paralysed man: Lo trust son!”
 (MtGl (Li) 9.2)
- (34) ONbr *ǫ untynde weron ego hiora ǫ ðara ǫ bebead ǫ beboden wæs him ǫ ðæm ðe hælend cueð geseað þætte nan nyte*
 L *et aperti sunt oculi illorum et comminatus est illis iesus dicens uidete ne quis sciat*
 “and opened were their eyes and the Saviour commanded them, said: See that no one knows”
 (MtGl (Li) 9.30)

Genitive demonstratives could be used independently in OE without an expressed head, as illustrated above in (6), so a further possible interpretation is that *ðara* in these double glosses was intended as an independently-used demonstrative. Thus in (33), *gesaeh ðe hælend geleafa hiora ǫ ðara* could translate as “the Saviour saw the faith of those (men)”.

Given the evident tendency towards pronominal paradigmatic merger in ONbr, however, I propose that processes in the history of Germanic may also help account for the usage recorded in the gloss. The third-person OE pronouns *he* “he” and *hie* “they” were themselves ultimately descended from a demonstrative form. Proto-Germanic possessed a general anaphoric pronoun that was used as a third-person personal pronoun but was in fact an old demonstrative “with lessened deictic force” (Prokosch 1939: §94). The forms of this deictic were used as anaphoric pronouns in the various Germanic languages and account for OE *he*, OS *he*, ON *hann* and Old High German *er*. The genitive forms of the old deictic were used without further inflection as possessive forms (Prokosch 1939: §94; Allen 2008: 40).

The ONbr data suggest a parallel conflation between *h*- and *þ*-forms with *para* slotting into attributive position. Partitive genitives involving both *hira* and

16. In addition to the instances cited here, double glosses of this nature also occur at MtGl (Li) 13.58, 10.14, MkGl (Li) 2.5, 10.14, 14.40, 14.59 and LkGl (Li) 1.16.

independent *þara* occurred in OE, which provided a precedent for *þara* to alternate with *hira*, e.g., *an þara bið genumen* “one of them/those will be taken” (*ÆHom* 19, 86) and *ē an heora sloh hine* “and one of them killed him” (*ChronF* (Baker), 1012.8). Given the use of nominative and dative *þ*-forms as personal pronouns in ONbr and the precedent in the language for *þara* to alternate with *hira*, it is not implausible that *þara* would have replaced *hira* as a possessive. Furthermore, similarly to nominative forms, genitive *se*-forms also alternated with possessive personal pronouns in clause-initial position, as in (35) and (36), which would have promoted the reanalysis of clause-initial *þara* as a possessive personal pronoun in contexts like (37).

- (35) *Se gereua þa hine betæhte his gingran. þæs nama*
 the officer then him entrusted his junior GEN.SG name
wæs ypolitus
 was Hippolytus
 “The officer then entrusted him to his junior whose name was Hippolytus”
 (*ÆCHom* I,29,421.81)

- (36) *He cwæð þæt he cuðe sumne man on romebyrig. his nama*
 he said that he knew some man in Rome GEN.SG name
wæs Seruulus
 was Seruulus
 “He said that he knew a certain man in Rome his name was Seruulus”
 (*ÆCHom* II,6,58.168)

- (37) *Eugenia þa mycclum wearð onbryrd and mid wope gespræc*
 eugenia then greatly became stirred and with weeping spoke
hire twægen cnihtas þære naman wæron Protus et Iacinctus
 her two servants GEN.PL names were Protus and Iacinctus
 “Eugenia then was greatly stirred and with weeping spoke to her two servants
 whose names were Protus and Jacinctus”
 (*ÆLS* (Eugenia), 41)

In line with the genitive form of the third-person personal pronouns (e.g., *hira/heora*), OE *þara* supplies the genitive case required of a possessive modifier and denotes the possessor but does not supply the agreement information required of a modifier of a head noun, thus facilitating the interchangeability of the forms.

3.3 Discussion thus far

The Lindisfarne gloss provides evidence of pronominal paradigmatic merger in ONbr: *þā* and *þæm* function as morphosyntactic and semantic equivalents to the OE personal pronouns in *h*-, and there are indications of the incipient use of *þāra* as a possessive. Crucially, there is no evidence of the direct transfer of ON

morphological material – only OE forms occur. Nor is it necessary to appeal to structural rather than morphological borrowing from ON to explain pronominal usage in ONbr (cf. Howe 1996: 158), given that the occurrence of *p*-forms in personal pronoun use was a feature of OE itself. The personal pronoun function of *p*-forms was simply more advanced in ONbr.¹⁷ Furthermore, as previously noted, the occurrence of demonstratives in personal pronoun use is a common diachronic cross-linguistic phenomenon and warns against too readily attributing linguistic change to foreign influence rather than a parallel independent development (see Howe 1996: 101, 155 for examples in the Germanic languages).

My stance is that a Northern English system already reliant on native *p*-forms fulfilling the function of personal pronouns was in place by late ONbr/early NME. One possible scenario is that the ONbr paradigmatic pronominal merger paved the way for the transposition of the (phonologically similar) ON pronoun forms. This view ties in with Serjeantson's (1936: 69) suggestion that Scandinavian pronoun transfer occurred late, between 1016 and 1150, i.e., only when the merger that facilitated the mapping of ON forms onto the English system was well established in the recipient language. This would help explain why pronoun transfer from one language to another – which is not generally considered likely – was possible. It also fits with ME developments in that it explains the occurrence of both (native) monophthongal and (Scandinavian) diphthongal forms in ME. From this perspective, the use of ONbr *p*-forms as personal pronouns might be the result of “interlingual identification” (Weinreich 1968 [1953]), whereby structural similarities between genetically-related languages lead to a high degree of interlingual identification of forms or phonetic word shapes and thus facilitate linguistic influence between those systems. Law (2014) explores the difficulty in distinguishing contact-induced similarity from inherited similarity but also the effect that inherited similarity can have on the outcomes of language contact, i.e., “contact-induced language drift”, which leads to “even greater linguistic similarity through convergence, and that depends on preexisting shared grammatical structures” (Law 2014: 155, 157). The hypothesis that pronoun use in the North relied on a mixed source paradigm comprising ON and English *p*-forms is one possible explanation, but in what follows, I show that ONbr and NME *p*-forms exhibit morphosyntactic and phonological continuity rather than a break in the system, and I posit that NME third-person plural personal pronoun usage can be accounted for from a native perspective without appeal to external influence.

17. That the personal pronoun function of *p*-forms was more advanced in ONbr appears to be substantiated by the absence of (unambiguous) instances of pronominal *ða* in the Mercian Gospel gloss *Ru*¹ compared to the 12 instances found in the corresponding section of the *Lindisfarne Gospels* gloss. See Cole (forthcoming).

4. Third-person plural pronouns in Northern Middle English

4.1 Morphosyntactic continuity

The NME *p*-forms were far more varied in function and their vocalisms more varied in form than the handbooks of the history of English would suggest. The distribution of the Scandinavian third-person plural subject pronoun *þe33* in the late-12th-century East Midlands text the *Ormulum* indicates that it was only adopted as a personal pronoun. *A linguistic atlas of early Middle English 1150–1325* (LAEME: Laing 2013) does not attest the use of *þe33* as a determiner, an independent demonstrative or as an antecedent to a relative clause; native *þa* is used in these contexts (see also Morse-Gagné 2003: 164). In stark contrast to the restrictive distribution of Scandinavian *þe33* in the *Ormulum*, the functions of *p*-forms in NME exhibit considerable morphosyntactic continuity with ONbr.

The results of a quantitative survey of northern texts based on LAEME (see the Appendix at the end of this article) indicate that NME *þai(e)/þay* and *þa(a)* function as personal pronouns, as illustrated in (38)–(40), and as antecedents to relative clauses, as in (41) and (42). The demonstrative uses of *þai* include the resumptive function, as illustrated in (43), and *þai* is also used contrastively in the sense of “those other ones”, as in (44), i.e., demonstratively rather than pronominally, and as a determiner, as in (45). In other words, the NME *p*-forms retain their ONbr functions.

- (38) *þan fell þai depe or lesse or mare*
 “then fell they deep either less or more”
 (Cotton, Vespasian A.iii, hand A, *Cursor Mundi* etc.)
- (39) *þa sari lokid ai sua forswonkin*
 “they sorry looked always so troubled” (Edinburgh, Royal College
 of Physicians, *Cursor Mundi*, hand A) [Morris (1878) prints *þai* 24861]
- (40) *God hauis his auen childir mad þa won wit him wit þaim he wonis*
 “God has made his own children they/who live with him he lives with them”
 (Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians, *Cursor Mundi*, hand A)
- (41) *bot þai þat left witoten wite*
 “but those/they that remained without punishment”
 (Cotton, Vespasian A.iii, hand A, *Cursor Mundi* etc.)
- (42) *þa þat forwiþ hauid knawin him*
 “those/they that forthwith had known him”
 (Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians, *Cursor Mundi*, hand C)

- (43) *qua menskes hir þai may be bald*
 “whoever honours her they may be heartened”
 (Cotton, Vespasian A.iii, hand A, *Cursor Mundi* etc.)
- (44) *þir sal be liht als fouel to flei þai sal be deille wit wa to drei*
 “These shall be light as fowls to fly, those shall be foolish with woe to endure”
 (Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians, *Cursor Mundi*, hand A)
- (45) *stil ai stod þai wandes thre fra adam tim until noe*
 “silent always stood the three rods from Adam’s time until now” [cf. *þaa þat þa wonders werkes wrought* “they/those that the wonderous works made”]
 (Cotton, Vespasian A.iii, hand A, *Cursor Mundi* etc.)

A diphthongal *þ*-form is also attested in ME outside the heavily Scandinavianised areas; *þai(e)* is recorded in the Southwest as a personal pronoun, independent demonstrative, plural determiner and antecedent to a relative clause (Morse-Gagné 2003: 231). Southwest ME *þai(e)* seems most likely to derive from late West Saxon *þæge/þage*.¹⁸ The *DOEC* records 19 instances of *þæge* and 4 instances of *þage* in late West Saxon.¹⁹ Kluge (1899: 937) initiated a tendency to equate *þæge* with Scandinavian *þei(r)* (cf. Förster 1941: 274f., 278f., 1942; Campbell 1959: §713; Hogg 1992: 146; Hogg & Fulk 2011: §5.13). A Scandinavian origin is refutable on chronological grounds given that the timing of *þæge/þage* in southwestern England is too early to be the result of Scandinavian influence (Morse-Gagné 2003: 220). In her reassessment of terms for which a Norse derivation has traditionally been claimed, Pons-Sanz (2013: 397–398) also suggests that *þæge* is likely to be native in origin. The occurrence of *þæge* in the Southwest is seen by Moore et al. (1935: 19) as evidence of a mixed origin for PDE *they*, with *they* originating from OE *þæge* in the South and from ON *þei(r)* in the North. As will be seen, a case can be made for considering both Southwest ME *þai(e)* and NME *þai* reflexes of OE *þā*.

There are morphosyntactic grounds for rejecting a Scandinavian origin for *þæge/þage*. The morphosyntactic functions of late West Saxon *þæge/þage* and Southwest ME *þai(e)* indicate that the forms stem from the OE demonstrative *þā*. In the West Saxon texts, *þæge/þage* function as plural personal pronouns, as illustrated

18. In line with traditional Germanic philology the symbol <ʒ> (the development from OE <ǰ> ‘insular g’) represents /j/ in this context.

19. There is a further instance at Jn (WSCp) 4.40, which Skeat’s (1871–1887) edition, upon which the *DOEC* relies, erroneously corrects to *þa*. The marginal occurrence of *þæge/þage* in late West Saxon cannot be denied. The form’s paucity in writing, however, may reflect its status as a local colloquial variant that was not deemed literary enough for the conservative West Saxon written standard but was widespread in speech and inevitably slipped into writing occasionally (Morse-Gagné 2003: 213–232).

in (46) and (47), but they also fulfil all the independent and dependent functions of OE *þā* including that of a feminine accusative singular form. Similarly, in Southwest ME, *þai(e)* functions as a plural determiner, antecedent to a relative clause and personal pronoun. Morse-Gagné notes that *þai(e)* fulfils the same range of functions as *þa/þeo* (< OE *þā*) in Southwest ME (see Morse-Gagné 2003: 217–219, 231 for detailed discussion).

(46) *Saga me hwæt hatton þæge*

“Tell me what were they called?” (*Sol* I, 9.1, cited by Morse-Gagné 2003: 218)

(47) *Þis sind eac þa reliquias þæra haligra confessorum þæt is Cristes andettera þæge forsegon þas swicolan woruld*

“This is/are also the remains of those holy confessors that is Christ’s acknowledged they/who renounced his false world” (*Rec* 10.8 (Förster), 144,

taken from Förster (1941: 278), cited by Morse-Gagné 2003: 218)

OE disyllabic *þæge* and *þage* involved a vowel + glide sequence plus final *-e* that became ME *þai(e)* following the common pattern of glide vocalisation and diphthongal formation (see Minkova 2014: 205, 206). Accounting for the final *-e* is problematic from either a native or Scandinavian perspective. Analogy with plural pronouns and adjectives like *sume*, *ealle*, *swylce* has been invoked by way of an explanation (*OED3* *thaie/thaye*, pron. and adj.). West Saxon *þæge*, however, is not invariably plural and also occurs as a feminine accusative singular form (Morse-Gagné 2003: 216). Final unetymological *-e* is at any rate a common phenomenon judging by the regular occurrence of ME forms of the type *þaye/þaie/þeyel/þie/þye*.

A weightier problem for a native derivation for *þæge* is the formal difficulty in accounting for [æ] as a derivation of OE *ā*, particularly as ON words with <ei> appear in ME with <æ3> (Björkman 1900: 37). Putting aside the fact that *þage* rather than *þæge* might have been the source for Southwest ME *þai(e)*, a fronted, raised reflex of OE *ā* is recorded for OE and includes instances of *þæ* (and *þe*) instead of *þa*, e.g., *and eac þæ gebroþu Petrus and Paulus* “and also the brothers Peter and Paul” (MCharm 11,0004.13) and *þa ðæ gecomon þe embe þa endlyftan tide...* “when they who had come about the eleventh hour...” (Mt (WSCp) 20.9). Furthermore, the fronted raised articulation of OE *ā* suggested by *þæge* and *þæ* is in line with the instances of a fronted raised reflex for OE *ā* identified by Stenbrenden (2016: 47–48, 61). Contrary to expectations, the earliest <ae, æ, ai/ay, e, ea, eo, ei/ey> spellings do not occur in the North but in the West, Central and Southeast Midlands in the latter half of the 12th century where Scandinavian etymology cannot be invoked as an explanation (Stenbrenden 2016: 47–48). Stenbrenden (2016: 48) finds no correlation between the fronting and raising of OE *ā* and vowel reduction in weak syllables but notes (relevantly for the present discussion) that spellings indicative of a fronted

raised articulation are especially common in high-frequency (grammatical) items. Dance (2003: 289–298) has suggested that the unexpected diphthongal vocalism in West Saxon *þæge* might be the result of the “diphthongization of a heavily stressed vowel in particularly emphatic circumstances”, but recovering the intonation patterns of ME, even in verse, is problematic. Diphthongal variants of long monophthongal vocalisms are in any case a common phenomenon, as we shall see.

The entry on Personal Pronoun and Demonstrative Merger (PPDM) in the *Corpus of narrative etymologies* (CoNE: Lass et al. 2013) states that *þai*, *þay*, *þaie* appear for both THEY and THOSE in northern texts in LAEME. The northern texts in LAEME “seem to show early evidence of a general tendency observable in later NME for the plural demonstrative and personal pronoun to fall together” (CoNE, PPDM; Lass et al. 2013). In Middle Scots *þai* was also used as a determiner (Morse-Gagné 2003: 216, fn. 81), marking a tendency that continues to characterise modern varieties of Scots in which phonologically merged *thae* is both a personal pronoun and determiner (CoNE, PPDM; Lass et al. 2013). CoNE also cites the occurrence of *þai(e)* for THOSE in the southwestern ME dialects as illustrative of PPDM.²⁰ Based on the premise that *þay/þai(e)* is a loanword, CoNE views its encroachment into THOSE contexts as an innovation (Lass et al. 2013). From the perspective of the hypothesis that Southwest ME *þai(e)* derives from OE *þā* via late West Saxon *þæge/þage*, its use as a determiner, demonstrative and personal pronoun constitutes a retention of its OE functions rather than an innovation. Similarly, the distribution of *þ*-forms in NME points to morphosyntactic continuity between the ONbr and NME systems in which *þ*-forms functioned not only as anaphoric demonstratives, antecedents to relative clauses and determiners but also as personal pronouns.

In the next section, I explore to what extent the case that can be made for morphosyntactic continuity between ONbr and NME can be extended to positing phonological continuity.

4.2 Phonological continuity

4.2.1 A variationist account

The phonological development of the object and possessive third-person plural pronouns is unproblematic for a native origin hypothesis in that OE *þāem* is an acceptable source for PDE *them* [ðɛm] (Gericke 1934: 84) and PDE *their* [ðɛə] could have derived from either a monophthongal or diphthongal form (Werner 1991: 390). Accounting for the [e:] realisation of PDE *they* as a reflex of OE *þā* and

20. See LAEME, Map no. 09674802 THOSE: ‘thay’ type, with *-ai* or *-aye* and eLALME, Dot Maps, Item 3, THOSE: ‘thay’ type, with *-ai(e)* or *-ay(e)*.

the apparent diphthongal vocalisms suggested by the NME spelling types *þai*, *þair*, *þaim* is more problematic for a native hypothesis.

In his discussion of variation and change, Lass (1999:77–79) notes how the usual handbook descriptions of sound change, while correct in principle, oversimplify change by juxtaposing initial and final states with little regard for the “very small incremental subchanges, accompanied by considerable variation that characterises transitions” (1999:77). The variation triggered by the change is subject to sociolinguistic and lexical conditioning with certain lexical items being affected before others before the change gradually spreads through the lexicon of the etymological category. Thus “[e]ven though from a macroperspective change might look like a linear transition, it is multidimensional: the essential mechanisms are cumulatively weighted variation and diffusion through the lexicon” (1999:77).

In accounting for the vocalisms of the NME ‘þ-’ type personal pronouns from a native perspective, I adopt a variationist approach that bears in mind dialectal variation and the considerable variation that characterises sound change before final states are reached. The realisation of any change will vary at both the dialectal and idiolectal level with speakers producing any relevant item in a variety of ways. The spelling variation recorded for ME indicates that etymological categories in ME could have a broad range of phonetic realisations with individuals quite capable of having two (or more) pronunciations for at least some words in certain etymological categories. Stenbrenden’s (2016) exhaustive study of early and late ME establishes a wide range of phonetic correspondences for the reflexes of OE long monophthongs in ME. Indeed, she notes how the idiosyncratic development of certain words can only be explained if co-variant realisations existed.²¹ With regard to the ME reflexes of OE *ā*, she observes that “[t]he ME material does not generally present neat and clear patterns regarding the development of OE *ā*” (Stenbrenden 2016:98).

The literature focuses heavily on the diagnostic value of <ei> as an indication of Scandinavian origin for the new ME pronouns. With reference to *þei*, *þeire*, *þeim*, Moore (1969:95) states that “[t]he new plural pronouns were certainly derived from, or developed under, the influence of the ON plurals *þeir*, *þeira*, *þeim* for the diphthong that occurs in ME forms cannot be accounted for on the basis of OE *þā*, *þāra*, *þām*”. In a similar vein, Morse-Gagné (2003:78) asserts that the “<ei> diphthongs [of *þei*, *þeire*, *þeim*] unambiguously identify them as Scandinavian in origin”.

No consensus exists as to the exact nature of the Scandinavian pronouns at the time of contact. The hypothesised Scandinavian forms *þeir*, *þeira*, *þeim* are “modern abstractions” (Morse-Gagné 2003:79) drawn from the normalised 12th- to

21. For instance, [e:] was raised to [i:] in most words in Standard English but diphthongised in a few words to [eɪ], e.g., *yea*, *break*, *steak*, *great* (Stenbrenden 2016:4).

14th-century literary forms of Old Icelandic and late Old Norwegian, which are much later than the conjectured initial period of contact between ON and OE speakers in the 9th century (cf. Haugen 1982: 100–101; Werner 1991: 380; Howe 1996: 156). Morse-Gagné (2003: 94–105) shows that the pronoun sets of what she labels Old Norwegian and Old Danish were far more varied than received wisdom suggests. The <ai, ei, æi> spellings attested in her 1050–1200 Old Norwegian runic and manuscript data suggest a range of diphthongal realisations. The post-1200 Old Danish material comprises monophthongal forms, mainly <æ, e> (Morse-Gagné 2003: 104). Based on the assumption that the speech of the insular Scandinavian population differed little from that of the mainland, Morse-Gagné argues that the distribution of monophthongal and diphthongal vocalisms in the various Scandinavian varieties suggests that the Old Norwegian pronominal system of the Hiberno-Norse settlers in the Northwest of England was diphthongal, whereas the pronoun set of Danish speakers, who settled mainly in the East Midlands and Northeast, would have comprised monophthongal forms (Morse-Gagné 2003: 115). It is debatable, however, to what extent the monophthongisation of /ei/ > /e/ (cf. runic OEN *fæigr*, *gæiRR* with post-runic OEN *fēgher*, *gēr*), which started in Old East Norse in the mid-10th century in Denmark (Schulte 2005: 1082), would have been a feature of the Anglo-Scandinavian speech of the Danish settlers in England. OE probably came into contact with Old East Norse and Old West Norse rather than Old Danish and Old Norwegian proper. Morse-Gagné's Danish data is late (post-1200), and the diphthongal *pe33*, *pe33re*, *pe33m* forms found in the 12th-century East Midlands' text the *Ormulum* suggest that the variety of ON spoken by the Danish in that area employed diphthongal forms, rather than the monophthongal forms posited by Morse-Gagné.

Assertions that rely on <ei> spellings as proof of origin in ON ignore dialectal variation and the fact that 'pei(-)' type pronouns were in fact rare in the North.²² Spellings in <ei, ey, e33> are common in the East Midlands and occur as early as the 12th century in the *Ormulum*, but *LAEME* and *eLALME* indicate that forms in <ai> rather than <ei> predominate in the North.²³ Furthermore, just as the NME *p*-forms were far more extensive in grammatical function than the traditional account would suggest, so too were the vocalisms of *p*-forms far more varied. Spellings suggestive of both diphthongal and monophthongal vocalisms occur in early and late NME.

22. The term 'North' here comprises the historic counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, Northumberland, County Durham and the East, West and North Ridings of Yorkshire (ERY, WRY, NRY, respectively).

23. The East Midlands *p*-forms themselves involved variation. In addition to *pei/pey*, *LAEME* also records *pe/ye/3e*. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00002329 *THEY: pe, ye, 3e*. See also Cole (forthcoming).

For the period 1150–1325, *LAEME* records a ‘thay’ type for *THEY* in *-ai(e)*, *-ay(e)* in the North and in a few texts in the Northeast and Northwest Midlands and in the Southwest.²⁴ A ‘*þa/ta*’ type is attested in the North and West Midlands.²⁵ A ‘they’ type in *-ei-*, *-ey-* (including *þe33* found in the *Ormulum*) is used mainly in the East Midlands, and to a lesser extent in the West Midlands, but only occurs in one northern text.²⁶ A ‘*þe, ye, 3e*’ type is also used in the East Midlands and in one West Midlands text.²⁷ A ‘*þi*’ type is attested in one northern text.²⁸ For *THEIR*, a ‘their’ type with medial *-ei-* occurs only in the East Midlands and includes *þe33re* found in the *Ormulum*.²⁹ A ‘thair’ type with medial *-ai/ay-* (including *yaier*) predominates in the North but also occurs in two East Midland texts and in one West Midlands text.³⁰ Monophthongal possessive forms are attested, including a ‘thar’ type with medial *-a-* attested only in the North and in one Northeast Midlands text³¹ and a ‘ther’ type found in the North and East Midlands.³² For *THEM*, the North has a ‘thaim’ type with medial *-ay*, *-ai-* (and *yaem*) and ‘tham’ with monophthongal medial *a*.³³ A ‘them’ type with medial *-ey*, *-ei-* (including the *þe33m* forms of the *Ormulum*)³⁴ occurs only in the East Midlands, and a ‘them’ type involving *yem*, *yem* and *yeem* occurs in one northern text and in two texts in the East Midlands.³⁵

The complex phonetic variation found in early ME continues into the late ME period (c. 1350–1450). For *THEY*, *eLALME* records a ‘they’ type with *-ei* or *-ey(e)* across the country that is particularly densely concentrated across the Midlands.³⁶ A ‘thay’ type with *-ai(e)* or *-ay(e)* also occurs across the country but more densely

24. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00002328 *THEY*: ‘thay’ type, with *-ai(e)* or *-ay(e)*.

25. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00002330 *THEY*: *þa* and *ta*.

26. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00002327 *THEY*: ‘they’ type, with *-ei*, *-ey*, *-e33*.

27. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00002329 *THEY*: *þe, ye, 3e*.

28. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00002340 *THEY*: *þi*.

29. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00064124 *THEIR*: ‘their’ type, with medial *-ei-* and incl *þe33re*.

30. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00064122 *THEIR*: ‘thair’ type, with medial *-ai-* or *-ay-* (incl *yaier*).

31. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00064121 *THEIR*: ‘thar’ type, simple *a* as medial vowel.

32. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00064123 *THEIR*: ‘ther’ type, simple *e* as medial vowel incl abbr *er*.

33. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00063941 *THEM* all object types: ‘thaim’ type with medial *-ai-* or *-ay-* and rare *yaem*; 00063942 *THEM* all object types: ‘tham’ type with simple medial *a*.

34. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00063939 *THEM* all object types: ‘them’ type, i.e., *yeim*, *yeym*, *þe33m*.

35. See *LAEME*, Map no. 00063940 *THEM* all object types: ‘them’ type, i.e., *yem*, *yem* and *yeem*.

36. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 7, *THEY*: ‘they’ type, with *-ei(-)* or *-ey(e)*.

so in the North, Northwest and Northeast Midlands.³⁷ A ‘tha’ type with final *-a(a)* is attested in Westmorland (North). It has a main cluster in South Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire (Northeast Midlands), and there are a few outliers elsewhere in the Midlands.³⁸ A ‘thi’ type, with final *-i(e)* or *-y(e)* is also found scattered across the country.³⁹ With regard to the possessive form *THEIR*, a ‘thar’ type with medial *-a-* is attested in the North, Northeast Midlands and several southwestern texts,⁴⁰ and ‘thair’ in *-ai-*, *-ay-* is also found mainly in these areas.⁴¹ A *their* type with *-ei-*, *-ey* occurs reasonably widely across the country but less so than monophthongal *ther* with medial *-e(e)-*, which is particularly frequent in the East Midlands and the North but less common in the West Midlands and parts of the South.⁴² For *THEM*, a *thaim* type with medial *-ai-*, *-ay-* is characteristic of the North, Northeast and Northwest Midlands.⁴³ A *tham* type with medial *-a(a)-* predominates in an area stretching from Lincolnshire northeastwards and across the entire North.⁴⁴ A *theim* type with *-ei-*, *-ey* occurs as a subset of a *them* type in *-e(e)-*; both are found across the country though less so in the Northeast.⁴⁵

The *LAEME* and *eLALME* data indicate that ME *þ*-forms involved a broad range of diphthongal and monophthongal vocalisms that have been ignored by the traditional account. The early ME data also show that spellings in <ai, a(a)> are favoured in the North and also occur in the (South)west, thus establishing a similar pattern in diatopically opposed parts of the country.

The results of the quantitative survey of northern texts summarised in the Appendix show that the preferred subject form in the early NME texts is *þai*. The oblique forms also generally have <ai> spellings, e.g., *þair*, *þaim*. The northern third-person pronoun system is nonetheless far more complex than a straightforward *þai*, *þair*, *þaim* paradigm; the monophthongal forms *þa(a)*, *þar(e)*/*þer(e)*, *þam*/*þeem* also occur. In fact, *þam* rather than *þaim* is the favoured form in the *LAEME*

37. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 7, *THEY*: ‘thay’ type, with *-ai(e)* or *-ay(e)*.

38. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 7, *THEY*: ‘tha’ type, with final *-a(a)*.

39. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 7, *THEY*: ‘thi’ type, with final *-i(e)* or *-y(e)*.

40. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 9, *THEIR*: ‘thar’ type, simple *a* as medial vowel.

41. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 9, *THEIR*: ‘thair’ type, with medial *-ai-* or *-ay-* (incl ‘*thayer*’).

42. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 9, *THEIR*: ‘their’ type, with medial *-ei-* or *-ey-*; *THEIR*: ‘ther’ type, simple *e(e)* as medial vowel.

43. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 8, *THEM*: ‘thaim’ type, with medial *-ai-* or *-ay-*.

44. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 8, *THEM*: ‘tham’ type, with simple medial *a(a)*.

45. See *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 8, *THEM*: ‘theim’ type, with medial *-ei-* or *-ey-*; *THEM*: ‘them’ type, with simple medial *e(e)*.

data for the Cotton Vespasian A.iii MS of the *Cursor Mundi*. An additional NME source, that of the *Expanded Northern Homily Cycle* (ENHC, British Library, MS Harley 4196 and British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius E vii, ed. Nevanlinna 1972), also records the categorical use of *þam* (Nevanlinna 1972: 123). The pervasiveness of *þai* in the LAEME data may be an accident of the particular texts that happen to survive and does not prove that *þa* did not enjoy a similar degree of currency among speakers. It is worth comparing the predominance of *þaim* over *þam* in the Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians, MS of *Cursor Mundi*, with the dearth of the variant in favour of *þam* in Cotton Vespasian A.iii and its categorical absence in ENHC. Relying in part on Brunner (1965: §53), who dates the monophthongal spelling in *þam* to the 14th century, Nevanlinna attributes the use of *þam* to “scribal confusion between the ONbr demonstrative pronoun *þam* and ON *þeim*” (Nevanlinna 1972: 123). ME *þam/þem* have also been argued to represent unaccented Scandinavian forms (Brunner 1948: 63; Werner 1991: 388). The ONbr data discussed above suggest that there is no need to appeal to external influence. The data provide evidence to indicate continuity between ONbr and NME usage; the scribe is simply using a reflex of OE *þām/þǣm* as a personal pronoun.

Cotton Vespasian A.iii, hand A is said to resemble the original composition of the *Cursor Mundi* most closely (Horall 1978: 18). Morse-Gagné (2003: 189–190) notes that objective forms in *h*- and *þ*- fluctuate in the early section of Cotton Vespasian A.iii, but only *þ*-forms occur in the later section. She classifies *h*-forms as English and *þ*-forms as Scandinavian and views the distribution as indicative of the English objectives being superseded by Scandinavian forms. I offer here a very different interpretation of the data. If indeed Cotton Vespasian A.iii, hand A resembles an earlier stage of NME, then it may be significant that it is precisely in this text that a notably high rate of monophthongal oblique forms occur. Only 3 of the 52 objective forms in Cotton Vespasian A.iii involve *þaim* – the rest have monophthongal vocalisms (*þam* 44x, *þaem* 1x) – and *ham*, *hem*, *am* forms also occur (4x). Monophthongal possessives comprising *þar(e)/þer(e)* (26x) also predominate over *þair(e)* (18x). Interestingly, Morse-Gagné (2003: 189) shows that, whereas monophthongal possessive forms are more common in the early sections of the manuscript, *þair* is categorical in her data sample for the later section of the text.

When viewed in the light of the ONbr data, there is no reason to assume that at least the monophthongal *þ*-pronouns at this stage in my argument were not of English origin. The distribution of the personal pronouns in *h*- and *þ*- supports the view that a native system reliant on OE *þ*-pronouns replaced the OE *h*-pronoun paradigm in the North. The change in rate of the monophthongal versus diphthongal pronoun variants suggests that the first sections of the manuscript reveal a closer adherence to the earlier pronunciation of the original exemplar that gradually gives way to the use of variants more familiar to the contemporary language of the copyist.

The crucial question arises as to where these newer diphthongal variants came from. One possibility is that a personal pronoun system, which employed English monophthongal *þ*-pronouns, was already established by the late ONbr/early NME period, and this facilitated the transfer of the diphthongal pronunciations found in the Scandinavian cognate forms. However, I wish to explore the possibility that the phonological development of the vocalisms in the northern *þ*-forms was in line with native phonological developments in NME. I contend that the differing vocalisms of the *þ*-forms in the North are the result of the fronting and raising of OE *ā* in NME and reflect the phonetic variation that characterises change in progress.

4.2.2 Northern Middle English development of OE *ā*

In the South, OE *ā* underwent rounding and raising to [ɔ:].⁴⁶ Spellings in <oo> for OE *ā* first occur around 1150 in the South and the change is complete by 1225, e.g., ME *more* < OE *māre*, ME *wot* < OE *wāt* (see Stenbrenden 2016: 37–44 with references for detailed recent discussion). In the North, however, OE *ā* was fronted to [a:] and later raised to [ɛ:], presumably via [æ:], and became [e:] at a later stage (Lass 1992: 46–48; Minkova 2014: 202–203). The northern reflex of OE *ā* fell together with the lengthened reflex of OE *a* in open syllables and, at a later stage, with the merged monophthongised reflex of ME *ai* and *ei* in [ɛ:], later [e:] (Lass 1999: 91–92). Thus the vocalism in OE *þā* would have undergone the following development in the North: NME [a:] > [æ:] > [ɛ:] > [e:]. The monophthongal realisation in *they* [ðe:] is retained in northern varieties of British English to this day, while in the South [e:] diphthongised at a later stage (Kniezsa 1981: 99).

The problem lies in dating these developments. The quality of the northern reflexes of OE *ā* is difficult to ascertain as the NME development of OE *ā* was not usually reflected in spelling. There is some spelling evidence, however, to corroborate the view that early NME *ā* had reached [ɛ:] by c.1400 (Dobson 1968: §98). Stenbrenden (2016: 61) identifies spelling forms indicative of a fronted raised articulation, probably [ɛ:] (Stenbrenden 2016: 97), with <ae, æ, ai/ay, e, ea, eo, ei/ey> all occurring for etymological OE *ā* in the North starting in the mid-13th century, although an even earlier dating for the raising of NME *ā* cannot be ruled out given the scarcity of surviving early NME material. The early 14th-century *Prophecy of the Scottish Wars* (Durham London, British Library, Cotton Julius A v, fols. 180r–181v) includes <ae> spellings for reflexes of OE *ā*, e.g., *gae* (< OE *gā*) “go”, *mae* (< OE *mā*) “more”, and *pae* (< OE *pawa*) “peacock”, which suggests an attempt to reflect a fronted, raised articulation, as do the <e(e), ae> spellings recorded for the text’s

46. There is debate as to the quality of OE *ā* (for detailed discussion, see Stenbrenden 2016: 37–40). Minkova (2014: 201), amongst others, posits that OE *ā* was back and rounded, but Stenbrenden (2016: 38) convincingly argues that OE *ā* originally had a central quality and was unrounded.

oblique plural personal pronoun forms *þaem*, *þem* and *þeem*. Rhymes in the *ENHC*, like *lad* (ME pret. of West Saxon *lǣdan*) : *mad* (adj. OE *mād*, *gemǣded*) *ENHC* 12525, beside the usual *led* (pret. ONbr *lēdan*) : *wed* (past pple) *ENHC* 6065, suggest that <a> in *lad* and *mad* “might have stood for an *e*-sound in the North” given the extensive scribal confusion in the manuscript between <e> and <a> before dentals (Nevanlinna 1972: Part 1, 31, fn. 2).

These points together indicate that *þ*-forms in <-a(a)(-), -ae-, -e(e)(-)> most likely had fronted, raised monophthongal vocalisms with conservative speakers retaining [a:] and more advanced speakers using [æ:] or [ɛ:]. However, the <-ai(-)/-ay(-)> spellings of the ‘pai(-)’ type suggest a diphthongal rather than monophthongal vocalism. Early NME texts also rhyme *þai* with ME *ai* (*þai* : *day* *ENHC* 138), which further highlights the diphthongal quality of the vocalism in the spelling types *þai*, *þair(e)*, *þaim*.⁴⁷ ME *ai* derives from OE *æġ* (ME *dai/day* < OE *dæġ*). In the 13th-century the reflexes of early ME *ei* came to be variably spelt <ai> (ME *wei/wai* < OE *weg*) (Wright & Wright 1923: §§106, 107). Spellings in <ai> and <ei> fell together in words with the reflexes of early ME *ai* and *ei* (*day* : *way* *ENHC* 5442). Luick (1967 [1914–1940]: §408) argued that the onset of ME *ai* was a fronted sound, presumably [ai] or [æi], perhaps [ɛi], rather than an open central or back onset. Ultimately, as mentioned above, the merged reflex of NME *ai* and *ei* was to monophthongise to [ɛ:], later [e:], and become identical with the reflex of NME *ā* (Lass 1999: 91–92). The dating of the ME *ai* and *ei* merger in [ɛ:] remains problematic with some scholars favouring an early 14th-century dating (Luick 1967 [1914–1940]: §§434, 515; Dobson 1968: §§98, 778, fn. 1; Jordan 1974: 135–136) and others placing the merger as late as the 16th century (Aitken 1977: 8). Lass (1999: 91–92) identifies the coexistence of three different dialect types, in which the development of ME /a:, ai, ɛ:/ takes distinctive paths. His Lineage II, which is of northern origin and underlies many non-standard varieties of PDE, especially northern ones (including Scots), merges ME /a:, ai/ early in /ɛ:/. Murray (1873: 53)

47. Both <a> and <ai> spellings occur for the northern reflex of OE *ā* in late NME (Wyld 1914: §157). The *Middle English dictionary* (Kurath et al. 1952–2001) records late NME instances such as *stan/stain*, *mar/maire*, *bath/baith*, *gai/ga*, *twa(a)/twai(e)/tway(e)*. The <ai> spellings occur less extensively in early NME and appear to be restricted to pre-consonantal contexts (Michael Benskin p.c.). The <i> diagraph spelling for historical monophthongs is generally interpreted as a diacritic indicative of vowel length and/or raising rather than a genuine diphthong (for discussion see Kniezsa 1983; Stenbrenden 2016: 29–30). This raises the possibility of some instances of <ai> in *þai*, *þair* and *þaim* representing a long monophthong rather than a diphthong, at least in late NME. Such a development would parallel the <a(a)/ai> alternation found for THOSE in the North, which is not seen in the literature as developing under ON influence but rather from OE *þās* > NME *þaas*, *þais*, *þaisse*, *þas*, *þase* (see *eLALME*, Dot Maps, Item 3, THOSE: ‘thas’ type, incl -aa-, -ae-, -ai- and -(s)se forms).

was of the opinion that <ai> spellings were extended to represent the fronted, raised Middle Scots reflex of OE *ā* following the monophthongisation of /ai/ and the resulting merger of ME *ai* and *ā*. Theoretically, this remains a possible explanation for the *pai*: *day* type rhymes of NME, but an early identification of ME *ai* with ME *ā* in [ɛ:] is not conclusively demonstrable for NME.

As noted, however, care needs to be taken not to frame sound change from a perspective that relies too heavily on initial and final stages with little regard for the variation that accompanies transitions. Judging from the spelling variation, etymological categories in ME could have a diverse range of pronunciations with individuals employing differing pronunciations for at least some words in certain etymological categories. The linguistic profiles in *LALME* (McIntosh et al. 1986) record numerous individual scribal systems with multiple spellings covering the whole range of monophthongal and diphthongal variants.⁴⁸ The ME period was a broad time span in which extensive variation would have characterised the phonetic realisation of the vocalisms in the *p*-pronouns before the late ME or EModE sound changes that resulted in the present-day pronunciation of *they* went to completion.

Cross-linguistic comparison with the results of studies of change in progress in modern speech communities militates in favour of the view that the monophthongal and diphthongal pronunciations attested by the NME spellings reflect the variation that would have characterised the NME sound change [a:] > [æ:] > [ɛ:] > [e:]. A relevant modern parallel from a related language is the range of pronunciations available for the long monophthongs of Modern Dutch.⁴⁹ For the written sequence <ee>, these range from the pure monophthongal standard realisation [e:], to slightly diphthongal [eⁱ], to fully diphthongal [ei] (van de Velde et al. 1997: 370–371).

Collins & Mees (1981: 133) note that <ee> (together with <oo>) are realised “overwhelmingly as narrow diphthongs”. Relevantly, with regard to the variant pronunciation of the long monophthong in the NME reflex of OE *ā* in *pai*/ *pa(a)*, the tendency to diphthongise is found to be more common in word-final position (Voortman 1994). Listeners have also been shown to perceive little significant difference in speakers’ realisations of /ei/ and /e:/ (Jacobi 2009: 99). Monophthongal and diphthongal pronunciations are also reported for the written homophonous sequences <ij> and <ei> in Dutch, e.g., *actualiteit*, *kleine*, *krijgen*, *vijs*. Although the standard realisation is /ei/, monophthongal variants are widespread: Vernacular Amsterdam has [a:], The Hague has [ɛ:] and monophthongal variants are also common in the southern Dutch provinces and Flemish (Collins & Mees 1981: 136).

48. For instance, LP53 WRY has <ai, ei> for *THEY*, <e, a, ai, ay> for *THEM* and <a, ai, ay> for *THEIR*. LP27 WRY has <e, a, ei, ai, ay> for *THEIR*. LP544 ERY has <ei, a, ai> for *THEY*, <a> for *THEM* and <e> for *THEIR*.

49. I am grateful to Margaret Laing for suggesting this line of inquiry.

Diphthongal realisations in [ai] with a lowered onset also occur in Rotterdam, Utrecht and Amsterdam (van de Velde et al. 1997:71–72) and exhibit class and gender stratification (van Heuven et al. 2002; cf. Jacobi 2009).

Parallels are of course not evidence, but the range of phonetic possibilities recorded in a related language is indicative of the scope of possibilities for ME. The wide-ranging realisations posited here for the vocalism in NME *þa(a)/þai* are substantiated by the breadth of spelling variants attested in *LAEME* for reflexes of OE *ā* including <ae, æ, ai/ay, e, ea, eo, ei/ey> (Stenbrenden 2016:69–70), and they parallel the fluctuating pronunciations recorded for other etymological categories in ME, e.g., <welle/weile> for OE *weilā* “wail” (Stenbrenden 2016:48) and <gra/grai> for OE *græȝ* “grey”, as in *tha / That er cled in gren and gra* and *thai / That er cled in gren and grai*, thereby rhyming *tha : gra* and *thai : grai*.⁵⁰ The alternating NME <ai/ei> vs <a/e> spellings are traditionally interpreted as evidence that scribes drew from a pool of variants that included OE and ON cognates, e.g., *weile* < OE *weilā* vs *welle* < ON *væla*, *grai* < OE *græȝ* vs *gra* < ON *grar* (and *tha* < OE *þā* vs *thai* < ON *þeir*). But it is just as likely that the rhymes bear witness to a pool of native monophthongal and diphthongal variants for the same etymological category. The <ai> spelling in NME *þai* probably represented [ai], [æi] or [ei], and these realisations were all variably present and varying with the monophthongal variants. The possibility that the vocalisms in the ON cognate *þ*-forms partly provided the diphthongal pronunciations found in NME cannot be ruled out entirely, but the Scandinavian variants would have slotted into a native system in which diphthongal and monophthongal realisations can reasonably be argued to have existed.

5. Conclusions

The present article has proposed a native origin for the ‘þ-’ type pronouns of NME as derived from the ONbr *þ*-forms via a process of paradigmatic merger whereby ONbr *þ*-pronouns replaced the inherited OE personal pronouns in *h*-. It shows morphosyntactic and phonological continuity between ONbr and NME, rather than the break in systems traditionally posited for the history of the third-person plural personal pronoun in English. The overlap in pronominal function between personal pronouns and *þ*-pronouns, characteristic of OE, was advanced in ONbr and proved instrumental in shaping the NME pronominal system. From this perspective, the use of *þai/þa* for both *THEY* and *THOSE* in the northern (and south-western) dialects of ME constitutes a retention of the original OE functions of the

50. The *Original or unexpanded Northern Homily Cycle* in Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians MS (ed. Thompson 2008:ll. 197–198, 201–202).

p-forms rather than an innovation. The study's reassessment of the NME data in view of the ONbr evidence suggests that a northern English system already reliant on native *p*-forms fulfilling the function of personal pronouns was in place by the early NME period.

Previous analyses have dismissed OE *pā*, *pāra*, *pām* as a source for the 'p-' type pronouns on the grounds that the (mid-)front diphthongal vocalisms of the pronouns could not be reflexes of OE *ā*. I have outlined a linguistically justifiable trajectory for the vocalisms of the NME 'p-' type pronouns as derived from OE *ā* that relies on the relevance of a dialectal difference in the development of OE *ā* that has gone unnoticed in the literature with regard to explaining the vocalisms of the NME pronouns. The development of OE *ā* differed in the North compared to the South producing a fronted raised reflex of OE *ā* that allows for the derivation of PDE *they* [ðe:], *their* [ðeə], *them* [ðem]. The study's variationist approach has borne in mind not only dialectal variation but also the considerable variation that characterises sound change before final states are reached. The range of phonetic correspondences recorded in NME for reflexes of OE *ā* involving both monophthongal and diphthongal realisations tells a story consistent with the results of change in progress in modern speech communities in related languages and reflects the type of diphthongal variation that typically characterises the realisation of long monophthongs. The fronted raised diphthongal reflex of OE *ā* recorded for Southwest ME *pai(e)* (< West Saxon *pæze/pæze*) outside the scope of Scandinavian influence militates in favour of the view that a diphthongal variant reflex of OE *ā* could develop internally.

Internal changes to the functional distribution of the ONbr *p*-forms created a system that lined up with the distribution of the ON cognate forms. The northern development of OE *ā* resulted in native *p*-forms that were also phonologically close to their Scandinavian equivalents. The phonetic variability that characterised the English *p*-forms would have rendered the ON variants, themselves drawn from different sources and subject to variation, so similar to the native variants as to be indistinguishable. The ON cognates would have slotted into a native pronominal system that already employed *p*-forms as personal pronouns and into a native pattern of variation involving both monophthongal and diphthongal variants. From this perspective, Scandinavian influence would have been limited to phonetic rather than morphosyntactic transfer and was partial at best, restricted in effect to reinforcing a native development.

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Appendix

Total number of ‘p-’ type and ‘h-’ type forms in Northern Middle English and their functions based on *LAEME* (Laing 2013).⁵¹

	THEY	THEIR	THEM	THOSE (PRONOUN)	THOSE (DETERMINER)
Cotton Vespasian	<i>pai</i> (68)	<i>pair(e)</i> (18)	<i>pam</i> (44)	<i>pa(a)</i> (1)	<i>pa</i> (1)
A.iii, hand A: <i>Cursor Mundi</i> etc. WRY	<i>pei</i> (4)	<i>par(e)</i> (19)	<i>paim</i> (3)	<i>po(o)</i> (2)	<i>pai</i> (1)
		<i>per(e)</i> (7)	<i>ham</i> (2)		
			<i>am</i> (1)		
			<i>hem</i> (1)		
			<i>paem</i> (1)		
Edinburgh, Royal	<i>pa</i> (5)	<i>pair</i> (92)	<i>paim</i> (78)	<i>pai</i> (20)	<i>pa</i> (6)
College of Physicians,	<i>pai</i> (205)	<i>payr</i> (1)	<i>paym</i> (1)	<i>pa</i> (9)	<i>par</i> ⁵² (1)
<i>Cursor Mundi</i> , hand	<i>pay</i> (2)	<i>par(e)</i> (6)	<i>pam</i> (3)	<i>pe</i> (1)	
A, fols. 1r–15v. ERY	<i>paim</i> (7)	<i>pairis/</i>	<i>pai</i> (1)		
		<i>payres</i> (2)			

51. The data are taken from the texts available for the North in *LAEME* for West Riding of Yorkshire (WRY), East Riding of Yorkshire (ERY), North Riding of Yorkshire (NRY), City of York and Durham (Du). All the texts are 14th-century, except *Pater Noster and Creed*, which *LAEME* dates to the early-mid-13th century. There are no instances of pronouns in Carlisle, Cumbria RO, D/Lons/L Medieval Deeds C1: *Gospatric’s Writ*. Counts for ‘p-’ type forms include <þ, th, ð, y> spellings and <t, d> spellings following coronals.

52. For discussion of *par* see Heltveit (1953:92–96).

	THEY	THEIR	THEM	THOSE (PRONOUN)	THOSE (DETERMINER)
Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians, <i>Cursor Mundi</i> , hand B, fols. 16r–36v. NRY	<i>þai</i> (147)	<i>þair</i> (84)	<i>þaim</i> (68)	<i>þa</i> (3)	<i>þar</i> (1) <i>þa</i> (3)
Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians, <i>Cursor Mundi</i> , hand C, fols. 37r–50v. York	<i>þai</i> (188)	<i>þair</i> (74)	<i>þaim</i> (123)	<i>þar</i> (1)	<i>þar</i> (2)
Cotton Charter iv 18: <i>Athelstan's Charter</i> . ERY	<i>þai</i> (1) <i>þay</i> (1)	<i>þair</i> (1)	<i>þham</i> (1)	–	<i>þa</i> (1)
Cotton Cleopatra B vi, fol. 204v: <i>Pater Noster</i> and <i>Creed</i> WRY	<i>þai</i> (1)	–	<i>ham</i> (2) <i>þaim</i> (1)	–	–
Cotton Faustina A.v fols. 10r–v, hand A & fols. 105v–106r, hand B. WRY	<i>þay</i> (1)	–	<i>þam</i> (1)	–	–
Cotton Julius A v, fols. 180r–181v: <i>Prophecy</i> of the <i>Scottish Wars</i> . Du	<i>þai</i> (11) <i>þay</i> (1)	<i>þair(e)</i> (9)	<i>þaem</i> (1) <i>þeem</i> (6) <i>em</i> (2) <i>þem</i> (2)	<i>þa</i> (1)	–

Résumé

On soutient généralement que les pronoms anglais *they*, *their*, *them* ne continuent pas des mots anglo-saxons mais descendraient des pronoms de la troisième personne du pluriel *þeir*, *þeira*, *þeim* du vieux-norrois. Cet article soutient que l'orthographe et la distribution textuelle des sources anciennes de l'anglais septentrional appuient l'hypothèse d'un changement interne pour le développement des pronoms personnels du type-*þ-*' au nord, et qu'elles démontrent que les formes modernes proviennent du pronom démonstratif vieil-anglais *þā*, *þāra*, *þām*. Le système de la troisième personne du pluriel des pronoms du moyen-anglais septentrional résulte d'une ré-analyse des pronoms démonstratifs comme personnels, comme on trouve souvent dans diverses langues, germaniques comme non-germaniques.

Zusammenfassung

Die englischen Personalpronomen *they, their, them* werden traditionell nicht als Entwicklungen aus dem Altenglischen, sondern als Ableitungen der Altnordischen Personalpronomen der 3. Person Plural, *þeir, þeira, þeim*, gesehen. Dieser Aufsatz argumentiert dafür, dass die orthographische und distributionelle Texteweidenschaft in frühen nordenglischen Quellen mit einer internen Entwicklung der ‘þ-’ Typ-Personalpronomen im Norden übereinstimmen. Dies weist auf die altenglischen Demonstrativpronomina *þā, þāra, þām* als Ausgangspunkt hin. Das Pronominalsystem in der 3. Person Plural im Nordmittelenglischen ist somit das Resultat einer Reanalyse eines Demonstrativpronomens als Personalpronomen, wie man sie sprachübergreifend in germanischen wie in nicht-germanischen Sprachen gleichermaßen antreffen kann.

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