

Johan Kerling

FRANCISCUS JUNIUS, 17TH-CENTURY LEXICOGRAPHY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH

Introduction

One of the most prominent seventeenth-century historical linguists and lexicographers is no doubt Franciscus Junius the Younger (1591-1677). Indeed it would hardly be an exaggeration to claim that he is the father of comparative Germanic linguistics. One problem, however, with this scholar is that the printed output of his scholarly activities is only a weak reflection of the range and number of his activities in linguistics, and in particular of his lexicographical interests and achievements. In fact the works printed during his lifetime are relatively few: a work on art-history, an edition of the Old English poem Genesis, the Observations on Willeramus, a glossary of Gothic and an edition of the Codex Argenteus (incorporating the Gothic glossary (Junius 1637, 1655, 1665). One of his major lexicographical works, his ETYMOLOGICUM ANGLICANUM was published posthumously in 1743 by Edward Lye.

The main body of what Junius ever produced is only available in manuscript. As is generally known, most of his MSS rest in the Bodleian Library, the Junius collection containing more than 120 items, some 40 of them printed books. The remaining 80-odd what we might call 'real' MSS form an interesting but heterogeneous collection of old manuscripts, transcripts of manuscripts and original manuscripts by Junius.

The manuscripts have, surprisingly, hitherto received very little serious attention (cf. von Raumer 1870; van de Velde 1966; Hetherington 1980: 222-236). In fact Junius himself has not received a great deal of attention either. Yet this considerable collection of manuscripts is worth exploring since it sheds light on the activities, techniques and ultimately the importance of this seventeenth-century scholar, whose published works have always been received with universal acclaim, and whose ETYMOLOGICUM was extensively used by Dr Johnson (although, admittedly, Johnson was not always happy with the quality of Junius's etymologies).

The historical perspective

The main concern of this paper is MS Junius 6, originally labelled as 'Dictionarium veteris linguae anglicanae', but more accurately described in the Bodleian Summary Catalogue as an alphabetical glossary to the works of the fourteenth-century English poet Chaucer.

A glossary to the works of Geoffrey Chaucer is hardly anything that anyone in our age is surprised at: such a glossary is absolutely essential for a good understanding of the works of this poet. However, as is understandable, this has not always been so. The first time we find a printed glossary appended to an edition of Chaucer's works is in 1598, when Thomas Speght brought out a new

edition of these works. Apparently Chaucer had become increasingly more difficult to understand towards the end of the sixteenth century. The reasons for this are primarily linguistic: the English language had changed to such an extent in every respect (syntax, morphology, phonology and lexis) that the Elizabethans found Chaucer's language very difficult indeed. There is an abundance of evidence for this (cf. Spurgeon 1925; Alderson and Henderson 1970; Brewer 1978; Kerling 1979; Schäfer 1982). This linguistic, and especially the lexical, problem is not only splendidly illustrated by the fact that in 1598 and 1602 editions of Chaucer's works were brought out which - for the first time - included glossaries, but also by the fact that, for example, in 1635 a translation appeared of Troilus and Criseyde into Latin so as to make this poem more easily accessible to a wider audience (Kynaston 1635). Evidently by the beginning of the seventeenth century Latin was considerably easier to understand for an educated English native speaker than late fourteenth-century London English. The situation is possibly best summed up in one of the prefatory verses in praise of Kynaston's Latin translation of Troilus and Criseyde when it is said

'Tis to your Happy cares we owe, that wee
Read Chaucer now without a Dictionary.

It can be demonstrated that Chaucer continued to be read in the seventeenth century, although the number of readers must have been restricted, if only because the very price of editions of Chaucer must have been prohibitive. A large number of his readers were undoubtedly interested in Chaucer as a poet. Others, however, were also, and possibly primarily, interested in Chaucer's language. After all, the late sixteenth century and the seventeenth century saw the rise of Old English studies (cf. Adams 1917; Birrell 1966; Kerling 1979; Hetherington 1980), and an increasing interest in the history of the language. The group that started the study of Old English was that round Matthew Parker (the so-called College of Antiquaries), and later on it included such people as Selden and Sir Robert Cotton, and became known as the Society of Antiquaries (cf. Evans 1956).

It is to this group that we must also turn for the beginning of the study of Middle English, and one of the more important people in this group (although not demonstrably a member of the Society of Antiquaries) was Franciscus Junius the Younger.

Franciscus Junius, the son of a well-known professor of divinity at Leiden, was born in Heidelberg in 1591. The Album Studiosorum of the University at Leiden shows us that Junius entered this university on 23 April 1608, giving his age as 17. This information is corroborated by a letter from Junius to Sir John Cotton, dated 30 January 1670, in which he tells Cotton that the day before 'I ... entred into my fourscoreth year', thus telling his reader that he had just become 79 years of age (Bodleian Library MS Smith 25, f. 37). So Junius was born 29 Jan. 1591. However, since the Junius family had moved to Leiden in 1592 Junius went to school and university in the Low Countries. When he was 26 years old he became a minister in the village of Hillegersberg near Rotterdam, but since he got into trouble there as he was suspected of Arminian inclinations, he resigned and decided never to go into the pulpit again. He left the Low Countries in 1620, went to Paris, and from there he

reached England in the summer of 1621.

In the autumn of 1621 he entered the service of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, as librarian and tutor to his son. Gradually - probably because he had access to large numbers of old books and manuscripts, and because of the linguistic interest of a number of people he met - he became interested in historical linguistics, above all in the lexical aspects of it. This is particularly clear from the many glossaries he compiled and made ready for the press.

MS Junius 6

One of the glossaries he compiled was a glossary to Chaucer's works, which he did not start on until late in life. The first reference to Chaucer in his correspondence is not found until 1667, i.e. when he is 76 years old. On 3 June of this year he wrote to his friend Thomas Marshall:

my kinsman Vossius thanketh you for D^r Winders dissertation, and I for the comment upon Chaucer, which I finde not otherwise then I expected. seeing I knew not how to looke for a Commentator that should give anie light to Chaucers old language, and so putt us in a way for to understand better the meaning of that inventive poët.

(Bodleian Library MS Marshall 134, f. 8).

In February 1668 Junius wrote a letter to Dugdale, and this provides us with the following information:

...Though I was not altogether idle since I returned to the Hague from Dordrecht; but first of all gott my great worke of Teutonik Glossaries in a perfect order for the presse: but seeing them as it were lie dead by me, I had neither heart nor lust to hoorde up more workes of that nature in my studie: but for a change, I took your archpoet Chaucer in hand: and though I thinke that in manie places he is not to bee understood without the help of old MS. copies, which England can afforde manie; yet doe I perswade my selfe to have met with innumerable places, hitherto misunderstood, or not understood at all, which I can illustrate.

(Dugdale 1827:383)

The conclusion that Junius did not start on his Chaucer glossary until late in life is corroborated by internal evidence from the glossary itself. The entry a per se, a collocation to be found in The Testament of Creseid (still then ascribed to Chaucer) is a very lengthy one, and ends as follows:

Quam proximè denique ad haec videtur, etiam accedere Sacra pagina Apocal. I,8. ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω, ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος, λέγει κύριος, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ παντοκράτωρ. Quid verò hac locutione significare voluerit summus rerum arbiter, ex sequentibus manifestè colligas: Deum nempne eundem et esse & semper fuisse ac porro futurum esse; proinde quoque certa atque immutabilia esse ejus promissa: quae me quoque sperare jubent ad finem aliquando perduetam iri hanc nostram operam, ad quam inchoandum hunc mihi diem illucessere passus est inexhaustus bonorum omnium largitor Deus.

The tenor of his comment is clear: via the Revelation of St. John and his faith in God's eternity and generosity he expresses the hope that God will allow him to finish the work just started. This suggests that he either expected the work to take a long time, or did not expect to live much longer, or both. Considering his age when he started working on this glossary his hesitation is understandable. In short, all this means that this glossary was started on nearly 70 years after the publication of the first printed Chaucer glossaries, and some 50 years before the next one, John Urry's, came out in 1721.

The manuscript of the glossary consists of nearly 100 folio sheets, with entries written on both sides, or pasted onto them on slips of paper; besides many entries are on loose slips of paper. The total number of entries is nearly 4000, which is an increase of some 52% over Speght's second glossary, or even of some 95% over Speght's first.

In certain respects we may describe the glossary as finished, but in the strictest sense of the word it is not. We find entries for A-Y (there is no entry for Z), and there is no unbalance between the number of entries for the first half of the alphabet and the second: for example, for the letter S we find as many as 438 items. All this suggests that what we have got here is in all likelihood more or less the glossary as Junius might ultimately have published it - at least as far as the number of entries is concerned. In other respects the glossary is incomplete, which is because a considerable number of lemmata have no definitions. It would therefore seem that Junius entered all the words he thought needed glossing, regardless of whether he could immediately gloss them or not, and postponed the filling in of gaps until a later date. This is obviously a sensible procedure, especially if you realise (as Junius did) that you might not live long enough to finish the work you have started, because in this way the possibility remains open for someone else to finish the work.

The following is a transcription of the entries Foreins - Forgon in Junius's manuscript, followed by a column indicating S₁, S₂, U and D. These abbreviations stand respectively for Speght's first glossary (1598), his second one (1602), Urry's (1721) and the glossary by Norman Davis et al. (1979). Only relevant parts from the lemmata in Davis and Urry are given.

E₁: Foreine, jacques
Gallis foire est Stereus li-
quidius. Vide Vossii etymolo-
gicum, in Foricae.

S₁: Foreine, iaques
S₂: Foreyne, a Iaques
U: Foreine, Ar. 78.A Jakes See Sk. A
stranger
D: Foreyne, outer privy

E₂: Foreins, forreiners
---they stode in such dis-
joynt/ Like as they had of
birth bene foreins. 1519.i.

S₁: -
S₂: -
U: Foreine, Ar. 78.A Jakes See Sk. A
stranger
D: Foreyne, alien

E₃: Forelived, Degener
 nis there no forelived wight
 or ungentill: Nemo degener
 exstat. 913,s
 Omnino referendum ad illum
 forleaven, quod mox sequetur.
S₁: -
S₂: -
U₂: Forlyved, for Forleved: Degenerate.
 See Forleven
D : Forlived, degenerate, ignoble

E₄: Forfare, forlorne
 Whan they seen poore folke
 forfare. 588,m
S₁: Forfare, forlorne
S₂: Forfare, forlorne
U₂: Forefare, Faring ill, forlorn. RR.
 5388. To decay, to go to ruine.
 Gam. 147
D : -

E₅: Forferd, videtur respondere
 Teutonico vervaert, Exanima-
 tus, territus.
 122,s. 1008, s.
S₁: -
S₂: -
U : -
D : Forfered, extremely afraid

E₆: Forfete, forfaite, trespasse.
 1183,i.
S₁: -
S₂: -
U₂: -
D : Forfeted, sinned

E₇: Forfraught, beset. Vide an non
 legendum sit forstraught, quod
 mox sequitur
S₁: Forfraught, beset
S₂: Forfraught, beset
U₂: Forstraughtin, No. 2613.
 Distracted, confounded. Sk.
D : Forstraught, greatly agitated

E₈: Forged made, wrought.
 That rasour was forged in a
 forge,/ Which that men clepen
 Coupe-gorge. 619,s.
S₁: Forge, worke
S₂: Forge, worke
U₂: Forgid, forged; Coined. MR, 148
D : Forge, forger, fashion in a smithy

E₉: Forgon, leave, relinquishe.
 154.s 735,i. nede him must his
 lif forgo. 508,s.
 ye wold not forgon his
 acquaintaunce 246,i.
S₁: -
S₂: -
U₂: Forgoe, Forgone: To lose,
 to forfeit; Lost.
D : Forgo(o)n, do without lose

This sample shows a number of interesting features, and on the basis of it some conclusions can be drawn that hold good for the glossary as a whole:

(1) This is the first truly alphabetical Chaucer glossary. The glossaries by Speght are only partly alphabetical, viz. by the first two or three letters only. Thus, for example, foreine follows forth, and forfare comes after forward in the 1598 glossary.

(2) Another innovation is that in a large number of instances Junius gives an entry plus context, followed by a coded indication of where in Chaucer's works a particular word or line can be found. The code, taking such forms as 1519,i; 913,s and 588,m is an easy one to crack: Junius worked from the 1598 Speght edition. This edition of Chaucer is printed in double columns, and all that Junius did was number the columns consecutively. Therefore 1519 stands for column 1519, and the number is followed by either i, m or s, which are abbreviations of infra, medio and supra respectively and refer to the bottom, middle or top of the column.

(3) Junius's knowledge of Middle English is good. This can, for example, be demonstrated by a comparison of the sample entries with the recent Chaucer glossary by Norman Davis. It will be seen that where an entry can be found in both Junius and Davis, there is agreement on the meaning of the words concerned.

(4) It is clear that Junius's approach is a scholarly one. His glossary shows that he has consulted other dictionaries available, such as Vossius's ETYMOLOGICON LINGUAE LATINAE (Amsterdam, London 1662). Furthermore he is critical of his source-text as is evident from his remark under forfraught which he correctly sees as a corruption of forstraught. Likewise he is very careful: the use of videtur ('it seems') under forferd is characteristic.

Conclusion

Our overall conclusion can be a simple one. Here we have a glossary, although incomplete, which represents the first attempt at a scholarly glossary to Chaucer's works. It is a glossary which methodologically was an advance upon earlier glossaries of Middle English, with the exception, perhaps, of Stephen Skinner's dictionary, which in an appendix contains a glossary that justifiably could be described as a first attempt to come to a dictionary of Middle English (Skinner 1671; Kerling 1979). Junius's glossary is different from Skinner's Middle English glossary because Skinner's primary aim was etymology (which Junius's was not), and because Junius's glossary is restricted to Chaucer's works (which Skinner's was not).

It is not easy to establish for whom this glossary was ultimately intended. In the Summary Catalogue of the Bodleian Library (see MSS Junius no 5118) it has been suggested that Junius was working on a new edition of Chaucer. If this is so, it is difficult to see why he should have used Latin in his definitions so often. However, the claim that he was working on a new edition of Chaucer cannot be substantiated.

Considering the extensive use of Latin in it, it is very well

possible that Junius intended this glossary for a scholarly audience. We have, in fact, a taste of things that might have come if he had lived long enough to complete this glossary: Junius clearly made use of his own Chaucer material when working on his ETYMOLOGI-CUM ANGLICANUM. This dictionary is in Latin with English (and other languages) only being used for illustrative purposes, and with all the entries concerning words in Chaucer in Latin.

The question of what Junius ultimately might have done with his glossary is one about which only speculation is possible, and any answer can only be merely hypothetical. However, more important than the question of what Junius might have done is the fact that we can establish that Junius was right when he wrote to Dugdale that he could do better than his predecessors: 'I perswade my selfe to have met with innumerable places, hitherto misunderstood, or not understood at all, which I can illustrate' (see above). An illustration of his competence has already been provided above when it was pointed out that Junius, quite rightly, was critical of the form forfraught. Another good example of his lexical acumen is provided elsewhere in his glossary by the entry ayle. In the early glossaries by Speght there is an entry ayle glossed as 'forever'. As I have shown elsewhere (Kerling 1979: 56), this gloss 'forever' is based on a misinterpretation of a line in Chaucer's Knight's Tale which in Speght's text reads

I am thine ayle, ready at thy wille

while modern editions have aiel. Speght clearly did not know the word ayle, and had a good guess: admittedly the reading 'forever' makes sense here ('I am yours forever'), but it is not the correct one. In fact ayle does not occur in Middle English in this sense. The word should read aiel, and it means 'grandfather' (French ayeul). Although Skinner has an entry ayal, ayle, with the correct interpretation, it is striking that in the same glossary Speght's mistake is perpetuated through the inclusion of the non-existent ayle 'forever'. Junius is the first Chaucer commentator to point out the correct meaning and origin of this word in this line from the Knight's Tale.

The glossary as a whole shows that here we have an experienced lexicographer at work, who on a sound scholarly basis produced a glossary which set a pattern for later Chaucer glossarists. Thus it can be established that the next Chaucer editor, John Urry, or rather Urry's editor (Urry's edition was published posthumously by an unknown 'Student of the same College' as Urry's, i.e. Christ-Church, Oxford), had access to, and indeed used Junius MSS. In his Preface he tells us (sign. L4, M1):

There is a copy of the Edition 1597. with MS. Notes of Junius in the Bodleyan Library amongst his MSS. (N^o. 5121.9) but neither did those Notes nor his other Papers there of that nature (which I likewise consulted) afford that assistance which might be expected from so great a Name; most of them being very imperfect, or drawn up rather for his own use than for the information of others.

It should be noted here that at this point Urry's editor is talking about textual problems, not lexical ones. But the main

point is that he himself says that he has consulted other Junius MSS. It is, however, not easy to demonstrate that Urry's editor actually made use of the Chaucer glossary for entries. Yet it is striking that the lexicographical technique behind the glossary in this edition of Chaucer is the same as that of Junius. Here, too, we have an alphabetical list giving the main word, followed by a definition (or more in the case of polysemy) plus references to the finding place or finding places in the main body of the text (see the sample entries above).

Likewise Edward Lye, the editor of Junius's ETYMOLOGICUM, had access to, and made use of, this glossary by Junius. This is, for example, clear from the fact that Junius's entry a per se from the glossary is transferred in toto to the ETYMOLOGICUM by Lye. We know for certain that this was a later addition by Lye because it is contained in square brackets, which, as Lye himself tells us, indicate additions by the editor from a variety of different sources, very often glossaries by Junius:

'Quicquid addidi, uncinis includitur, ut a textu ipso facilius distinguatur. Quae Junius e Glossariis suis ipse nobis suppediavit, loca habent semper adnotata, unde sumpta sunt. Alia autem indicantur nominibus auctorum, quibus eadem debeo'.

(*'Preface'* to the ETYMOLOGICUM, sign. B₁, B₂).

Lye also claims that square brackets and the addition of the letter L indicate additions that are his own work. These include 'many old words':

'Mea vero, quaecumque sint, litera L designantur. Multa vetera, localia sive topica, ut vocantur, & Scotica vocabula immiscui, pluraque immiscuissem, si potuissem eorum etyma expiscari'.

(*Ibid.*)

Here we may start doubting Lye's honesty. Although further research is needed, it is remarkable, and in all likelihood less than coincidence that many of the old words, which he actually labels as 'vet. Angl.' also occur in our Junius glossary. One even begins to wonder whether the abbreviation vet. Angl. may be based on the old designation of the Junius glossary in the Bodleian, namely 'Dictionarium veteris linguae anglicanae'. Likewise it should be noted here that Junius also compiled a glossary to Gavin Douglas's Scottish version of Virgil's Aeneid (MS Junius 114). It is not unlikely that the Scottish words which Lye refers to were taken from this MS.

In short we can say that Junius's glossary is an advance upon earlier ones in method, scope and quality, and that it represents an important step in the growth and development of lexicographical techniques. The greatest praise we can actually give Junius is making the observation that methodologically the most recent Chaucer glossary, brought out in Oxford in 1979, is the same as Junius's, produced in Oxford more than 300 years ago. That the quality of the modern Chaucer glossary is better is understandable, but it must not be forgotten that the modern one is the outcome of a long tradition, a tradition in which the scholar Junius played an important role.

References

- Adams, E.N. (1917/70) Old English Scholarship in England from 1566-1800. New Haven & London: Archon Books
- Alderson, W.L. and Henderson, A.C. (1970) Chaucer and Augustan Scholarship. Berkeley: U. of California P.
- Birrell, T.A. (1966) "The Society of Antiquaries and the taste for Old English 1705-1804" Neophilologus 50: 107-117
- Brewer, D. (1978) Chaucer: The Critical Heritage. London: Routledge
- Davis, N. et al. (1979) A Chaucer Glossary. Oxford: U.P.
- Dugdale see Hamper
- Evans, J. (1956) A History of the Society of Antiquaries. Oxford: Society of Antiquaries
- Hamper, W. ed. (1827) The Life, Diary and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale. London
- Hetherington, M.S. (1980) The Beginnings of Old English Lexicography. Spicewood, Texas: privately printed
- Junius, F. (1637) De Pictura Veterum Libri Tres. Amsterdam
- Junius, F. (1655) Caedmonis Monachi Paraphrasis Poetica ... Amsterdam
- Junius, F. (1655) Observationes in Willeramii Abbatis Franciscam Paraphrasin Cantici Canticozum. Amsterdam
- Junius, F. (1665) Quatuor D.N. Jesu Christi Evangeliorum Versiones ... Dordrecht
- Kerling, J. (1979) Chaucer in Early English Dictionaries. Leiden: U.P.
- Kynaston, Sir F. (1635) Amorum Troili et Creseidae Libri Duo Priores Anglico-Latini. London
- Raumer, R. von (1870) Geschichte der Germanischen Philologie. München: M. Oldenbourg
- Schäfer, J. (1982) "Chaucer in Shakespeare's dictionaries: the beginning" The Chaucer Review 17: 182-190
- Speght, T. ed. (1598/1602) The Workes of our Antient and Learned English Poet, Geffrey Chaucer. London
- Spurgeon, C.F.E. (1925) Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion 1357-1900. Cambridge: Russell & Russell
- Urry, J. ed. (1721) The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer. London
- Velde, R.G. van de (1966) De Studie van het Gotisch in de Nederlanden. Gent: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Taal- en Letterkunde