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Anglo-Norman
Money Names in
Context

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Anglų-normanų *pinigų* pavadinimai kontekste

SOCIOLINGUISTICS / SOCIOLINGVISTIKA

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The present study is the second in a series of inquiries into the specificity of money names in the history of English. The time frame is the Anglo-Norman period (1066–1500). The paper explores two distinct concepts – that of money as an abstract ideal construct and the concept of the *coin* represented by sets of nummular tokens. The centrality of cognitive concepts allows us to establish a link between socio-historical factors and actuation of naming, i. e., to study medieval onomasiological patterns in all complexity of social, cognitive, political, and ideological aspects. Semiotic study of Anglo-Norman coinage gives an insight into the meaning of messages Kings of England and France tried to communicate to each other and their subjects through coin iconography employing a set of elaborate images based on culturally preferred symbolic elements. By studying references to medieval coinage in various literary genres, we propose to outline some of the contours of new metaphoricity based on the concept of money and new mercantile ideology.

KEYWORDS: Anglo-Norman, trilingualism, culture, cognitive narratology, onomasiological patterns, money symbolism, semiotics, concept of the coin, mercantile ideology.

*On earth there is a little thing,
That reigns as does the richest king
In this and every land;*

*Sir Penny is his name, we're told,
He compels both young and old
To bow unto his hand.*

Sir Penny¹

Introduction



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Medieval coins of the Anglo-Norman (1066–1500) period are described in minute detail as to their quality, metal, fineness, design, inscriptions, attribution to the mint and the king under whose reign they were issued, etc. Old and modern historians have provided an in-depth study of the history of money as a social and economic construct and described the many economic roles played by it in Medieval Europe. *The availability and use of money must be considered one of the key variables in our understanding of medieval societies* (Spufford, 1993, p.1). According to these studies, money changed the very fabric of rural and urban life in the Middle Ages. Similarly, money names changed the fabric of the language and medieval literature too. *Money, which refers to the system of tropes, is an internal participant in the*

¹ This satire was popular in the Middle Ages; it is found in three languages: Latin, French, and English. The epigraph is a translation made from a version of about 1350. (Shackford, 1913, p.134)

logical or semiological organization of the language (Shell, 1982, p.3). It is surprising that linguists have paid little or no attention to this lexical group. The focus of interest in money names was not different from other lexical units. It was mainly etymological, semantic and lexicographical. No attempt has been made to study money as a culturally constructed conceptual category, its political, symbolic and ideological content. The current article is intended to make up for this noticeable negligence.

The purpose of this essay is twofold: first, we inquire into onomasiological peculiarities of money names (the abstract concept and concrete coins) and their semantics in the Anglo-Norman period with the purpose of detecting tropic shifts in the language naming practices; and second, we integrate discourse into our inquiry of money to expose its growing role in making sense of new experience in the said period. According to W. Humboldt (1963), writing constitutes an essential part of language, the material embodiment of the specific formative principle a language employs to construct meaning rather than being the mere representational mirror of speech. For him, the development of language and writing were mutually dependent. Proceeding from these two objectives we employ different but complementing methods of analysis within the frameworks of cognitive theory: those of **cognitive historical sociolinguistics**, a discipline that regards the evolution of linguistic systems occurring in systematic connection to the social-historical situation of their speakers (Hernandez-Campoy & Conde-Silvestre, 2012, p.1) and **cognitive narratology** – a branch that studies mind-relevant aspects of narratives as cognitive artifacts establishing the nexus of narrative and mind in which the cognitive and social, linguistic and literary intersect and form ground for structuring and comprehending the world (Herman, 2003). Material for the research was collected from numismatic catalogs, books for coin collectors, and money encyclopedias (Ainslie, 1830; Keary, 1885; Allen, 1949; Snodgrass, 2003) and verified by Middle-English and Anglo-Norman dictionaries (Kelham, 1779; Stratmann & Bradley, 1891). The final list of money names comprises the following words: *angel, angelot, beazant, chaise, denier, double, dragme, ecu, farthing, florin, frank, groat (gros), guiennois, hardi, leopard/lion, mark, mouton (agnel), noble, obole, pavilion, penny, pound, ryal, salute, shilling, sol/ sou, sovereign, and sterling*.

There has always been scholarly interest in studying the relationship between language and culture. Enquiries into the determinative role of culture in human and linguistic development started with the works by W. Humboldt, who introduced a notion of culture as *worldview (Weltanschauung)* (Underhill 2009) Later contributions in this field were made by Anthropological linguistics, Ethnolinguistics, Linguistic relativity, and Social constructivism (Duranti, 2003). Some linguists went as far as introduce the notion of *linguaculture*, that is a single domain constituted by language and culture where culture is viewed as residing in language, and language as being loaded with culture. (Risager, 2015). The most recent development in this field is the emergence of Cultural Linguistics – a distinct discipline that has gone beyond Aboriginal languages and primitive cultures and explores *the features of human languages that encode culturally constructed conceptualizations of the whole range of human experience* (Palmer, 1996; Sharifian, 2017, p.10).

More significantly, medievalists insist on a vital importance of the contextualizing framework in analyzing medieval texts. *Cultural contexts may be religious, or concern social hierarchy, or urban life, or the ways in which society constructed narratives of its own experience (chronicles), or represented its values to another culture* (Brown, 2009, p.2). Context – the general surroundings of a *focal event* – is a multifaceted phenomenon. In the first place, we

Methodology and Material

Cultural and Socio-Historical Background

distinguish between *linguistic* and *non-linguistic* contexts. The former deals with immediate verbal environment of a language unit. Linguistic context is vitally important for inferring meaning of polysemous words. At the boundary of linguistic and non-linguistic contexts is literature. Literary texts, being, ontologically, linguistic entities, need contextualization as a fundamental part of understanding their purport. Psychological, social, cultural, or historical *circumstances* account for many properties of literary texts and other works of art. An integrated theory of context is impossible without various cognitive components – shared social cognitions, knowledge, ideologies, norms, and values (Van Dijk, 2008, p.5, 23). The configuration and integration of contexts may be represented as *concentric rings* starting with linguistic to literary to cultural to cognitive to a broad socio-historical context including polity, economy, religion, art, etc.

Money is a relatively young form of economic conceptualizations. The deep entanglement of money and culture has always been recognized as a background factor shaping personal self-identification and esteem, causing social differentiation, altering ideology and affecting discursive practices by germinating new thematic content and genres in literature, and infusing new imagery and vocabulary into language (Palmer, 1996; Brown, 2009; Gil & Silva, 2015; Bivona, 2016; Wolfthal, 2016). Money thus reflects and shapes the culture in which it functions.

Cultural and Socio- Historical Background

The Norman Conquest changed the entire course of the English history and language. The event of such significance could not but have a considerable impact on all aspects of the country's life. After 1066 the Anglo-Saxon aristocrats either emigrated or withdrew into the forests, the majority lost their estates. Later they perished in many revolts and insurgences against the conquerors. Within 20 years of the Battle of Hastings, the important positions in England were almost always occupied by Normans. Merchants and craftsmen from the continent settled in England in considerable numbers. There were French towns and French streets within English towns. For families from Gaul *the country had become a land newly discovered, which had to be colonized, and which belonged to any comer* (Thierry, 1825, p.223). The English were also banished from the upper echelons of the Church and English abbots were persecuted (Thierry, 1825; Baugh & Cable, 1978).

However, there were positive developments too. The Normans abolished slavery. They were skilled builders and put up many castles, towers and churches *for war and for God*. The economy also grew rapidly, and there was a big increase in trade with continental Europe. Merchants and craftsmen from the continent brought new crafts and products. The Normans increased the number of monasteries, which were the main centers of learning before universities. Many young English people went to France to get a good education.

Hostility dominated the English and the Normans well into the twelfth century. Yet by the end of the twelfth century ethnic distinctions had broken down. *Although Norman French continued to be spoken, and though English society absorbed a tremendous amount of Continental culture, the aristocracy, descended in large measure from the conquerors, came to identify itself firmly as English* (Thomas, 2005, pp.3–4).

Trilingualism

The linguistic situation in post Anglo-Saxon England may be described as trilingualism. The co-existing languages – Latin, French and English – performed the social identificatory function, *a symbolic representation of social closure* (Britnell, 2009, p.81). The language of power and courtly culture was Anglo-Norman (Insular French brought from Normandy to the British Isles which differed from continental French). *Anglo-Norman was limited to*

certain highly privileged circles, primarily royal court and government, the law, and the nobility including the episcopacy, in other words, the topmost heights of social pyramid (Ingham & Marcus, 2016, p.147). Latin was a learned language of the clergy, intellectuals, and medical practitioners. English which grew out of Anglo-Saxon was spoken by the majority of ordinary people. Recent research, however, reveals the fact that Anglo-Norman was becoming the language of many professions and occupations. It was used by mid-level groups of medieval English society, among members of various guilds. *The use of Anglo-Norman extended out to those who owed their positions to professional knowledge, rather than a Norman pedigree and a landed inheritance* (ibid., p.148).

Trilingualism impacted the literary landscape of the Anglo-Norman period. Distinguished Latin writers were brought from the Continent by the Conqueror. *Anglo-Latin* literature included poetry of great beauty, and almost classic elegance, satirical verses and epigrams; but the most important part of Latin writings comprised serious tracts on political and ecclesiastical history, and profound works of theological and scholastic character (Wright, 1846). Side by side with this kind of literature, there appeared pseudo-historical narratives creating a mythic history of past princes and heroes. The most important work in this genre, which exercised immense influence on subsequent literature was that by Geoffrey of Monmouth² whose *History* glorified the legendary king Arthur and earned the author the title of *Galfridus Arturus. He had, unknowingly perhaps, wandered from the domain of history into that of romance, which was more agreeable to the taste of his time* (ibid., p.146).

The first encounter of Anglo-Saxons with French romance is believed to have taken place at Hastings when Norman soldiers to brace up their courage and intimidate the enemy sang *la Chanson de Roland*³. Later, transplanted on the English soil, *la chanson de geste* gave birth to a prolific literary genre of chivalric romances which propagated the conventions of chivalry. *Frenchification* of literature started already in the 12th century: gifted men of letters translated Latin and French texts into Anglo-Norman or created their own poetic works. These were *courtly works, aimed at aristocratic audience familiar with courtly love and and ideals of knighthood. They were primarily imaginative and fantastic* (Dunn & Byrnes, 1990, p.5).

However, the largest proportion of Middle English literature was of religious character providing moral and spiritual guidance: homilies, lives of saints, debate poetry in which one of the disputants is always morally and theologically correct, miracle (towneley) plays, sermons, didactic poems, allegories, confessional prose, etc. (Lambdin & Lambdin, 2002). It is not surprising that the native language of the country made a comeback within ecclesiastic literature whose aim was, as Orm⁴ put it, to help *All þess te better ...þe Goddspell unnderrstannðenn* [All those ... to better understand the Gospel] (Holt, 1878 (line 50)). From religious literature English spread to secular genres. In the end, Norman and English drove Latin out of the scene.

As has been shown above, with the Norman invasion, the general political and cultural landscape of Medieval England changed, so did the moneyscape. In the Middle-English period the group of words denoting money greatly increased for several reasons. First, it was a transitional period when for some time before disappearing altogether or acquiring new meanings old names continued functioning alongside newly borrowed words: feoh, schat/sceat (Anglo-Saxon) – moneie, mūnet (Anglo-Norman); mynet (Anglo-Saxon) – coin (Anglo-

Anglo-Norman Moneyscape

2 British cleric (1095–1155) who wrote *The History of the Kings of Britain* which abounds in beautiful stories about British kings of doubtful historical veracity. Written originally in Latin, this work was translated into many European languages.

3 *La chanson de geste* (song of heroic deeds) written possibly by the *trouvere* (a poet-composer) Turolde in about 1090, is the oldest surviving major work of French literature. It is divided into parts called *laisse*.

4 *Ormulum*, a collection of homilies, written by the monk Orm between 1150 and 1180 (quoted by the number of line).

Norman). Second, whereas some Anglo-Saxon coins vanished, new ones were added to the Anglo-Saxon currency. Finally, there were two concurrent money systems – one for insular England, the other for English possessions on the Continent; the latter was in close contact with the monetary system of French kings with a strong cross-fertilizing effect as a result.

Cognitive context is a function of human cognitive abilities. It consists of acquired factual knowledge and true or false assumptions on the basis of which further knowledge is to be obtained. Medieval economic thought in Europe developed within Christian religion with its dominant philosophy of Scholasticism⁵. When stripped of theological postulate about inherent sinfulness of money, the Scholastic teaching appears to have taken a favorable view on the *natural institution* of money and recognized its usefulness for the public well-being as *a balancing instrument for the exchange of natural wealth* (Oresme⁶, 1956, p.11). Alongside *pure* theory, Medieval monetary reality supplied a down-to-earth kind of experience not always in concord with academic theorizing. Wars, famine, plague, adulteration of coinage, clippings, broken silver, counterfeit coins, etc. disrupted the fledging *monetized* economic relations. French and English monarchs resorted to debasement (altering precious metal content), devaluing money in circulation, introducing various cheap alloys (Wittreck, 2016). These processes were encoded in the language: *good money*, (in conformity with legal norms), *white money* (silver money), *black money* (money of billion of small value or counterfeit money intended by forgers to pass for silver), *devalued money*, *bad* (fake money), etc.

Human language is not the only means for encoding and storing acquired knowledge. Every culture has a set of symbols that perform the same function. Iconography of coins (pictorial representation/ design) is a special aspect of cognitive content. Coins are a unique kind of signs whose secondary function (its primary function is to be a medium of exchange) is to convey semiotic messages and connotations through combination of symbolic elements typical of the contemporary epoch. They were easily recognized and understood at the time of issuance but inferring their semiotic meaning today requires analysis of cultural, historical, or political context.

Money: Generic Names

The generic name *money*⁵ appeared in the middle of the 13th century, a borrowing of the Old French *monnaie* (money, coin, currency; change, mint) which goes back to Latin *moneta* derived from *Moneta*, a name of the Roman⁶ goddess Juno, in whose temple money was coined. A very interesting explanation of the word's etymology is found in Ugucchio's⁷ *Derivationes magnae: Moneta is so called from moneo (to warn), because it warns us against fraud in metal or weight* (cited by Oresme, 1956, p.22). However, it took the borrowing some time to penetrate the language and oust Anglo-Saxon words. Middle-English texts, which we attempt to analyze in chronological order, illustrate this process.

Undoubtedly, the oldest literary artifact is *Chronicles*⁸. After 1066 up to around 1154, *Chronicle* continued to be written in Anglo-Saxon. The analysis of these texts shows that two Anglo-Saxon words are still used to denote money: *feoh* and *sceat*. For example, in 1093, the scribe recording king William's severe illness when many people thought him dead, writes, *on his broke he Gode fela behæsa behet. his agen lif on riht to lædene. Godes cyrcean griðian friðian. næfre ma eft wið feo gesyllan*. [In this miserable state he made many good promises

5 A method of critical thought which places a strong emphasis on dialectical reasoning to extend knowledge.

6 Nicholas Oresme (1320–1382), a bishop, a most influential thinker of the 14th century. His *De Moneta* is the first tract on the nature and origin of money, which brings together the ideas of prominent Schoolmen.

7 Ugucchio of Pisa, the author of *Derivationes*, a Latin lexicon of alphabetically ordered simple words and their derivatives, the most widely-circulated lexicographical encyclopedia of the Middle Ages.

8 *Chronicles* are cited by the year.

to God, that he would lead a righteous life, that God's churches he would guard and free, that never again would he sell them for money] (Clark 1958, p. 20). The other word was the Anglo-Saxon *sceatta*: *Hi namen þære swa mycele gold seolfre swa manega gersumas on sceat on scrud on bokes swa nan man ne mæi oðer tællen.* (1068) [They took so much gold and silver, so much treasure in money, robes, and books that no man could tell] (ibid., p 3).

In the Brut Chronicle⁹ of 1296, we don't find Anglo-Saxon words any longer, but only the borrowed lexeme *money*; for example, *neve (new) money; gret somme of money; money was skarse; for defaut (lack) of money*, etc. By the 14th century, the borrowed word had taken root in the language and ousted its Anglo-Saxon counterparts. Thus, describing the ordinance by Richard III¹⁰ who was afraid to travel in his own realm for fear of conspirators and assassins and wished to coerce town folks of many shires and especially London to peace, a scribe writes: *Wherfore thay ordeyned, that Londoun and euerich of tho shiris sholde gadre a gret summe of moneye, and in token of pee3 yeue it to the kyng; and so thay dede* (1397–8). [Therefore they (the council) ordained that London and every shire should gather a great sum of money and as a token of peace give it to the King; and so they did].

The same regularity manifests itself in literary genres. The generic name *feoh* is used up to the end of the 13th century. We find the word in such different works as homilies by Ormulum and the fable *Dame Sirith*.¹¹

*Of þat hē wolde witen wel
Hū micel feh him cōme.
3if him of al his kinedōm
Ælc man ān pening 3ǣfe.*

About that he wanted to know well
How much money to him will come,
If to him of all his kingdom
Each man one penny gave.

(Holt, 1878 (line 3281))

*Me were levere then ani fe
That he hevede enes leien bi me.*

It would be more pleasing to me than any money
That he had once lain by me

(Dunn, Byrnes, 1990 (Dame Sirith, line 382)).

In the literature of the 14th century, the word *money* functions in all genres. In the Debate poetry, e. g., *mony messe* (much money); in *Minor Poems of Vernon*¹²: *He may saue money and gete þat wol be curteys of his mete* [He who takes care of his food can save money and get more]; in *The Towneley play*¹³ – *The Conspiracy* – which describes Judas' treason, Pilate urges Judas to fulfill his promise and give away Jesus:

*Thynk what thou has doyn,
that has thi master sold;
Performe thi bargan soyn;
thou has thi money takyn and told.*

Think what you have done,
That have your master sold;
Perform your bargain soon;
You have taken your money and counted it.

(The Towneley Plays, 1966 (The Conspiracy, line 583)).

Trying to incorporate new borrowings into its lexis and semantics, the language goes through a stage of synonymic and semantic differentiation. In the allegory *Vision of Piers the*

9 The Brut Chronicle is the collective name of a number of medieval chronicles, first written in Anglo-Norman and later translated into English.

10 King of England from 1377 until he was deposed in 1399. Richard died in captivity next year of starvation.

11 One of the two known English fables, written between 1272 and 1283, composed in the form of a dialogue, probably meant to be performed orally or dramatized.

12 A large collection of religious poems and prose written in the 1380s.

13 Also called *mystery* plays, dramatize Biblical history (quoted by line).

Plowman,¹⁴ two words are used to denote the generic term: *moneye* and *pecunie*. Contextual analysis explains their usage by thematic difference. The former is used in contexts depicting everyday life and reflecting everyday speech, the latter is used in the context relating to court procedures and belongs to a higher register of legal language.

Ac þe moneye of þis molde þat men so faste holdeth telle me, Madam, to whom that treasure appendeth?

"But the money of this land to which men hold so fast
Tell me, Madam, to whom that treasure belongs?"

(Langland, 1888 (passus 1, lines 40–45)).

Be þe pecunie y-payed þauh parties chide.

Be paid in money ... though parties contend
(ibid., passus 4, line 392)

A more complicated picture is found in Dan Michel's *Ayenbite of Inwyt*.¹⁵ The Anglo-Saxon word *guodes* (goods) has the meaning *wealth, money*, whereas the borrowed word *money* is used in religious contexts in reference to Christ's blood in the transferred meaning of *price paid, cost*, that is the price (money) Jesus paid for saving mankind.

Manie men ... makeþ sacrefices naȝt to god: ac to þe dyeule in þet hi despendeþ folliche hare guodes ine ydelnesses uor bost of þe wordle ac uor to yeue uor god.

Many men ... offer sacrifices not to God but the Devil, in that they dispense foolishly their money in vanity to boast to the world but not to give for God.

(Michel, 1866, p.187)

We byeþ alle y-wesse mid Iesu cristes presiose blod. And yboȝt mid onelepi moneye. And ase-moche costende þe on ase þe oþer.

We are all a-washed with Jesus Christ's precious blood. And bought with the same money. And as much one costs as the other.

(ibid., p.145)

The well-known coin name *the penny* is sometimes used in the general meaning of *money*. In *Dame Sirith*, the lady, though she has been paid in shillings, says, "*Neren never pones beter biset/ Then thes shulen ben*". [*Pennies (money) were never better employed/ Than these shall be.*] (Dunn, Byrnes, 1990 (Dame Sirith, line 275)). Describing rich decorations at Camelot on Christmas-tide the anonymous author says that tapestries were embroidered with the best gems *þat myȝt be preued of prys wyth penyes to bye, in daye* [that might be price-proved with pennies to buy any a day] (Tolkien, Gordon, 1967¹⁶ (part 4, lines 19–20)).

The words *silver* and *gold* are often used in the generic meaning. For instance, *Me ret of saint germain ... ate out-gouinge of melane he acsede at onen of his diaknen yef he hedde eny zeluer...yeue to pouren*. [He told me of St. Germain ... when he was leaving Milan, he asked one of his deacons if ha had any money ... to give to the poor] (Michel, 1866, p.190). A poor Kentishman, trying to get a hearing of his case in court is told by one of the clerks, "*Ley down sylvar or here thow may not spede*" [give money or you should not come here] (Lydgate, London Lickpenny, stanza. 6, line 48). In Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* a sick man, Thomas, complains that he has spent on different sorts of friars who promised to pray

14 A theological allegory written around 1370–90 by William Langland, concerns the narrator's intense quest for the true Christian life. It is composed of a series of dream-visions. The text is divided into sections called *passus* (quoted by passus and line).

15 *The Prick of Conscience* written about 1340 is a sample of confessional prose which explains allegorically the main religious concepts to *lewede* (simple) people who do not know Latin or French (quoted by page).

16 *Gawayn and þe Grene Knyȝt*, a late 14th-century chivalric romance by an anonymous author with its plot combining two types of folklore motifs, the beheading game and the exchange of winnings.

for him *ful many a pound, but hasn't fared better*. He bemoans, "*Farwel, my gold, for it is al ago!*" [Farewell, my money, for it is all gone!] (Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales (Summoner's Tale, line 1953)).

To sum up, the abstract concept of money is actualized by a number of words with the borrowed word performing the function of the prototype (a word representative of the whole category) and ousting its Anglo-Saxon predecessors out of the field. Other words are: *the penny* (the sole silver coin current in the economy since time immemorial) and names of metals of which coins were struck.

Money is not only an economic construct, or a social institution, money is not only a material thing, or a conception of value in one's mind, it is a semiotic system attaching a symbolic dimension to naming. Onomasiological events, in this perspective, are viewed as establishing a relationship between a referent, name and meaning, between the symbol and the symbolic content. The semiotic nature of money is determined *by the tropic interaction between economic and linguistic symbolization* (Shell, 1982, p.4).

Linguists may be surprised to learn that Oresme discusses and suggests his own appraisal of money designations. He ascribes almost mystic significance to money names which *were given by our forefathers after deep thought and with great mystery*. In ancient times, a shilling (solidus) had six thousand pence *in order that the round shape of radiant metal, like a golden sun, might correspond numerically with the age of the world*; and the pound which consisted of twelve ounces *corresponded with the year*; the word ounce (*uncia*) in its turn signified number six, considered by the learned antiquity *the most perfect (1+2+3) number*. According to Oresme, these names *symbolize so many of the secrets of nature* (Oresme, 1956, p.17). He distinguishes between *proper names which are derived from the essence* such as "*pound, shilling, penny, halfpenny, as, sextula*, and the like, which are names of weights applied to coins" given by the sages of that time and names *not proper but accidental, or denominative from a place, a design or an authority, or in some other way* (*ibid.*, p.9).

The word *COIN* is a borrowing (about 1300) from Old French *coing* (12th c.) which meant *corner, angle, a wedge; stamp; piece of money*; from Latin *cuneus* *a wedge*¹⁷ (FEW). The English word came to mean *thing stamped with a wedge, a piece of money* by late 14th century, drawing on the ancient metonymic naming pattern of *instrument* → *an object made with this instrument*. Two words are used in the narratives analyzed in the meaning *a piece of money* – *Coin* and *Münet*; the former is used in the direct meaning, the latter in the transferred meaning of *the price paid*.

*And god askede of hem · whas was pe coygne
Cesares, þei seiden · sothliche we knowen.
Reddite cesari, seide god · þat to cesar by-falleþ*

And god asked them whose was the coin
Caesar's the said... in truth we know
Pay to Caesar said god that to Caesar belongs.
(Langland, 1888 (text C, passus II, line 46)).

*Vor pouerté is þet menet/ huermide me bayþ þe
riche of heuene.*

For poverty is that coin with which one may
buy the riches of Heaven.
(Michel, 1866, p.241)

¹⁷ The die for stamping metal was wedge-shaped.

Money: Coin Names

Positive and Ghost Money

Long before the conquest in AD 755, Pepin the Short's¹⁸ reform of French currency practically set up two parallel monetary systems. In England, the smallest silver coin was called the *penny* which corresponded to the French *denier*. 12 pence/ deniers equaled one *shilling* in England and *sol or sou* in France; 20 shillings made up one *pound* and 20 sols one *livre*. Out of these monies only the *penny* and the *denier* were positive coins, the other four were imaginary or *ghost* money used for calculating big sums. These correspondences lasted for 300 years well into the Middle English period.

The Norman conquest had no immediate effect on the English currency. Changes made by William the Conqueror concerned only the denominations of money of account, for which no positive coins existed: the *mancus*, the *mark*, the *shilling*, and the *pound* (Humphreys, 1853, pp.428–429). The coins of William I and his son were mainly silver *pennies* of very good quality and the *penny* long remained the sole English coin. (Keary, 1885, p.9). The *mark* and the *pound* continued to be used as money of account, but the main meaning was that of weight. Thus, in the Chronicle for 1087 the scribe writes: *Se cyng wæs swā swīðe stearc and benam of his underpēoddan maniġ marc goldes and mā hundred punda seolfres ðæt hē nam be wihte and mid myçlum unrihte of his landlēode for lýtetre nēode*. [The King was also of great sternness and he took from his subjects many marks of gold and many hundred pounds of silver that he took by weight and with much injustice to the people of the country, and with little need]. Three centuries later in 1415, describing the Southampton¹⁹ plot the chronicler mentions an incredible sum of money offered to the conspirators: *They had receyuet a gret somme of money, þat is to say, a Ml pounde of gold, and had sold þe Kyng vnto þe Frensshmen and his brether*. [They had received a great sum of money, that is to say a thousand pounds of gold, and had sold the King to the Frenchmen and his brother].

In literature, the juxtaposition of *mark* and *pound* is also very common. When the young cleric begs Dame Sirith to help in his love affairs, he promises to pay generously:

*Help, Dame Sirith,
And ich wille geve thee gift ful stark,
Moni a pound and moni a marke.*

And I will give you really striking gifts,
Many a pound and many a mark
(Dunn, Byrnes, 1990 (Dame Sirith, line 225)).

The word *mancus* (Anglo-Norman *manke*) is less common, in our research material, we found it only in *Poema Morale*²⁰ where the author explains the necessity of piety, voluntary donations to the Church or to the poor. Before God all are equal, whether rich or poor:

*And se þe more ne mai don mid his gode iþanke,
Also wel se þe þe haved goldes fele manke.
And ofte God can more þanc þan þe him zieveð
lasse.*

And he who may not do more, with his good will,
As well as he who has many a mancus of gold.
And often God shows more grace when one
gives him less.

(Poema Morale, 1881 (line 70))

One more unit of account was the *shilling* well-known in Anglo-Saxon England. Though no hard coin existed in the Middle ages (the first *shilling* was not issued till 1502), it was mentioned in many literary works.

18 The first Carolingian King (714–768). He was proclaimed the sole king of France in 751. He expanded the Frankish realm and made the Franks the foremost power of Europe.

19 The Southampton Plot of 1415 was a conspiracy to replace King Henry V and prevent his invasion of France. The conspirators were arrested, summary tried and beheaded. The King sailed to France.

20 *Moral Ode*, was composed in the last quarter of the 12th century by an unknown author, outlining proper Christian conduct.

*Have her twenti shiling,
This ich geve thee to meding,
To bugen thee sep and swin.*

Have now twenty shillings.
This I give you as reward
To buy for yourself sheep and pigs.

(Dunn, Byrnes, 1990 (Dame Sirith, lines 269–271))

In the end of the 15th century an English silver coin was struck called the *testoon*, a forerunner of the *shilling*. As with other coins of the period, the *testoon* first appeared in Italy in the 1470s by the name *testone* meaning *head* as the head of the monarch was impressed on the coin. The coin had currency in many European countries: French *teston* etymologically related to *tête* (head), Portugese *Testao*. Dutch *Testoon*. In England the name *testoon* was short-lived, it was popularly called *tester* and later the coin became known as the *shilling*, probably because it was initially valued at one shilling and the name was better known to the public.

The *penny* and its French counterpart the *denier* were practically the sole silver coins current in the economies of Europe till the middle of the twelfth century. Though minted in England, penny coins were known on the Continent as *starlings* or *esterlings* (silver penny) and were highly esteemed for the fineness of silver, that is why they were often forged on the Continent. There was a *luther alay*, and yet loketh he lik a sterlyng: *The merk of that monee is good, ac the metal is feble*. [a lighter alloy and yet it looks like a sterling: the stamp is good but the metal is billon – cheap alloy] (Langland, 1888 (passus XV, line 15.348)). The etymology of the word *sterling* is uncertain. Some relate the name to the cross on the reverse which resembled a star (Snodgrass, 2003, p.146). Another theory derives it from Old French *estedre* (stater), an ancient Greek coin, which became a general name for the principal or standard coin in any place (Etymological dict). Still another version derives it from the name given to persons who examined the mints and coinage – possibly at Easter. The term meant *money true according to the last examination* (Humphreys, 1853, p.429). Some trace the word to the popular name of German merchants in England who were called *Easterlings*, (men of the East), whose money was of the purest quality; in Middle High Germanic a certain coin was called *sterlink* (WUD). Finally, researchers suggest that the *iesterling* was the currency of a mysterious country called *lestia* located somewhere near Novgorod, *whose cities were all destroyed and whose records and monuments all perished under the proscriptions of Charlemagne and his successors* (Del Mar, 1890, pp.159–160). In the Middle Ages the word was entirely applied to pennies. *Myn hooly pardoun may yow alle warice, So that ye offre nobles or sterlynges* [My holy pardon can cure you all, Providing that you offer gold coins or silver pennies.] (Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales (Pardoner's Tale, lines 907–908)).

By 1560s the word started to mean *money having the quality of the sterling*, and about 1600 *English money in general*. A *pound sterling* was originally a *pound weight of sterlings*.

The names *Aquitaine penny* and *Aquitaine denier* tell us a story of the changing fortunes of the region. In the Middle ages it was a kingdom at one time, a duchy at another; in 1137 it passed to France when duchess Eleanor married King of France. When their marriage was annulled and Eleanor married King of England, the region became an English possession and remained so till the end of the Hundred Years' War. In the reign of Henry II²¹ and Eleanor there were two coinages: the *Penny* for England and the Anglo-Gallic coin struck in Aquitaine – the *Denier*. However, their son Richard I²² pursued a different money policy. He started coining

21 Henry II (1133–1189), expanded his empire. By 1172, he controlled England, large parts of Wales, the eastern half of Ireland and the western half of France.

22 Also called Lion Heart, King of England (1189–1199). Had a reputation as a great military leader and warrior.

Penny vs Denier

pennies in his French possessions: Aquitaine, Poitou, Normandy, hence the name *Aquitaine penny*. There was fractional money too; *half-denier* also called *obole* (Old French). Later when farthings appeared they were also called popularly *obole*. The name is derived from the least valuable coin in ancient Athens *obolos* (Latin *obolus*), which meant *a needle, a metal stick* due to the original shape. *Obols* were long thin sticks of copper or bronze. The hand could hold in its grasp no more than six *obols*, which made up a *drachma* meaning *a handful*.

The word *denier* comes from Latin *denarius*. (a Roman silver coin) the root means *decem* (ten, containing ten parts). The semantic structure of the word reveals the already familiar combinations of meanings that of weight measure and a coin: 1) a unit of weight in the French system, in use up to 1812; 2) a coin. Like the penny, the denier was the smallest coin in circulation, which is why they both received additional meaning *something of little or no importance*. In the *Chanson of Roland* the King of France, Charles le Grand, when he saw the overwhelming enemy forces, to encourage his own combatants, cried at the top of his voice:

*Barons franceis, vos estes bons vassals.
Tantes batailles avez faites en camps!
Veez paien: felun sunt e cuart,
Tutes lor leis un dener ne lur valt.*

Barons of France, good vassals are ye all,
So great combats have Ye fought in the fields;
See the pagans; felons are they and cowards,
All their laws are not worth a penny!

(Brault, 1997 (La Chanson de Roland, Laisse 244))

During the reign of Louis VI, the Fat²³, the *denier* got an extra name *parisis* (denarius of Paris), and started a practice of naming coins after the place where they were struck. In 1205, after the area of Touraine was retrieved by France, the mint was set up there and the coins issued received the name *tournois* (denier of Tours) to mark the victory; it consolidated the *geographical model* for naming. In 1340, when Edward III²⁴ of England received Guyenne²⁵, Gascony, and other parts of France, the English coins struck in Guyenne were called *guiennois*.

Denier coins were very simple in design, they carried King's head on the obverse (facial likeness was not necessary) and one of the several types of crosses on the reverse. Edward III began to change this format. His *Double*, or *Double-denier*, had several designs. One was featuring a Crown of five fleur-de-lis (a symbol of the French monarchy²⁶; another was featuring a Lion (heraldic symbol of England). Thus coins were becoming an essential tool of asserting political dominance. His son, the Black Prince²⁷, struck a great number of coins. One coin is very interesting in that it combined royal symbols of the two countries – two fleur-de-lis and two lions – expressly claiming English right to the French throne. Throughout the 15th century, the *denier* was also current in Ireland, Scotland and some parts of England.

Farthing

By 1221, the necessity for small-denomination coins had become urgent. So the first round silver farthings were issued in small quantities under Henry III who directed a writ to all sheriffs which proclaimed that no farthing should be accepted in payment unless it was round (Ruding, 1840, p.182). Thus at long last, the *farthing* became a distinct coin rather than

23 Warrior King of France (1108–1137). He spent almost all of his twenty-nine-year reign fighting either the *robber barons* who plundered Paris or the Norman kings of England.

24 King of England (1327–1377) is noted for his military success, and a long reign of 50 years. In 1337, he declared himself the rightful heir to the French Throne, was denied, and stated the Hundred Years' War.

25 An old French province.

26 The three petals represent the medieval social classes: those who worked, those who fought, and those who prayed.

27 He never became the King of England as his father outlived him; was the Prince of Aquitaine (1362–72); his victories over the French made him very popular in England but not in France.

28 King of England from 1216 until his death in 1272.

a fourth part of the penny cut off with a chisel. Farthings had survived for about 700 years and were discontinued at the end of 1960. All through its long history the farthing played a role in language and literature. Being the smallest coin in Medieval England, the word *farthing* acquired the meaning *the smallest monetary unit in general*. Based on the idea of *smallness* new expressions modified the monetary facet of the word to mean *a thing of no importance; nothing at all*, for instance, *nought a ferthing/ nought a farthing worth/ nought worth a farthing*.

The coin name was made famous by the Biblical story of the poor widow whose worldly riches were two small coins which she brought to God. In the original Greek text *lepta* and in the Latin Vulgate Bible²⁹ *minuta* were interpreted by Wycliffe³⁰ as the *farthing*. *Pore widowe hadde comen, sche sente tweye mynutis, that is, a ferthing* [Poor widow came and offered two small coins, that is a *farthing*] (NIV, Mark, 12:42; Luke, 21:2). Another instance is Jesus' advice to look for extrajudicial reconciliation with one's adversary because if one gets into prison, *I seie to thee, Thou schalt not go thennis, til thou zelde also the last ferthing* [I tell you, you shall never get out of there till you have paid your last *farthing*] (NIV, Matthew, 5:27; Luke, 12:59).

In literature, the word is used in various contexts to stress one's poverty, or to prove one's honesty, or vice-versa, to confess one's greed. In the Townely play *The Killing of Abel*, Cain performs the part of a theomachist. He blames God for not helping him.

*Me gifys he nought bot soro and wo.
Yit boroed I neuer a farthyng of hym,
here my hend.*

To me he gives nothing but sorrow and woe.
Truly, He won't let me borrow so much as a
farthing.

(The Killing of Abel, Lines, 98–100.)

Cain also accuses clergymen of avarice and hypocrisy. Though they preach that the laity should pay tithe (one tenth) to God, they are in no hurry to part with their own possessions: *My farthyng is in the preest hand syn last tyme I offyr*. [A fine example our priest sets! He's still holding on to that *farthing* I offered him last time] (ibid., lines 105–106). Piers, the plowman, wanting to prove his honesty exclaims, *Ich nolde fonge a ferthing · for seynt Thomas shryne!* [I won't take a *farthing* for St. Thomas' shrine!] (Langland, 1888 (passus VIII, line 201)).

In Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, the word is used in two meanings: 1) *a coin* and 2) proverbially, *nothing at all*. Compare the two examples. A Friar³¹, who solicited money from poor people, was so convincing that even a poor widow who had no shoes, would give him a farthing. *So plesaunt was his In principio, Yet wolde he have a ferthyng, er he wente*. [So pleasant was his "In the beginning," Yet he would have a *farthing*, before he went away] (Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales* (General Prologue, lines 254–255)).

When Chaucer describes the Prioress's (ecclesiastical title for a Nun of high standing) immaculate table manners he writes:

*That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir
draughte.*

That in her cup there was seen no tiny bit
Of grease, when she had drunk her drink.
(Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* (General Pro-
logue, lines 134–135))

29 A late 4th century Latin translation of the Bible which later became Catholic Church's official version.

30 Wycliffe's Bible. Middle English translation of the Bible under the direction of John Wycliffe from 1382 to 1395.

31 A member of one of the Christian religious orders founded in the twelfth or thirteenth century that have adopted a lifestyle of poverty and service to society.

Groat

As trade grew, pennies were not coping with a greater demand for money payments. So in 1249, King of England Henry III³² summoned a Parliament at London, in which it was enacted that *a coyne of a certain weight of siluer called a grote should be stamped, and that it should have on the one syde the picture of the kinges face and on the other a crosse* (Grafton, 1809, p.244–245). The ordinance of his son, Edward I³³, gives us a clue to the source for naming. He ordered the mints to strike *Esterlyng, maylle, ferthing fet forger roundement, Et gros Tournais Englays qe valent verayment Quatre esterlinges en achate & vent*. [Sterling (penny), half-penny, farthing should be coined round, and the English groat of Tours³⁴, whose real value is four sterlings (pence) for purchase and sale]. The English coin was of better quality than its European counterparts: *pe groot turoney is somewhat lasse worpy þan an Engliche groote*. [The groat of Tours is of less worth than the English groat] (ibid.).

It becomes clear that the coin derives its name from the French word *gros* (a large piece) and the immediate ancestor to the groat was the French *gros tournois*. It has cognates in many European languages: Old Fris. *grāta*, the Middle Dutch *groot* (great or large); German *groschen*; *grosso* (a silver coin issued by Tyrol and Venice in the 13th century); the Bohemian *Prague groš*, in use since 1300; the *Kraków grosz* (a silver coin introduced in 1367 in Poland); Russian *zpow*. The name is traced to Medieval Latin *grossus*, (a thick coin). The underlying onomasiological model is the ancient metonymic pattern of naming an object after its salient quality (compare Anglo-Saxon *solidus*).

Medieval authors make ample use of the new coin name in their narratives. Langland, describing how a covetous woman cheated laborers and poor folk by pouring together *Peni Ale* (cheap ale) and *piriwhit* (pudding or thick ale) and selling it *A Galoun for a Grote* · *God wot, no lasse*, [a gallon for a groat, not less, God knows] (Langland, 1888 (passus V, line 138)). She made them believe that a higher price signaled better quality. Friar in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* reproves ailing Thomas that the latter gives insufficient alms to his convent, that is why their prayers cannot cure him. *A, yif that covent half a quarter otes! A, yif that covent foure and twenty grotes!* [Ah, give that convent half a quarter oats! A, give that convent four and twenty groats] (Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* (Summoner's Tale, lines 1964–1965)). Relating the bickering between The Friar and the Summoner,³⁵ Chaucer coins an idiomatic expression, something like modern *pay back in kind* or *pay someone in his own coin*.

*Nay, quod the Somonour, lat hym seye to me
What so hym list whan it comth to my lot
By god I shal hym quiten every groat.*

Nay, said the Summoner, let him say to me
Whatever he pleases; when it comes to my
turn, By God, I shall pay him back every groat.

(Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* (Friar's Tale,
lines 1290–1292))

The word is used in a cliché said when one is daring somebody to do something or betting a small sum. It sounds quite harmless in sentences like *If you'll tell me this riddle, I'll give you a groat*. But it creates a sinister and horrifying reality when a soldier in the Towneley Play *Herod the Great*, cynically, bets a groat that when he is through with the killing of a baby, its mother will not be pleased. *I hold, here a grote/ she lykys me not weyll, Befor we parte* [I hold here a groat That she will like me less Before we part] (lines 328–329).

32 Henry III (1207–1272), English King, the Lord of Ireland, Duke of Aquitaine, the rightful ruler of Gascony, known for his piety, but increasingly unpopular.

33 King of England from 1272 to 1307.

34 A city located in the Centre-west of France.

35 An officer of an ecclesiastical court whose job was to deliver a summons to an offender. Offense included *sins of immorality, witchcraft, usury, simony, neglect of the sacraments, and withholding tithes or offering*.

As commerce increased internationally and banking expanded, silver could not meet the demand for higher value coins. At that time, many countries reintroduced gold coinage. Before that in early medieval Western Europe, gold coins in circulation were mainly produced by the Byzantines, hence the term *bezant*, derived from the country of origin (Old French *besant*, from Latin *bizantius aureus*). This term was used to describe several gold coins. *Bezant* in reference to coins is common in literary sources from the 10th through 14th centuries. *Orm describes a reward of Fiftiȝ bez3sannz to mede; Forr þatt te33 sholldenn att hiss dæp þa riche menn offcwellenn.* [fifty bezant of reward to kill rich men at his death] (Holt, 1878 (line 8102)). Wycliffe uses this word in the *Parable of the Ten Minas* to translate the word *mina* (three months' wages). The would-be king when leaving for foreign land gives his servants one *mina* each to put this money to work. On his return, he calls his servants and each gives an account of how he has used the *besaunt* given to him. The first servant's *bezant* has earned ten more, another servant's *besant hap maad fyve*. And the third servant *put aȝen in a sudarie* [put it away in a piece of cloth] and earned nothing. The king awarded those who earned a profit and punished the one who had not tried to do anything. We find allusion to this episode in Gower's *Confessio Amantis: The which his lordes besant hedde And therupon gat non encress* [He who had hidden the Lord's coin And upon which got no profit] (Gower, *Confessio Amantis* (book 5, lines 1930–1932)). In the *Parable of the Lost Coin*, Wycliffe explains the coin name *dragme* with the help of *besaunt*, probably better known to English folk. The Bible tells about a woman who had *ten dragmes, ether besauntis* and lost one. She lightens a lantern and turns her house upside down to find it (NIV, Luke 15: 8–10). Thus we can call the *bezant* the precursor of European gold coins.

In 1252, the mint of Florence started issuing a *little gold flower* – a *Gold Florin*³⁶ carrying a lily (fleur-de-lis) on its obverse and a figure of St. John the Baptist in hair shirt on the reverse (see Appendix 1), the first European gold coin meant to play an important commercial role, especially in banking. The story of this coin is interesting and illustrative of a new attitude to money as an issue of political concern. Gold florins were very soon adopted by potentates all over Europe.

The English, however, issued their own gold coin – the *Gold Penny* featuring the king, enthroned, in his royal robes. The coin was unpopular so three-months later cities petitioned against it. By 1265 it was discontinued and there was no gold coinage for 70 years. Only in 1343, did the English Parliament petition Edward III to issue gold coins to help international trade. The monarch ordained to start minting gold *florins (double leopard)*, *half-florins (single leopard)* and *quarter-florins (helm)*. The designs of *florins* were different for his possessions in France and for England. The Aquitaine (French) coin depicted John the Baptist clothed in skins with a staff pointing to the cross, whereas the English coin portrayed the King seated under a canopy with orb and scepter and two heraldic lions (called leopards) beside him, hence the name *double leopard*. The background of *fleur-de-lis* and the inscription *King of France* is indicative of Edward III's ambitions to become the King of France and eventually marked the start of the Hundred Years' War (1339–1453). However, it was soon discovered that the coin was overvalued and was not in demand, so the issuance of the *florin* was discontinued the same year. Though short lived, the coin was so beautiful that the name left trace in literature. Gower, Chaucer, the anonymous translator of the romance *The Romance of the Emperor Octavian*³⁷ – all described *the beautee of thise floryns newe and brighte* (Chaucer, *Cantenbury*

³⁶ In the mid-1200s the Florentine mint struck a silver coin called a *little silver flower*.

³⁷ A 14th-century verse translation and abridgement of a mid-13th century Old French romance by the same name.

Gold Coins: Bezant

Gold Florin, Noble and Sovereign in Political Context

Tales (Pardoner's Tale, line 839): *florins fine of gold, y-coined rounde ... so faire and brighte!* (ibid., line 487); *euery floryn in his cofre is his Mawmet* [every florin in his coffer was his Idol] (ibid., line 750). Clement, a farmhand, buys a child (King's son) from outlaws with *floryns brode and bryght* (Halliwell-Phillipps, 1844 (line 576)). Langland describing corruption among judges says that bribes were given in florins, so justice failed. *Feip may not han his forþ hir Florins gon so þikke* [Faith cannot go forth because her (Falsehood's) florins are so thick] (Langland, 1888 (passus III, line 153)).

The same year, a new gold coin was introduced in England *for the benefit of the whole realm* called the *Noble*. Its name is derived from the noble nature of the metal. The impression on the obverse is a king standing on board of a ship with a sword and a shield. The coin is commemorative of the naval victory at Sluys (1340), one of the opening conflicts of the 'Hundred Years' War between England and France where France lost its fleet. *For foure thinges our noble sheweth to me – King, ship, and sword, and power of the see* (anonymous poet) (Ruding, 1840, p.219). The coin was successful. In 1464, Edward IV³⁸ added a rose on the ship, the coin got a name *Rose Noble* or *Ryal*. This coin name is also used by Medieval authors. Langland's allegory of exchange justice is represented by Meed the Maid whose name means *award*, and who must settle lawsuits by offering amends, but who also corrupts judges by offering bribes and *fouls law* so that Conscience refuses to marry her. Unhappy, she asks a Friar to pray for her. *She tolde hym a tale and toke hym a noble, Forto ben hire bedeman*³⁹ [told him a lying tale and gave him a noble to pray for her] (Langland, 1888 (passus III, lines 45–46)). In Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, the Pardoner is ready to offer pardon at every mile provided that *ye offren, alwey newe and newe, Nobles or pens, whiche that be goode and trewe* [you offer again and again Nobles or silver pennies, which are good and true] (Chaucer, 1400 (Parson's Tale, lines 930–931)).

France denounced the circulation of the *Florin* too. In 1364, the use of florins was prohibited in France as *infra dignitatem* (below dignity) because borrowed money was derogatory to the Crown and national self-identification. So money in this context became an issue of politics rather than economics.

Another example of political significance of a coin is the case of the *Sovereign* issued by Henry VII⁴⁰ in October of 1489. This coin was quite ostentatious – much larger than any gold coinage that had been circulating in England before. It featured the King seated facing on a low-backed, low-armed throne with scepter and orb on the obverse and a Tudor double rose (a combination of the red rose of Lancaster with juxtaposed white rose of York) on the reverse side. The story behind this coin is tragic. Henry Tudor defeated Richard III⁴¹ and seized the throne of England after winning the battle at Bosworth Field as a result of vile and villainous Treason by the former *pillars of the Ricardian regime*. His right to royal power was tenuous, so the coin named *sovereign* was to convey a complex political message to his subjects and Continental rulers that Henry had put an end to the Wars of the Roses (hence the combined rose), established the Tudor dynasty and was the legitimate and sole *by the Grace of God, King of England and France, Lord of Ireland* in whom supreme authority was vested. The legend on the reverse confirms his rights, *This is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes*, (NIV, Psalm 118).

The choice of the design and name was the prerogative of the King, and it was not accidental.

38 King of England from 1461 to his death in 1483. An excellent commander, he was never defeated on the battle field.

39 One who prays for another for money.

40 King of England (1485–1509), the first monarch of the House of Tudor.

41 King of England (1483–1485), the last King of the House of York.

The coin and the name added glossiness to the new dynasty. The noun, recorded in late 13th c., meant *superior, ruler, master*, from Old French *soverain sovereign, lord, ruler*. The adjective *sovereign* was registered in the 14th c., and was current both in England and on the Continent. It means *great, superior, supreme*, and comes from Old French *soverain highest, supreme*, from Vulgar Latin **superanus chief, principal*, from Latin *super*. The meaning *gold coin* was first recorded in late 15th c. and approximately coincides with the issuance authorized by Henry VII in 1489. That is why in contemporary literature the word *sovereign*, though used by many authors, never occurs in the meaning of coin.

Gower, Lydgate, Chaucer and others use the word either in the meaning of *master, ruler* or *supreme, great*. In Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, about 300 uses of the word are registered (Glossary). Examples are many: the *sovereyn conquerour* [the supreme conqueror], *sovereyn prys* [outstanding reputation], *sovereyn mansioun, temple* [excellent mansion, temple], *sovereyn honour* [high honor], *sovereyn hertes reste* [complete peace of mind], *sovereyn bontee* [perfect goodness], *sovereyn actes* [great deeds]. Speaking about celestial gods, Gower describes them in terms of mundane rulers: *So as Saturne is soverein Of false goddes, as thei sein, So is Sibeles of goddesses The moder, whom withoute gesses The folk payene honoure and serve* [So as Saturn is the King of false gods, as they say, so Cybele is the mother of the goddesses, whom without doubt pagan people honor and serve] (Gower, *Confessio Amantis* (Book 5, lines 1133–1136)). Elsewhere he describes Jupiter in the same terms: *For Jupiter aboven alle, Which is of goddes soverein, Hath in his celier, as men sein, Tuo tonnes fulle of love drinke* [Jupiter, above all, who is gods' ruler has in his cellar, as people say, two casks full of love drink] (*ibid.*, Book 6, lines 330–333).

Thus, a numismatic artifact corroborated by the right name and proper connotation of this name in literature may serve well political purposes of the time.

As has been mentioned above, there were two concurrent coin systems in France: one ordained by English Kings or their *locum tenens*, the other by French Kings. Edward III who actually started the Hundred Years war was the first of the English Kings who struck a great variety of gold money in France – practice continued by his son, the Black prince. They both fought many battles in France; to commemorate his victories Edward III issued the coin *Leopard d'or* featuring a crowned lion as a symbol of English power. The legend on the coin reads, *Edward III, by Grace of God, king of England and France*. That was an unvarnished claim on the French Crown.

The aesthetics and symbolism of English and French coins of that period, the time of continual conflicts, have very much in common and draw on a set of standardized images and symbolic elements of the epoch. For example, the English coin called *Pavilion* depicts the crowned English Prince standing in his robes under a superb portico (pavilion), with a naked sword and a shield decorated with the arms of England and France. King of France's *Gold Pavilion* portrays him seated on the throne beneath draped canopy holding scepter. The *Pavilion* was a tent in which the King resided on military campaigns. Both coins exploited the image of the tent as a symbol of valor and bellicose spirit. On another coin, called *Chaise* (chair), the Prince is seated in a Gothic chair, or throne, with a scepter in his right hand; the reverse quartered the lilies of France with the lions of England. The French king also has a similar coin where he is sitting in a Gothic chair in his mail armor and warrior coat, holding an epee raised in his right hand and his left hand resting on a shield adorned with heraldic lilies. War symbolism persists on other coins. Prince's Gold *Hardy* (tough, brave) portrays him holding a naked sword in his right hand pointing to it with his left hand, his robes do not conceal the armor underneath. Parallelism is obvious between the English *Guiennois* where Prince in full armor

Continental Gold Coins: Symbols and Images

is standing under the Gothic portal holding sword and shield with the arms of England and France and the French coin called *Franc a Pied* (on foot) where the French King is standing, holding in his right hand a sword and in his left hand the hand of justice⁴².

The belligerent mindset of French kings and the general context of war prompted names for new French coins. The first gold coin *Denier d'or* (Gold denier) struck in France in 1266 was called *ecu* etymologically derived from Latin *scutum* meaning *shield* related to Italian *scudo* and Portuguese *escudo*. Its design included a shield covered with fleur-de-lis. It is noteworthy that Chaucer knew the popular name *shield* for *ecu* and masterfully used it in his *Tales*. Describing a Merchant who always wanted to increase his profits, Chaucer writes, *Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle* [Between Middelburgh (Holland) and Orwell (England) He well knew how shields (ecu) to sell in exchange] (Chaucer, *Cantentury Tales* (General Prologue, line 278)). In *Shipman's Tale*, describing Merchant's business and transactions Chaucer also uses the word *shield*. *For he was bounden in a reconyssaunce To paye twenty thousand sheeld anon* [For he was bound by a formal pledge To pay twenty thousand shields quickly] (*ibid.*, line 331).

Another dramatic example is the name *franc*, for centuries the national currency of France. The first issuance of *francs* was ransom money for King John II⁴³ of France (1360) who was held in captivity by the English. This coin showed an armored knight brandishing a sword on a richly decorated galloping horse. He looks as if he had vowed not to lay down arms until he had recaptured the lost lands. The word *franc* means *free*. The King is believed to have said on his release, "We have been released from prison, and we are *franc* (free) and released forever."

Chaucer, being very sensitive to details, when he describes a rich merchant of Saint Denis (near Paris) whose wife had spent too much money on clothes and had to pay back a huge debt, speaks in terms of French money – *the franc*. The woman laments: *A sonday next I moste nedes paye An hundred frankes, or ellis I am lorn*. [Next Sunday, I must pay a hundred francs or else I'm lost] (Chaucer, *Cantentury Tales* (Shipman's Tale, lines 180–181)).

France was a Catholic country, so some coins involve religious symbolism. The first coin struck in France with a Biblical theme was *Agnel* (God's Lamb), popularly known as *mouton* (1305). The coin depicts the Holy Lamb carrying a banner. In the Bible, Jesus Christ is called the *Lamb of God*, a metaphor allusive to His crucifixion resonating with the sacrifice of lamb of the Old Testament. But if we consider the historical context, the story of the coin becomes more meaningful. It was the last gold coin (1311) struck by Philip the Fair⁴⁴ whose reign was marked by atrocious deeds: he expelled the Jews from France, eliminated the order of the Knights Templar and burnt many of them, caused scandals in his own family. Probably, the coin was a sign of repentance: the legend on the coin reads, *Lamb of God burdened by the sins of the World, have mercy on us* (Catholic prayer). In the literary works analyzed, the coin is mentioned by Langland when he describes how Meed the Maid bribes officials. *She gaf hem vchone Coupes of clene Gold and peces of seluer, Rynges with Rubyes and Richesses I-nouwe, manye þe leste man of here mayne a mutoun of gold* [gave each of them cups of pure gold and pieces of silver, rings with rubies and other riches which I know, and to the least men in their train a gold coin called *mouton*] (Langland, 1888 (passus III, line 25)).

42 Hand of Justice is a stick mounted with an ivory hand which gives a benediction.

43 King of France (1350–1364). Suffered disastrous military losses, was captured by the English in the battle of Poitiers and had to pay an enormous ransom, was released, but failed to pay the necessary sum, voluntarily returned to prison and soon died there.

44 Philip IV, King of France from 1285 till his death in 1314.

One more coin with religious imagery is *Salut d'or* (1309) representing the Annunciation scene with Archangel Gabriel saluting Virgin Mary, flower (lily) in a vase between them. This motive continued well into the 15th century. English kings also struck such coins with a different design, though. The Virgin stands receiving a tablet with inscribed *AVE* (rejoice!) from the Archangel Gabriel, royal coats-of-arms of France and England below them. Finally, a religious theme of exceptional importance for Christians is represented on the coin called *Angel*, the name derived from French *Angelot*, first struck in 1340. The coin pictures Archangel Michael killing the dragon, a symbol of the Devil. The French inspired by this theme produced a coin in 1341 which showed a galloping French king spearing the dragon of England with his lance. Impresses on the coins symbolize, on the one hand, royal power by means of regal insignia such as crown, throne, coat of arms, scepter, orb, etc.; on the other hand, the images that are meant to express the martial spirit of the time of national conflicts and wars in Europe with the help of war attributes – canopy, sword, shield, armor, epee, etc. English and French kings created complicated messages combining several symbolic elements. Coupled with inscriptions, the implications are clear – English Kings' claims on the French throne and French Kings' fitting rebuff. Thus, an intricate symbolism of secular and sacred subjects interwoven with politics constitute the cognitive substrate for naming new coins.

Oresme may also be credited with the first instance of metaphoric description of money based on the prevailing Medieval orienting model – organicism – which viewed the universe and its parts as organic wholes, or living beings. For Oresme, the state or Kingdom was *like a human body* and money was *humors*⁴⁵ which could flow freely. His is an explanation of inflation via this metaphor: *The body is disordered when the humors flow too freely into one member, so that that member is often thus inflamed and overgrown while the others are withered and shrunken and the body's due proportions are destroyed and its life shortened; so also is a common-wealth or a kingdom when riches are unduly attracted by one part of it* (Oresme, 1956, p.43).

Recognizing the limited scope of textual material, we still find it possible to offer a tentative classification of metaphors involving a new kind of imagery based on the concept of money.

First, Medieval Anglo-Norman money metaphors actuate the ancient model represented in the Greek word *séme* which combines two meanings *word* and *coin*. Metaphors based on the comparison between speech and money run throughout the whole text of Dan Michel's *Ayenbite of Inwit*. According to him, when speech is well thought out and then comes to tongue, it is *ase guode moneye*: it is made of *guod metal and of guode sseppe* (form). Each word must be of the right weight, neither too much, nor too little, and words in speech must be of the right number. It is noteworthy that expressions usually applicable to money – *ri3te wy3te/ and ri3te tale* (Michel, 1866, p.152) – are used to characterize speech and words. The concept of weight is repeated several times in relation to words: *pet he conne we3e/ and ayenwe3e/ pet word* [each man must weigh and reweigh the word] (ibid., p.57) *me ssel we3e pet word er hit by yzed* [we shall weigh well the words before they are spoken] (ibid., p.256).

Another metaphor treats Money/ coins as a tool to achieve one's aim. In Chaucer's *Tales*, the Merchant of Seint-Denis explains that money is his instrument to earn more money. *But one thyng is, ye knowe it wel ynogh Of chapmen, that hir moneie is hir plough*. [But there is one thing, you know it well enough About merchants, that their money is their plough] (Chaucer, *Cantebury Tales* (Shipman's Tale, line 288)). Gower resorts to personification: *Gold is the lord of man and beste* (Gower, *Confessio Amantis* (Book 5, line 241)).

⁴⁵ Medieval medicine considered that the body contained four humors (liquids): blood, black bile, yellow bile, and phlegm. A healthy body keeps the four in balance.

Money Metaphorics in Anglo-Norman

The most important among new metaphorizations is the appraisal of people in terms of money. In the 14th century, the French word *monnoie* acquired the meaning *social condition, character; measure of one's merits and value* (FEW, p.75). In French this trope is incorporated in the semantic structure of the word; in English it functions at the level of metaphors. Examples in literature are many. Dan Michel calls hypocrites *false money*. They only try to look good to the world, but it is nothing but falsehood. *Uor of guod metal hy makeþ ualse moneye* [Of good metal they make false money] (Michel, 1866, p.26). Langland describing a woman says that her head *was worþ a Mark*. A preacher draws parallels between people and the most common coin denominations: *Evreye covetouse man is proude, thynkyng himselfe more worthy a pound, than an oþer man a peny*. [every covetous man is proud of thinking of himself worthy of a pound, and of another man worthy of o penny] (Lever, 1871, p.22).

A unique group of metaphors relates especially to theology. Twelfth-century theologians were concerned with language about God and how they can speak about a Divine being. In the Old Testament we find a metaphor based on likeness between Jesus who was called *God's lamb* and earthly creature – sacrificial lamb. Money names also participate in the divine language. In *Ayenbite of Inwyt*, Poverty is equated to a coin with which one may buy heaven. God's blood is money which He paid for salvation of mankind.

We can see that metaphorical mappings are directionally different. In some cases, MONEY is a source domain, whereas in other instances it is a target domain, which testifies to the fact that the concept of money had become instilled and well understood in collective conscience.

Money: New Ideology

The last issue to be addressed in this essay is to analyze the major ideological shifts which the use of money in the economy caused, with literary discourse serving as a source of information illuminating the new ideology. There are three discernible ideologies in regard to money in the literature of the period: religious, chivalric, and that of new social groups of the gentry, merchants, usurers, laborers. The works analyzed exhibit a clash of old and new ideology, that is contestation between Pauline theological postulate that *love of money is the root of all evil* and a new exchange culture, the first *shoots* of mercantile worldview. Within one literary work we find concurrent discourses with old and new ideas.

In contrast to explicit condemnation of money by religion and ostentatious indifference by chivalry, the merchant and labor classes display fondness of money and willingness to multiply it. *Chafferers* (merchants), central figures of the nascent monetary economy, are on a par with knights in late chivalric romances. Clement, a merchant, when he sees a fair child (emperor's son) in the hands of outlaws, does not challenge them to fight, but, offers to buy the child and according to his custom haggles over the price, finally cutting it by half (Halliwell-Phillips, 1844 (lines 581–582)). English writers became aware of the pleasures of prosperity. A man with money can buy better food *good brede and ale, and wine, rybbes of befe, strabery ripe, and chery, pepar and saffron* [good bread, ale and wine, ribs of beef, ripe strawberry and cherry, pepper and saffron]; best clothes and drapery (Lydgate, London Lickpenny, stanzas 7–10). But if one is poor, one is an outcast in rich London: *He that lackethe money with them, he shall not spede* [he who lacks money, should not hurry here] (ibid., stanza 16, line. 128). Moreover, peasants and hire hands do not want to *eat nyght-olde wortes, no peny ale hem paie, ne no pece of bacoun, But it be fressh flessh outhur fissh fryed outhur ybake* [yesterday's vegetables, or cheap ale, or dry bacon, but it should be fresh meat or fish fried or baked] (Langland, 1888 (Text B, passus VI, lines 308–309)).

Representatives of various social groups want to get out of poverty. Some, like Noah's wife, try to benefit from their own labor. She refuses to quit her spindle even when the flood is imminent (The

Towneley Plays, 1966 (*Noah and the Ark*). Others use unscrupulous means. Chaucer's Pardoner, though he preaches about the sin of avarice and quotes the Bible, swindles money from pilgrims. Mak (*The Towneley Plays, 1966 (The First Shepherds' Play)*) steals a fat ewe from shepherds who gave him food and shelter. Some lend other men's money borrowed at small cost to get greater interest. Others buy corn very cheap in the harvest season and sell it when corn becomes scarce and dear (Michel, 1866, p.36).

The pervasive presence of money commercialized all aspects of Medieval life. Women exchange love for money. The Wife of Bath (Chaucer, *Cantenbury Tales*) boasts that her first three husbands had wealth and power, *They had me yeven hir lond and hir tresoor; Me neded nat do lenger diligence* [They had given me their land and their treasure; I needed not work hard any longer] (lines 204–205). The workings of law and the course of justice were manipulated by covetous judges, men of law, and clerks. As described in *London Lickpenny*, nobody would take up the case, if no money changed hands. Pecuniary compensation becomes common in judicature. In order to settle the case the wrong-doer *soughte to maken pees with hise pens, and profred hym manye* [Sought to make peace with his pence and offered many]. And the injured party *Nyme he a nombre of nobles oper of shullenges* [takes a number of nobles or shillings] (Langland, 1888 (passus 4, lines 63, 395)).

Meed (award) became central in the exchange economy. It is most convincingly presented in Langland's *Piers Plowman*. Emperors, earls, all kinds of lords have a retinue of young men who serve them for gifts; Popes and prelates give meed to their administrators to maintain laws, the King has meed from his men to keep peace in his land; servants receive money from their masters; minstrels perform for meed; beggars cadge meed from people; priests ask for a masspenny for preaching and clerks for teaching; craftsmen crave meed for training their apprentices. *Marchaundise and mede mote nede go togideres: No wight, es I wene, withouten Mede may libbe!* [Merchandise and meed must needs go together. No creature, as I know, without meed can live!] (Langland, 1888 (Text B, passus 3, lines 225–226)). People became acquisitive. There is a very interesting artifact found in the late fifteenth century manuscript – a jingle written by hand: *Yt ys all wayes sene now a days That money makythe the man.* [It is always seen nowadays that money makes the man] (Thrupp, 1989, p.31).

The Anglo-Norman period saw a dramatic expansion of the category of money, which alongside Anglo-Saxon words included Latin, Greek, Italian, French, and Byzantine names. Structurally, the category underwent important changes concerning prototypicality. Anglo-Saxon generic names were replaced by the borrowed word *money* thus severing all ties with primordial cognitive base.

Different degrees of salience of various onomasiological models can be singled out. The two mainstream patterns are: denominating coins from the place of origin (Florin) or from images impressed on them (Mouton, Pavilion). Minor metonymic models are: instrument → object with which it is made (Coin); material → object of which it is made (Sterling); quality → object having this quality (Noble).

During this period, Coins became a sign of political dominance pillared by the coin iconography. Features of design were based on three main themes: Royal power, War, Religion. Semiotic meaning was encoded by a combination of diverse symbolic elements (heraldic, religious, martial). Coupled with legends, coins were endowed with communicative qualities allowing the rulers to express their political ambitions.

The period under analysis witnessed an active process of metaphor making. The concept of Money/ Coin has acquired explanatory power within specific metaphoricity acting as a source

Conclusion

domain. The marketplace vocabulary penetrated the area of the Divine. Sacred things started to be interpreted as goods for sale. It had become customary to speak about *buying the kingdom of heaven, purchasing bliss, paying for salvation*, etc. Even God's blood was called *money*.

The Anglo-Norman period is characterized by great paradigm shifts, insofar as it involves a break with old onomasiological models, passage from old to new literary tradition, appearance of new symbolism and imagery, and emergence of novel ideology and mercantile culture brought about by sweeping socio-historical developments such as the Hundred Years' War, famine, the decline of feudalism, emergence of trade-based economy and new economic agents (merchants, laborers, usurers, etc.). Money becomes central in late Medieval commerce, the source of wealth and power, the crux of ecclesiastical and scholastic debate, and a recurrent topos in literary discourse.

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Santrauka**Natalya Davidko. Anglų-normanų pinigų pavadinimai kontekste**

Šis darbas yra antrasis tyrimų serijoje, nagrinėjančioje pinigų pavadinimų specifiškumą anglų kalbos istorijoje. Tyrinėjimo laikotarpis yra anglų-normanų periodas (1066–1500 m.). Straipsnyje nagrinėjamos dvi skirtingos sampratos: pinigai kaip abstrakti ideali loginė struktūra ir monetų sąvoka, išreikšta žetonų rinkiniais. Kognityvinių sampratų svarba leido nustatyti ryšį tarp socialinių ir istorinių veiksnių ir pavadinimų kūrimo, pavyzdžiui: ištirti viduramžių onomasiologijos modelius sudėtingais socialiniais, kognityviniais, politiniais ir ideologiniais aspektais. Anglų-normanų monetų kaldinimo semiotinis tyrimas suteikė supratimą apie žinutes, kurias Anglijos ir Prancūzijos karaliai mėgino perduoti vienas kitam, užšifruodami jas monetose ikonografijos būdu, t. y. pasitelkdami detalius paveikslėlius, kurie vaizduoja kultūriškai priimtinius simbolinius elementus. Ištyrus įvairiuose literatūros šaltiniuose nuorodas į viduramžių monetų kaldinimą, remiantis pinigų samprata ir nauja prekybine ideologija apibrėžti kai kurie nauji metaforiškumai.

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