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Review
Reviewed Work(s): A History of the English Language by Elly van Gelderen; A History of the English Language by Richard Hogg and David Denison; The Oxford History of English by Lynda Mugglestone
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REVIEW ARTICLE

A history of the English language. By ELLY VAN GELDEREN. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2006. Pp. xviii, 334. ISBN 9027232369. $49.95.

A history of the English language. Ed. by RICHARD HOGG and DAVID DENISON. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xiii, 495. ISBN 0521662273. $45.

The Oxford history of English. Ed. by LYNDA MUGGLESTONE. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp. xii, 485. ISBN 0199249318. $75 (Hb).

Reviewed by DONKA MINKOVA, *University of California, Los Angeles*

2006 was a bumper-crop year for books on the history of English.[1] While in the twenty-first century a B.A., M.A., and even a Ph.D. degree in English can be obtained without any exposure to philology or linguistics, at least in the US, it is encouraging that big commercial publishers are willing to support new pedagogically oriented volumes in a field that is no longer considered central to the training of the next generation of cultural and literary historians. Not surprisingly, the way the history of English itself is presented to the publishers and the consumers reflects changes in the research and teaching environment: the shift toward socialization of the humanities, the digital revolution in research, the computerization of instruction and learning.

Bundling together three books in one review calls for a state-of-the-art overview; it should be said from the start that the study of the history of English is healthy, diversified, and intellectually energizing. All three volumes make valuable information available to scholars, instructors, students, and the general public. Although the umbrella subject matter is the same for the three volumes, the goals and the approaches of the authors and editors are different: van Gelderen's *History of the English language* (*HEL*) is the only book in the reviewed set written by a single author and targeted specifically to an undergraduate audience. Hogg and Dennison's (Cambridge) *History of the English language* (*CHEL*)—informally known as 'baby-*CHEL*' to distinguish it from the monumental six-volume *Cambridge history of the English language* (1992–2001)—is for advanced students, scholars, and teachers, while Mugglestone's *Oxford history of English* (*OHE*) is 'for everyone interested in the English language' (blurb).

1. THE SCHOLARLY HERITAGE. The scholarly shoulders on which the twenty-first-century histories of English stand are truly solid and imposing. Driven initially by ecclesiastical, political, legal, antiquarian, and purely linguistic interest in the Anglo-Saxon heritage, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century scholars made the bulk of the pre-1066 texts available to the reading public. The first Old English–Latin–English dictionary appeared in 1659, and the first Old English grammar in 1689.[2] Only two generations later, in 1749, John Free put together the first book-length history of the language.[3] In

[1] Two other coursebooks on the history of English also appeared in that year: Brinton & Arnovick 2006 and Freeborn 2006. Brinton & Arnovick 2006 provides a comprehensive philological survey of the changes that have formed the canon in the last two hundred years. It is a model of good pedagogical writing and is likely to have a long shelf-life, matching the time-tested classics by Baugh and Cable (2002) and Pyles and Algeo (1982). Freeborn 2006 likewise covers all the bases, but is particularly focused on spelling and textual history; it is also the most interactive of all the 2006 histories of English.

[2] *Institutiones grammaticae Anglo-Saxonicae et Moeso-Gothicae auctore Georgio Hickesio* . . . , Oxoniae: E Theatro Sheldoniano, 1689.

[3] John Free, *An essay towards an history of the English tongue*, 1749 (English linguistics, 1500–1800: A collection of facsimile reprints, no. 125, Menston: Scolar P., 1968). The reference to his work as the first history of English is found in Bailey 2002:462.

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the nineteenth century the diachronic study of English blossomed within the more general context of scientific discovery on the one hand and the construction, maintenance, and glorification of national identity in the English-speaking countries on the other. Detailed philological descriptions of early English texts were commissioned and executed with great care by scholars trained in comparative philology. The Early English Text Society was founded in 1864 by Frederick Furnivall and has now published 475 volumes, which lay the empirical foundation of both literary and linguistic studies of Old and Middle English texts and set the standard for all other historical editorial work. The majestic *Oxford English Dictionary*, conceived in 1857 and started in 1879, added even more luster to what was already a highly prestigious academic enterprise. The importance of language history was recognized on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1825 Thomas Jefferson wrote:

> And, more than all things, we want a dictionary . . . in which the Saxon root, placed alphabetically, shall be followed by all its cognate modifications of nouns, verbs, &c., whether Anglo-Saxon, or found in the dialects of subsequent ages. We want, too, an elaborate history of the English language.[4]

During the twentieth century the history of English continued to be a preeminent research area; it also became a core curricular requirement for university degrees in English both in English-speaking countries and across the world. In Britain the grammars and Anglo-Saxon primers of Henry Sweet, the 'founding father of the history of English' (the phrase is Hogg's, *CHEL*:353), the editions and annotations of the Reverend Richard Morris, and the still useful Old and Middle English grammars of Joseph and Elizabeth Mary Wright were familiar to anyone studying or researching English. Some of the foundational early contributions were produced by nonnative speakers, a pattern of internationalization that has remained a hallmark of the field to this day. Building on the detailed atomistic descriptions of the nineteenth century, the Dane Otto Jespersen produced an unrivaled seven-volume historically based coverage of English phonology, morphology, and syntax (1909–1943). Karl Luick's two-volume *Grammatik* (1921–1942), famously restricted to *Lautlehre*, is, to this day, the single most important and influential resource for any scholarly discussion of phonological issues. Trained in the Neogrammarian model of regularity of sound change, the early twentieth-century historians of English went far beyond the early philological empiricist tradition, offering coherent, imaginative, challenging, and challengeable functionalist and structuralist accounts that formed the starting point of subsequent linguistic debates.

In the second half of the twentieth century, students of historical English responded quickly to the new developments in theoretical linguistics, and though the textbooks remained theory-neutral and mostly focused on Standard English, there was a proliferation of theoretically informed, innovative treatments of diachronic topics both within and beyond phonology, morphology, and word-formation. English historical syntax, previously either neglected or mostly descriptive, took a leap forward with the 1972 publication of Traugott's *A history of English syntax*. In a notable and most welcome departure from previous textbook treatments of diachronic English, Lass (1987) positioned his presentation in the analytical framework of the then-current linguistic models and dedicated about a third of the book to the treatment of regional and social variation. The pattern of treating post-eighteenth-century English and nonstandard varieties as

[4] *The letters of Thomas Jefferson: 1743–1826*, 'The Anglo-Saxon language' (To the Honorable J. Evelyn Denison, M.P., Monticello, November 9, 1825) (*A hypertext on American history from the colonial period until modern times*, Groningen: Department of Humanities Computing & Department of American Studies, University of Groningen).

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peripheral to the language history was also broken. The six-volume *Cambridge history*, a lasting testimony to the scholarly achievements at the end of the century, stretches over the entire time-span from earliest Germanic and Old English to the end of the twentieth century, with two volumes dedicated to varieties outside Southern British English. The historical periods volumes (Vols. I–IV) constitute the first major overview of the history of English that does not privilege phonology and morphology over syntax, lexicology, and sociolinguistics. The success of the pioneering Helsinki Corpus paved the way for many more highly sophisticated digital collections, which along with the indispensable Toronto Dictionary of Old English Corpus and the Middle English Compendium allowed scholars to access data digitally, compensating as far as possible for the absence of the individual speaker and the impossibility of live tests. The skills and the tools we bring into the present century—attention to theory, an incomparably larger empirical base, construction of history on all levels, diversity of methodologies and approaches, along with the impressive legacy of earlier research—provide the daunting backdrop against which new histories of English have to be measured.

2. Audience, scope, methodologies. The intended audience, the scope, and the methodologies of the three books overlap only partially. No single theoretical paradigm unifies them; what they do share is avoidance of accounts couched in current and theory-specific formal models of phonology and morphosyntax. All three books are ambitious overviews of the entire chronological span, but for different audiences; only van Gelderen's *HEL* is undergraduate-friendly in its often chatty tone, with highlighted keywords, questions, paper projects, exercises, and answers to them. For general linguists interested in English, Hogg and Denison's *CHEL* would be the best starting point, while for the student of literature in its linguistic, social, and cultural context, Mugglestone's *OHE* would be the best fit.

HEL is in many ways a traditional textbook. Its opening chapter introduces the main genetic and typological characteristics of English as a Germanic language and offers a brief discussion of the external and internal motives for language change, followed by 'English spelling, sounds, and grammar' (13–28). The chapter succeeds in generating curiosity about the vagaries of Present-Day English orthography; it also clears some basic terminological obstacles, including the IPA and grammatical terms, both of which can be assumed to be new to the average undergraduate. After these preparatory steps, the reader is led into the historical core of the book. Six chapters follow the traditional periodization of the history of the language, starting with pre-Old English (29–45), Old English (47–90), Old to Middle English (91–109), Middle English (111–53), Early Modern English (155–202), and Modern English (203–48). A substantial chapter is dedicated to 'English around the world' (249–79). The period chapters and the World Englishes chapter follow the same overall internal format: sources, spelling and sounds, morphology, syntax, lexicon, regional and register variation, conclusion. The book ends with a useful synthesis of the major theories about language and language change, including examples of grammaticalization. Many chapters include appropriate literary passages. The text is enriched by numerous tables, figures, and references to internet resources; the inclusion of some cartoons and original drawings by the author fits well with the relatively informal lecture style of the presentation. Three appendices (293–319) offer possible answers to the exercises, advice on using the *OED*, and a chronology of historical events up to 2003.

As a whole the book is grounded in the familiar pedagogical tradition of presenting the history of the language by moving chronologically from the past to the present.

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This approach emphasizes the synchronic reality of each stage of the language, but makes the continuity of the changes on the separate language levels less apparent, though the identical templates for the historical chapters and the frequent cross-references make the links easy to establish. Approaching the history of English from the perspective of a general linguist, whose own research is primarily in syntax, van Gelderen emphasizes grammatical change and language typology, the latter tracked under the leitmotif of the loss of synthetic marking in favor of analyticity from Old to Middle English and the reappearance of new synthetic forms in the last four hundred years. She achieves a fair balance between accessibility and responsible linguistic description. Language change is clarified in terms of language-internal structural and functionalist factors, yet additional cultural and historical information on spelling, printing, prescriptivism, and even authorship debates abounds. Responding to the digitization of texts and the availability of relevant websites, van Gelderen includes many references to electronic resources; she has kept the text website up to date by listing additions and corrections to the paper version.

While I appreciate the difficulty of writing for US undergraduates and admire the many innovations in this text, using it for a ten-week upper division History of English class at UCLA did not work too well, possibly because of the diversity of the students and my own research interests. Most English majors enroll in a history-of-the-language class because they want to develop skills that will make Chaucer or Shakespeare more accessible. For those students, typically unfamiliar with linguistic terminology and methods of analysis, the text moves too fast and includes too much 'technical' information, a taboo word for many. Mastering just the chronological chapters is a huge challenge and at times an unattainable goal for students without preliminary exposure to linguistics. The book will probably fare much better if used in a full semester course.

For students of general linguistics the presentation is manageable and rewarding, especially in the morphology and syntax sections. The phonological coverage is less satisfactory. Core historical changes are presented partially; thus we find Old English fricative voicing defined as occurring 'between two voiced sounds' (52, table 4.3), without reference to further prosodic or morphological conditioning, which leaves the voiceless fricatives in *be**f**oul*, *be**th**ink*, *a**s**under*, or *too**th**ache* a mystery. The allophonic status of the voiced and voiceless fricatives is not made explicit—indeed, the term allophone is avoided altogether.

The term would have been useful elsewhere, as in describing the history of the velar nasal [ŋ], which is a classic case of phonemicization of an earlier allophone of /n/ after the loss of /g/ in final position, the change of *sing* [sɪŋg] > [sɪŋ]. The shift in question is not restricted to *-ing*, as is clear from *bang – ban*, *sung – sun*, *wrong – Ron*. This is not acknowledged, nor is it made clear that it was not all 'words ending in *-ing*' (164, 208) that were realized with [-ɪn] in Early Modern English, but that it was a fourteenth-to-eighteenth-century deletion specific to the unstressed suffix *-ing*. There is no reference to the genuine word-final and suffix-sensitive sixteenth-century loss of [ŋg] resulting in /ŋ/ as in *tongue*, *banger*, *slangy*. Confusingly, the 'introduction of the velar nasal [ŋ] as a regular sound' is dated to Early Modern English and is illustrated (165, table 7.3) with '[In] > [Iŋ] (in final position)', where the capital [I] for the lax front vowel is an unfortunate typo. The allophonic status of the Old English fricatives is implied, but a statement such as 'it is possible that the scribe said [f] [in *heofon* 'heaven']' (51) is misleading; foot-medial intervocalic voicing in Old English is obligatory. The introduction of word-initial /z-/ is dated incorrectly to the sixteenth century

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and after (52), though *zed*, *zeal*, *Zephirus*, *zeugma*, *zone*, and *zodiac* are all attested much earlier than that.

These are examples of small inaccuracies and oversights, but for someone with a special interest in phonology, this overall remarkably well-organized and well-presented text is insufficiently precise and analytical in this one area. A more careful proofing would benefit a second edition too. As a final thought on this text: the amount of knowledge accumulated in the field of English historical linguistics is such that it is unrealistic to expect a single scholar to have the same level of expertise in all subfields. For a huge topic such as 'The history of English', this is the century of collaborative works and multi-authored handbooks, indeed the direction in which all the major academic publishers have been moving in the last two decades.

Hogg and Denison's *CHEL* is not intended as a textbook, although any single chapter, or a combination of chapters, could easily serve as the basis for an upper-division undergraduate seminar. More likely, as in my own experience as an instructor, the book's real users are graduate students; researchers in the same or related fields will find the book very useful too. The list of contributors is a constellation of leading names in the subfields selected by the editors. In an excellent free-standing opening chapter ('Overview', 1–42) Hogg and Denison defend their choice of topics and cover the periodization and external history, including the globalization, of English. The chapter surveys the forms of historical evidence and addresses briefly the causes and mechanisms of language change. The next two chapters are dedicated to language-internal change: 'Phonology and morphology' (43–108) by Roger Lass, 'Syntax' (109–98) by Olga Fischer and Wim van der Wurff, followed by a chapter that by definition looks at both structural factors and borrowing, namely 'Vocabulary' (199–270) by Dieter Kastovsky. The remaining shorter chapters are: 'Standardisation' (271–311) by Terttu Nevalainen and Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 'Names' (312–51) by Richard Coates, 'English in Britain' (352–83) by Richard Hogg, 'English in North America' (384–419) by Edward Finegan, and 'English worldwide' (420–39) by David Crystal. Initial suggestions for further reading (440–44), some helpfully annotated, enhance the scholarly usefulness of the book.

Except for the last chapter, which promises an examination of 'the chief linguistic features which characterize the "New Englishes" ' (422) but stops at delivering an informative journalistic survey of the spread of English and the gaps in the study of this process, the authors present state-of-the-art research within their respective areas. The organization of the volume moves logically from level to level, with the focus shifting from internal to external factors of change. Following the tradition of the first two volumes of the six-volume *Cambridge history of the English language*, and unlike the other books reviewed here, this volume includes a most welcome chapter on onomastics; since Coates himself makes the point that at least on creation, proper names respect the current principles of word-formation (313), it is surprising to see the chapter separated from the 'Vocabulary' chapter. The material covered in the volume is too wide-ranging to allow detailed evaluation of each contribution, but for this interested and critical reader every chapter offered either new empirical data or new interpretative angles, or both.

Having reviewed three of the six *Cambridge history of the English language* volumes (Minkova & Stockwell 1994a,b, Minkova 2001), which subsequently became an essential reference tool, I expected Hogg and Denison's baby-*CHEL* to be familiar. In spite of some inevitable overlaps, the bread-and-butter of any historical survey, the dozen or so intervening years of scholarship are reflected in the contributions, which

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are all written specially for this volume. If one takes internal vs. external history as placed on a continuum, *CHEL* predictably covers both ends, with each chapter reflecting the author(s)' theoretical and methodological preferences. The chapters on phonology, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary, at one end of this continuum, provide the structuralist, functionalist, and typological perspective, while the coverage of English in Britain, North America, and the worldwide proliferation of Englishes focuses primarily on the 'external' dimension; onomastics and standardization straddle the boundary. Overall, the book achieves a good balance between internal accounts of change and change seen in terms of social and regional variation. References to the complexity of the issues and the tentativeness of the explanations are frequent. The writing is clear and noncondescending and the material is presented in an immediately accessible framework without argumentation in favor of a particular theoretical model. I used the chapters on phonology, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary for a ten-week graduate seminar; the students' reactions were very positive.

The title of the volume edited by Mugglestone, *THE Oxford history of English*, invites an unnecessary contrast with Brinton & Arnovick 2006, another excellent history of English published by Oxford University Press. The editor's own introduction is more realistically entitled '*A* history of English' (1–7); it shares with the other reviewed volumes the recognition that 'a single true—and all-encompassing—history is an illusion' (*OHE*:1). The intended audience is not specified, but, as noted above, the inside front flap of the jacket announces that the book is 'for everyone interested in the English language, present and past'. This is undeniably true; any mature and intellectually curious reader will find something of appeal in the well-crafted chapters that encompass the entire chronological range from (pre-)Old English to Modern English. The ordering of 'present' and 'past' in the blurb is also a fair reflection of the emphasis in this volume—although Old and Middle English are represented, more than two-thirds of the material addresses the later periods and the present, including the twenty-first century. Two-thirds of the contributors are British scholars, compared to one-third in *CHEL*; van Gelderen is Dutch-American.

The details of the *OHE* contents are as follows: 'Preliminaries: Before English' (7–31) by TERRY HOAD, 'Beginnings and transitions: Old English' (32–60) by SUSAN IRVINE, 'Contacts and conflicts: Latin, Norse, and French' (61–85) by MATTHEW TOWNEND, 'Middle English—Dialects and diversity' (86–119) by MARILYN CORRIE, 'From Middle to Early Modern English' (120–46) by JEREMY SMITH, 'Restructuring Renaissance English' (147–77) by APRIL MCMAHON, 'Mapping change in Tudor English' (178–211) by TERTTU NEVALAINEN, 'The Babel of Renaissance English' (212–39) by PAULA BLANK, 'Correctness and its origins' (240–73) by INGRID TIEKEN-BOON VAN OSTADE, 'English in the nineteenth century' (274–304) by LYNDA MUGGLESTONE, 'Modern regional English in the British Isles' (305–33) by CLIVE UPTON, 'English among the languages' (334–59) by RICHARD W. BAILEY, 'English worldwide in the twentieth century' (360–93) by TOM MCARTHUR, and 'Into the twenty-first century' (394–413) by DAVID CRYSTAL. A very extensive chronology (415–28) covers important historical events, the appearance of early texts, grammars and dictionaries, and the spread of English from the first evidence for Indo-European and the break-up of proto-Germanic (c. 300–200 BC) to the launching in 2005 of the BBC *Voices* project. A detailed guide to further reading follows each chapter.

OHE presents the work of a well-established group of scholars (Nevalainen, Tieken-Boon van Ostade, and Crystal are contributors to both *CHEL* and *OHE*), whose approach to their topics is consistently guided by the emphasis on 'the twin images of pluralism and diversity, and on the complex patterns of usage' (2). In this volume,

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interest in the language's past is not primarily driven by questions of a formal linguistic nature. Rather, the evolution of the language here is situated and contextualized within literary and cultural history and the history of spelling; the main forces identified as driving language change are social and pragmatic. The narrative is organized chronologically in the first ten chapters, all of which emphasize language variation in the respective periods, allowing a history of nonstandard varieties to emerge along with the description of the dominant normative forms. The philological observations in the Old and Middle English chapters are not presented independently; there are no vowel and consonant charts, no model paradigms. Instead, the forms are extracted from the cited texts and discussed in that context.

Ideally, students and scholars should be familiar with both *CHEL* and *OHE*. Still, if we were to compare them, a very broad characterization of the pedagogical and research usefulness of *OHE* compared to *CHEL* would be that while the latter works mainly toward developing the analytical skills of future English historical linguists, *OHE* teaches English medievalists to approach linguistic issues with maximum social and cultural awareness. Of the three volumes reviewed here, *OHE* is the best companion reading for literary scholars, historians, and sociolinguists; it broadens significantly the extralinguistic information, which often leads to new ways of accounting for language change. As an example, one can take Nevalainen's superb, detailed, corpus-based description of the rivalry between third-person present tense *-(e)th* and *-(e)s* (*OHE*: 184–93), which opens the way to new inquiries into the structural causes for the advanced state of inflectional syncope in nouns vs. verbs and the articulatory and perceptual forces at play leading to the preservation of *-(e)th* after sibilants in the southern data. A notable outlier in the volume is McMahon's chapter, where the focus is on the systematic phonological restructuring associated with the Great Vowel Shift. McMahon offers a most illuminating synthesis of the long-standing controversy over the inception and structural coherence of the long-vowel changes and mergers between c. 1400–1700, using that as a paradigm case of hindsight abstraction on the one hand vs. realism in terms of both synchronic and diachronic variation on the other. The details can be intimidatingly complex ('readers of a nervous disposition may be better advised to skip [the merger problem]', *OHE*:167). This is not to say, however, that the changes are abstracted from the context of usage, but only that individual usage patterns must contribute to conceptually larger patterns. In McMahon's words, 'even a change that only takes a generation or two is quite unlikely to be seen as such by the people participating in it. All changes therefore go beyond the individual native speaker's competence, and none can be truly linguistically or conceptually "real"' (174).

3. Sample comparisons. Just perusing *HEL*'s, *CHEL*'s, and *OHE*'s tables of contents should convince anyone that they address a vast range of topics and bring a wealth of information that will undoubtedly become part of the permanent store of historical knowledge. A single article cannot do justice to over 1,300 pages of material written by twenty-four scholars. I therefore select two relatively underrepresented areas and compare their treatment in the three volumes, a kind of spot-check of topics that are both innovating within the historical study of English and important for positioning English historical studies within the larger domain of language study. The areas are the Celtic influence on English and the history of English prosody.

3.1. The influence of celtic on english. An often-cited, though not always contextualized, dismissal of the linguistic influence of Celtic on English can be found in many of the most widely used textbooks, for example Baugh & Cable 2002:69: 'Outside of place-names . . . the influence of Celtic upon the English language is almost

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negligible'.[5] The tradition of ignoring the effect of the Celtic substratum is partly rooted in a pre-Thomason & Kaufman 1988 superficial expectation that loanwords are a good way of estimating the degree of linguistic hybridization. The paucity of Celtic loanwords in the English vocabulary is well known; only about a dozen Celtic loanwords have survived in standard/nonregional English, yet this is not surprising in the context of continuing use of Brittonic as a first language, lack of intense contact, and the different social levels of the speakers. Contact-induced changes in phonology and grammar are another matter, however, and work in that area is very much part of the current academic scene in English historical studies. In the last two decades the Celtic linguistic contribution to English has been promulgated by a small but vocal group of scholars whose dedicated contributions enrich the literature with challenging hypotheses. Filppula et al. 2002 and 2008 are collections of new studies of demographic and historical records, evidence from language-contact theory, areal, and typological evidence, all of which reopen and strengthen earlier claims of Celtic influence. John McWhorter's 2008 eloquent and witty synthesis of arguments in favor of hybridization bring the discussion home to a much broader reading public, guaranteeing that the Celtic strain will become part of at least the popular perception of outside influences on English grammar.

In spite of one's skepticism on details and untestable proposals—I have Laker (2009) in mind—it is evident that an offhand dismissal of Celtic as a factor in the history of English is unwarranted; this is an area of research that has potential for further empirical and theoretical elucidation. Among the candidates for external, rather than system-internal, causality in English morphosyntax are the rise of the English progressive, the rise of *do*-support, and the Northern Subject Rule. Here is how the reviewed books recognize the current Celtic-to-English debate.

Van Gelderen's *HEL* separates the influence of Celtic on English into 'visible' and 'invisible'. Pre-Old English Celtic loans into Germanic and other continental languages, and Old English loans, are the 'visible' component, covered quite extensively in Ch. 5 (91–93); here one could add the striking addition of sixty-eight previously unresolved English place-names of Celtic origin noted in Filppula et al. 2002:22. Van Gelderen comments on some peculiarities of the Celtic loan vocabulary compared to loans from Scandinavian or French; so for example, adjectives are borrowed only as place-name components and there are no verbs coming from Celtic. The borrowing is restricted to nonbasic content words (93, 107). This narrow scope of the Celtic loanwords would be puzzling if true, but it seems that the puzzle disappears if we consider the broader range of Celtic loanwords, including adjectives (*deor* 'brave', *wann* 'dark, pallid'), derived verbs (OE *trymman* 'strengthen' < Welsh *trum* 'heavy'), and probable Welsh loans such as *brag* 'boast', *gird* 'strike' (Breeze 2002:176–77). As for morphosyntactic changes attributed to Celtic influence, they are in the 'invisible' category. The only two references we find in the book are to 'the use of prepositions to express an ongoing action (e.g. *I am on-hunting*) [which] may be due to contact with Celtic' (93), and a cursory reference to the aspectual use of auxiliaries in Irish and Canadian English (*I am after doing that, He's after telling me about it*) (261), which is the entire follow-up to the promising statement that 'As we will see in Ch. 9, Celtic has influenced the grammar of some varieties of Modern English' (93).

[5] For a full survey of the 'received opinions', see Filppula et al. 2008:223–26. After this review was written, the leading journal in the field, *English Language and Linguistics*, dedicated a special issue to reevaluating the Celtic hypothesis (13.2, 2009, ed. by Markku Filppula and Juhani Klemola). The profession is listening.

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CHEL gives more serious scholarly consideration to the linguistic consequences of the contacts between the indigenous speakers of Brittonic and the speakers of Old and Middle English. Not surprisingly, the lexical influence outside of place-names is discussed by Hogg and Denison in the opening chapter (8), and in Kastovsky's chapter ('Vocabulary', 225–26) where we find an almost exhaustive list of surviving borrowings: the familiar *bin*, *cross*, *dun*, *torr*, alongside some Old English loans that have not survived. The onomastic inheritance is recognized as being much richer. Coates's chapter ('Names') provides an enlightening and original discussion of the difference between Brittonic and English geographical names with cultural implications outside English: if the feature is major (rivers, other boundary-delimiting features), its name is likely to be taken over, while the microtoponymy is rejected by the newcomers (337). Thus we get Celtic river-names such as *Thames*, *Severn*, and *Humber*, and the Brittonic word for river itself, **aβon*, became the proper name of six English rivers (336). A small nugget of Celtic-ness, which I have not encountered elsewhere, is the practice of left-headed or 'inversion' compounds in place-naming in the north-west, Cumberland, and adjacent Scottish counties: *Kirkoswald*, *Crossmichael*. These are identified as corresponding to Irish/Manx name-syntax (348–49).

The controversy over the Celtic influence on the syntax of English is acknowledged in Fischer and van der Wurff's chapter with specific references to recent works where the Celtic substratum hypotheses are stated and defended (136). The authors note two innovations that have attracted the attention of scholars seeking contact-based explanations: the grammaticalization of the progressive and the rise of *do*. The hypothesis that the progressive may have been directly influenced by Celtic is highlighted (136); the possible bridge between Old English *be* + *-ende* (present participle) and Celtic is identified as imperfectivity, more concretely 'limited duration . . . with the connotation of persistence, of "not giving up" ', for example, *he wæs heriende and feohtende fiftig wintra* 'he was/he kept attacking and fighting for fifty years' (136). Such a meaning of the progressive is recorded in Middle Irish too; within English it persists throughout Middle English, becomes grammaticalized in late Modern English, and is part of the aspectual marking today. Outside of this link, however, Fischer and van der Wurff list internal structural factors that complement a purely contact-driven account: loss of inflections and related rise of periphrasis, which makes new periphrastic structures more easily accommodated, confusion and merger of the verbal noun in *-ung*, *-ing* and the participle in *-ende*, *-inde*, *-ande*, and formal confusion between the participle and the infinitive. In the end, the history of the progressive emerges as the result of an extremely complex set of factors, and it is not surprising that the authors move on to the discussion of its functions without making a clear commitment to the Celtic origin of the form.

The observation that negative and interrogative *do* 'is found nowhere on earth except Celtic and English' (McWhorter 2008:31) is a serious challenge for purely structural accounts of that feature of English. Fischer and van der Wurff preface their account of the rise of *do* as an empty operator by recognizing its 'rather idiosyncratic grammaticalisation' (154). They do mention the possibility of a Celtic substratum influence in that process (154), but the rest of their account is a systematic overview of potential language-internal sources of the change. First, they point out the attested causative, anticipative, and substitute uses of *do* in Old English that are shared with other West Germanic languages, where the semantic bleaching of causatives with transitive verbs and the already semantically impoverished anticipative and substitute uses provide a logical first step toward the development of 'empty' *do*. Then we have the records of

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a very steep rise of empty *do* in the second half of the sixteenth century, a fact that any account has to confront. In response, proponents of a Celtic-contact source of *do* point out that the earliest instances of affirmative 'empty' *do* are found in thirteenth-century South-Western Middle English and that the current distribution of unstressed affirmative *do* in declarative sentences is also associated with the South-West of England (Klemola 2002). Fischer and van der Wurff's approach is to refer to a set of 'macro-causes', all of them system-internal: the concurrent rise of other periphrastic constructions for tense, aspect, mood, and voice, the increasing rigidity of SVO word order, and changes of the position of the adverbial (156). In the end, although they repeatedly caution that 'we are still somewhat in the dark as to what constructions provided the origin or what factors were most crucial to the development' (155), they do not attempt a summary evaluative statement that includes the substratum hypothesis.

Surprisingly, in view of the overall emphasis on social and cultural diversity, *OHE* is quite reticent on the question of grammatical features of English that may be attributed to the Celtic substratum. Townend draws an interesting line between Celtic as part of 'a history of language in England' vs. 'a history of the English language' (65): Celtic is central for the former, but in terms of the lingustic history, 'sadly the possible influence of Celtic on English (besides the handful of loanwords mentioned earlier) remains obscure and disputed' (84). Works on the Celtic influence on English are not included in the 'Further reading' in any of the chapters. The pre-Christian Celtic-to-Germanic lexical transfer is noted by Hoad (29); for example, OE *rīce* 'powerful, realm', Germanic **rīkja-*, is from the Celtic suffixed form **rīg-yo-* and not an independent development from a common IE source **reg-* 'rule'. Celtic words in Old English are mentioned by Bailey (336), and the modern Celtic vocabulary items are discussed in the context of Irish and Welsh regionalisms by Upton (323).

The Celtic influence on syntax is a topic ignored by *OHE*. The history of aspectual marking is not included in any of the chapters. In her fine survey of the origins and spread of *do*-support in Tudor English, Nevalainen (197–209) recognizes the puzzling nature of the rise of periphrastic *do* and notes, among others, the proposal attributing the process to the frequent use of *do* to mark habitual action in the South-Western dialects, where it could be linked to contact with Welsh. She inserts an element of reservation about this source, however, by pointing out that past habitual actions in Welsh can also be indicated by the simple past tense and by the equivalent of *used to*. A corpus of early English correspondence reveals that fifteenth-century periphrastic *do* 'occurs particularly in the City of London and to some extent in the west' (199). Nevalainen focuses primarily on the history of *do*-periphrasis in affirmative and negative declaratives. In affirmatives, *do* increases between 1500–1640 and then takes a rapid and surprising downturn between 1640–1710. She adduces quantitative genre-based evidence from the Helsinki Corpus to argue that the rise of the affirmative was based on the spoken language, but no argument for a regional influence emerges from the data. Moreover, the mystery of the arrested spread of *do* in affirmative sentences in the standard would argue against dialectal influence, not in favor of it. Her discussion of the linguistic motivations for *do* (206–8) is entirely structural and functional; it does not include language contact. The brief concluding statement that 'dialect contact may have had a role in shaping . . . the standard' (208) refers to the cautiously worded possibility that the decreased use of affirmative *do* recorded in the south reflects the post-1603 linguistic situation in King James's Court since affirmative *do* was lagging behind in Scottish English. In the end, although Nevalainen acknowledges the puzzle of *do* ('None of these accounts is perfectly satisfactory, and not least because of prob-

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lems of localization' (199)), she also implicitly dismisses the substratum hypothesis by presenting only internal dialect data and structural arguments.

In concluding this section: work on the Celtic linguistic substratum is still not part of the ESTABLISHMENT history of English. Research on this topic published over the last two decades does require closer attention. Contact-based hypotheses about English extend beyond the origin of *do* and the progressive forms. A syntactic pattern that has attracted attention in the context of assessing the Celtic influence on English is the Northern Subject Rule (Klemola 2000), according to which the selection of verbal *-s* depends on the proximity and type of the subject: *-s* is added unless the verb is immediately preceded by a subject pronoun, as in *I often tells him* vs. *I tell him not to*). The rule is described in Lass's 'Phonology and morphology' chapter (103–4) and in Hogg's 'English in Britain' (375) in baby-*CHEL*. A very similar paradigm is also introduced as an Older Scots feature in Smith's 'From Middle to Early Modern English' chapter in *OHE* (129–30) under the name of the Northern Personal Pronoun Rule, whereby the verb has a zero inflection if a pronominal subject is immediately adjacent to it on either side and the *-s*/*-es*/*-is*-/*-ys* inflection is used in all other cases. As Smith notes, the rule is found also 'in the more conservative dialects of the Eastern United States' (129). Indeed, the same pattern is traceable to Scottish migration through Ulster in the seventeenth century to Appalachian English; it is also attested in nineteenth-century African American English (Montgomery 1989 and Montgomery et al. 1993), so it is of considerable historical interest for the history of New World Englishes too. The possibility of a substratum connection for the origin of this concord is not mentioned in the books under review, though it is one of the central arguments in the creolized history of English; see McWhorter 2008:48–51, 117. Moreover, casting a chronologically much deeper net, Vennemann (2001) has argued that this modern regional peculiarity can be traced back to a prehistoric Semitic substratum in insular Celtic.[6]

One particularly un-Germanic feature of English is the lack of noun-phrase-external dative possession marking when the possessed object is inalienable, as in *and sone fel him* (dat.) *to þe fet* 'and soon fell to his feet'. The only other Germanic language besides English lacking this construction is Afrikaans. Vennemann (2001), who cites this and other Old and Middle English examples, pointed out that Insular Celtic parallels English in this respect, and in spite of possible reservations about the necessity of the connection, the loss of this grammatical feature is too striking to be omitted from the accounts altogether.

These are admittedly controversial topics, and as such they may be argued to be outside the remit of the reviewed books. Yet an engagement with ongoing debates is a great opportunity to show the targeted 'advanced student' the extent to which our HISTORIES continue to be discovered and reinterpreted.

3.2. HISTORY OF ENGLISH STRESS. While sound change has always been a central component of histories of English and major changes such as the Great Vowel Shift have been subjected to analysis within every possible phonological framework, prosodic developments are more difficult to reconstruct and are traditionally described quite

[6] A very important new study (Benskin 2009) provides the most in-depth review of the literature, a survey of the philological evidence, and an incisive critique of the published pro- and anti-Celticist arguments for the Northern Subject Rule. Benskin affirms the possibility of a very early origin (tenth-century Old Northumbrian) for the rule and lays out an analogical schema that may be invoked in favor of a transfer of the pattern from Brittonic to Old English by female slaves and domestic servants. The article makes the case for Celtic influence on the rise of the construction much more probable than any previous work in that area.

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sparingly. Van Gelderen's *HEL* is no exception: there is no discussion of syllable structure and the only references to stress are a cursory mention of the Germanic word-initial stress vs. stress on polysyllabic loans from French and Latin (165–66), some ongoing stress variation (*abdomen, anchovy*, etc., 209), and some examples of regional variation (*argument, execute, advertisement*, 258).

OHE is equally reticent with respect to prosodic history. Hoad comments on the difference between Germanic and other Indo-European languages with respect to stress, defining the former rather vaguely: 'in Germanic the stress came to be always placed on the first syllable in most words', linking this, predictably, to inflectional loss (20). The same connection between stress and inflectional loss is found in Townend's discussion of the Norse-English contacts (83). Irvine's two-sentence summary of the features of Old English meter (39) as stress-based presupposes information not offered in the volume and therefore remains cryptic. Smith mentions the link between meter and stress as a useful heuristic (136). I did not find other references to prosodic features anywhere else in the volume; the more's the pity since verse has been the dominant form of literary creativity for all but the last three hundred years of the history of English and *OHE*'s collection of papers would be most accessible to students of literature.

Lass's chapter 'Phonology and morphology' in baby-*CHEL* devotes considerable attention to word stress. A brief and admirably clear outline of the situation in Modern English (51) identifies, negatively, THE single regularity of the stress system: primary stress cannot appear more than three syllables from the end. This section adumbrates also the historical clash of left-prominent Germanic stress and the adoptive system of stress assignment calculated from the right edge of the word. The complex effect of morphological factors in Old English is recognized (54–55), but without specifics; no references to the long-standing controversy about the role of syllable weight in Old English stress appear here or in the 'Further reading' for this chapter. Insensitivity to syllable structure in Old English is posited for both roots and affixes (68), but only at the cost of listing prefixes as stressable in the lexicon, while it is clear that light prefixes (*be-, ge-*) cannot be stressed. A similar weight-based restriction blocks light suffixes from bearing nonprimary stress and functioning as ictic in the verse, while suffixes such as *-dōm* '-dom', *lēas* '-less' can be ictic. A provocative statement that Old English has 'a phrase-vs-compound rule more or less the same as the modern one' (54) is more than we find anywhere else in these volumes on the issue of phrasal stress, yet it does leave one wondering how we know and how solid the observation is. Syllable weight is introduced as a preamble to the Romance Stress Rule (68), and here Lass reiterates the position he has held in his earlier publications, namely that in English a -VC-syllable is light. This is a vulnerable position in terms of Old English meter and in terms of the minimal-word requirement; Lass admits that it is 'somewhat controversial', but does not offer a guide to what the dissent may be based on.

Stress has been important in the history of English word-formation. Kastovsky mentions the lack of stress on suffixes as the reason for the shift from affixal to affixless derivation in English and ultimately the generalization of word-based morphology (227, 238). Both Lass (94–95) and Kastovsky (227–28) bring up briefly the appearance of an important pattern in current English: the functional stress-shifting in pairs such as *áddict* n. – *addíct* v.; *présent* n. – *presént* v. For Lass this is a 'new sub-pattern' whose beginning is dated to the early sixteenth century, while for Kastovsky the Old English alternation of stressed prefixes on nouns vs. unstressed prefixes on verbs is 'not unlikely' to have been 'at least one of the factors that contributed to the establishment of the Modern English stress alternation' (227). The question of continuity or innovation is

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of interest. As reported in Minkova 2008, continuity of functional stress-shifting in English can be claimed only as a very general tendency toward lexicalization of a sentence-level prosodic pattern. In every other respect the Old English model (*óutlaw* n. – *outláw* v.) and the non-Germanic model (*présent* n. – *presént* v.) differ: native stress-shifting requires overt morphological compositionality, it is not sensitive to the segmental content of the coda, and the direction of the shifting is unregulated. The non-Germanic model applies to synchronically monomorphemic words (*record*, *torment*, *permit*), it overwhelmingly favors coronals in the coda, and the shift is unidirectional—from iambic to trochaic.

4. CONCLUSION. The three volumes command admiration and respect; they move the field forward by opening up new areas of inquiry. Some of the features that distinguish this new crop of histories from their august predecessors are:

- focus on regional and ethnic varieties, pluralism and diversity,
- attention to both standard and nonstandard, public and private records of historical English,
- emphasis on historical multilingualism and English as a world language,
- shift of chronological emphasis: the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are now a legitimate part of the HISTORY of English,
- wide-spread use of historical corpora as the basis of statistically based accounts, and
- inclusion of web-based pedagogical and research materials.

It is evident that many sociological and cultural aspects of the history of English had been neglected in the pioneering works. The early focus on the development of one particular variety, southern Standard English, which characterized investigations as late as the turn of the twentieth century, has now shifted and widened to include the whole gamut of Englishes inside and outside the United Kingdom and North America. The familiar classics: Baugh & Cable, Pyles & Algeo, both of which have gone through five editions, to name just two of the most widely used and revised texts, continue to have their usefulness and their readership, but the field has now expanded beyond the confines of a single text. The 'history of English' has also become a field that no single scholar, no matter how accomplished and omniscient, can fully command. We now need as many histories of English as there are branches of linguistics, and bundling them together in one volume is a good start, as is obvious from the proliferation of multi-authored handbooks in the last decade. Maybe it is time to abandon the general *History of English* title and go for the post-colon-ial extended titles and subtitles of the type we find in earlier centuries.[7]

The three volumes should be seen as worthy successors in a venerable tradition of language study. They enrich our understanding of the philological and cultural heritage of English and invite further research. One can only hope that consumption will keep pace with production and that this wealth of instructional material will help instill in the next generation of students an appreciation of our linguistic past and will restore

[7] The most influential late-eighteenth-century guide to pronunciation, John Walker's *Dictionary* (1791), has the title *A critical pronouncing dictionary, and expositor of the English language*; ... *to which are prefixed, principles of English pronunciation ... Likewise, rules to be observed by the natives of Scotland, Ireland, and London, for avoiding their respective peculiarities, and directions to foreigners, for acquiring a knowledge of the use of this dictionary: the whole interspersed with observations etymological, critical, and grammatical.*

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the study of language history to its rightful place in the humanistic curriculum. Pointing out what these volumes do NOT do does not detract from the enormous range of old and new knowledge that is made available in them. In taking leave from these fascinating journeys into the past and present of English, I concur with Hogg and Denison's sentiment in baby-*CHEL*, that the greatest appeal of this kind of study is that 'there is so much still to discover' (7).

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