Merja Stenroos, Martti Mäkinen and Inge Særheim (eds.). *Language Contact and Development around the North Sea*. Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 321. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2012, xvi + 235 pp., € 105.00/$ 158.00.

This volume contains some eleven papers, most of which were presented at a conference on the development of languages and literacy in the North Sea area which was held at the University of Stavanger in Norway in August 2009. The papers are preceded by an admirably lucid and concise introduction by the editors and are arranged according to the following categories: Part I. The evidence of place-names (three papers); Part II. Code selection in written texts (three papers); Part III. Linguistic developments and contact situations (five papers).

The first paper in the collection, Carole Hough's "Celts in Scandinavian Scotland and Anglo-Saxon England: Place-names and language contact reconsidered" (3–22), deals with the paucity of pre-Norse names in the Northern and Western Isles and of pre-Anglo-Saxon names in the English Lowland Zone. Hough seeks to place this in the context of the fate of the Pictish and British populations at the hands of their Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon conquerors. Quite properly, she is sceptical of the view that in the English Lowland Zone the British were effectively 'ethnically cleansed' by the English, but she clearly sees the contradiction between British survival and the modest number of British place-names. To overcome this, she argues that in the Early Middle Ages place-names were primarily functional with a real semantic content. However, we have to be clear about the type of language contact and the degree of semantic opacity involved here. In cases where unrelated languages meet, place-names can have a purely referential function devoid of meaning. The classic example is of course the tautological Cheetwood (in Cheetham Lancashire: Ekwall 1922: 33), a compound of British **cȩ̄d* 'wood' and the semantically identical OE *wudu*. Here the English have taken the (for them) semantically empty British *cȩ̄d* as a name, a point of reference in a particular *Landschaft*, and have added their own qualifier. Again, Hough takes issue with a suggestion of Alan James that British **eglȩ̄s* < Latin *ecclēsia* may well have been "just a meaningless label that Britons were heard to use in relation to certain pieces of land" for the Anglo-Saxons (James 2009: 129). In fact, James is somewhat equivocal. He suggests that **eglȩ̄s* was used by British speakers to denote a piece of land subject to the Church, which, borrowed into English as **eclēs*, remained in use among English-speakers as a name (Eccles) for such landholdings (James 2009: 129–130). Professor Hough indicates a way out of the contradictions inherent in James' position by suggesting that the Eccles-group of names were taken over by the English as "*meaningful* names" (14). She states that the Anglo-Saxons knew what Eccles denoted

(17), but I am not so sure. I would prefer to interpret Eccleston (Lancashire) as 'village, estate at a place called Eccles' rather than 'estate at a British church' or 'estate on a piece of land belonging to the Church'. Hough is probably correct in seeing 'sense' and 'reference' as poles on a cline subject to diachronic variation (16–17), but the matter is not so clear cut and ultimately leads to the question of how place-names are formed and who coined them. Many years ago, the late Kenneth Cameron pointed out that the Old English names in *-ingas* compounded with personal names were originally group names and not place-names, only becoming place-names when the groups in question became permanently associated with the places in which they settled (Cameron 1976: 137–138, 140). We should also not forget that *-ingas*-names could denote ancient *regiones*; cf. Sonning in Berkshire (*usque ad terminum alterius prouinciae quae appellatur Sonninges* before 675 Gelling 1973–1976: 132–133). We can perhaps regard the name of the *regio* or province as a halfway house between the group name and its definitive use as a place-name, but at some stage, probably fairly early on, it must have become semantically opaque. Hough (5), following the late Cecily Clark, quite correctly cites the so-called Grimston hybrids of the Danelaw, names in which a Scandinavian personal name, which has replaced an earlier qualifier, is compounded with OE *tūn* 'estate, village, homestead' as examples of partial renaming caused by changes in lordship. Possibly, however, we are initially concerned with the designation for a particular *seigneurie* which only later acquired the status of a place-name. So, for example, Thurmaston in Leicestershire would, in the first instance, denote an estate with livestock and dependent peasantry belonging to a Dane named Thurmoth (ON *Þormóðr*, ODan *Thormōth*). The early forms of Thurmaston show an English genitive in *-es* (see Cox 2004: 237), and it was obviously coined initially by the Anglian peasantry of the area to distinguish Thurmoth's *seigneurie*/estate from others in the vicinity. The establishment of Thurmaston as a place-name proper was a subsequent development. Obviously, the boundaries between meaning and reference are not clear-cut, but fuzzy at the edges.

The basic tenet of Jürgen Udolph's paper "The colonization of England by Germanic tribes on the basis of place-names" (23–51) is that the Anglo-Saxon settlement in the former Roman province of Britannia did not have Schleswig-Holstein and the Jutland peninsula as its point of departure, but rather Westphalia, Lower Saxony, the southern Netherlands and Flanders. To support this hypothesis, he has assembled a list of (mainly descriptive) place-name elements common to both England and the Continental regions in question. The problem is that the distribution of elements like Germanic **fanja-* 'bog, moor' or **lauha-* 'wood' is dictated by the accidents of topography and landscape and the fact that they are present in several dialects renders them useless as indicators of dialectal

provenance. An examination of morphological features would seem to be more promising. Udolph attempts this with place-names containing the collective suffix *-ithi* (Germanic **-iþja*), but the problem here is, as Udolph's map (44) indicates, that, though this name element is frequent in Lower Saxony and on the Lower Rhine, it is also found at the neck of the Jutland peninsula and is only sporadically attested in England (almost exclusively in the South-East). Perhaps more useful is the name type in which a personal name is compounded with Germanic **-ingahaima-*. This type is represented by the English *-ingahām* names, but is also well attested in the Frankish and Saxon areas in Flanders; cf., for example, the Flemish place-names Anzegem and Tiegem, whose first elemets are Frankish *Ansold* (< *Answald*) and Frankish-Saxon *Thiadbōdo*, respectively (Gysseling 1960: 62, 965). Udolph makes no attempt to establish a relative or absolute chronology of name types and does not even try to relate his onomastic evidence to that of archaeology. A crucial point ignored by Udolph is that our evidence for the early North-West Germanic toponymy of North Friesland, Angeln and Schwansen is limited because of extensive Danish penetration of these areas in the periods following the Migration Age.

Inge Særheim's "Ancient toponyms in south-west Norway: Origin and formation" (53–66) investigates a group of early uncompounded names of islands, fjords, rivers, lakes and old settlements in the south-west Norwegian province of Rogaland. He divides these names into two categories, namely, a) 'primary' names formed with a productive suffix, which seem to be ancient, and b) 'secondary' names belonging to particular lexical items. The question of pre-Indo-European substratal influence looms large in any discussion of early nomenclature and the author cites Theo Vennemann's Vasconic and Semitidic substrata and Hans Kuhn's theory that the Indo-European settlers in north-west Europe took over pre-existing names as examples of scholarship in this direction (54–55). Særheim questions the validity of such approaches. For example (54), he cites the examples of Solund, the name of an island in Sogn (western Norway), and Arendal, the name of a town in Aust-Agder (southern Norway). Vennemann interpreted the former as belonging to a Semitidic word for 'mountain', but Særheim shows that it is more plausibly derived from ON **sól* 'furrow, incision' and an *-und*-suffix. Arendal belongs to a group of Ar(e)n- names in northern Europe which Vennemann linked to a Vasconic word for 'valley'. Though conceding the formal possibility that the first element of Arendel is ON *ǫrn* 'eagle' (gen. sing. *arnar*), Særheim prefers to interpret it in the Indo-European context of Hans Krahe's *Alteuropäische Hydronomie* and compares the Arno in Tuscany and the Arn in Denmark. He shows that the names from Rogaland examined in the present paper can all be plausibly interpreted as belonging to Norse, Germanic or Indo-European and, whilst not completely rejecting the theoretical possibility of a

pre-Indo-European substrate in the ancient toponymy of southern Norway and Scandinavia, he is rightly sceptical about its existence.

Part II, "Code selection in written texts", begins with Jan Ragnar Hagland's paper "On vernacular literacy in late medieval Norway" (69–80), which is concerned with Danish/Norwegian literacy in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Norway. His sources are primarily charters, though he also mentions royal amendments to law codes, land surveys (mostly ecclesiastical) and transcripts or copies of the Norwegian law codes as relevant. For Hagland, local legal records (which he terms 'affidavits') are especially important. He takes the increase in the number of records of this type from around 550 in the period 1310–1350 to around 720 in the period 1350–1390 to indicate a certain increase in the level of local administrative literacy. Hagland detects a certain amount of independent lay literacy in the fifteenth century. Hagland's results are important in the context of the shift to the vernacular for administrative purposes in the later Middle Ages. Particularly interesting is his observation (75–76) that the "development of the literate mentality" in the production of local legal records was not accompanied by moves towards standardization. This of course is the opposite of what happened in England in the fifteenth century when the emergence of Chancery English (Samuels Type IV) acted as a motor for standardization.

A particular case of Norwegian limited bilingualism and language shift, that in Bryggen, the commercial centre of Bergen, in the period 1529–1936 is examined by Agnete Nesse's contribution "Four languages, one text type: The neighbours' books of Bryggen 1529–1936" (81–97). We are concerned here with a classic case of language use being dictated by politics. Between 1350 and 1750, Bryggen was one of the four main *Kontore* of the Hanseatic League. From the start of the period covered here until 1814, Norway was a province of the Danish crown and Danish had the functions of an administrative language. The so-called 'neighbours' book's are records detailing the regulation of the affairs of the mercantile community of Bryggen. The written language of the Hansa at the beginning of the period examined here was Low German, though this gave way to High German after 1580. The neighbours' books gradually shifted from Low German to High German in the course of the seventeenth century and then from High German to Danish between 1770 and 1820. The transition from Danish to Norwegian took place from the latter part of the nineteenth century onwards, and we might well ask how far this language shift was connected with the emergence of *Nynorsk* as a recognized variety. The language of the neighbours' books only partially reflects the spoken language. In the sixteenth century, we have a diglossic situation in which the Norwegian population of Bergen spoke the West Norwegian dialect of Hordaland, while the closed all-male Hanseatic community used Low German. Contacts between the two communities were limited, but there was some degree of passive

bilingualism. After the Hansa was wound up in the middle of the eighteenth century, the end of German as a spoken language in Bergen was inevitable, especially as non-Hanseatic Germans often married local women whose mother tongue was of course Norwegian.

The title of Laura Wright's paper, "On variation and change in London medieval mixed-language business documents" (99–115), is something of a misnomer because we are largely concerned with Latin records containing vernacular (English and French) technical terminology in the areas of carpentry and building. Only in the fifteenth century, as in the London accounts of the Worshipful Company of Grocers of 1432 cited on page 109, do we find texts that can be genuinely described as 'mixed' in that an underlying French grammatical matrix has been filled out with English vocabulary and has been encroached upon by English morphological features. The appearance of English patterns of word-formation, e.g., the use of the *-ing*-form in the deverbal formations *floryng* and *punchounynge* in a record of 1400 (104–105) indicates that the scribes who wrote these documents had English as their native tongue. The author points out that the use of abbreviations sometimes makes it difficult to decide whether an English, French or Latin inflectional form is meant. A point of criticism is her designation of the French in use in these records as 'Anglo-Norman'. This is surely anachronistic in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In any case, given that Central French (Parisian) loan-words occur in England from the latter part of the thirteenth century onwards, more precision in the determination of the dialectal affiliations of the French element in the material would have been appropriate. The author interprets her material as indicating that the shift to monolingual English in this type of record spans the period between 1380 and 1480, the date of the shift varying from archive to archive (109–110). However, the view of Richard Ingham, cited by Wright (111), that Anglo-Norman continued to be used orally "until at least the later fourteenth century" is open to dispute. We are concerned here with specialized texts using their own technical terminology and to use them to make deductions about spoken languages is a highly hazardous business.

Part III, "Linguistic developments and contact situations", commences with Kristin Killie's paper "Old English–Late British language contact and the English progressive" (119–140). The postulate of a British morphosyntactic substrate in English has enjoyed a certain vogue in recent discussions of the character of the linguistic contacts between Late British and Proto-Old English, though Killie is sensibly cautious. After reviewing the current debate on the nature of British–Anglo-Saxon linguistic and socio-historical interaction, the author goes on to examine "the possible influence" of the Late British verbal noun construction on the English progressive. I would agree with her view (129) that there must have

been widespread bilingualism on the part of the Britons in contact with the Anglo-Saxons, but would argue that this does not necessarily imply the inevitability of substrate influence on English in the wake of a shift to English on the part of the British population. As it is, the author, while acknowledging similarities of form and function between Celtic verbal noun constructions and English participial formations, wisely leaves it open whether we are concerned with Late British substrate influence on Old English or with parallel developments independent of each other. As she indicates (135), there are chronological problems, a major difficulty being that we have no direct textual evidence from the time in which Late British and Proto-Old English were in contact with each other. A further factor is, as Killie points out (135–136), that aspectual markers are notoriously unstable. We should also do well to note that the full development of aspect and the emergence of the modern progressive form in English belongs to the latter part of the Early Modern English period and that participial forms in Old English must also be evaluated in the context of Latin influence, especially where we are concerned with Old English translations of Latin texts.

The next paper, Marcelle Cole's "The Old English origins of the Northern Subject Rule: Evidence from the *Lindisfarne* gloss to the Gospels of John and Mark" (141–168) deals with a morphosyntactic feature whose origin has been the subject of much debate. The Northern Subject Rule is a grammatical constraint in Northern Middle English by which the plural marker of the present indicative was *-s* unless the verb had a personal pronoun preceding it or following it, in which case the verb had a vocalic or zero-morpheme ending. As Cole points out (143), it has been generally assumed that the reduced forms and the constraint which induced them must have emerged in the Northern dialects in the early Middle English period, though, as she also indicates (142), Juhani Klemola has argued that we may be concerned with a substrate feature taken into Old Northumbrian through contact with Brittonic between the middle of the seventh century and the late eighth century. There are cogent chronological reasons for rejecting this view, since the Northern Subject Rule is only apparent in Middle English. This objection could be rendered invalid, if the emergence of the feature could be pushed back into the Old English period, and this is precisely the aim of the present paper. However, as she herself recognizes (143–144), the discussion is made more difficult by the fact that our late Northumbrian texts – namely, Aldred's interlinear glosses to the *Durham Ritual* and the *Lindisfarne Gospels* and Owun's *Rushworth*^{2} gloss – belong to a text type subject to the syntactic constraints imposed by the Latin original and to the "skewing effect of glossing on language" (144). Selection of present endings in the glosses seems, as she indeed suggests (164–165), to be marked by a tendency for subject type and adjacency to condition verbal morphology, but it is too broad an interpretation of the evidence to assert,

as Cole does (165) that "the syntactic configuration at the crux of the NSR was already a feature of late Old Northumbrian".

This paper is followed by Claudia Di Sciacca's article "For Heaven's sake: The Scandinavian contribution to a semantic field in Old and Middle English" (169–192), which focuses on the Scandinavian loan-words *sky* (ON *ský* n. 'cloud; cataract on the eye') and *loft* (ON *lopt* n. 'air, sky, heavens'). Of course, the semantic restructuring of the word-field around 'sky', 'cloud' and 'heaven' in Middle English with its interaction of foreign (Norse, French) influence and internal shifts, as in the death of OE *wolcen* 'cloud; sky, heavens' and the shift in meaning of OE *clūd* from 'rock, lump' to 'cloud', is now part of the accepted wisdom of English historical semantics. The author dutifully discusses ON *ský* and its relatives OE *sċēo* 'cloud'and OSax *skion* 'cloud cover, overcast sky' (170–176). She quite correctly follows the traditional derivation of ON *ský* from a Germanic **skeu-ja-*, but is less certain about OE *sċēo*, which she takes to belong to either **skeuja-* or to **skeuwa-* (171). The absence of *i*-mutation in OE *sċēo* means that the first of these alternatives can be ruled out, so that we are left with a *u̯a*-declension neuter, Germanic **skeu-u̯a-*. As Di Sciacca indicates, OE *sċēo* has only been noted in Riddle 3 line 41 (or, if one follows the view that the first three riddles of the Exeter Book form a unity, Riddle 1 line 71), where she takes it to have been a learned archaism. I would take it to be a word from the Old English *Dichtersprache* removed from everyday usage. As Di Sciacca points out (174), it is only in English that the original meaning of *sky* has disappeared and given way to the sense 'the vault of heaven, firmament'. In Middle English, we find two variants, *skī(e)* and *skeu*. The first clearly goes back to ON *ský*, while the second would appear to belong to Germanic **skeu-u̯a-* and thus represent an unrecorded Norse cognate of OE *sċēo*. The second part of Di Sciacca's paper, the case of OE *lyft* 'air', the ancestor of ModE *lift* (substantive, verb) 'that which is raised, elevator; to raise', and ON *lopt* 'air, atmosphere', the ancestor of ModE *loft* 'attic, upper storey' (176–185), is more straightforward. The author begins with an etymological survey which is not really relevant to the semantic development of this word-field in English. More to the point is her observation that *on lofte* 'in the air' occurs in two Ælfric texts and *on/inne þe lofte* with the same meaning in two versions of the late-twelfth-century *Poema Morale*, while the homily in BL Cotton Vespasian A. xxii dating from ca. 1200 has the formulation *loftes leom*, which Di Sciacca (181) translates as 'the welkin's gleam'. The use of *loft* as a synonym for 'cloud' is, as she notes, unique in Middle English, but is simply the result of semantic confusion within the word-field 'sky', 'the heavens', 'firmament', 'cloud', 'covering of the heavens' in the course of the restructuring of this field in the context of the triumph of the Norse borrowing *ský* and the French loan *air(e)*. Interestingly, as Di Sciacca mentions (183–184) the modern sense of *loft* as 'upper storey, loft' is

attested in place-names of the type Lofthouse, Loftus (Yorkshire), these names being recorded already in the Middle English period (see Watts 2004: 379). The author suggests (182) that ON *lopt* entered English not as a simplex, but as the head of locative adverbial phrases, such as *á lopt* 'aloft, into the sky; abroad' and *á lopti* 'aloft, in the air, on high, hovering', but despite the existence of ModE *aloft* with an obvious Norse antecedent, this would seem to stretch the evidence a little too far.

Marjorie Lorvik's paper "North Sea timber trade terminology in the Early Modern period: The cargo inventory for the *White Lamb* revisited" (193–212) examines the timber terminology in a Scots cargo inventory for a Danish-owned ship, the *White Lamb*, which was sold at Burnisland on the Scottish coast in 1698. The similarity of Scots and Dano-Norwegian timber terminology touches on questions of mutual intelligibility amongst those involved in the Scottish-Norwegian timber trade in the Early Modern period. Starting from the inventory, the author examines the terms *foot, trees, oak, wood, barrel, knee-heads* and *oars*, which are mentioned in the inventory, as well as the terms *timber* and *baulk*, which, though not found in the inventory, are central to the timber trade. She discusses the etymologies of these terms in some detail (197–203). This is all very worthy, but it is questionable whether the results justify such detail. We are concerned with technical vocabulary specific to this field of trading activity and this would doubtless have been understood by all of those involved. This of course means Dutch and Low German speakers as well as speakers of Dano-Norwegian and Scots. Lorvik's reservations about the degree to which Dutch speakers would have been familiar with this terminology (204) seems ill-founded. The author quite correctly concludes that the absence of a pidgin/jargon of the *Russenorsk* type implies some degree of mutual intelligibility, possibly on the lines of a continuum, within this trading community on an oral basis. This would of course have been facilitated by the existence of a technical terminology which was generally understood.

The final paper in the volume is that of Gunnel Melchers, "'Nornomania' in the research on language in the Northern Isles" (212–230). Until recently, research on the dialects of Orkney and Shetland has, in accordance with the paradigm established by Jakob Jakobsen at the end of the nineteenth century, concentrated on the linguistic relics of the extinct Scandinavian language of the Northern Isles, Norn. In the paper reviewed here, which has something of the character of a *Forschungsbericht*, Melchers takes issue with what she calls *Nornomania*, the preoccupation with the central role of Norn in the dialectology of Orkney and Shetland. The author stresses a shift of focus in her own research from an initial concentration on the Scandinavian/Norn element to an interest in the modern dialect of Shetland. As she demonstrates, the relationship between Norn and

Scots and the triumph of the latter have formed a central point in recent research into the historical dialectology of the Northern Isles. Quite correctly, she indicates that phonological and morphosyntactical features in the modern dialects which have been previously assumed to be of Scandinavian origin should be subject to critical re-examination.

All the articles in the volume are accompanied by comprehensive bibliographies and the volume is rounded off by a useful index of subjects, terms and languages (231–235).

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