

# *Daniel*, the *Three Youths* fragment and the transmission of Old English verse

PAUL G. REMLEY

The theories of oral-formulaic composition advanced by Albert B. Lord, his mentor and collaborator Milman Parry, and their later twentieth-century followers have been adduced frequently in studies of Old English verse, elements of whose language must go back ultimately to an oral tradition.<sup>1</sup> After decades of research, however, scholars have yet to find conclusive answers to some basic questions:<sup>2</sup> did literate Anglo-Saxons continue to practise techniques of extemporaneous versification? If so, did they continue to develop the mnemonic skills attributed to oral poets? It is clear that the monuments of Old English verse reveal many examples of formulaic language (for example, *se mæra maga Healfdenes*, *se mæra mago Healfdenes* and *se mæra maga Ecgðeowes*);<sup>3</sup> but should we regard this language as a reliable witness to oral-formulaic versification or, perhaps, as a hybrid, ‘literary-formulaic’ idiom? Finally, if we accept the synchronic (or achronic) models of the formulaic ‘word-hoard’ that inform many Old English studies, is it pointless even to speculate about poetic influence,

<sup>1</sup> Several hundred Old English studies are abstracted by J. M. Foley, *Oral-Formulaic Theory and Research: an Introduction and Annotated Bibliography* (New York, 1985); these are accessible *ad indicem*, pp. 707–10. For more recent work, see the bibliography in P. Acker, *Revising Oral Theory: Formulaic Composition in Old English and Old Icelandic Verse* (New York, 1998), pp. 111–25.

<sup>2</sup> For a fundamental discussion of problems of orality and literacy, see the augmented reissue of a study by Lord first published in 1960: *The Singer of Tales*, ed. S. Mitchell and G. Nagy (Cambridge, MA, 2000), with audio and video supplements on compact disc – esp. at pp. 124–38. To trace some revisions of opinion, see further the text of a keynote address delivered by Lord, ‘Words Heard and Words Seen’, printed in *Oral Tradition and Literacy: Changing Visions of the World*, ed. R. A. Whitaker and E. R. Sienaert (Durban, 1986), pp. 1–17, and its expansion (cited silently hereafter) in a collection of Lord’s papers, *Epic Singers and Oral Tradition* (Ithaca, NY, 1991), pp. 15–37. For additional discussion of Old English verse, see esp. the posthumously issued studies in Lord’s *The Singer Resumes the Tale*, ed. M. L. Lord (Ithaca, NY, 1995), pp. 96–166, and Lord, ‘Oral Composition and “Oral Residue” in the Middle Ages’, *Oral Tradition in the Middle Ages*, ed. W. F. H. Nicolaisen, *Med. and Renaissance Texts and Stud.* 112 (Binghamton, NY, 1995), 7–29.

<sup>3</sup> *Beo* 1474, 2011 and 2587: ‘the famous son of Healfdene (or Ecgtheow)’. Unless noted, abbreviated titles of Old English texts follow those set out by B. Mitchell, C. Ball and A. Cameron, ‘Short Titles of Old English Texts’, *ASE* 4 (1975), 207–21; Mitchell, Ball and Cameron, ‘Short Titles of Old English Texts: Addenda and Corrigenda’, *ASE* 8 (1979), 331–3; and A. DiP. Healey and R. L. Venezky, *A Microfiche Concordance to Old English: the List of Texts and Index of Editions* (Toronto, 1980) [hereafter cited as *List*].

direction of borrowing and similar concerns? If so, how should we regard, say, two parallel uses of the unusual phrase *enge anpaðas*,<sup>4</sup> occurring verbatim in *Beowulf* and the poetic *Exodus* but nowhere else among the surviving monuments? Must we view these parallels as isolated outcroppings in the trackless expanse of the Old English poetic corpus? Largely as a result of the scarcity of verse preserved in multiple copies, such questions have remained debatable into the present century.

DANIEL AND THE VERSE OF THE CANTICLE-POET: NEW EVIDENCE  
FOR ORAL- AND LITERARY-FORMULAIC THEORY

The main subjects of the present study are the rare, parallel passages edited under the titles *Daniel* (there at lines 279–439) and *The Canticles of the Three Youths*<sup>5</sup> (designated *The Three Youths* in the present study, and long known as *Azarias*).<sup>6</sup> These parallel texts, across a span of nearly two hundred lines of verse, treat the deuterocanonical account (in early versions of the book of Daniel) narrating the angelic rescue of three young Israelite confessors from the fiery furnace of the Babylonian tyrant Nebuchadnezzar.<sup>7</sup>

If the interrelationship of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* could be established securely, the common vocabulary and the corpus of variants preserved in the two

<sup>4</sup> *Beo* 1410a: ‘narrow, solitary paths’; cf. *Exo* 58a.

<sup>5</sup> The sigil *TY* is used in abbreviated references below. The title *The Canticles of the Three Youths* accompanies the most recent edition of the verse, in *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry: an Edition of Exeter Dean and Chapter MS 3501*, ed. B. J. Muir, 2nd ed., 1 vol. in 2 (Exeter, 2000), on p. 157. Muir’s new title avoids the false impression – created by the title *Azarias* – that Azariah’s recitation (the biblical ‘Prayer of Azariah’: Dan. III.26–45; cf. *TY* 5–48) supplies the central matter of the verse, to the exclusion of the hymnody assigned to the three youths collectively (the biblical ‘Song of the Three Youths’: Dan. III.52–90; cf. *TY* 73–161a). Muir’s title, however, still ignores the narration of the three youths’ ordeal that provides the setting of the canticle-based passages – that is, the extant treatments of the biblical prose of Dan. III.25, III.46–51 and III.91–4 (at *TY* 1–4, 49–72, and 161b–191) – as well as some lost verse treating the prose of Dan. III.1–24, documented for the first time in the present study; see below, pp. 115–17.

<sup>6</sup> The title *Azarias* accompanied Grein’s text, giving rise to the short-lived English-language title *Azariah* in Gollancz’s edition: see *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie*, ed. C. W. M. Grein, 2 vols. in 4 (Göttingen, 1857–64) I, 115–19, and *The Exeter Book: an Anthology of Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, ed. I. Gollancz and W. S. Mackie, 2 vols., EETS os 104 and 194 (London, 1895–1934) I, 189–200. The verbose title ‘The Story of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, paraphrased’, accompanying Thorpe’s *editio princeps*, may qualify, in the final analysis, as the only accurate editorial title advanced to date: see *Codex Exoniensis: a Collection of Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, ed. B. Thorpe (London, 1842), pp. 185–97; but see also below, n. 120.

<sup>7</sup> The relevant verse of *Daniel* has been edited most recently in *Daniel and Azarias*, ed. R. T. Farrell, OE Lib. (London, 1974), pp. 47–89, at 64–77; Muir’s edition of *The Three Youths*, with critical notes, appears at pp. 157–63 and 461–7 of the edition cited in n. 5. These editions are best consulted together with the facsimiles in *The Cadmon Manuscript of Anglo-Saxon Biblical Poetry: Junius XI in the Bodleian Library*, introd. I. Gollancz (London, 1927), and in *The Exeter Book of Old English Poetry*, introd. R. W. Chambers, M. Förster and R. Flower (London, 1933).

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texts would provide a valuable resource for linguistic, metrical and palaeographical analysis. Scholars have long been engaged by the problem, but no two seem to have reached identical conclusions regarding the chronological priority of one text over the other. Nor have they agreed on the relationship of either text to a hypothetical archetype of *Daniel*. Two extracts from the *Daniel–Three Youths* parallels figure prominently in an influential study by Kenneth Sisam, first issued in 1946.<sup>8</sup> Sisam there addresses what he terms the ‘authority’ and ‘integrity’ of the major Old English poetical witnesses, including the Junius manuscript and the Exeter Book (which respectively preserve *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*).<sup>9</sup> Questioning the performance of later Anglo-Saxon scribes who transmitted their native poetry to posterity, Sisam argues that his generally negative view of their achievement is corroborated by a parallel ‘specimen from the *Daniel*–[*Three Youths*] verses . . . [which] evidently contains a deep-seated corruption’.<sup>10</sup> Some twenty years later, in the wake of Lord’s early publications, Alison Jones Gyger and Alan Jabbour adverted to the oral-formulaic tradition in assessing the parallels, Jones Gyger maintaining that the passages ‘show differences which are [more easily] . . . attributable to the lapses of memory of an “oral singer” than to anything else’.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> K. Sisam, ‘Notes on Old English Poetry’, *RES* 22 (1946–7), 257–68, esp. at 258–65; rev. repr. (to which reference is made hereafter) issued as ‘The Authority of Old English Poetical Manuscripts’, in Sisam’s *Studies in the History of Old English Literature*, corr. ed. (Oxford, 1962), pp. 29–44, here at 31–9.

<sup>9</sup> The monuments in question, also cited frequently below as Junius 11 and Exeter 3501, are (1) Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11 (*SC* 5123) (southern English centre (at Canterbury or ?Malmesbury)?, s. x<sup>2</sup> or x/xi (pp. 1–212: thus Lockett and Ker, respectively; or s. xi<sup>1</sup>?; thus Gneuss) and s. xi<sup>1</sup> (pp. 213–28: thus Ker and Gneuss); added drawings of s. xii<sup>2</sup>; later provenance (by s. xiv) at Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury?) and (2) Exeter, Cathedral Library, 3501, fols. 8–130 (centre in south-western England (conceivably Exeter)?, s. x<sup>2</sup> (c. 975: thus Scragg); possibly influenced by work produced at Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury (thus Gameson); provenance at Exeter by s. xi<sup>3/4</sup>). For introductory discussions and references, along with citations of extant manuscripts containing work assigned to the primary scribe of the Exeter Book and to the second main artist of the Junius manuscript, see the articles ‘Exeter Book’ (by D. G. Scragg) and ‘Junius Manuscript’ (by P. G. Remley), *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. M. Lapidge, J. Blair, S. Keynes and D. Scragg (Oxford, 1999), respectively at pp. 177–8 and 264–6. It should be assumed that all of the citations of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts in this study have been refined in the light of treatments by N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957; repr. with suppl. 1990), where available, and by H. Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: a List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100*, *Med. and Renaissance Texts and Stud.* 241 (Tempe, AZ, 2001).<sup>10</sup> Sisam, ‘The Authority’, p. 32.

<sup>11</sup> A. Jones [Gyger], ‘*Daniel* and *Azarias* as Evidence for the Oral-Formulaic Character of Old English Poetry’, *MÆ* 35 (1966), 95–102, at 95–6; cf. A. A. Jabbour, ‘The Memorial Transmission of Old English Poetry: a Study of the Extant Parallel Texts’ (unpubl. PhD diss., Duke Univ., 1968) [hereafter cited as ‘The Memorial Transmission’], with abstract in *Dissertation Abstracts (International)* [hereafter *DA(I)*] 30A (1969), 282–3; and Jabbour, ‘Memorial Transmission in Old English Poetry’, *Chaucer Rev.* 3 (1969), 174–90.

This position has not been taken up in recent years. Several recent studies, without supplying any detailed rationale, have adduced the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse as evidence for Anglo-Saxon scribal practice.<sup>12</sup> And the verse has been seen to witness techniques of verse-composition commonly adopted by vernacular poets (and poetic revisers).<sup>13</sup> More cautious commentary occurs in a study by Katherine O’Brien O’Keeffe, who rightly notes that ‘the relationship between *Daniel* and [*The Three Youths*] . . . illustrate[s] the complex problems in evaluating residual orality and literate transmission’.<sup>14</sup> O’Keeffe also challenges some of the assumptions implicit in Sisam’s ‘use of the term “integrity”’, which ‘tells us that manuscripts are judged by faithfulness to a hypothetical authorial version’.<sup>15</sup> Differing critical opinions regarding the chronology of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* will be addressed in due course.<sup>16</sup>

The present study attempts to improve our understanding of the *Daniel–Three Youths* variants by identifying some discernible points of scribal intervention in the parallel texts, as well as some thoroughly revised passages of verse. Where possible, these changes have been associated with specific individuals who were involved in the composition and transmission of the texts – say, a scribe or a poetic reviser whose traces have been left in multiple passages. For instance, the treatment of a canticle associated with the hymnody of the confessors, occurring in *The Three Youths*, will be shown to embody original verse by a single, anonymous poet, identified here as the Canticle-Poet. The Canticle-Poet, as we shall see, was a literate Christian who was steeped in the Latin diction of the liturgy. But this individual also managed to deploy traditional formulae in the course of composing new alliterative verse, varying the formulaic language to suit contexts arising out of Latin source-material. The analysis below will allow us to scrutinize the artistry of this previously unrecognized poet over an extensive sequence of lines.

PARALLELISM AND PROGRESSIVE TEXTUAL DIVERGENCE IN *DANIEL*  
AND *THE THREE YOUTHS*

The verbal correspondence exhibited by the parallel passages in *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* frequently is so striking that the relevant texts in Junius 11 and Exeter 3501 might well be regarded as close copies of a single composition. The texts’ joint witness to the rendition of Azariah’s recitation (*Dan* 283–332 and *TY*

<sup>12</sup> D. Moffat, ‘Anglo-Saxon Scribes and Old English Verse’, *Speculum* 67 (1992), 805–27; R. M. Liuzza, ‘On the Dating of *Beowulf*’, *Beowulf: Basic Readings*, ed. P. S. Baker (New York, 1995), pp. 281–302; and P. Orton, *The Transmission of Old English Poetry*, Westfield Pub. in Med. and Renaissance Stud. 12 (Turnhout, 2000).

<sup>13</sup> See the studies by Moffat and Orton, as cited, and D. P. O’Donnell, ‘Manuscript Variation in Multiple-Recension Old English Poetic Texts: the Technical Problem and Poetical Art’ (unpubl. PhD diss., Yale Univ., 1996), with abstract in *DA(J)* 57A (1996), 2469.

<sup>14</sup> K. O’Brien O’Keeffe, *Visible Song: Transitional Literacy in Old English Verse*, CSASE 4 (Cambridge, 1990), 138, n. 1. <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* p. 60. <sup>16</sup> See below, pp. 89–90.

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5–48) offers a representative example of this close verbal correspondence in its opening lines. (Textual variants are marked by the use of italic type.)<sup>17</sup>

Dan 283–5: *Metod* alwihta – *hwæt!* – þu eart mǣhtum swið  
niðas to nergenne. Is þin nama mære,  
wlitig 7 wuldorfæst ofer werðeode.<sup>18</sup>

TY 5–7: *Meotud* alwihta, þu eart *mæhtum* swið  
*niþas* to nerganne. Is þin *noma* mære,  
wlitig 7 wuldorfæst ofer werþeode.<sup>19</sup>

In later passages, the parallel treatments of the youths' hymnody (*Dan* 362–408 and *TY* 73–161a) reveal a pattern of sporadic parallelism and frequent innovation. By the time we arrive at their variant accounts of the miracle's aftermath (*Dan* 409–39 and *TY* 161b–191), the texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* would appear to have effected a complete divergence.

<sup>17</sup> For the shared Latin source of *Dan* 283–5 and *TY* 5–7, cf. *Dan.* III.26: 'Benedictus es, Domine, Deus patrum nostrorum et laudabilis, et gloriosum nomen tuum in saecula' ('You are blessed, Lord, the God of our fathers, and you are worthy of praise, and your name is glorious through the ages'). Unless noted, citations of Latin scripture follow the edition of the Vulgate text in *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem*, 4th ed., ed. R. Weber *et al.*, rev. R. Gryson (Stuttgart, 1994), with English translations adapted from the text of the Douai–Rheims version printed in *The Holy Bible translated from the Latin Vulgate*, ed. R. Challoner (Baltimore, MD, 1899). In preparing biblical citations, I have tried to identify all of the cases in which a given Old English biblical rendering can be shown to reflect an Old Latin source, a variant Vulgate reading or an extrabiblical model such as a liturgical lection. Any biblical language cited from the Stuttgart edition may thus be assumed to represent a common reading among witnesses surveyed for the present study.

<sup>18</sup> 'Give heed, Lord of all beings! You are strong in your powers [and] in redeeming your people. Your name is famous, illustrious and secure in its glory among the nations of humankind.' In citations of the Old English, capitalization and punctuation have generally been modernized in the light of the consulted editions; see further nn. 7 and 19. Many abbreviated forms have been expanded in accordance with the same models. Roman numerals, however, are reproduced unaltered, as are occurrences of the *nota 7* ('and'), whose phonology in the texts – whether *ond* or *and* – is uncertain. (Note, however, *TY* 117a *ond* [*sic*: Exeter 3501].) For *Daniel*, frequent reference has been made to earlier editions in *ASPR* I, 111–32 (by G. P. Krapp) and in the dissertation of F. C. Brennan, 'The Old English *Daniel*, edited with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary' (unpubl. PhD diss., Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1966), with abstract in *DA(I)* 27 (1967), 3421; Brennan's dissertation includes a valuable linguistic treatment of *Daniel*, as well as the only complete glossary issued to date. Translations generally follow the rendering of R. T. Farrell, 'Old English *Daniel*: a Translation based on a Reconstruction of the Text, with Notes and Commentary' (unpubl. PhD diss., Fordham Univ., 1968), with abstract in *DA(I)* 29A (1969), 2671–2. I assume sole responsibility for errors and infelicities.

<sup>19</sup> 'Lord of all beings, you are strong in your powers in redeeming your people. Your name is illustrious, beautiful and established in splendour over the nations of humankind.' For citations of *The Three Youths*, frequent reference has been made to the edition in *ASPR* III, 89–94 (by G. P. Krapp and E. V. K. Dobbie); see further nn. 5–7. Translations have been adapted from the facing-page rendering in *The Exeter Book*, ed. Gollancz and Mackie I, 189–200.

The marked divergence of the texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* first becomes evident in the two sequences of lines treating the recollection of God's promise to the patriarchs (in the biblical 'Prayer of Azariah'). As noted, these parallel passages were singled out by Kenneth Sisam as specimens of poorly transmitted Old English verse.<sup>20</sup> The passages, to which frequent reference will be made below, may be set out here in a format that eliminates Sisam's nonstandard line-breaks. (Textual variants are marked by the use of italic type; bracketed insertions address problematic readings.)<sup>21</sup>

- Dan* 315–24: þu him *þæt* gehete þurh hleoðorcwyde, 315  
 þæt þu hyra frumcyn in fyrndagum  
 ican wolde, *þætte* æfter him  
 on *cneorissum* cenned wurde,  
*7 seo manigeo mære wære,*  
 hat [sc. *had*] to hebban swa heofonsteorran 320  
*bebugað* bradne hwyrft, oð *þ* [sc. *oðþe?*] brimfaro · *þæs* [sc. *-faropæs?*],  
*safaroða sand,* geond sealtne wæg  
*me are* [sc. *in eare?*] grynded, þæt *his* untrim a  
 in wintra worn wurðan sceolde.<sup>22</sup>
- TY* 32–41: þu him gehete þurh hleoþorcwidas  
 þæt þu hyra frumcynn on fyrndagum  
 ycan wolde, þæt *hit* æfter him  
 on *cyneryce* cenned wurde, 35  
*yced on eorþan,* þæt *swa* untime,  
 had to hebban, swa heofonsteorran  
 bugað bradne hwearft oð brimflodas,  
*swa waroþa sond ymb* sealt wæter,  
*yþe geond eargrund,* þæt *swa* untime 40  
*ymb* wintra hwearft weorðan sceolde.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Sisam, 'The Authority', pp. 32–4.

<sup>21</sup> The passages follow *Dan.* III.36: '... quibus locutus es, pollicens quod multiplicares semen eorum sicut stellas caeli, et sicut harenam quae est in litore maris' ('[Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, ...] to whom you did speak, promising that you would multiply their progeny as the stars of the sky and as the sand that is on the shore of the sea').

<sup>22</sup> 'You promised them through the speech of prophets that you would increase their progeny in days long distant, that [progeny] which would be born after them into [future] generations, and [you promised] that the multitude would be illustrious, [you promised] to raise their stature just as the stars of heaven extend across their broad compass, or [reading *oðþe*] as the sand of the seacoasts, [the sand] of the shore of the sea, across the salty flow, serves as a foundation for the ocean [reading *in eare*], so that its [that is, the progeny's] uncountable number should forever come into being over a great span of years [lit. "winters"].'

<sup>23</sup> 'You promised them through the speeches of prophets that you would, in days far off, increase their progeny, [you promised] that after them it would be brought forth in the kingdom, [and



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These lines include some textual variants that resist classification. Several parallel readings involve different words showing similar patterns of letters: *cneorisum* (*Dan* 318a: '[into] (future) generations') and *cyneryce* (*TY* 35a: 'kingdom'); *sæ* (-*farōða*) (*Dan* 322a: 'sea') and *swa* (*warōþa*) (*TY* 39a: 'so'); and (*sealtne*) *wæg* (*Dan* 322b: 'motion, flow, wave') and (*sealt*) *wæter* (*TY* 39b: 'water'). Two full lines of verse without a word in common alternate in parallel (*Dan* 319 '7 seo mænigeo . . . wære' and *TY* 36 'yced . . . swa unrime'), to be followed closely by a half-line that seems to have been reproduced *litteratim* (*Dan* 320b and *TY* 37b: *swa beofonsteorran*). Any argument for the direct influence of oral (or orally influenced) compositional techniques on the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse will have to come to terms with this body of evidence. Variants of this sort might seem more likely to emerge over the course of written transmission.<sup>24</sup>

### *The progressive divergence of the Daniel–Three Youths verse*

Generally speaking, the parallel passages of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse may be divided into two groups, one group including passages that display continuous verbal parallels (as in the first pair of extracts set out above)<sup>25</sup> and the other including passages marked by a more sporadic sort of parallelism (as in Sisam's specimens).<sup>26</sup> As one proceeds carefully through the parallel texts (*Dan* 279–439 and *TY* 1–191), however, it becomes clear that the shift from the first type of parallelism to the second is gradual. The quantity of textual variation increases steadily with the progression of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse, even beyond the two most conspicuous points of divergence at *Dan* 315–24 and *TY* 32–41 (in Sisam's specimens), and after *Dan* 366 and *TY* 75 or thereabout (in verse treating the youths' recitation).<sup>27</sup> The incremental deviation of the parallel texts, which I shall designate 'progressive divergence' in subsequent discussion, provides the linchpin of much of the argumentation presented below. The pattern of the divergence suggests that the verse of one of the two texts under discussion

thus] increased on earth, in order to raise their stature, [and] that just as the stars of heaven – [stars] so numberless – circle the broad expanse to the ocean floods, similar to the sand of the shores around salt water, [similar to] the waves over the foundation of the sea, even so numberless should it [that is, the progeny] become in the course of years [lit. "winters"].'

<sup>24</sup> More profitably, perhaps, for the recovery of techniques of orally influenced formulaic composition, the passages reveal an interchange of a (historically Anglian) archaism, *worn* (*Dan* 324a: 'great number'), and a dialectally unmarked poeticism (also found in Alfredian prose), *hwearft* (*TY* 41a: 'turning, course'; cf. *Dan* 321a *hwyrft* and *TY* 38a *hwearft*); see F. Wenisch, *Spezifisch anglisches Wörtgut in den nordhumbrischen Interlinearglossierungen des Lukasevangeliums*, *Anglistische Forschungen* 132 (Heidelberg, 1979), 130 and 142.

<sup>25</sup> *Dan* 283–5 and *TY* 5–7; see p. 85.

<sup>26</sup> *Dan* 315–24 and *TY* 32–41; see immediately above, p. 86.

<sup>27</sup> Scholars have most often situated the end of the pattern of continuous parallelism in the rendition of the second main group of invocations, that is, at *Dan* 367–374a and *TY* 76–97a (following *Dan*. III.61–6).

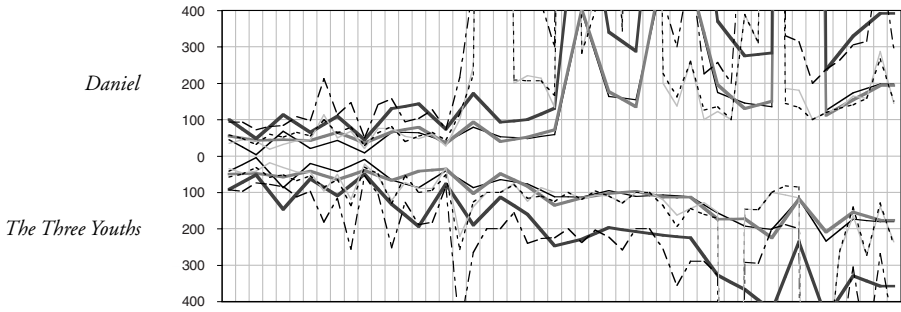


Fig. 1. The progressive divergence of the transmitted texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*

(*Dan* 279–439 and the extant verse of *The Three Youths*) was altered comprehensively – from beginning to end – at some point in its transmission, even if the nature and cause (or causes) of the textual changes in question remain to be identified.

In documenting this phenomenon, I have analysed the language of all of the parallel passages exhaustively with respect to variation in lexis, morphology and syntax (together mainly subsuming grammar), phonology (or spelling) and metre. An enumeration of the variant readings so identified has made it possible to quantify the patterns of textual divergence exhibited by the two texts.<sup>28</sup> I hope to issue a full account of this linguistic and metrical survey in a future publication. For the present purpose, the statistical results of this analysis have been charted in fig. 1, where the progressive textual divergence of the verse is plainly visible.<sup>29</sup>

Various circumstances might be adduced to explain the pattern of divergence revealed by the texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*. These include the dwindling attention of a careless scribe, a series of worsening defects in a materially

<sup>28</sup> Counts of variants have been undertaken under three headings (for the extant texts of both *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*, producing six samples): (1) lexis; (2) morphology, syntax, phonology (or spelling) and metre; and (3) the combined totals of the preceding. The distribution of variants is charted twice in fig. 1, once according to a uniform division of passages into groups of ten half-lines (or short lines), generally – though not invariably – corresponding to groups of five full lines of verse; and again according to a division into sense-units of varying lengths, these suggested by the scriptural narration of the fiery furnace episode. The pattern of gradual divergence has been confirmed by each of the twelve statistical series so obtained, as may be seen clearly in fig. 1.

<sup>29</sup> The dashed ‘peak’ and ‘valley’ in fig. 1, cols. 7–9, which correspond to Sisam’s specimens of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse, confirm that these passages are not representative of the continuous parallelism seen in the opening lines of the extant texts. I suggest below that the texts’ sudden divergence at this point may reflect the impact of material damage suffered by a lost copy of the verse; see pp. 121–2.



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damaged exemplar, fading light and failing memory. More charitably, the textual divergence might be seen to reflect a poetic reviser's increasingly careful assessment of the accuracy of Old English verse treating Latin source-material. Or it might be seen to reflect the growing confidence of a reviser who was a capable alliterative poet. And the most cautious explanation of the divergence at issue, as we shall see, may be obliged to incorporate several of these hypothetical scenarios.

#### *The relative chronology of Daniel and The Three Youths*

There is no scholarly consensus regarding the chronological priority of either *Daniel* or *The Three Youths*. An extreme position was taken by Alison Jones Gyger, whose cited position regarding the independent oral circulation of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse effectively disallows such text-historical speculation altogether.<sup>30</sup> Jones Gyger maintains that '[i]t is not possible to decide which, if either, was the primary version', while granting that '[i]n many respects the *Daniel* version is both faultier and less logical than [the *Three Youths* version]'.<sup>31</sup> Jones Gyger's conclusion that certain readings in *The Three Youths* are superior to the corresponding verse in *Daniel* was anticipated by Sisam and followed by Jabbour.<sup>32</sup> Reinforcing this view, Daniel P. O'Donnell has recently given the readings from *The Three Youths* pride of place in his doctoral thesis, setting them out in the first column of a lengthy parallel-text analysis.<sup>33</sup>

Critical defences of readings in *The Three Youths*, to the exclusion of variants in *Daniel*, have generally been based on close study of the continuous parallels in the early sections of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse. The prominent textual variants and difficult readings in later sections of *The Three Youths*, however, have been neglected in all studies issued to date. Moreover, no critic has acknowledged outright the possibility that revisions introduced by a redactor contribute to the impression that the earlier sections of *The Three Youths* preserve a superior text. Peter Orton, again on the basis of a study restricted to the early sections of the parallel texts, offers brief comments to this effect in a recent book,<sup>34</sup> noting the 'difficulty in determining the direction of changes [in the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse]' and suggesting that 'grammatical modifications of every kind, though priority cannot be established in any of them . . . mark [the texts] off quite emphatically from all other [multiple-witness specimens.] . . . [The] transmitters

<sup>30</sup> See p. 83.

<sup>31</sup> Jones Gyger, '*Daniel and Azarias*', pp. 95–6; she concludes that 'it [cannot] be argued from these examples that either *Daniel* or [*The Three Youths*] represented the primary form of the material or even that either was closer than the other to this primary form'.

<sup>32</sup> Sisam, 'The Authority', pp. 32–4, and Jabbour, 'The Memorial Transmission', at (for example) pp. 142–4. <sup>33</sup> O'Donnell, 'Manuscript Variation', pp. 364–432.

<sup>34</sup> Orton, *The Transmission*.

of this [verse] treated it with exceptional elasticity, and were competent enough in imposing their modifications to disguise their activities from the reader'.<sup>35</sup> The following discussion is intended to breach this critical impasse.

*An Old Latin-based canticle and its reflexes in Daniel and The Three Youths*

The immediate source of the rendition of 'The Song of the Three Youths' in *Daniel* (*Dan* 363–408) is an extrabiblical text, a variant form of the liturgical canticle known as *Canticum trium puerorum* (or, in modern use, the *Benedicite*).<sup>36</sup> The distinctive order of the invocations in the Latin canticle,<sup>37</sup> an order that is reproduced in the verse of *Daniel*, decisively links the Old English rendition to this liturgical source. Although the treatment of the matter of the canticle in *The Three Youths* (at *TY* 73–161a) is far less concise than is the corresponding rendition in *Daniel* (*Dan* 363–408), the verse of *The Three Youths* nevertheless reflects the pervasive influence of the same sequence of invocations. (This debt of *The Three Youths* to the Latin canticle-text, which is substantiated in the following summary, has not been recognized previously.) The distinctive arrangement of invocations occurs in a text of *Canticum trium puerorum* that is typically found in the *canticularium*, or appendix of canticles, annexed to copies of the so-called 'Roman' version of the psalms (or *psalterium Romanum*). The canticle-text in question, emerging out of an Old Latin (pre-Vulgate) scriptural tradition, ultimately goes back to a variant form of the Theodotonic Greek text of the canticle. Five Anglo-Saxon glossed psalters bear witness to the readings of this reflex of the Theodotonic text-type.<sup>38</sup> With the verse-numbering in editions of the Vulgate providing a basis for detailed comparison, the content of the Old Latin-derived liturgical canticle is summarized below; scriptural matter that is wholly unrepresented in the canticle has been enclosed in square brackets:

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* p. 198. <sup>36</sup> P. G. Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse: Studies in 'Genesis', 'Exodus', and 'Daniel'*, CSASE 16 (Cambridge, 1996), 392–404.

<sup>37</sup> For example, 'Benedicite pruina et niues Dominum . . .' ('Bless the Lord, you hoar-frost and snow . . .'); cf. the Vulgate texts of *Dan.* III.68 and *Dan.* III.70. Extracts witnessing the variant text are taken from *The Vespasian Psalter*, ed. D. H. Wright, with A. Campbell, EEMF 14 (Copenhagen, 1967), with abbreviations silently expanded and with normalized capitalization and punctuation. This facsimile edition reproduces the leaves of London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian A. i, fols. 2–154 (Canterbury? (St. Augustine's Abbey?), s. viii<sup>2/4</sup>; glosses of s. ix (c. 850?), following an earlier exemplar; additions of s. xi; provenance (by s. xi) at ?Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury; later provenance (by s. xv) at St Augustine's), here at 150v.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 370–413. Helmut Gneuss has offered a concise summary of the state of these witnesses: 'In den Mss. [PsG]ACDEL stehen die biblischen Cantica teilweise in einer Vetus Latina-Fassung und weichen deshalb oft wesentlich vom Vulgatatext der übrigen Mss. ab': H. Gneuss, *Lehnbildungen und Lehnbedeutungen im Altenglischen* (Berlin, 1955), p. 45, n. 2. For the sigla used here, see Healey and Venezky, *List*.

Daniel and the Three Youths fragment

1. [Dan. III.52a—III.52b—III.53–6]  
[Series of blessings commencing regularly with the phrase *benedictus es* ('You are blessed . . .') in the Vulgate text: not present *in loco* among the verses of the canticle; no reflex *in loco* in *Daniel* or *The Three Youths*; cf. echo of Dan. III.56 at the end of the canticle (as reproduced at *Dan* 405b–406), noted below under item 11.]
2. Dan. III.57—III.59—III.58—III.60  
Hymnodic invocations of God's works, the heavens, angels and heavenly waters (cf. *Dan* 362–6 and *TY* 73–5).
3. Dan. III.61–6  
Invocations of God's powers and spirits, of heavenly bodies and of elements of water and fire (cf. *Dan* 367–374a and *TY* 76–97a). The variation of matter in the canticle-verse corresponding to Dan. III.66 reflects the orthographic confusion of *aestus* ('heat') and *aestas* ('summer'; cf. *Dan* 373b *sumor*).
4. [Dan. III.67–8]  
[Invocations of cold, heat and watery elements; not present *in loco* in the canticle-series; no reflex *in loco* in *Daniel* or *The Three Youths*; cf. reflexes of Dan. III.69 (*Dan* 376b *bat 7 ceald*) and III.70 (377b *forstas*) noted below, under item 5.]
5. Dan. III.71–2—III.69–70—III.73  
Invocations of darkness and light; cold and heat; and atmospheric elements (cf. *Dan* 374b–380 and *TY* 99–108a): the matter in the canticle-verses corresponding to Dan. III.69 and III.72 here exhibits both (1) a variant Theodotonic invocation of heat (cf. *Vespasian A. i*, 150v *caumas* and *Dan* 376b *bat*), and (2) an invocation of light and darkness, in reversed order (cf. *Vespasian A. i tenebrae et lumen*, as discussed below).<sup>39</sup>
6. Dan. III.74–6  
Invocations of the earth; of mountains and hills; and of things born of the earth (cf. *Vespasian A. i*, 150v *omnia nascentia terrae*), that is, plants, trees and other growing things (cf. *Dan* 381–2 for reflexes of Dan. III.74–5; no reflex of Dan. III.76 in *Daniel*; cf. *TY* 110b–121, as discussed below).<sup>40</sup>
7. Dan. III.78—III.77—III.79–81  
Invocations of the waters and of creatures dwelling in water, in the sky and on earth (cf. *Dan* 383–9 and *TY* 122–45).
8. Dan. III.82–7—III.88a  
Invocations of humankind; of Israel; of God's officers and confessors; and of the faithful (cf. *Dan* 390–399a, for reflexes of Dan.

<sup>39</sup> See pp. 94–101.

<sup>40</sup> See pp. 107–8 and 124.

III.82–3, III.86 and III.88a; no clear reflex of Dan. III.84–5 or III.87 in *Daniel*; cf. *TY* 146–54 and discussion below).<sup>41</sup>

9. [Dan. III.88b—III.89–90]  
[Offering of thanks for God’s mercy and his rescue of those suffering oppression, with a final invocation of all the faithful (*omnes religiosi* in the Vulgate text); not present among the verses of the canticle; no reflex in *Daniel*; cf. *TY* 158–161a.]
10. First extrabiblical addition  
Trinitarian doxology (cf. *Vespasian A. i*, 150v ‘benedicamus Patrem et Filium et Sanctum Spiritum’); cf. *Dan* 399b–403 and *TY* 155–7.
11. Second extrabiblical addition  
Exhortation to praise God, with reminiscence of the *benedictus es*-series (cf. item 1 above and *Vespasian A. i*, 150v–151r ‘Laudamus et superexaltamus eum in saecula. Benedictus es in firmamento caeli’); cf. *Dan* 404–6; no reflex in *The Three Youths*.
12. ?Third extrabiblical addition  
?Closing *alia oratio* or similar liturgical form (cf. ‘Tu Domine illuminasti omnem mundum . . . Tu etiam tres pueros . . . liberasti . . .’, and *Dan* 407–8 ‘. . . lifes leohtfruma, / ofer landa gehwile . . .’; no precise parallel in *The Three Youths*; cf. *TY* 158–161a).<sup>42</sup>

The complete and precise agreement of the verse of *Daniel* with the order and content of canticle-verses (or additions) set out here as items 2, 10 and 11 – along with the distinctive Old English reflex noted under item 3 – places the direct dependence of the poem’s rendition of *Canticum trium puerorum* on the cited variant Theodotonic text-type beyond serious question. Forceful corroborating evidence appears in the renditions of canticle-verses cited above under items 5 and 7, whose reflexes in *Daniel* agree completely with the Theodotonic model in terms of content and, in great bulk, in their ordering of invocations. Two instances in which the verse of *Daniel* reveals an interchange or conflation of the matter of adjacent canticle-verses may be charged to poetic licence.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, the three instances in which the order of two adjacent elements is reversed within a reflex of a single canticle-verse appear to have arisen *metri causa*, given the invariable participation of the relevant terms in their lines’ alliterative schemes.<sup>44</sup>

In sum, the evidence plainly indicates that a Latin liturgical canticle reproducing a distinctive order of invocations, an order going back to a variant Greek

<sup>41</sup> See pp. 93–4 and 124–5.

<sup>42</sup> The cited liturgical form appears in London, British Library, Harley 2892 (Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury, or ?Winchester (for use at Canterbury), s. xi<sup>2/4</sup>; ‘Canterbury Benedictional’), 81r. See Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, pp. 387–9.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 399–401, discussing these apparent instances of poetic adaptation. <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* p. 401.

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text-type in the Theodotonic tradition, stands behind the verse of lines 362–408 of *Daniel*. The more important, previously unremarked point for the present discussion is that the same ordering of canticle-verses has now been shown to underlie the central section of the verse of *The Three Youths* preserved in Exeter 3501 (at *TY*73–161a).

### *Early readings and lacunae in the transmitted texts of Daniel and The Three Youths*

As we have seen, the concise treatment of the matter of ‘The Song of the Three Youths’ in *Daniel* owes a pervasive debt to a single, well-defined source: the variant Theodotonic text of *Canticum trium puerorum*. A close comparison of this model with the verse of *Daniel*, as preserved in Junius 11, aids the identification of passages from which readings seem to have been lost in the course of the poem’s transmission. The more expansive verse of *The Three Youths* preserved in Exeter 3501 offers valuable corroborating evidence here as well.<sup>45</sup> To cite one of several examples, the invocations of God’s officers and of the faithful (Dan. III.82–7 and III.88a), as treated under item 8 in the summary above,<sup>46</sup> are very badly served by the transmitted text of *Daniel*:

*Dan* 393–6:    7 þec haligra   heortan cræftas,  
                  soðfæstra gehwæs   sawle 7 gastas,  
                  lofiað liffrean   lean sellende  
                  eallum, ece drihten.<sup>47</sup>

Only the invocations of the spirits and souls of the just (Dan. III.86: *spiritus et animae iustorum*) are rendered at all closely in this passage (*Dan* 394: ‘... soðfæstra gehwæs / sawle 7 gastas’), albeit with a reversal in the order of spirits (*gastas*) and souls (*sawle*) effected *metri causa*. Allusions to God’s priests (Dan. III.84: *sacerdotes Domini*), to his servants (III.85: *serui Domini*) and to those humble at heart (III.87: *humiles corde*) fail to find any reflex in the extant verse of *Daniel*. The alliteration of *eallum* and *ece* in a suspiciously short line (*Dan* 396), however, seems to anticipate a form of the adjective *eaðmod*, ubiquitous at this point in vernacular

<sup>45</sup> In the present study, references to the transmitted texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*, as preserved in Junius 11 and Exeter 3501 respectively, most often are indicated explicitly. Other references to *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* may be taken to refer to the compositions which these witnesses imperfectly represent. <sup>46</sup> See pp. 91–2.

<sup>47</sup> ‘And the powers of the holy of heart, the souls and spirits of all the faithful, [so] they praise you, the Lord of life, the eternal Lord, giving a reward to all persons.’ Cf. the liturgical reflex of Dan. III.84–7: ‘Benedicite sacerdotes Domini Dominum. Benedicite serui Domini Dominum. Benedicite spiritus et animae iustorum Dominum. Benedicite sancti et humiles corde’ (‘Priests of the Lord, bless the Lord. Servants of the Lord, bless the Lord. Spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord. You who are holy and humble of heart, bless the Lord’); see further below, pp. 124–5. The Latin liturgical extract follows the readings in Vespasian A. i (see above, n. 37), here at 150v.

psalter-glosses, although no such reflex of Latin *humilis* appears in the extant verse of *Daniel*.<sup>48</sup>

In addressing the variant treatment of the youths' hymnody in *The Three Youths* and its relationship to the liturgical model described above, we have to reckon with the certainty that the text preserved in Exeter 3501 in several respects stands closer to the Latin source than does the verse of *Daniel* preserved in Junius 11. Conspicuously, the cited invocations of God's officers and the faithful are more fully rendered in the verse of *The Three Youths* (at *TY* 148–149a). The verse here also includes the anticipated reflex of Latin *humilis*, in the compound adjective *eaðmodheort* (*TY* 152b). Moreover, the presence of the reading *þas*, unmetrical and untranslatable in context (perhaps reflecting a form *þeowas*, 'servants', following *serui* in the Latin), among other difficult readings, might be seen to reflect an incipient process of textual degradation – a process attested at a later stage, perhaps, by the text of *Daniel* preserved in Junius 11:

*TY* 148–52: Bletsien þe þine sacerdos [sc. *sacerdas*], saðfæst [sc. *soðfæst*] cyning,  
milde mæsseras, mærne dryhten,  
7 þine þeowas [Exeter 3501: *þas*], ðeoda hyrde  
swylce haligra hluttre saule,  
7, ece god, eaðmodheorte.<sup>49</sup>

It will prove possible to analyse this passage more conclusively below.<sup>50</sup> The suspicion immediately arises, however, that the lines cited here bear witness to a state of the text of *Daniel* earlier than that preserved in Junius 11. Indeed, passages in *The Three Youths* are treated below in which the preservation of readings going back to earlier texts of *Daniel* can be substantiated.<sup>51</sup> In the present case, however, such suspicion will prove to be unfounded. The cited verse (*TY* 148–52), we shall see, is more likely to witness a poetic reviser's recasting of a lacunose passage found in a *Daniel*-exemplar.

#### *A Vulgate-based reading in The Three Youths*

A neglected passage in *The Three Youths* indicates that the text-historical implications of the readings in Exeter 3501 are far more complex than they might seem on first reflection, at least with respect to the treatment of *Canticum trium puerorum*. Here, against *Daniel*, we observe an apparent point of close alignment with the liturgical source of the rendition, in the only macaronic (Latin–Old English) line occurring in the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse:

<sup>48</sup> See Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, pp. 385–6, with n. 88.

<sup>49</sup> 'Let your priests bless you, faithful king, [as their] glorious Lord, [your] meek mass-priests, and your servants, guardian of nations; [and] so also the pure souls of the holy ones, and the humble-hearted, eternal God'; for the relevant Latin readings, see above, n. 47.

<sup>50</sup> See pp. 124–5. <sup>51</sup> See pp. 111 (with n. 109), 113–14 (with n. 113) and 127–32.



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TY 99–101: 7 þec dæg 7 niht, domfæst cyning,  
lofigen 7 lufigen [Exeter 3501: *lifigen*], *lux 7 tenebre*,  
þe þas werþeoda weardum healdað<sup>52</sup>

With the reading *lux 7 tenebre* (TY 102b: ‘light and shadows’; cf. Dan. III.72), the verse of *The Three Youths* seems to reveal the Latin phraseology that underlies the parallel, essentially synonymous half-line in *Daniel: leoht 7 þeostro* (Dan 375b: ‘light and darkness’). This impression, however, is misleading. As has been established conclusively, the Old Latin liturgical form informing the vernacular rendering in *Daniel* is *tenebr(a)e et lumen*. The inversion of the order of the invocations of light and darkness, as noted, has been made *metri causa*. The form *lux et tenebr(a)e* never occurs among witnesses to the Old Latin-based text that exerted an influence on *Daniel*.

In this passage at least, the inclusion of the reading *lux 7 tenebre* in *The Three Youths* (at 100b) provides a secure benchmark for the relative dating of the treatments of *Canticum trium puerorum* in that text and in *Daniel*. Put simply, we have to reckon here with the occurrence of an unmistakably Vulgate-based invocation in a vernacular rendition otherwise reproducing the nuance of a characteristically Old Latin order of invocations. The only plausible explanation for this state of affairs is that the Latin form *lux 7 tenebre* represents an intrusion into the verse in question, attested now by Dan 362–408, having entered the text as a substitution for – or as a restoration of – the reading *leoht 7 þeostro*, or a similar Old English phrase (cf. Dan 375b). Moreover, as further analysis will show, the verse of *The Three Youths* displays other reflexes of the Vulgate-based text of *Canticum trium puerorum* that are wholly out of place in a rendition of the Old Latin sequence of invocations.

### *The tenth-century circulation of the ‘psalterium Gallicanum’ and the date of The Three Youths*

The occurrence of the reading *lux 7 tenebre* (TY 100b; cf. Dan. III.72) in the Exeter witness also provides evidence for the absolute dating of the recast version of this passage in *The Three Youths* – and, in turn, for the production of the Exeter Book itself. The phrase under discussion typifies a Vulgate-derived and typologically non-‘Roman’ version of *Canticum trium puerorum*, a version showing an order of invocations that differs widely from the order observed in the variant Theodotonic text-type discussed above.<sup>53</sup> This text of *Canticum*

<sup>52</sup> ‘And let day and night praise and adore you, king firm in judgement, the light and the darkness, which hold the nations of humankind in their dominions’, following a reflex of Dan. III.71–2: ‘Benedicite noctes et dies Dominum. Benedicite tenebrae et lumen Dominum’, cited here from Vespasian A. i, 150r (‘Nights and days, bless the Lord. Light and shadows, bless the Lord’).

<sup>53</sup> For collations of readings in Dan. III.72, see P. G. Remley, ‘The Biblical Sources of the Junius Poems *Genesis*, *Exodus* and *Daniel*’ (unpubl. PhD diss., Columbia University, 1990), p. 364.

*trium puerorum* is found in the *canticularia* of psalters containing the so-called ‘Gallican’ version of the psalms (or *psalterium Gallicanum*), there forming part of a series of canticles whose compilation, traditionally attributed to Alcuin, has been dated to *c.* 785.<sup>54</sup> Witnesses to the Anglo-Saxon circulation of the version of *Canticum trium puerorum* characteristically displaying the reading *lux et tenebr(a)* include the following:<sup>55</sup>

1. London, British Library, Cotton Galba A. xviii + Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B. 484 (*SC* 11831), fol. 85 (north-eastern France (centre in area of Liège or Rheims?), s. ix<sup>1</sup>; provenance at English centre (that is, at the royal court, or at a religious centre at Winchester?) by s. ix<sup>2</sup> or x<sup>in</sup>; additions of s. ix<sup>2</sup>, x<sup>in</sup> and x<sup>2/4</sup>; ‘Æthelstan Psalter’).<sup>56</sup>
2. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 272 (Rheims, s. ix<sup>4/4</sup> (in 883/4); provenance at English centre by s. xi; possible provenance at English centre by s. x<sup>1</sup>; later provenance in Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury; ‘Psalter of Count Achadeus’).
3. Salisbury, Cathedral Library, 180 (northern French or Breton centre, s. ix/x; provenance at English centre by *c.* 1100; possible provenance at English centre by s. x<sup>1</sup>; later provenance at Salisbury).
4. Salisbury, Cathedral Library, 150, fols. 1–151 (south-western English centre (Sherborne or Shaftesbury?), s. x<sup>3/3</sup> (969 or later); glosses of s. x<sup>2</sup> and s. xi/xii; ‘Salisbury Psalter’).
5. London, British Library, Harley 2904 (Ramsey or Winchester (for use at Ramsey?), s. x<sup>3/3</sup> or x<sup>ex</sup>; ‘Ramsey Psalter’).
6. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 411 (Canterbury, s. x<sup>4/4</sup>? (thus Temple, following Wormald), possibly after exemplar(s) from western

<sup>54</sup> For a detailed survey of manuscripts, which has yet to be superseded, see J. Mearns, *The Canticles of the Christian Church, Eastern and Western, in Early and Medieval Times* (Cambridge, 1914), pp. 62–8.

<sup>55</sup> For a more extensive list of manuscripts, including details of the foliation of copies of the Vulgate-based canticle, see Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, pp. 390–1, n. 97; and cf. p. 429. Beyond the repertory entries of Gneuss and, where available, of Ker, see further the treatments of the eight manuscripts listed here in *Anglo-Saxon Litanies of the Saints*, ed. M. Lapidge, HBS 106 (London, 1991), 64–6 (nos. 5 and 7), 70–1 (no. 17), 74–6 (nos. 23–4 and 27) and 83–4 (nos. 43–4); and additional notices by M. Gretsche, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform*, CSASE 25 (Cambridge, 1999), 267–9, 274–6, 287–96 and 310–15, treating items 1–7 in the present list, and related issues; E. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts 900–1066*, Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the Brit. Isles 2 (London, 1976), 36–7 (no. 5), 45–6 (no. 18) and 63–5 (nos. 40–1), treating items 1 and 4–6; and R. Gameson, ‘The Origin of the Exeter Book of Old English Poetry’, *ASE* 25 (1996), 135–85, with pls. III–VIII, here at pp. 145 (no. 12) and 166, treating items 4 and 8.

<sup>56</sup> For an introductory treatment and bibliographical orientation, see M. Lapidge, ‘Æthelstan Psalter’, *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Lapidge *et al.*, pp. 17–18.

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France, s. ix<sup>2</sup> or x<sup>1</sup>; or produced itself in western France, s. x<sup>1</sup>?; additions of s. x<sup>2</sup>, x/xi, xi/xii, xii and xvi; provenance at <sup>?</sup>Abingdon by s. xi<sup>in</sup>; later provenance at Canterbury; ‘Psalter of Thomas Becket’ or ‘Psalter of Archbishop N.’).<sup>57</sup>

7. London, Lambeth Palace Library, 427, fols. 1–202 (south-western English centre (Winchester?), s. xi<sup>1</sup>; later provenance at Lanthony, Gloucs.; ‘Lambeth Psalter’).
8. London, British Library, Harley 863, fols. 8–125 (Exeter, s. xi<sup>med</sup> or s. xi<sup>3/4</sup> (1046 × 1072), possibly after exemplar(s) from Exeter, s. xi<sup>1</sup> or s. xi<sup>med</sup>; probably recorded in Leofric inventory (1069 × 1072); ‘Exeter Psalter’ or ‘Leofric Psalter’).

The evidence of manuscripts confirms that the Vulgate-based text of *Canticum trium puerorum*, exhibiting the form *lux et tenebr(a)e*, had been copied out on English soil by the later tenth century, perhaps as early as *c.* 970 (see item 4 in the list of witnesses provided above).<sup>58</sup> The evidence also shows that copies were in circulation in south-western English centres, and at Canterbury, by the later tenth century or by the opening decades of the eleventh. Although it would be unwise to draw any firm conclusions on this basis, the geographical distribution in question takes in the regions and centres that have been associated with the production of the Exeter Book and related manuscripts.<sup>59</sup> The dating and localization of the extant witnesses corroborates other text-historical evidence to show, in the words of Helmut Gneuss, that ‘[t]he Latin text in the older manuscripts . . . of the *Psalterium Romanum* . . . was gradually replaced by that of the *Psalterium Gallicanum* after the tenth-century Benedictine reform’.<sup>60</sup> The precise chronology of this transition, however, is difficult to establish.

At least one continental copy of the *Gallicanum*, equipped with a *canticularium*, had been imported to England by *c.* 910 (see item 1 in the list of witnesses). Apart from the evidence of surviving books imported from the Continent – for

<sup>57</sup> For a detailed study, see M. Budny, *Insular, Anglo-Saxon and Early Anglo-Norman Art at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge: an Illustrated Catalogue*, introd. R. I. Page, 2 vols. (Kalamazoo, MI, 1997) I, 253–63 (no. 22), and II, black and white pls. 203–8 and colour pl. 1.

<sup>58</sup> Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 450, notes that a table of years (in two cycles) on Salisbury 150, 1v, commences in the year 969. A much earlier, but wholly atypical, English witness to a Vulgate-based canticle-text occurs in the present London, British Library, Royal 2. A. XX (Mercian centre (Worcester?), s. viii<sup>2</sup> or ix<sup>1/4</sup>; glosses of s. x<sup>1</sup>; additions of s. x<sup>med</sup>; ‘Royal prayer-book’), on 14v–16r. This prayer-book preserves a full text of the biblical ‘Song of the Three Youths’, perhaps derived directly from a copy of the book of Daniel, or a continuous extract therefrom; see Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, p. 376, n. 76. <sup>59</sup> See above, n. 9.

<sup>60</sup> H. Gneuss, ‘Liturgical Books in Anglo-Saxon England and their Old English Terminology’, *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies presented to Peter Clemoes on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 91–141, at 114.

example, items 1–3 in the list, and, perhaps, item 6 (or its model)<sup>61</sup> – it is clear that continental scholars will have had many opportunities to transmit their knowledge of the *Gallicanum*-linked canticle-series to Anglo-Saxon centres well before the Benedictine reforms.<sup>62</sup> Mechthild Gretsch has adduced specific evidence to indicate that Æthelwold, in the years preceding his emergence as a major figure of the reforms, studied the *Gallicanum* in the 930s at Æthelstan's court.<sup>63</sup> Evidence will be cited below to indicate that Æthelwold carried out intensive work on the *psalterium Romanum* from c. 940 to c. 955. But he surely will have had further recourse to the *Gallicanum* before his service as abbot of Abingdon (c. 954–63), notably over the period of his study with Dunstan at Glastonbury from c. 939.<sup>64</sup>

Beyond these considerations relating to the *Gallicanum*, it should be recognized that the reading *lux et tenebr(a)e* (Dan. III.72; cf. TY 100b) will have been accessible in continuous Vulgate texts throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. On balance, nevertheless, it seems reasonable to associate the revision of the verse of *The Three Youths* with the gradual, though never universal, adoption of the *Gallicanum*-linked canticle-series over the course of the Benedictine reforms. Indeed, it will emerge below that this revision most plausibly was carried out in the light of a canticle-text called up from memory by a poetic redactor. Such familiarity with the text implies that the *Romanum* had been largely superseded by the *Gallicanum* in the redactor's milieu. Beyond the direct witness of the English copy of the *Gallicanum* in Salisbury 150 (item 4 above), perhaps produced as early as c. 970, three indirect witnesses are datable to the early years of the period which saw the replacement of the *Romanum* by the *Gallicanum*: (1) The initial preparation of the interlinear gloss and marginal scholia witnessed by the Royal Psalter, evidently preserving a close copy made from a lost exemplar, has now been convincingly attributed to Æthelwold and his circle by

<sup>61</sup> The vexed question of the English versus continental origin of CCC 411 deserves further attention. I have not seen a detailed discussion of Bishop's claim that the work of the main scribe of CCC 411 appears also in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 214 (Canterbury?, s. x<sup>ex</sup> or xi<sup>m</sup>): T. A. M. Bishop, 'Notes on Cambridge Manuscripts, Part II', *Trans. of the Cambridge Bibliographical Soc.* 2 (1955), 185–92, at 187. Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 275 and 290, suggests that a Carolingian copy of the *Gallicanum*, the famous Utrecht Psalter, also may have been imported to England before 950; the monument is now accessible as Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 32 (Script. eccl. 484), fols. 1–91 (Hautvillers or Rheims, s. ix<sup>l</sup> (c. 816 × c. 840); provenance at Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury, by s. x<sup>ex</sup> or xi<sup>m</sup>); see W. Noel, 'Utrecht Psalter', *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Lapidge *et al.*, p. 458.

<sup>62</sup> Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations*, p. 287, cites contacts with continental scholars occurring in the reigns of Alfred (871–99) and Æthelstan (924–39) in this connection.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 310–15, suggesting that Æthelwold had personally scrutinized the present Galba A. xviii (item 1 in my list of manuscripts).

<sup>64</sup> *Wulfstan of Winchester: The Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom, Oxford Med. Texts (Oxford, 1991), p. xli; Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations*, p. 255.

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Gretsch.<sup>65</sup> The apparatus thus attests to the continuing consultation of the *psalterium Romanum* – at Glastonbury or Abingdon, or at both centres – in the decades preceding Æthelwold's promotion to the bishopric at Winchester in 963. (2) Psalm incipits drawn from both the *Romanum* and *Gallicanum* occur in transmitted texts of the Old English translation of Benedict's *Regula*, a work ascribed securely to Æthelwold.<sup>66</sup> Gretsch would now date the initial production of this work to *c.* 940 × *c.* 955.<sup>67</sup> This is precisely the period when Æthelwold, we have seen, will have been carrying out intensive work on the *Romanum*. The *Gallicanum*-derived incipits thus may not be original features of the text, having been introduced by scribes or redactors as replacements for earlier citations of the *Romanum* – providing a parallel, of a sort, to the substitution observed in Exeter 3501 – and they may date 'from a rather early stage in the transmissional history of the text, say, from the 960s or 970s'.<sup>68</sup> (3) The Anglo-Latin consuetudinal text known as *Regularis concordia* (dated to *c.* 970 × 973), almost certainly the work of Æthelwold, also contains incipits of psalms attesting to the use of the *Gallicanum*.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 89–92, 112–13 and 261–73. The monument in question is the present London, British Library, Royal 2. B. V (Glastonbury or Abingdon? (or Winchester or Worcester, after an exemplar from Glastonbury or Abingdon?), s. x<sup>mcd</sup> (*c.* 940 × *c.* 960); text and glosses by one main hand; additions of s. x<sup>cs</sup>–xi<sup>2</sup>; provenance by s. xi at Winchester; later provenance (by s. xi<sup>cs</sup>?) at Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury; 'Royal Psalter' or 'Regius Psalter'). The manuscript is thought to preserve a close copy of a glossed text of the *psalterium Romanum* prepared by Æthelwold and his circle, almost certainly at Glastonbury or Abingdon. For the glossing apparatus, see A. Cameron, 'A List of Old English Texts', *A Plan for the Dictionary of Old English*, ed. R. Frank and Cameron, Toronto OE Ser. 2 (Toronto, 1973), 25–306, at 225 and 227 (items C7.9 and C11.9); and Healey and Venezky, *List*, pp. 163–4 (under the sigla *PsCaD* and *PsGID*).

<sup>66</sup> Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 295–6. For the Old English reflexes of Benedict's *Regula*, see *ibid.* pp. 226–34; Cameron, 'A List of Old English Texts', pp. 121–2 and 224 (items B10.1–4 and C4); and Healey and Venezky, *List*, p. 19 (under the sigla *BenR*, *BenRApp*, *BenRGl* 1–3, *BenRW* and *BenRWells*). The ascription to Æthelwold's hand is corroborated, Gretsch demonstrates, by verbal links to the short Old English treatise known as 'King Edgar's Establishment of Monasteries', almost certainly a work of Æthelwold (pp. 230–3); for the treatise, see Cameron, 'A List of Old English Texts', p. 199 (item B17.11) and Healey and Venezky, *List*, p. 170 (under the sigil *RevMon*).

<sup>67</sup> Specifically, Gretsch suggests that Æthelwold, still drawing on the *Romanum*, circulated his Old English Rule in one or more preliminary versions as early as *c.* 940 × *c.* 955; see Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 259–60. The twelfth-century *Liber Eliensis*, however, attests to what would appear to be the official promulgation of the translation by Æthelwold, with royal support, in 964 × 975 – a tradition evidently going back to lost Old English material issued in the later tenth century. <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* p. 296.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 294–5, concluding that the incipits 'may indicate the adoption of the *Gallicanum* as the official text for mass and Office by the 970s, at least at Winchester and the monasteries in its orbit'. It should be recalled, however, that the two surviving manuscripts in which the text of the *Regularis concordia* is preserved *in extenso* both date from the middle of the eleventh century, by which time the *Gallicanum* had passed into common use; see L. Kornexl, *Die 'Regularis concordia' und ihre altenglische Interlinearversion*, Münchener Universitäts-Schriften 17 (Munich, 1993), xcvi–cxii.

To sum up, absolute outer termini for the *Gallicanum*-linked borrowing in the verse of *The Three Youths* might be placed in the 930s and the 990s. We find evidence in the 930s for the study of the *psalterium Gallicanum* by Æthelwold, a known author of Old English texts; and no contemporary scholar to my knowledge has credited a date for the production of the Exeter Book later than the 990s.<sup>70</sup> I am inclined, however, to accept a more narrow dating of the liturgically informed revision in question to a period *c.* 960  $\times$  *c.* 980. I see no good reason to date a citation of a *Gallicanum*-linked reading in a vernacular setting earlier than any direct or indirect witness to the native dissemination of the psalter-text at issue. My proposed *terminus post quem* (*c.* 960) corresponds closely to the earlier date proposed by Gretsch for the *Gallicanum*-derived substitutions in the Old English rendering of Benedict's *Regula*.<sup>71</sup> My proposed *terminus ad quem* (*c.* 980) corresponds to the later terminus accepted by Richard Gameson in his more precise dating of the production of Exeter 3501 (to *c.* 960  $\times$  *c.* 980).<sup>72</sup>

The occasional alignment of the verse of *The Three Youths* with a Vulgate-based canticle-text transmitted in the *psalterium Gallicanum* will be corroborated below.<sup>73</sup> Additional Vulgate-based borrowings, standing outside of the passage marked by the phrase *lux 7 tenebre* (TY 96b–102), point to a special connection between the two texts. But this connection should not be taken uncritically to prove that the Vulgate-based passages in *The Three Youths* were composed after the corresponding, Old Latin-based lines of *Daniel*. Copies of the *psalterium Romanum* (with its Old Latin-based *canticularium*) continued to be produced at Anglo-Saxon centres down to the time of the Conquest.<sup>74</sup>

The establishment of the chronological priority of certain passages in *Daniel* arises out of a convergence of evidence, as does the dating to *c.* 960  $\times$  *c.* 980 of the revision which introduced *Gallicanum*-linked readings to the verse of *The Three Youths*. The following considerations are of the greatest importance: (1) the relative dating indicated by the order and content of invocations rendered in the texts, which indicates that some passages of *Daniel* must have been produced before the corresponding verse in *The Three Youths*;<sup>75</sup> (2) the absolute

<sup>70</sup> See above, n. 9; and, further, p. 140. In connection with the dating of the main hand of Exeter 3501, Richard Gameson has recently confirmed the 'outer limits of the late 950s and the 990s for such hands' on the basis of a careful study of dated palaeographical specimens: Gameson, 'The Origin', p. 166.

<sup>71</sup> Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations*, p. 296; see above, p. 99 (with n. 68).

<sup>72</sup> In comparison to other specimens, the main hand of Exeter 3501 'looks less advanced stylistically . . . and it may be chronologically earlier: a date in the 960s or 970s seems most plausible': Gameson, 'The Origin', p. 166. <sup>73</sup> See pp. 104–8.

<sup>74</sup> This attests to the long-standing prestige of the *psalterium Romanum*, whose English transmission may be traced back at least to the time of Wilfrid's sojourn in Kent (*c.* 650). See Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 289–92, and Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, pp. 60, 390 (n. 96) and 401–2. <sup>75</sup> See pp. 90–2 and 94–5.



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dating suggested by the documented production of copies of the *psalterium Gallicanum* in Anglo-Saxon England, occurring by *c.* 970, or somewhat later, to judge by the witness of Salisbury 150;<sup>76</sup> and (3) the ingrained preference for the text of the *Gallicanum* reflected by the *Three Youths* revision, as seen also in some variant *Gallicanum* readings emerging in the transmission of the Old English Rule, perhaps as early as *c.* 960;<sup>77</sup> and (4) the production of the Exeter Book itself (whose *terminus ad quem*, as noted above, may be placed *c.* 980). Taken together, these four criteria verify the priority of at least some of the verse of *Daniel*, and they point to outer dating termini *c.* 960 × *c.* 980 for the production of some revised lines in *The Three Youths*.

Beyond its text-historical significance, the macaronic passage in *The Three Youths* containing the phrase *lux 7 tenebre* may improve our understanding of the verse itself. The cited occurrence of the Latin liturgical form will be seen to stand near the midpoint of the second clearly demarcated passage attributed to a *Daniel*-reviser whom I shall designate the Canticle-Poet. Further analysis of this crucial passage will make it possible to establish the *oeuvre* of this previously unrecognized alliterative poet with greater precision.

#### *The main contributions of the Canticle-Poet*

In approaching the body of Old English verse that I have assigned to the hand of the Canticle-Poet, it should be stressed at the outset that my contention here will be that this verse offers a unique view of the compositional activities of one individual.<sup>78</sup> The texts at issue do not appear to have emerged as collaborative products of a school of poets, or as compositions in the public sphere that passed through a network of oral performances and scribal stints. The Canticle-Poet was capable of composing thematically interrelated passages of verse, often in response to the content of Latin models. In this endeavour, the poet displays both a critical attitude toward Latin texts and a casual command of formulaic diction.

The stylistic and source-historical analysis of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse summarized below has led to the recovery of the Canticle-Poet's work. Specifically, within the anonymous verse of *The Three Youths*, the activities of the Canticle-Poet are reflected in the distinctive handling of several themes (or *topoi*). The expansive treatment of these commonplaces stands in contrast to the concise, sequential and literalistic mode of rendering observed in the verse founded on *Canticum trium puerorum* in *Daniel*. In particular, the poet's rhetorical

<sup>76</sup> See pp. 96–7.      <sup>77</sup> See pp. 94–5 and 98–9 (with n. 68).

<sup>78</sup> None of the evidence discussed in this section has been adduced previously in connection with the *Daniel–Three Youths* parallels. For a survey of the relevant passages, see Remley, 'The Biblical Sources', pp. 392–5

training seems to have instilled an appreciation of naturalistic imagery associated with the topos of the *locus amoenus* (a ‘beautiful place’, such as an enclosed garden). The Canticle-Poet’s activities are also observed in passages of *The Three Youths* reflecting a tendency toward the revision of existing verse, particularly with an eye for the thoroughness with which Latin terminology has been rendered in the Old English. The products of this critical undertaking reveal a sure grasp of the content of the invocations in *Canticum trium puerorum*. The poet, however, seems oblivious to the precise nature of the Old Latin–Vulgate disjunction in the canticle’s dissemination. Moreover, the Canticle-Poet shows only limited concern to maintain the integrity of a sequence of invocations.

Before proceeding with my analysis of the Canticle-Poet’s verse, I should register one final text-historical judgement. The course of revision undertaken by this poet almost certainly took place at a transmissional stage preceding the production of the Exeter Book. Two items of evidence, in my view, are decisive: (1) The problematic form *lifigen* (literally, ‘let them live’) appears in Exeter 3501 in the reading ‘lofigen 7 lifigen [sc. *lufigen*]’ (TY 100a: properly, ‘... let them praise and adore [you]’, reading *lufigen*). This reading occurs in the macaronic passage marked by the reading *lux 7 tenebre*, whose attribution to the Canticle-Poet is verified below.<sup>79</sup> The rhetorical pun (or paronomasia) in the turn of phrase, we shall see, exemplifies the Canticle-Poet’s style. On the other hand, the reading in Exeter 3501, obscuring the context of the call to sing God’s praises – in a rendition of the *benedicite*-series – represents the sort of error that can only be charged to an inattentive scribe working from a copy-text. (2) The reading *þas* (TY 150a), untranslatable in context, seems to obscure the common Old English term *þeomas* (‘servants’, following a Latin model *serui*; cf. Dan. III.85). The reading transmitted by Exeter 3501 appears in a passage that will be assigned below to the hand of the Canticle-Poet.<sup>80</sup> I would thus conclude that the changes attributed below to the Canticle-Poet were not introduced in the course of the production of the Exeter Book.

#### *Botanical imagery in passages unique to The Three Youths*

The first unambiguous contribution of the Canticle-Poet is an allusion to the fruits of the earth, or botanical growth generally, involving the common Old English noun *wæstm* (in the sense of ‘growth’, ‘produce’, or ‘fruit(s)’): ‘... 7 heofondream / wæstem weorðian’ (TY 79b–80a: ‘... and may they [that is, the sun and the moon] glorify the fruits of the earth with the joy of the firmament [that is, the stars?]’). The phrase ‘wæstem weorðian’ (TY 80a) stands out as a gratuitous addition to a passage in *The Three Youths* (TY 76–80a, following Dan.

<sup>79</sup> See above, p. 95, and below, p. 103.

<sup>80</sup> See below, p. 124–5.

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III.61–3) treating the invocations of God’s powers, the sun, moon and stars. In context, the allusion is wholly without biblical or liturgical precedent.

In the Canticle-Poet’s cited addition at *TY* 80a (‘wæstem weorðian’), it cannot be assumed uncritically that the use of the semantically versatile term *wæstm* – which variously may denote ‘increase’, ‘offspring’ or even ‘physique’ – offers a specific reference to botanical growth. But any doubt is removed by the immediate appearance (at *TY* 80b–85a) of a fully developed *locus amoenus* passage, a passage which finds no parallel in *Daniel*.<sup>81</sup>

*TY* 80b–85a: Ful oft þu, wuldorcyning, 80  
 þurh lyft lætest leodum to fremc  
 mildne morgenren. Monig sceal siþþan  
 wyrt onwæcnan, eac þon wudubearwas  
 tanum tydrað. Trymmað eorðwelan,  
 hleoð 7 hluttrað.<sup>82</sup> 85

The second unmistakable contribution of the Canticle-Poet serves to frame the reviser’s treatment of the invocations of night and day, along with shadows and light, in the passage (discussed at length) displaying the liturgical form *lux 7 tenebre*. Given the significance of this single grammatical sentence for the establishment of the poet’s *oeuvre*, the macaronic invocations may be reproduced here once again with the crucial framing lines in place:

*TY* 97b–102: Fremest eorðwelan  
 þurh monigne had, milde dryhten,  
 7 þec dæg 7 niht, domfæst cyning,  
 lofigen 7 lufigen [Exeter 3501: *lifigen*], *lux 7 tenebre*, 100  
 þe þas werþeoda weardum healdað;  
 deop dryhtnes bibod, drugon hi þæt longe.<sup>83</sup>

Two further passages in *The Three Youths* that include prominent natural imagery are almost certainly the work of the Canticle-Poet. A substantial, nine-line exhortatory passage (*TY* 108b–116) intervenes between some concise reflexes of the Latin invocations of lightning-bolts, clouds, the earth, and of mountains

<sup>81</sup> This passage (*TY* 80b–85a) effectively rehearses the invocation of ‘every shower and dew’ (Dan. III.64: *omnis imber et ros*, in Vulgate-based reflexes), which is rendered in *Daniel* – with no parallel *in loco* in *The Three Youths* – by a succinct half-line: *deaw 7 deor scur* (Dan 371a: ‘dew and heavy rain’, following the shorter Old Latin reading *imber et ros*, here reproduced from Vespasian A. i, 150r); see further below, pp. 105–6.

<sup>82</sup> ‘Very often, king of glory, you send the gentle morning rain through the air for the good of the people. Many a plant must then come to life, and with that the forest groves will teem with branches. [The morning rain] fortifies the wealth of the earth, protects [it] and purifies [it].’

<sup>83</sup> ‘You shape the wealth of the earth into many a form, merciful Lord. And let day and night praise and adore you, king firm in judgement, the light and the darkness, which hold the nations of humankind in their dominions; the Lord’s stern command, long have they obeyed it.’

and hills (TY 106–108a and 117–19, following Dan. III.73–5). The exhortatory passage stands in the place of a single invocation of the earth (Dan. III.74: *terra*) that is rendered succinctly in *Daniel* by a brief phrase: *eorðan grund* (Dan 380a: ‘foundation of the earth’). The central lines of the amplified passage in *The Three Youths* seem to equate the abundance of the earth with the proliferation of humankind:<sup>84</sup>

TY 110b–113:                   Wæstmum herge,  
                                  bletsien bledum,    7 þin blæd wese  
                                  a forð ece,    ælmhtig god.  
                                  Wesað 7 weaxað    ealle werþeode . . .<sup>85</sup>

Finally, the Canticle-Poet contributes two more lines of natural imagery, which find no parallel in the corresponding passage of *Daniel* (cf. Dan 381–3):

TY 120–1:       Forðon waldend scop   wudige moras,  
                                  lofe leanige   leohtes hyrde.<sup>86</sup>

This curt *sententia*, we shall see, may well provide a key to the Canticle-Poet’s undertaking. For the moment, we may suspect that the poet’s abiding interest in botanical imagery reflects some prior experience with the figure of the *locus amoenus*, perhaps in the course of composing alliterative verse.

#### *The critical undertaking of the Canticle-Poet*

The activities of the Canticle-Poet are corroborated in the transmitted verse of *The Three Youths* by several discernible reflexes of the poet’s critical judgements. All of these reflexes occur in the verse’s revised treatment of *Canticum trium puerorum* (TY 73–161a), hereafter designated the *canticum*-revision. As we have seen, the poet’s undertaking was informed by the Latin diction of a liturgical text, the Vulgate-based text of *Canticum trium puerorum*. As we shall see shortly, this text seems to have been called up from memory. The language of the Latin source evidently aided in the revision of some problematic readings transmitted by the poet’s *Daniel*-exemplar. In the same light, the poet also seems to have undertaken the restoration of verse lost to some textual lacunae in that exemplar.

All of the stylistically linked natural imagery associated with the work of the Canticle-Poet occurs in the *canticum*-revision (TY 73–161a), with the four passages cited above forming a major component of the revision. It cannot be concluded, however, that every unique element of the *canticum*-revision should be

<sup>84</sup> For the framing lines of the exhortatory passage, see below, p. 110.

<sup>85</sup> ‘Let [creation] praise [you] with the fruits of the earth, [and] let those bless [you] with their blossoms, and let your glory live forever more, eternally, almighty God. All the nations of the people live and flourish . . .’

<sup>86</sup> ‘Let the woody moors repay the guardian of light – for he, the ruler, created [them] – with [their] praise.’

charged to this poet. Scribes, scribal redactors and other poetic revisers may have supplied elements of the extant verse. Nevertheless, by extrapolating from the linguistic and poetic features of these stylistically linked passages, it may prove possible to identify additional contributions of the Canticle-Poet. Before making that attempt, however, I shall pursue another line of inquiry, essentially unrelated to the stylistic survey, but complementing its findings. This independent analysis may serve to dispel any doubt that we have to reckon with the efforts of one main reviser in accounting for the most conspicuous feature of the *canticum*-revision: the prominence of its natural imagery, especially in treatments of botanical themes.

The verse assigned to the Canticle-Poet thus far has revealed a tendency to amplify the content of brief liturgical forms. For instance, the first sequence of verse attributed to the poet's *oeuvre* follows a brief allusion to the botanical splendour of the earth (TY 80a: *wæstem*, 'the fruits of the earth') with a long passage (TY 80b–85a) celebrating the fall of dew or 'gentle morning rain' (82a: *mildne morgenrenn*).<sup>87</sup> The botanical allusion here (at TY 80a) represents a departure from the matter of the invocations of the sun, moon and stars (TY 77–9, following Dan. III.62–3). But the passage it serves to introduce (TY 80b–85a), without counterpart in *Daniel*, offers a reasonable amplification of the phrase *omnis imber et ros* (Dan. III.64: 'every shower and dew'), occurring in the next verse of the Vulgate-derived canticle.<sup>88</sup>

The natural imagery in the second substantial passage assigned to the Canticle-Poet (TY 97b–102) turns mainly on a single compound noun: *eorðwela* (at TY 97b: 'wealth of the earth'). A liturgical precedent can be discerned for the amplification here as well. The words 'Fremest eorðwelan . . .' (TY 97b: 'You shape the wealth of the earth . . .') closely follow the phrase *wearme wederdægas* (TY 96a: 'days of warm weather'), a phrase with no precise parallel in *Daniel*. The expression serves to amplify the seasonal imagery of an Old Latin-derived phrase going back to *Daniel*: *beorht sumor* (Dan 373b: 'bright summer'; recurring *litteratim* at TY 95b). But the more general term *aestus* ('heat', occurring twice in the Vulgate at Dan. III.66–7), perhaps bound up with the use of the adjective *wearm*, may have formed part of the *Gallicanum*-linked hymnody known to the Canticle-Poet.<sup>89</sup> Be that as it may, the very next verse in the Vulgate-based text known to the poet will have contained an invocation of dews and hoarfrost (cf. Dan. III.68: *rores et pruina*). This verse has no close counterpart in the Old Latin-based sequence that informs the rendition in *Daniel*, where the distinctive mention of summer (at Dan 373b) is followed immediately by an invocation of night and day (at Dan 373–4), thus

<sup>87</sup> See above, pp. 102–3. <sup>88</sup> See n. 81.

<sup>89</sup> For collations of invocations in Vulgate-based texts following Dan. III.66–7, where the variant reading *aestas* ('summer') is not unknown, see Remley, 'The Biblical Sources', pp. 362–3.

corresponding precisely to the Old Latin model.<sup>90</sup> It thus seems reasonable to infer that the Canticle-Poet – expecting a reflex of the Vulgate-derived liturgical form *rores et pruina*, but finding none – recalled the natural imagery of a passage previously completed for the revised text of *The Three Youths*. This is the passage identified here as the first main addition of the Canticle-Poet (TY 80b–85a), recalling the Vulgate-derived phrase *omnis imber et ros* in its celebration of the fall of the *morgenren* (TY 82a: ‘morning rain’; cf. Dan. III.64: ‘every shower and dew’).<sup>91</sup> In other words, the elemental imagery in the second passage attributed to the Canticle-Poet (TY 97b–102), influenced by the phrase *rores et pruina*, complements the reflex of the semantically proximate phrase *omnis imber et ros* in the reviser’s first main contribution (TY 80b–85a).<sup>92</sup>

The two amplified passages analysed above (TY 80b–85a and 97b–102), both showing prominent botanical imagery, are most naturally viewed as the contributions of a single poet. These amplified passages also emerge, under scrutiny, as coordinated components in a programme of liturgically informed poetic revision. A similar critical sense seems to inform the third unexpected occurrence of natural imagery in the *canticum*-revision (TY 110b–113: ‘Wæstmum herge . . .’).<sup>93</sup> This naturalistic passage immediately precedes allusions to hills (or mountains) and to the earth in the revised text of *The Three Youths* (117b–118a: ‘hea duna / geond middangeard’, that is, ‘high hills [or “mountains”] throughout the earth’). (The phrasing here effectively reverses the Vulgate order of *terra* (Dan. III.74) and *montes et colles* (III.75: ‘mountains and hills’).) The naturalistic passage thus occurs at a point in the series of invocations where neither the Old Latin sequence nor the Vulgate-based hymnody of the *Gallicanum* introduce botanical subjects. Conspicuously, beyond the cited half-line *hea duna* (TY 117b: ‘high hills [or “mountains”]’), which appears to do duty for the whole of the liturgical form *montes et colles* (cf. also *moras* (120b), ‘moors, hills’), the relevant verse of *The Three Youths* (TY 117–21) shows no clear verbal congruence with the concise rendition in *Daniel*, which addresses the earth, mountains and hills:

Dan 381–2: Eall eorðan grund, ece drihten,  
hyllas 7 hrusan 7 hea beorgas . . .<sup>94</sup>

<sup>90</sup> That is, the matter of Dan. III.71 directly follows the matter of III.66; see p. 91, items 3 and 5.

<sup>91</sup> See above, pp. 103 and 105.

<sup>92</sup> Note also the phrase *milde dryhten* in the second passage (TY 98b: ‘merciful Lord’), perhaps echoing the phrase *mildne morgenren* in the first (TY 82a; the adjective *milde* is unattested in *Daniel*). Moreover, the phrase *milde dryhten* (TY 98b) stands as a formulaic variant of the epithet *milde meotod* (TY 90a: ‘merciful Creator’), occurring in a later passage (TY 85b–93) that is almost certainly the work of the Canticle-Poet; see p. 109. The attribution would seem to be settled by the inclusion of the crucial compound *eorðwela* (‘wealth of the earth’) in both the first passage and the second (at TY 84b and 97b).<sup>93</sup> See above, p. 104.

<sup>94</sup> ‘All the expanse of the earth, Lord eternal, the hills and valleys and high mountains . . .’



### Daniel and the Three Youths fragment

It seems likely that the verse of *Daniel* in this passage either was missing (or illegible) in the exemplar known to the Canticle-Poet, or that the reviser chose to leave this language out of the account. We shall return to this point shortly.

#### *A liturgical rationale for the main canticum-revision*

We have seen that the third main contribution of the Canticle-Poet (TY 110b–113) included a conspicuous passage of botanical imagery without any clear Old Latin or Vulgate precedent. Moreover, there are indications that the poet's *Daniel*-exemplar was lacunose at this point. Indeed, there is other evidence – in verse not yet considered here – to indicate forcefully that the Canticle-Poet's *Daniel*-exemplar failed to include any Old English verse whatsoever treating the invocation of growing things in Dan. III.76.<sup>95</sup> Such an omission would be significant, in so far as that biblical verse (Dan. III.76) represents the *locus classicus* of botanical imagery in liturgical reflexes of 'The Song of the Three Youths'.

The decisive evidence in this case resides not in the verse of *The Three Youths* but rather in the transmitted text of *Daniel* preserved in Junius 11, where the Old Latin-based invocation of 'all things that are born of the earth' (Dan. III.76: *omnia nascentia terrae*, following Vespasian A. i) is neglected entirely. As I have shown previously, the absence of any reflex of this invocation in the Junius 11 witness to *Daniel* is a conspicuous lacuna in the transmitted text's concise rendition of *Canticum trium puerorum*.<sup>96</sup>

In the light of the evidence set out in fig. 2, it is clear that the fourth naturalistic passage attributed to the Canticle-Poet, comprising a brief celebration of God's wooded moors (TY 120b: *wudige moras*), appears precisely at the point where some reflex of the *germinantia*-verse (Dan. III.76) would be expected in a rendition of a Vulgate-based text of *Canticum trium puerorum*: following a treatment of the invocations of the earth and hills (or mountains).

The natural inference, specifically in connection with the third and fourth of the naturalistic passages demarcated above, is that the Canticle-Poet's main concern, over the whole sequence of lines extending from the initial allusion to *wæstmæs* (cf. TY 110b: 'fruits of the earth') to the final passage celebrating *wudige moras* (concluding at 121b), was to effect an expansive conflation of matter derived from three successive hymnodic verses: the invocations of the earth (Dan. III.74: *terra*); of mountains and hills (III.75: *montes et colles*); and – crucially – of all things that spring up in the earth, following the Vulgate-derived form of that verse (III.76: *uniuersa germinantia in terra*). The poet shows some

<sup>95</sup> The Old Latin invocation, addressing *omnia nascentia terrae* (Dan. III.76: 'all things that are born of the earth'), immediately follows the source of the rendition just discussed (Dan. III.75, addressing mountains and hills, as rendered at Dan 382).

<sup>96</sup> See Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, pp. 385 (citing previous scholarship on the crux) and 432–4.

Daniel	Theodotonic text	Vulgate text	<i>Daniel</i>	<i>The Three Youths</i>
III.74	terra	terra	381a: eorðan 381a: grund	118a: middangeard
III.75	montes et colles	montes et colles	382a: hyllas 382b: beorgas	117b: duna (cf. 120b: <i>moras</i> )
III.76	omnia nascentia terrae	uniuersa germinantia in terra	— [!]	120b: wudige moras (cf. 80a: <i>wæstem</i> ) (cf. 82b–85a: <i>wyrt</i> , etc.) (cf. 97b: <i>eorðwela</i> ) (cf. 110b–113: <i>wæstmas</i> , etc.)

Fig. 2 An early, lacunose rendition of Dan. III.74–6 in *Daniel* and its revision in *The Three Youths*

awareness of the ordering of the invocations in the liturgy, but this does not seem to be an overriding concern.

The evidence available suggests, moreover, that Old English phraseology corresponding to the Old Latin form of the last-mentioned invocation (Dan. III.76: *omnia nascentia terrae*, ‘all things which are born of the earth’) was not present in the *Daniel*-exemplar available to the Canticle-Poet. The absence of such verse might well be associated with the cited lacuna in the Junius 11 witness. It thus seems plausible that the state of the transmitted text in this exemplar called to mind the variant wording of that verse’s Vulgate equivalent (*uniuersa germinantia in terra*) in the course of the Canticle-Poet’s revisions. Bound up with that poet’s appreciation of the figure of the *locus amoenus*, the desire to undertake a liturgically informed revision of an ostensibly lacunose text may well have provided a critical rationale for the main enterprise of the *canticum*-revision.

#### *Further contributions of the Canticle-Poet*

The main contributions of the Canticle-Poet and – by implication, the major components of the *canticum*-revision – have been defined narrowly above to include only those passages that (1) exhibit prominent natural (specifically botanical) imagery, and that (2) show a critical concern with the rendering of particular Latin liturgical forms in Old English verse. By extrapolating cautiously from the evidence thus adduced, it may prove possible to attribute additional passages in *The Three Youths* to the efforts of the Canticle-Poet, perhaps including some that stand outside of the *canticum*-revision proper.<sup>97</sup>

As we have seen, The Canticle-Poet’s second main contribution to the verse of *The Three Youths* (TY 97b–102) centres on the liturgical form *lux 7 tenebre*.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>97</sup> None of the evidence discussed in this section has been adduced previously in connection with the *Daniel–Three Youths* parallels. <sup>98</sup> See pp. 94–5 and 103.

### Daniel and the Three Youths *fragment*

The passage in question also includes an interpretative comment praising the powers of light and darkness: ‘. . . þe þas werþeoda / weardum healdað’ (*TY* 101: ‘. . . which hold the nations of humankind in their dominions’).<sup>99</sup> The *sententia* immediately following, similarly constituting a full alliterative line, may also be assigned to the hand of the Canticle-Poet: ‘deop dryhtnes bibod, / drugon hi þæt longe’ (*TY* 102: ‘the Lord’s stern command, long have they obeyed it’).<sup>100</sup> Indeed, the *sententia* (*TY* 102) can only be construed easily by reference to the matter of the preceding lines (the praise of light and darkness, at *TY* 99–101). On similar grounds – the inclusion of interpretative comments bearing only tangentially on the matter at hand – I suggest that three other passages in *The Three Youths*, all standing immediately adjacent to verse plausibly attributed to the Canticle-Poet, should be attributed to the same reviser.

The first directly addresses the moral import of the invocations in *Canticum trium puerorum*, in phrases that might be characterized, by turns, as homiletic, proverbial and broadly dogmatic in tenor:

<i>TY</i> 85b–93:	Næfre hlisan ah	85
	meotud þan maran þonne he wið monna bearn	
	wyrceð weldædum. Wis bið se þe con	
	ongytan þone geocend, þe us eall good syleð	
	þe we habbað þenden we her beoð	
	7 us milde meotod mare gehateð,	90
	gif we geearniað, elne willað,	
	ðonne feran sceal þurh frean hæse	
	sundor anra gehwæs sawl of lice. <sup>101</sup>	

These lines of the Canticle-Poet, in my view, deserve to be recognized as a self-standing example of Old English devotional verse that has been preserved in a paraliturgical context.

The third main contribution of the Canticle-Poet, as demarcated above, includes a reference to *wæstmas* (cf. *TY* 110b: ‘fruits of the earth’), as well as an instance of a rhetorical pun (or paronomasia) playing an allusion to blossoms or

<sup>99</sup> See above, p. 103. The clause forms an integral part of the Canticle-Poet’s verse in praise of earthly wealth (*eorðwela*; cf. *TY* 97b).

<sup>100</sup> The fourth and final unambiguous contribution of the Canticle-Poet also includes a brief comment on God’s efficacy: ‘Forðon waldend scop . . .’ (*TY* 120a: ‘for he, the ruler, has created them [that is, the woody moors]’).

<sup>101</sup> ‘The creator never has greater glory than when he is efficacious in his beneficent works for the progeny of humankind. Wise is the one who can recognize his helper [i.e. God], who gives us all the good we have while we are here, and who, our merciful creator, promises us [even] more if we but deserve [and] desire [it] fervently when, at the Lord’s command, the soul, sundered from every one [of us], must journey from the body.’



some that stand outside of the rendition of *Canticum trium puerorum* proper.<sup>108</sup> The account of the aftermath of the miracle in the fiery furnace provides a logical focus for such an inquiry, as its narration in *The Three Youths* (at *TY* 161b–191) differs almost completely from the corresponding scene in *Daniel*, apart from some intriguing – if brief and uncontextualized – points of verbal reminiscence. By contrast, the earlier rendition of Azariah’s prayer and its surrounding, prose-based passages (*Dan* 279–361 and *TY* 1–72) rarely provide material suitable for this type of stylistic investigation. The points of divergence in those passages, which mainly reveal a pattern of continuous parallelism, might be attributed plausibly to the efforts of scribes (or scribal redactors).<sup>109</sup>

Any passage of verse reflecting the compositional efforts of the Cantic-Poet might be expected to exhibit one of the following features:

1. One or more of some two dozen words that are unattested in the verse of *Daniel* but occur in passages attributed here to the Cantic-Poet. These may be summarized by part of speech. Adjectives: *genge* (*TY* 109a: ‘prevailing, efficacious’), *milde* (82a, 90a and 98b: ‘mild, gentle’) and *wudig* (120b: ‘wooded’). Adverbs: *elne* (‘fervently’: see under noun *ellen*, below), *ful* (80b: ‘fully’), *geornlice* (109b: ‘eagerly’), *longe* (102b: ‘long’), *nafre* (85b: ‘never’) and *wel* (87a: ‘well’, in compound). Nouns: *brice* (116a: ‘use, gain’), *dun* (117b: ‘hill, mountain’), *ellen* (‘strength’, used adverbially (at *TY* 91b) in *elne*, ‘fervently’), *fremu* (81b: ‘advantage’), *geocend* (88a: ‘helper’), *hæs* (92b: ‘command’), *blisa* (85b: ‘glory’), *morgen* (82a: ‘morning’, in compound) and *wæstm* (80a and 110b: ‘fruits of the earth’). Verbs: (*ge*)*earnian* (91a: ‘earn, deserve’), *bleowan* (85a: ‘protect’), *bluttrian* (85a: ‘brighten’), *leanian* (121a: ‘reward’), (*ge*)*scieppan* (120a: ‘shape, create’) and *tydran* (84a: ‘bring forth’, with dative).

2. One or more of several formulaic expressions comprising common Old English terms, expressions which find no precise parallel in *Daniel* but also

<sup>108</sup> Four indications of the Cantic-Poet’s possible knowledge of passages elsewhere in *Daniel*, all of which involve parallel collocations, may be noted briefly: (1) *TY* 97 ‘freaan . . . / Fremest . . .’ (second main contribution of Cantic-Poet) and *Dan* 185 ‘Fremde . . . / . . . frea . . .’; (2) *TY* 104 ‘fæder . . . / folca . . .’ (second main contribution of Cantic-Poet), *Dan* 10 ‘. . . folc . . . / . . . fæder . . .’ and *Dan* 400 ‘. . . folca . . . / fæder . . .’; (3) *TY* 108 ‘. . . dyrne dryhten. / . . . dom . . .’ (*canticum*-revision and third main contribution of Cantic-Poet), *Dan* 37 ‘. . . dyrust, / drihtne . . .’, and cf. *Dan* 32a, 150, 455, 547, 744 and 761 (*drihtnes domas*, and so on); (4) *TY* 119a *fæger folde* (secondary contribution of Cantic-Poet) and *Dan* 497 ‘. . . on foldan / fægre . . .’

<sup>109</sup> One engaging parallel involves the use of forms of *dreogan* (‘suffer, endure’) and *dryhten* (‘Lord’) as alliterating pairs at *TY* 3 (prose-based introduction to Azariah’s prayer) and 102 (second main contribution of the Cantic-Poet). In the former case, however, it is possible that some form of *dreogan* has been lost from the parallel verse at *Dan* 281a – a conjecture that editors of *Daniel* have frequently reified through emendation. The Cantic-Poet’s verse would then reflect the influence of an exemplar of *Daniel* preserving an early reading at this point. Compare also the forms of the noun *liss* (‘grace’), unknown in *Daniel*, at *TY* 55a (account of the angelic rescue) and 114a (secondary contribution of the Cantic-Poet).

occur in contributions of the Canticle-Poet, as I have identified them. These include such compound terms as (a) *domfæst* (99b: ‘firm in judgement’; cf. *GenA* 1287a, 1510a, 1786a and similar);<sup>110</sup> (b) *eorðwela* (84b and 97b: ‘wealth of the earth’; cf. *GuthA* 62a, 319a and similar); (c) the hapax legomenon *morgenren* (82a: ‘morning rain [that is, dew?’]); and (d) *welðæd* (87a: ‘beneficial deed’; cf. *Phoen* 543b, *PPs* LXXVI.7.3b and similar). And they include several formulaic phrases and collocations, such as (e) *dryhtnes bibod* (102a: ‘Lord’s command’; also at *ChristC* 1158b; cf. *meotudes bibod* at *Prec* 71a and similar; and cf. item 2 in the list of verbal parallels set out immediately after this stylistic summary); (f) *leohtes byrde* (121b: ‘guardian of light’; also at *Res* 8b; cf. *leohtes wealdend* at *Glor I* 9b and similar; and cf. item 8 in the list below); (g) ‘. . . bremen dryhten’ (116b: ‘. . . let them praise the Lord’; cf. item 4 in the list); (h) ‘. . . miltsun hergen’ (118b: ‘. . . let them praise [God] for [his] mercies’; cf. item 6 in the list); and (i) ‘. . . waldend scop’ (120a: ‘. . . the ruler created [them]’; cf. ‘God scop . . .’ at *GuthA* 495a and *Max I* 127a, ‘dryhten scop . . .’ at *Rid* 85.2b and similar; cf. item 7 in the list).

3. Conspicuously repeated formulaic diction, whether or not precise parallels occur in the Canticle-Poet’s *oeuvre*. A hallmark of the poet’s style is the repetition of formulaic language – often amounting to an obtrusive and arguably inartistic repetition of such language – within a narrow span of lines.<sup>111</sup>

With these criteria in mind, close study of the language of *The Three Youths* reveals a number of additional contributions by the Canticle-Poet to the *canticum*-revision, above and beyond the cited instances of the poet’s continuous verse-composition:

1. *TY* 80b–81a ‘Ful oft þu . . . / . . . lætest’ (first main contribution of Canticle-Poet) and 135b ‘Ful oft þu . . . lætest’ (*canticum*-revision): the adverb *ful* is unattested in *Daniel*.
2. *TY* 102a *deop dryhtnes bibod* (second main contribution of Canticle-Poet) and 124 ‘. . . deop . . . / . . . dryhtnes bibod’ (*canticum*-revision).
3. *TY* 115 ‘. . . ece dryhten, / ær . . .’ (probable contribution of Canticle-Poet) and 128 ‘. . . ær . . . / ece dryhten’ (*canticum*-revision); cf. also *Dan* 309b, 330b, 359b, 381b, 396b and 716b (*ece driebten* and similar) and *TY* 132b, 134b, 147a and 152a (*ece dryhten* and similar).
4. *TY* 116b ‘bremen dryhten’ (third main contribution of Canticle-Poet) and 142b ‘bremen dryhten’ (*canticum*-revision).
5. *TY* 117 ‘. . . halga god, / hea duna . . .’ (possible contribution of Canticle-Poet: reflex of *Dan*. III.75) and 123 ‘hea . . . / haligne dryhten’ (*canticum*-revision).

<sup>110</sup> For the sigla used here, see the guides cited above, n. 3.

<sup>111</sup> See, for example, the passages containing parallel uses of the terms *milde* and *eorðwela*, cited in the stylistic summary under items 1 and 2 respectively.

### Daniel and the Three Youths fragment

6. TY 118b ‘. . . miltsum hergen’ (probable contribution of Canticle-Poet), 146 ‘Meotud . . . / . . . miltsum hergen’ (*canticum*-revision) and 154 ‘. . . meotud, / miltsum hergað’ (*canticum*-revision).
7. TY 120a ‘. . . waldend scop . . .’ (fourth main contribution of Canticle-Poet), 128 ‘. . . gescop / . . . dryhten’ (*canticum*-revision) and 137b ‘. . . se cyning gescop’ (*canticum*-revision); the verb (*ge*)*sciëppan* is unattested in *Daniel* (but cf. *Dan* 291b, 314b and 391b *scyppend*).
8. TY 121b *leobtes byrde* (fourth main contribution of Canticle-Poet) and 129b *leobtes byrde* (*canticum*-revision).

The divergent narration of the miracle’s aftermath in *The Three Youths* (at TY 161b–191), as we shall see shortly, also appears to have been revised extensively. In the light of the preceding analysis, however, the question of whether the Canticle-Poet contributed to this section of *The Three Youths* finds a short answer: there is no compelling linguistic or stylistic evidence to indicate this reviser’s involvement. Not one of the poet’s characteristic terms or expressions occurs in the variant account. Granted, there is one conspicuous repetition of formulaic language within a restricted span of lines (as characterized above), involving the formulaic variants *for gæstlufan* (TY 172b: ‘because of [their] love of the Holy Spirit [or “ . . . souls’ love”?]’) and *mid gæstlufan* (188b: ‘through the love of the Holy Spirit [or “with their souls’ love”?]’). It will be suggested below that the first of these phrases may be a reflex of a lost early reading in *Daniel* (cf. *Dan* 21a: ‘. . . his gastes lufan’), and the second (if its appearance is other than coincidental) might be taken to show only that the Canticle-Poet’s stint as a reviser did extend minimally into the closing passage of extant verse of *The Three Youths*.

In sum, all of the verse that has been attributed above to the Canticle-Poet occurs in the revised rendition of *Canticum trium puerorum*. It thus seems reasonable to conclude that this individual was the main architect of the *canticum*-revision. Even in that section of *The Three Youths*, however, the possible contributions of other *Daniel*-revisers (perhaps including redactors and scribes) should not be ruled out of the question.

#### THE AFTERMATH OF THE MIRACLE: CODICOLOGICAL ISSUES AND SISAM’S CRITICAL SPECIMENS

The final passages of *The Three Youths* (at TY 161b–191) attest to the varying techniques of formulaic composition that were employed by Anglo-Saxon poetic revisers.<sup>112</sup> The Canticle-Poet, as we have seen, tends to deploy formulaic language in a conspicuous manner, even over fairly restricted spans of

<sup>112</sup> None of the parallels discussed in this section has been adduced previously in connection with the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse.



verse. In contrast, the style observed in the closing passages of *The Three Youths*, treating the response of Nebuchadnezzar's court to the miracle in the furnace, diverges markedly from this pattern. The verse here favours the subtle manipulation of formulaic language that seems to have been culled directly from the verse of *Daniel*, often by drawing on passages far removed from the matter at hand:<sup>113</sup>

1. *haligra gehyld* (TY 169a) and 'halgum . . . / . . . hyld . . .' (Dan 480).
2. *gæstlufan* (TY 172b; also at 188b: Cantic-Poet's influence?) and *gastes lufan* (Dan 21a).
3. *ofnes æled* (TY 177a); (a) 'Æled . . . / . . . ofen . . .' (Dan 242) and (b) ' . . . ofn . . . / alet . . .' (Dan 253).
4. 'ac him is engel mid' (TY 177b) and '7 se engel mid' (Dan 353b).
5. *beorbtne blæd* (TY 178a) and *beorbt on blædum* (Dan 499a).
6. ' . . . blæd; / . . . bryne . . .' (TY 178) and ' . . . blæd . . . / . . . bryne . . .' (Dan 454).
7. ' . . . lige / lifgende . . .' (TY 182) and 'lige . . . / . . . lifgende' (Dan 295).
8. 'Ne forhogodon . . . þa halgan' (TY 184a); (a) 'halig . . . / . . . hyge . . .' (Dan 533) and (b) ' . . . haligu . . . / . . . hige . . .' (Dan 542).
9. ' . . . fyre, / feorh . . .' (TY 186) and ' . . . fyres . . . / . . . feorh . . .' (Dan 233).
10. 'wuldre gewlitegad' (TY 187a) and 'Wlitiga . . . / . . . wuldor . . .' (Dan 326).
11. 'swa hyra wædum ne scod / gifre gleda' (TY 187b–188a); (a) 'þæt hyre [sc. *hyra*] lice ne wæs / owiht geegled' (Dan 342b–343a) and (b) 'swa him wiht ne sceod / grim gleda nið' (Dan 463b–464a).

These parallels leave no reason to doubt that a poet contributing to the closing lines of *The Three Youths* was familiar with several sections of *Daniel*, having perhaps read through – or heard – the poem in its entirety. Although several parallels may simply reflect the normal play of formulaic diction (say, items 1, 2, 5, 8a and 8b in the list above), the remainder display more extensive parallel language or share distinctive vocabulary; and some appear in strikingly similar narrative contexts.

<sup>113</sup> A related, but potentially misleading, item of evidence involves a phrase in *The Three Youths*, which occurs in an account of the angelic rescue (TY 51a–67a), following the rendition of the biblical 'Prayer of Azariah' (TY 5–48) – that is, the phrase *æfastum þrim* (TY 58b: '[ . . . to protect] the three who were faithful to the Old Law'), with no parallel *in loco* in *Daniel*. The same expression, intriguingly enough, does appear elsewhere in *Daniel*, specifically in that poem's proleptic account of the angelic rescue (Dan 271–8) – matter without parallel in the extant text of the *The Three Youths* – in the phrase *æfaste ðry*, at Dan 272a. But the phrase *æfastum þrim* (TY 58b), I will suggest below, does not represent a poetic reviser's reminiscence of a passage in *Daniel*. Rather, it indicates that two lines now attested uniquely in Exeter 3501 (the present TY 57–8) once formed an integral part of the transmitted text of *Daniel*; see below, pp. 127 and 129–30.

### Daniel and the Three Youths fragment

The contextually informed parallels are especially intriguing. Some of the closing lines of *The Three Youths* echo the account of the early stages of the youths' ordeal in *Daniel* (*Dan* 224–255a; cf. items 3a, 3b and 9 in the list), preceding the recitations in the furnace. Other lines anticipate the wording of a protracted, largely unbiblical account of the spread of the youths' fame, which occurs in a later passage of *Daniel* (*Dan* 454–85; cf. items 6 and 11b), following the treatment of Nebuchadnezzar's response to the miracle.<sup>114</sup> The truly extraordinary aspect of these parallels is that they prove that at least one reviser involved in recasting the account of the miracle's aftermath was familiar with sections of *Daniel* lying outside of the narrative compass of the verse of *The Three Youths* extant in Exeter 3501. Any such reviser would know four of the instances of formulaic language borrowed from the *Daniel*-tradition (as cited above under items 4, 7, 10 and 11a), in so far as they occur in prominent passages of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse (treating Azariah's prayer and the angelic rescue). But the reproduction of this previously deployed language in the final section of *The Three Youths* is no less remarkable for that. Taken together, the bulk of the parallels in question (especially items 3a, 3b, 6–7, 9–10, 11a and 11b) would seem to settle the case decisively in favour of direct borrowing from other sections of *Daniel* as against borrowing from the formulaic word-heap as a whole.

#### *Codicological lacunae in Exeter 3501 and the content of The Three Youths*

Two plausible explanations may be considered briefly, either of which might help to account for the presence of unexpected echoes of *Daniel* in recast sections of *The Three Youths*. One explanation draws on evidence that might be characterized broadly as compositional (or transmissional), and the other draws mainly on codicological evidence. First, it is possible, if not likely, that the *Daniel*-exemplar known to the reviser(s) responsible for recasting the denouement of the miracle contained a full text of *Daniel*, or a text substantially more extensive than that represented by the surviving copy of *The Three Youths*. It is thus tempting (though not yet necessary) to assume that some matter, perhaps a substantial amount of matter, at some point was lost from the *Daniel*-revision now represented by *The Three Youths*, either at the beginning or ending of the text, or at both ends.

A second, more provocative explanation might help to account specifically for the unexpected verbal parallels with the early stages of the youths' ordeal. A

<sup>114</sup> These parallels (cf. items 6 and 11b) are unique in so far as they show that an exemplar used by the *Daniel*-reviser(s) active at this point included the closing verse of the rendition of Daniel III in *Daniel* (otherwise represented only by *Dan* 440–94) – perhaps (as I shall suggest below) in a badly obliterated state.

narrow strip of parchment, measuring 70mm vertically and formerly accommodating four manuscript lines, has been cut away from the top of the leaf (Exeter 3501, fol. 53) preserving the present opening lines of the extant verse of *The Three Youths* (TY 1–28a) on its recto.<sup>115</sup> The excision of this strip of parchment has also destroyed the verse that was copied out at the top of the verso of the leaf – that is, the better part of six alliterative lines, which will have bridged the fragmentary lines conventionally numbered 28 and 29 in modern editions of *The Three Youths*.<sup>116</sup> The mutilation of this leaf, which is (as it happens) the first leaf of the seventh extant quire of the Exeter Book, has certain implications both for the codicology of the volume and for the transmission-history of *The Three Youths*.

Since the appearance of Max Förster's studies introducing the first complete facsimile edition of Exeter 3501, published in 1933, it has been widely accepted that at least one full quire has been lost before the present seventh quire of the manuscript.<sup>117</sup> In a review of the facsimile edition, Neil R. Ker recognized that the 'remains of two letters are to be seen close above the large initial *H* of *Him* [the first word of the present TY 1a] on the recto of the mutilated folio 53. The position of these remains shows that there was less than one blank line before the section . . . In this part of the manuscript two or three blank lines are always left before the beginning of a new poem.'<sup>118</sup> The clear implication is that the text of *The Three Youths* is acephalous as we have it.

Given the prior loss of one full quire (or more) before the present seventh quire of Exeter 3501, I would suggest, the excision of parchment at the top of folio 53 might be associated with a badly misguided attempt at codicological integration undertaken subsequently by a knife-wielding editor (or binder). This individual should be seen to have obliterated about a dozen lines of *The Three Youths* altogether, which had been copied out at two points in Exeter 3501 (at the top of 53v, as noted, but also at the top of 53r). Indeed, in view of the regular

<sup>115</sup> Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 153; J. C. Pope, 'Palaeography and Poetry: Some Solved and Unsolved Problems of the Exeter Book', *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries: Essays presented to N. R. Ker*, ed. M. B. Parkes and A. G. Watson (London, 1978), pp. 25–65, at 35; and *The Exeter Anthology*, ed. Muir, pp. 11–12. Ker maintains that '[t]he first six lines on f. 53 have been excised'. This statement, if it is meant to refer to lines ruled for text, is incorrect. Four ruled lines are missing.

<sup>116</sup> In view of the continuous parallelism observed in this section of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse, the lost matter may well have corresponded in bulk to the present *Dan* 307–12; see *The Exeter Book*, ed. Gollancz and Mackie I, 190.

<sup>117</sup> See Förster's comments in *The Exeter Book*, introd. Chambers, Förster and Flower, pp. 57–8.

<sup>118</sup> N. R. Ker, review of *The Exeter Book*, introd. Chambers, Förster and Flower, *MÆ* 2 (1933), 224–31, at 227–8. Ker's suggestions are accepted by Pope, 'Palaeography and Poetry', pp. 35–6, who adds that the first letter of the extant copy of *The Three Youths*, an enlarged *h*, 'is of a size commonly used by the scribe for a new section within a long poem'; see further *The Exeter Anthology*, ed. Muir, p. 11.

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pattern of verbal borrowing observed in the variant account of the miracle's aftermath, it seems likely that a substantial quantity of verse has been lost at the start of the extant witness to *The Three Youths*.

It is in this connection that the codicological significance of the contextual parallels noted above becomes clear. As we have seen, the account of the miracle's aftermath preserved in Exeter 3501 exhibits verbal parallels – as cited under items 3a, 3b and 9 in the list supplied above – with verse treating the early stages of the youths' ordeal in *Daniel*. These include the alliterative collocations *ofnes aled* (TY 177a: 'the oven's blaze'), with striking parallels at both *Dan* 242 and 253, and '... fyre ... / feorh ...' (TY 186: '[they strode from] the fire, their vitality [unharméd]'), with a striking contextual complement at *Dan* 233 ('... fyres ... / ... feorh ...': '[forced into] the fire's [flame, God preserved] their vitality'). It is thus probable that the excised parchment did include (on 53r) the final lines of a full section of verse that formerly circulated as part of the text of *The Three Youths*, that is, about six lines altogether, resembling the present *Dan* 273–8.

The verse in the lost section of *The Three Youths* probably corresponded in bulk to the present *Dan* 224–78, lines standing at the start of the section assigned the numeral 'LII' in Junius 11 (*recte* section 53). It will have treated, at the very least, the consignment of the youths to the furnace, and the bulk of its verse will have been copied out into the lost quire preceding the present seventh quire of Exeter 3501. (It is possible, moreover, that this lost section was preceded by other lost sections of verse that were, to some extent, congruent with passages of *Daniel* preserved in Junius 11.)<sup>119</sup> It is now clear that the verse in question has been lost to two distinct codicological lacunae, that is, lacunae involving (1) the loss of at least one quire and (2) the excision of parchment from folio 53. Taken together, the available evidence indicates that the extant copy of *The Three Youths*, before the loss of a substantial quantity of its verse to the two codicological lacunae, will have comprised verse corresponding in scope to the matter of Daniel III.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>119</sup> The loss of verse corresponding to the present *Dan* 173b–223 (or thereabout), following *Dan*. III.1–18, seems likely. O'Donnell, 'Manuscript Variation', p. 365, rightly stresses the possibility that the codicological loss 'included one or more quires', calling into question the 'assumption that a single quire is missing' on the part of Pope and other scholars. Less persuasive, perhaps, is the palaeographical evidence adduced by O'Donnell, *ibid.* p. 366, in support of his suggestion that 'it seems fairly safe to assume that the missing text was not closely related to the Junius poem', that is, 'the remains of the [two partly visible] letters [g and one letter with a long descender] ... do not match anything in the corresponding line[s] of *Daniel* [*Dan* 277b–278: "þæt wæs wuldres god / þe hie generede / wið þam niðhete?"]'.

<sup>120</sup> A more extensive loss before the present seventh quire, a loss of verse treating the matter of Daniel I–II and corresponding in bulk to the present *Dan* 1–173a (or 22–167, or the like), cannot be ruled out of the question. If such a loss has occurred, all of the modern titles that have been assigned to the *Daniel*-verse in Exeter 3501 – including *Azarias* and *The Canticles of the Three Youths*, among other titles (see n. 6) – are fundamentally misinformed.

*Sporadic verbal parallels in the Daniel–Three Youths verse and the codicology of lost exemplars*

We arrive now at the final and, in many respects, the most extraordinary group of verbal parallels exhibited by the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse.<sup>121</sup> Not all of the echoes detected in the variant account of the miracle’s aftermath involve borrowings from earlier and later passages in *Daniel*. Several striking parallels are also seen to occur *in loco* – that is, more or less in sequence and at equivalent points in the two texts’ narration. But these passages also reveal a jarring sort of textual disjunction, recalling the difficult language of Sisam’s critical specimens: marked divergence of syntax, varied contextualization of subject matter, the alternation of similarly spelled words at a single position in the metrical line, and so on. The sporadic sort of parallelism observed here seems to reflect the deployment of formulaic diction by a poet (or reviser) attempting to reconstitute the substance of remembered or fragmentary verse. The passages might even be seen – despite their preservation as written texts – to provide a unique witness to the improvisatory practices of oral poets.

In setting out the first pair of passages, which address the conflagration in the furnace, it will prove practical to highlight textual variants by use of italic type one last time:<sup>122</sup>

<i>Dan</i> 411b–415:	ƿæt eower fela geseab, ƿeoden [sc. <i>peode</i> ?] mine ƿæt we ƿry syndon [sc. <i>sendon</i> ], geboden to bæle in byrnende fyes leoman. Nu ic ƿæt feower men geseo to soðe, nales me selfa [sc. <i>sefa</i> ?] leogeð [Farrell: <i>leoge</i> ]. <sup>123</sup>	415
<i>TY</i> 170b–171 and 173–5:	ƿæt ic geara wiste, ƿæt we ·III· hæfdon, ƿeoda wisan, . . . gebunden to bæle in byrnendes	170 173

<sup>121</sup> The passages treated in this section have not previously received critical attention in connection with the continuous parallelism observed elsewhere in the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse.

<sup>122</sup> The passages follow *Dan.* III.91–2: “Tunc Nabochodonosor rex obstipuit et surrexit prope et ait optimatibus suis, “Nonne tres uiros misimus in medio ignis compeditos? . . . Ecce, ego uideo uiros quattuor . . .” (“Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished and rose up in haste and said to his nobles: “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? . . . Behold, I see four men . . .”). See also discussion below, pp. 125 and 130.

<sup>123</sup> ‘Many of you have seen, my peoples [reading *peode*; Farrell reads *ƿeodnas*, “lords”], that we sent those three, condemned to immolation, into the burning glow of the fire. Now, in truth, I see four men there, unless something is deceiving me [or “unless my mind deceives me”, reading *sefa*?; or “I do not deceive myself at all”, reading *leoge*?].’ For a defence of the manuscript reading *syndon* as a possible variant spelling of *sendon* (by reference to the phonology of some Kentish texts), see *Daniel*, ed. Farrell, p. 72. For discussion of the emendation of *selfa* to *sefa* (as in ASPR), see *ibid.* pp. 72–3; and see further below, pp. 125 and 130–1.

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fyres leoman. Nu [sc. *Ne?*] ic þær ·III· men  
*sende to sǫðe, nales me sylfa gerad . . .*<sup>124</sup>

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Noteworthy points of variation include the occurrence of two semantically similar but essentially distinct phrases (‘eower fela geseah’ (*Dan* 411b), that is, ‘many of you have seen’, and ‘ic geare wiste’ (*TY* 170b), that is, ‘I know for certain’), each anchored to an initial demonstrative pronoun *þæt* (as direct object). The verse subsequently displays two graphemically similar half-lines (*Dan* 412a *þeode* [Junius 11: *þeoden*] *mine* and *TY* 171b *þeoda wisan*), the former referring to Nebuchadnezzar’s audience and the latter to the three youths themselves. The phrases’ positions in the metrical line are inverted with respect to two adjacent clauses (at *Dan* 412b and *TY* 171a), also marked by parallel occurrences of *þæt*, clauses which in turn are dependent on the semantically similar phrases at *Dan* 411b and *TY* 170b. There is a conspicuous syntactic shift in the alternation of the verbs *hæfdon* (as an auxiliary, with the participle *gebunden*), in reference to the oppressors, and *syndon* (sc. *sendon*, as an absolute), with the participle *geboden* employed as an adjective referring to the youths. The passages also exhibit a subtle type of syntactic oscillation in the phrases *in byrnende fyres leoman* and *in byrnendes fyres leoman* (*Dan* 413b–414a and *TY* 173b–174a), reflecting the presence or absence of a genitive ending in *-es* (sc. ‘in the burning glow of the fire’ as against ‘in the glow of the burning fire’).

Ten lines on, the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse again exhibits a striking graphemic parallelism. Points of congruence are indicated by the use of italic type:

*Dan* 425–428a: ‘. . . cweðað he sie ana ælmihtig god,  
*witig wuldorcýning, worlde 7 heofona.*  
 Aban þu þa beornas, *brego Caldea,*  
 ut of ofne.’<sup>125</sup>

*TY* 178b–180: ‘. . . ne mæg him bryne sceþþan  
*wlitigne wuldorhoman.’ Ða þam wordum swealg*  
*brego Caldea, gewat þa to þam bryne gongan . . .*<sup>126</sup>

<sup>124</sup> ‘I know for certain that we had fettered those three, those leaders of peoples, for immolation in the glow of the burning fire. I have now sent [or “Did I not send”, reading *Ne?*] four men there on a journey [to death?], unless I failed to keep myself in control [or “unless this has been brought upon me”?].’ (The translations offered here for the doubtful reading *gerad*, lit. ‘it rode [over me]’ or similar, are conjectural.) For the omitted line (*TY* 172), see below, p. 130.

<sup>125</sup> Verse treating the speech of an unnamed *ræsna*: ‘. . . they say that he alone is almighty God, wise king of glory, in the world and of the heavens. Lord of the Chaldeans, order the youths out of the furnace.’

<sup>126</sup> Verse initially treating the speech of an unnamed *eorl*, and subsequently shifting to third-person narration: ‘“. . . the fire may not hurt his [that is, the angel’s] beauteous garb of glory.” When the lord of the Chaldeans had absorbed these words, he then left to go to the fire . . .’

In an exceptional example of contextual variation, the verse of *The Three Youths* here appears to recast language originating in the wholly unbiblical speech of Nebuchadnezzar's advisor (*ræswa*) to form a new passage, offering (in effect) a paraphrase of the scriptural content of Daniel III: 'Tunc accessit Nabuchodonosor ad ostium fornacis ignis ardentis'.<sup>127</sup> At this juncture, a brief occurrence of parallel language reveals some persistent positional and syntactic features of the verse, as well as the retention of the biblical context, despite a thorough recasting of the poetic language.<sup>128</sup>

Dan 430: *Het þa* se cyning to him cnihtas *gangan* . . .<sup>129</sup>

TY 182–3: *Het þa* of þam lige lifgende bearn  
Nabocodonossor near *ætgonan*.<sup>130</sup>

Sporadic occurrences of verbal parallelism with *Daniel* continue right up to the penultimate line of the *Three Youths* fragment. The exceptional poetical echoes occurring in the closing lines of the *Daniel–Three Youths* sequences occupy ten full lines of verse over two passages. In setting these out, italic type again has been used to indicate points of similarity, not divergence, and a limited amount of bold type has been introduced to illustrate several subtle parallels that seem to be bound up in the deployment of formulaic diction.<sup>131</sup>

Dan 436–9: *Næs hyra wlite gewemmed*, *ne nænig wroht on hrægle*,  
*ne feax fyre beswæled*, *ac bic on friðe drihtnes*  
*of ðam grimman gryre glade treddedon*,  
*gleawmode guman*, *on gastes hyld*.<sup>132</sup>

TY 186–91: *ac eodon of þam fyre*, *feorh unwenne*,  
*wuldre gewlitegad*, *swa hyra wædum ne scod*  
*gifre gleda*, *ac bi mid gæstlufan*

<sup>127</sup> Dan. III.93: 'Then Nebuchadnezzar came to the door of the burning fiery furnace . . .'

<sup>128</sup> Both extracts follow Dan. III.93: 'tunc . . . Nabuchodonosor . . . ait, ". . . egedimini et uenite"' ('then Nebuchadnezzar said, "go forth and come"').

<sup>129</sup> 'The king ordered the young men to come to him . . .'

<sup>130</sup> 'Then Nebuchadnezzar ordered the living youths to approach nearer from the midst of the flame.'

<sup>131</sup> Both passages follow Dan. III.93b and III.94b–94c: 'Statimque egressi sunt Sedrac, Misac et Abdenago de medio ignis . . . Contemplabantur uiros illos quoniam nihil potestatis habuisset ignis in corporibus eorum, et capillus capitis eorum non esset adustus, et sarabara eorum non fuissent inmutata' ('And immediately Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego went out from the midst of the fire . . . [And the king's officials] considered these men, that the fire had no power over their bodies, and that not a hair of their heads had been singed, nor had their garments been altered').

<sup>132</sup> 'Their beauty was not harmed, nor had any damage been done to their clothing, and nary a hair was singed by fire; rather they walked joyfully out of the dire torment under the protection of the Holy Spirit, those wise-minded youths.'



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synne geswencton 7 gesigefæston,  
modum gleawe, in monþeawum,  
þurh foreþoncas fyr gedydon.<sup>133</sup>

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The textual variation here comprises three lines of verse exhibiting alliteration on the letter **g** with only one word in common (*Dan* 438–9 and *TY* 188, linked perhaps by forms of *gast*). The semantic parallelism of the phrases *on frīðes drihtnes* (*Dan* 437b), *on gastes byld* (*Dan* 439b) and *mid gæstlufan* (*TY* 188b) complicates the variation. The limited graphemic congruence of *beswaled* and *geswencton* at similar points in their respective lines (at *Dan* 437a and *TY* 189a) is also of note, as is the lexical inversion displayed by *gleawmode* and *modum gleawe* (*Dan* 439a and *TY* 190a).

*Preliminary conclusion: a codicological rationale for the progressive divergence of Daniel and The Three Youths*

The final section of *The Three Youths* might be adduced as evidence for the continuing cultivation of oral-formulaic techniques in the later Anglo-Saxon period. It is difficult to account otherwise for the presence there of uncontextual echoes of the parallel section of *Daniel*, echoes interacting with a layer of formulaic diction that recalls passages far removed from the verse of that section. The verse brings to mind the mnemonic skills and verbal dexterity attributed to oral poets. But even here, I should argue, we must reckon with the persistent influence of a written exemplar. The graphemically informed parallels cited above would seem to prove this *prima facie*. The sporadic recurrence of nonalliterative vocabulary in similar line-positions (‘þæt we. . .’, ‘het þa . . .’, and so on)<sup>134</sup> might serve as corroborating evidence.

The peculiar disposition of the graphemically informed parallels provides a valuable clue to a conundrum noted above: the progressive divergence of the texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*.<sup>135</sup> It was observed in Sisam’s critical specimens that the lexically and syntactically convoluted diction revealed by those two jarring passages crops up and falls away very suddenly.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, a continuous, line-for-line correspondence otherwise characterizes the parallelism in these sections of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse. One explanation for this sort of spasmodic textual variation might involve a physical defect in an exemplar – a copy of a passage that had faded or become badly rubbed with the hazards of its

<sup>133</sup> ‘But they strode from the fire, their vitality unharmed, beautified in their glory, for the greedy coals had not disturbed their clothes; rather through the love of the Holy Spirit [or “with their souls’ love”?] they had outwearied sin and had triumphed with proper virtues, wise in their minds; because of their earlier [pious] thoughts they had escaped the fire.’

<sup>134</sup> See the citations of *Dan* 412b–*TY* 171a and *Dan* 430a–*TY* 182a, pp. 118–20.

<sup>135</sup> See above, pp. 84–9 and fig. 1. <sup>136</sup> See pp. 86–8 and fig. 1.

parchment. Indeed, the progressively worsening state of an exemplar has been broached as a plausible cause for this progressive textual divergence.<sup>137</sup> The peculiarly derivative treatment of the aftermath of the miracle in *The Three Youths* might be seen as a response to such codicological constraints: a reviser confronted with an exemplar which in some way had become badly obliterated, perhaps, will have resolved to flesh out a few legible readings by reference to an earlier, prose-based narrative on the youths' ordeal (items 3a, 3b and 9 in the list supplied above).<sup>138</sup> These borrowings will have been supplemented by some phrases drawn from verse treating the youths' hymnody and rescue (items 4, 7, 10 and 11a in the list). The reviser may even have made use of some indistinct readings recovered from a passage in a later section of the damaged parchment (items 6 and 11b in the list).

It might be maintained that some of the variant readings in the *canticum*-revision also emerged in response to problems of legibility encountered in a materially defective exemplar. However, the text-historical issues surrounding the account of the miracle's aftermath differ fundamentally from those relating to the performance of the Canticle-Poet. That reviser, we have seen, undertook a course of original verse-composition, mainly in response to perceived lacunae in a vernacular treatment of Latin source-material.

In effect, we have to reckon with two main courses of revision attested by the verse of *The Three Youths*, the first involving responses to codicological damage and the second reflecting concerns about textual lacunae and the accuracy of an Old English rendition of Latin diction. These courses of revision are (1) the restorative programme undertaken by individuals attempting to recover partly legible readings from the damaged parchment of a *Daniel*-exemplar, including the scribal redactor(s) involved in the repair of the early passages of the extant *Three Youths* verse (say, *TY* 1–76), and by the poetic reviser(s) responsible for the derivative account of the miracle's aftermath (*TY* 161b–191); and (2) the critical and poetic activities of the Canticle-Poet (as reflected in the verse of *TY* 80–152). This dual conclusion bears certain chronological implications. Crucially, it is unlikely that the main *canticum*-revision preceded the exemplar-related restoration in question. There is no evidence to show that the verse of the Canticle-Poet passed through a stage of partial obliteration or textual restoration. Admittedly, the possibility cannot be ruled out that the compositional work of the Canticle-Poet was undertaken at the same transmissional stage as the restoration in question. It is possible that some (or many) of the hundreds of relatively minor textual variants observed in the early passages of the

<sup>137</sup> See above, pp. 88–9. For a discussion of the concept of scribal 'repair' (or attempted textual restoration), without reference to *Daniel* or *The Three Youths*, see Orton, *The Transmission*, pp. 195–6. <sup>138</sup> See above, p. 114.

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*Daniel–Three Youths* verse – the passages exhibiting continuous parallelism – arose in the course of the Canticum-Poet’s work on an exemplar of *The Three Youths*. And it is possible that the same individual produced the derivative account of the miracle’s aftermath now preserved in Exeter 3501. In the verse preceding and following the *canticum*-revision, however, the absence of any clear parallel to the Canticum-Poet’s characteristic style argues against such an attribution, especially given the consistent and distinctive mode of versification that is observed in the account of the aftermath in *The Three Youths*.

### TOWARD A STEMMA OF ATTESTED EARLY TEXTS OF DANIEL

Beyond their mutual descent from an archetype of *Daniel*, the transmitted texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* may be seen to go back to a common exemplar situated at some distance from that archetype, an exemplar that displayed a characteristic group of textual cruces or otherwise suspect readings. In terms of stemmatics, the point at issue essentially is one of shared error in parallel passages, even though the concept of error, in my view, remains insufficiently defined as it may relate to later Anglo-Saxon redactions of Old English popular verse. Nevertheless, I would maintain that the extant texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* reveal significant interpretative difficulties at identical points in no fewer than five pairs of parallel passages, each of which may bear witness to the readings of a common antecedent text.<sup>139</sup> These passages may be summarized as follows:

(1) *Dan* 288 [short line]: ‘[Siendon þine domas / . . . soðe . . . (*Dan* 286a and 287a)] swa þu eac sylfa eart’ (‘Your judgements are true, as you yourself are’), following scriptural ‘Quia iustus es . . .’ (*Dan*. III.27: ‘For you are just . . .’), with no parallel *in loco* in *The Three Youths* (cf. *TY* 9–10). The lines preceding and following the short line in *Daniel* (*Dan* 288) are paralleled precisely in *The Three Youths*, suggesting that the *Daniel*-exemplar used for the latter production descended from the line of *Daniel* witnesses that transmitted the short line to the Junius copy. The short line in question, presumably regarded as defective, was dropped either at the point of the production of the *Three Youths* revision or, perhaps, in a previous act of transcription in the *Daniel*-tradition.

(2) *Dan* 321b–323a (in Sisam’s specimens): ‘oðþæt [Junius 11: oð þ; sc. oðþe?] brimfaro · þæs [sc. ?brimfaropes; cf. next line], / sæfaroða sand, / geond sealtne wæg / me are [sc. *in eare*?] gryndeð’ (cf. *TY* 38b–40a: ‘oð brimflodas, / swa waroþa sond / ymþ sealt wæter, / yþe geond eargrund’),<sup>140</sup> following the scriptural phrase ‘sicut harenam quae est in litore maris’ (*Dan*. III.36b: ‘like the sand that is on the shore of the sea’). It is an open question whether all of the verse

<sup>139</sup> For a possible sixth example, see my remarks on the *almihtig–eal mægen* crux below, n. 166.

<sup>140</sup> For translations and discussion of the Old English, see above, pp. 86–7.

extracted by Sisam for his critical specimens (*Dan* 315–24 and *TY* 32–41) should be viewed as witnessing a lengthy textual crux in an ancestor of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*. But the difficult pairs of lines cited here (*Dan* 321b–323a and *TY* 38b–40a) indicate that at least one problematic passage had emerged in an antecedent text in the *Daniel*-tradition, to judge by the problems of transcription evident in the copy of *Daniel* in Junius 11. (Textual variants, including possible conjectural restorations, occur at parallel points in the *Three Youths* rendering.) Moreover, hard words complicate the interpretation of both passages (?*brim-faröð*, ‘sea-shore’ (cf. *Dan* 321b); *gryndan*, ‘serve as a foundation (?)’ (cf. 323a); ?*ear*, ‘sea’, and the hapax legomenon *eargrund*, ‘sea-bed (?)’ (cf. *Dan* 323a and *TY* 40a); and so on). These lines, at least, may attest to a crux in a common antecedent text.

(3) *TY* 120b: *wudige moras* (cf. *wæstem* (80a), *wyrt*, and so on (82b–85a), *eorðwela* (97b), *wæstmas*, and so on (110b–113), and similar forms), with no parallel *in loco* in *Daniel* (cf. *Dan* 381–3). The readings bear on the *nascentia*–*germinantia* crux, discussed above.<sup>141</sup>

(4) *TY* 150a [metrically defective half-line]: ‘7 þine þas [sc. *þeowas*?] . . .’ (‘servants of the Lord [reading *þeowas*], [. . . bless the Lord]’), in a treatment of the liturgical forms ‘benedicite sacerdotes Domini Domino’ and ‘benedicite serui Domini Domino’ (*Dan*. III.84–5: ‘priests of the Lord, bless the Lord; servants of the Lord, bless the Lord’), with no parallel *in loco* in *Daniel* (cf. *Dan* 392b–396). Along with the cited *nascentia*–*germinantia* crux, the absence of renderings of the invocations of priests and other servants of God in *Daniel* is one of the few conspicuous lacunae in the poem’s rendition of *Canticum trium puerorum*.<sup>142</sup> The presence of the untranslatable (and unmetrical) reading *þas* in the extant copy of *The Three Youths* (at *TY* 150a), at first glance, would seem to reflect the transmission of an eviscerated form of *þeowas* (‘servants’). Confusion about such a reading might be seen to have caused the loss of an archetypal reflex of *Dan*. III.84–5 in a *Daniel*-exemplar, a reflex whose text might then be detected in verse preserved in Exeter 3501 (‘Bletsien þe þine sacerdos [sc. *sacerdas*], / saðfæst [sc. *søðfæst*] cyning, / . . . milde mæsseras, / . . . ðeoda hyrde’, and so on).<sup>143</sup> On the contrary, the whole passage at issue (*TY* 148–52) is better regarded as a product of the Canticle-Poet’s textually informed programme of poetical revision. (The changes here seem to have been carried out in the light of a liturgical reflex of *Dan*. III.84–7.) The prominence of the adjective *milde* – not found in the extant verse of *Daniel* – within the lexis of that poet has been demonstrated above;<sup>144</sup> the epithet *søðfæst cyning* (‘faithful king’), also unattested in

<sup>141</sup> See pp. 91 and 107–8. <sup>142</sup> See above, pp. 93–4 and 102.

<sup>143</sup> *TY* 148–50. The full text of this passage is set out and translated above, p. 94.

<sup>144</sup> See pp. 106 (with n. 92) and 111–12 (with n. 111).

## Daniel and the Three Youths fragment

*Daniel*, occurs twice elsewhere in the *canticum*-revision (at TY 77a and 122a) but nowhere else in *The Three Youths*; another epithet, *ðeoda hyrde* (150b: ‘guardian of nations’), similarly unattested in *Daniel* or elsewhere in *The Three Youths*, may be viewed as a systematic variant of the formula *leobtes hyrde*, reproduced twice *litteratim* in the *canticum*-revision (at TY 121b and 129b).<sup>145</sup> The passage in question thus almost certainly bears witness to the occurrence of a textual lacuna – a lacuna involving several missing invocations (in Dan. III.84–7) – in an ancestor of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*.

(5) *Dan* 415b ‘... nales me selfa leoge [Junius 11: *leogedð*]’ (‘... I do not deceive myself at all’, following Farrell) and TY 175b ‘... nales me sylfa gerad’ (‘unless I failed to keep myself in control [or “unless this has been brought upon me”]’). The widely accepted emendation of *selfa* (*Dan* 415b: ‘self’) in the extant copy of *Daniel* to *sefa* (‘mind’) permits an interpretation ‘unless my mind deceives me’. The emendation seems plausible, especially in view of the scriptural phrase ‘Tunc Nabuchodonosor rex obstipuit’ (*Dan*. III.91: ‘Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished’). Even if we choose to reject this emendation (as Farrell has done), we have to contend with the parallel occurrences of the intensive pronoun *sylf* (‘self’) in two widely differing phrases (at *Dan* 415b and TY 175b, cited above), both phrases having been recognized as inscrutable by all editors. These problematic readings jointly indicate that the confusion goes back to a textual crux in a common antecedent text, a crux possibly involving the term *sefa* (‘mind’).

Taken together, these five textual cruces suggest strongly that the extant texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* share an early line of descent within the *Daniel*-tradition. Several additional pairs of passages, however, seem to witness scribal lapses that are attributable to exemplars transmitted along two separate stemmatic branches, both branches emerging out of the shared line of descent. (See figs. 3–5.)<sup>146</sup> These lapses have adversely affected passages of the *Daniel–Three Youths* texts that once shared more than a dozen lines of verse, lines which now appear to have been lost to a textual lacuna in one witness or the other. In each

<sup>145</sup> See above, pp. 112 (item 2f) and 113.

<sup>146</sup> Figs. 3–5 summarize all of the hypothetical stages in the transmission of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse that are described in the present study. In the summary of a given stage, a final numeric reference in parentheses indicates the number(s) of pages (and, perhaps, the number of a footnote) in the present study where the stage in question is discussed; a reference ‘132–3n166’, for example, refers to the discussion at pp. 132–3, n. 166. Citations of the pages of Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, are preceded by the sigil *OEBV*. In figs. 4 and 5, a ‘down’ arrow (↓) in some cases will be seen to precede information relating to the textual development informing a given stage. This ‘down’ arrow indicates that the textual development so marked may have arisen at a subsequent point in the stemmatic branch. Similarly, in an unbroken series of textual developments marked by successive ‘down’ arrows, any item may effect an interchange of position with any other item in the series.

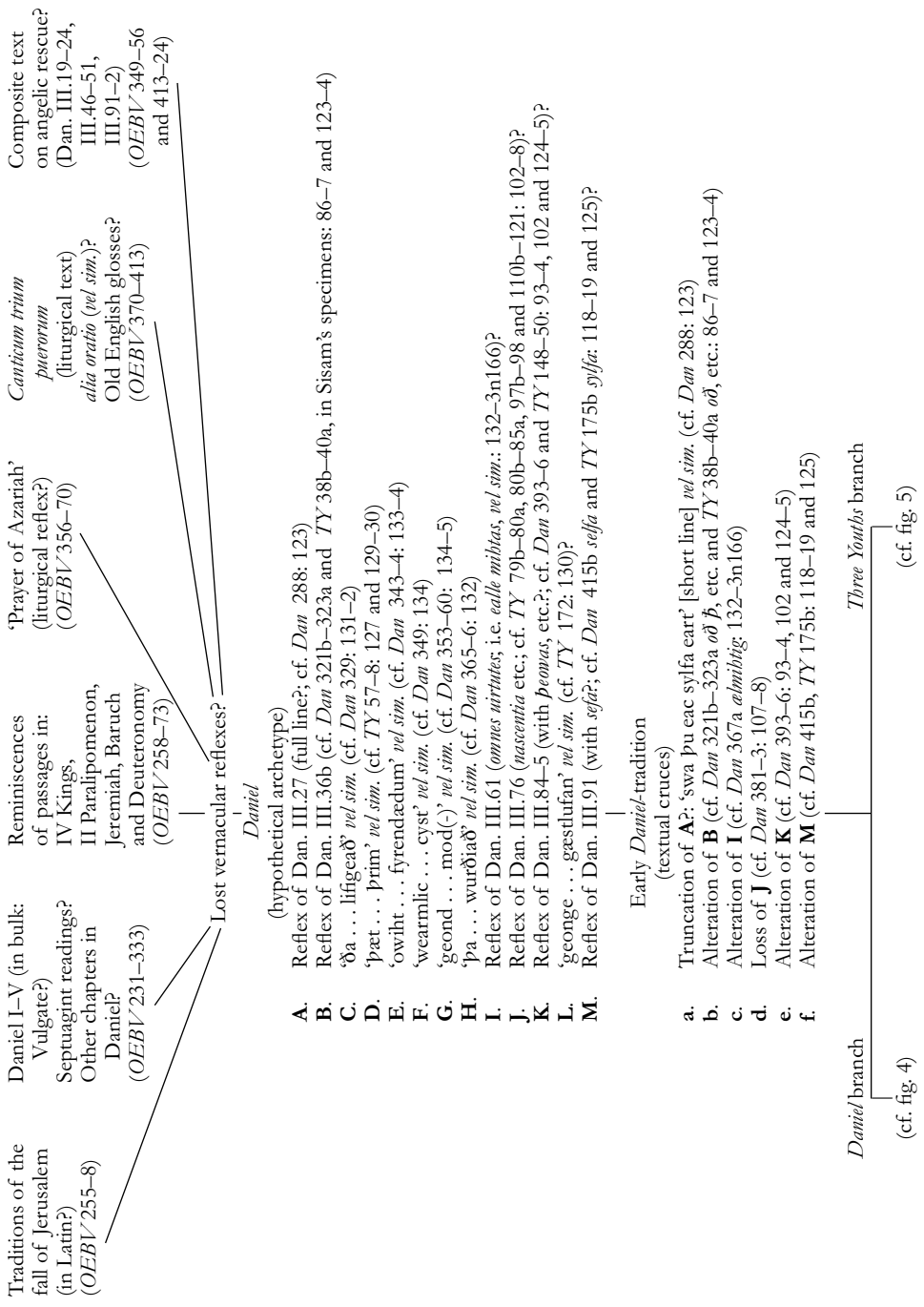


Fig. 3. The common stock of the *Daniel-Three Youths* verse (including items **A-M** and **a-f**)

## Daniel and the Three Youths fragment

Common Stock (cf. fig. 3, with items **A–M** and **a–f**)

↓  
*Daniel*-exemplar

(hypothetical archetype of branch)

Reflex of Dan. I–V.23, etc. (cf. *Dan* 1–764: *OEBV*231–333)

Reflex of Dan. V.24–31, other chapters in *Daniel*? (*OEBV*287)

↓ Alteration of **b** (cf. *Dan* 321b–323a ‘brim faro · þæs . . . gryndeð’, etc.: 86–7 and 123–4)

↓ Alteration of **f** (cf. *Dan* 415b ‘me selfa leogeð . . .’, etc.: 118–19 and 125)?

↓  
Scribal lapses

(independent lapses)

Loss of **D** (127 and 129–30)

Loss of **L** (130)

↓  
Scribal repair

Repair of **D** (129–30)

↓  
*Daniel* (Junius 11)

Loss of leaf containing reflex of Dan. III.2–6 *vel sim.* (*OEBV*276)

Loss of leaf (or leaves) containing reflex of Dan. V.24–31 *vel sim.* (*OEBV*287)

Loss of leaves containing reflexes of other chapters in *Daniel*? (*OEBV*287n161)

Fig. 4. The *Daniel* branch

case, the lapse at issue arguably involves a textual loss occurring as a result of scribal inattention, specifically the sort of *lapsus oculi* that will be termed ‘eye-skip’ in subsequent discussion.

### *Scribal lapses, textual lacunae and early texts of Daniel*

Three of the five suspect passages adduced as evidence for a common antecedent text of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse – items 1, 3 and 4 in the summary above<sup>147</sup> – seem to reflect the loss of full (or short) lines of verse over the course of the production and circulation of *Daniel*-exemplars no longer extant. It might thus be expected that the surviving texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* in their turn would preserve lines of verse that are found to be wanting in corresponding passages of the parallel texts. The reliable preservation of readings going back to early texts of *Daniel* within the extant verse of *The Three Youths*, however, seems to be as rare as we should expect, given the drastically revised state of the latter witness. Nevertheless, two pairs of passages deserve consideration in this regard. The first case involves the appearance in *The Three Youths* of two full lines of verse not represented in Junius 11, lines which arguably go back

<sup>147</sup> See pp. 123–5.



Common Stock (cf. fig. 3, with items **A–M** and **a–f**)

*Three Youths*-exemplar

(hypothetical archetype of branch)

- I. Reflex of Dan. I–II etc.? (117n120)
  - II. Reflex of Dan. III.1–24 (cf. *TY* 233, 242, 253; 113–17)?
  - III. Reflex of Dan. III.25–90 (cf. *TY* 1–161a: 84–123)
  - IV. Reflex of Dan. III.91–4 (cf. *TY* 161b–191: 113–17)
  - V. Reflex of Dan. III.95–100 (cf. *TY* 178, 187b: 113–17)
  - VI. Reflex of other chapters in Daniel? (111n108, 113–15 and 121–3)
- ↓ Loss of **a** (cf. *TY* 9–10: 123)
  - ↓ Alteration of **b** (cf. *TY* 38b–40 ‘oð . . . eargrund’: 86–7 and 123–4)?
  - ↓ Repair of **c** (cf. *TY* 76a *eat. meagen*: 132–3n166)?
  - ↓ Alteration of **f** (cf. *Dan* 175b ‘. . . me sylfa gerad’: 118–19 and 125)?
  - ↓ Loss of **P** (117n120)
  - ↓ Loss of **V** (113–17)
  - ↓ Loss of **VI**: (111n108, 113–15 and 133)
- ↓ Scribal lapses  
(concurrent lapses)
- i. Loss of **C** (131–2)
  - ii. Loss of **E** (133–4)
  - iii. Loss of **F** (134)
  - iv. Loss of **G** (134–5)
  - v. Loss of **H** (132)
- ↓ Scribal repair  
(subsequent to i–v)
- ↓ Repair of **ii** (cf. *TY* 63b *swad*: 133–4)
  - ↓ Repair of **iii** (cf. *TY* 64a *ser*: 134)
- (continues in next column)

(*Three Youths* branch, continued)

- Damaged exemplar  
(increasingly severe damage)
  - Alteration of **III** and **IV** (113–15 and 118–23)
  - Alteration of **I**, **II**, **V** and **VI**? (113–15, 117n120 and 121–3)
- ↓ Comprehensive textual restoration  
(progressive textual divergence)
- Repair of **III** and **IV** (113–15 and 118–23)
  - Repair of **I**, **II**, **V** and **VI**? (113–15, 117n120 and 121–3)
- ↓ Revision of aftermath narrative  
(concurrent with preceding?)
- Alteration of **IV** (113–17)
  - Borrowing from **III** and **V** (cf. *TY* 178, 187b, 233 etc.: 113–17)
- ↓ Revision of *canticum*-rendition by Canticle-Poet  
(concurrent with preceding?)
- 1. Repair of **d** (cf. *TY* 80–121: 102–4 and 107–8)
  - 2. Repair of **e** (cf. *TY* 148–52: 93–4, 102 and 124–5)
  - 3. Other alteration of **III** (104–7 and 109–13)
- ↓ Alteration of **2** (cf. *TY* 150a *par*: 102)
- Alteration of form *lyfgen, vel sim.* (cf. *TY* 100a *lyfgen*: 102)
- ↓ **The Three Youths** (Exeter 3501)
- Loss of quire(s) (115–17)
  - Excision of parchment (115–17)

Fig. 5. The *Three Youths* branch (including items **I–VI**, **i–v** and **1–3**)



‘formula density’ that reminds one of certain concise formulaic expressions in *Daniel* more forcefully than does any verse attributed securely to a *Daniel*-reviser.<sup>154</sup> Finally, the evident syntactic repair involving the insertion of an accusative pronoun *hine* (*Dan* 341a) indicates that the textual loss through scribal eye-skip occurred at least one transmissional stage before the production of Junius 11.

My second pair of passages, arguably attesting to verse lost in the *Daniel*-tradition, is drawn from the complex sequence of parallels seen in the variant accounts of the miracle’s aftermath.<sup>155</sup> The second passage here plausibly contains a reflex of a line that circulated in early texts of *Daniel*, though not, perhaps, its *ipsissima verba*. (Italic type again represents textual variation, and bold type indicates possible sources of eye-skip.)<sup>156</sup>

*Dan* 412–413a: . . . þeoden [sc. *þeode?*] *māne*, þæt we þry syndon [sc. *sendon*],  
geboden to bæle . . .<sup>157</sup>

TY 171–173a: . . . þæt we .III. *hæfdon*, þeoda *wisan*,  
*geonge cniehtas*, for *gastlufan*  
**gebunden** to bæle . . .<sup>158</sup>

The verbal parallelism revealed by the line unique to *The Three Youths* (italicized here in full) and by a line in a very early section of *Daniel* (at 21a: *gastes lufan*) has been noted.<sup>159</sup> If, as I have suggested, the *Daniel*-reviser(s) responsible for the final section of the extant text of *The Three Youths* sought diligently to salvage legible readings from a damaged exemplar, it holds to reason that some early phraseology of *Daniel* might be preserved in the process.

On balance, the claims of these passages to preserve lost verse in the *Daniel*-tradition appear highly reasonable in the first case and slightly problematic in the second. In neither instance can the loss of verse hypothesized above easily be charged to scribal eye-skip caused by the misapprehension of similar word-endings (known as *homoioleuton*). In both cases, however, there is evidence of a graphemic environment that may have indeed encouraged eye-skip: the con-

<sup>154</sup> The collocations in question, however, are not formulaic tags; neither finds a precise parallel now outside of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse. But cf. *Dan* 733b *runcraeftige men* (‘men skilled in the arts of secret knowledge [that is, pagan advisers]’) and 720 ‘. . . in egesan / engel . . .’ ([‘then,] in a sight inspiring terror, the angel [caused his hand to appear]’; cf. also *Dan* 725 ‘. . . egesan . . . / . . . engles . . .’). For the concept of formula density and its relation to formulaic composition, see Lord, ‘Words Heard’, pp. 26–7. <sup>155</sup> See above, pp. 113–21.

<sup>156</sup> For the Latin source of the renditions, see n. 122.

<sup>157</sup> [‘Many of you have seen,] my peoples [reading *þeode*; Farrell reads *þeodnas*, “lords”], that we sent those three, condemned to immolation, [into the fire] . . .’

<sup>158</sup> [‘I know for certain] that we had fettered those three, those leaders of multitudes, *young stripplings*, because of [their] love of the Holy Spirit [or “souls’ love”?] for immolation [in the fire] . . .’ (Italic type indicates matter that may have been lost to a lacuna.) <sup>159</sup> See pp. 113–14.

### Daniel and the Three Youths fragment

struing of **p** and **t** in the first case and of two occurrences of **ge** in the second. Instances of eye-skip involving the initial letters (or words) of the first line of lost text and of the next line reproduced, as will emerge below, are also exemplified by the transmitted text of *The Three Youths*.

#### *Scribal lapses and the transmitted text of The Three Youths*

As one by now might reasonably expect, the textual disruption observed in the verse of *The Three Youths* also involves the loss of some lines through scribal eye-skip. What is surprising, however, is the large quantity of verse that has been lost to lacunae in this way. The witness in Exeter 3501 reveals the loss of fully twenty half-lines in five substantial scribal lapses, assuming that no further verse has been lost from the transmitted text of *Daniel*, which serves as the benchmark. Also remarkable is the restricted range of lines over which these lapses have occurred. We have to reckon with the probability that the five cases of eye-skip arose over a span of about forty-one lines (corresponding in bulk to *Dan* 327–67), whose verse is roughly congruent with thirty-three extant lines in *The Three Youths* (TY 44–76).<sup>160</sup> This lacunose patch in the transmitted text of *The Three Youths* (TY 44–76) – commencing shortly after the close of Sisam’s critical specimen (at TY 41) – clearly documents the sort of professional negligence that Sisam associated with later Anglo-Saxon scribal performance. Nevertheless, the pervasiveness of the losses within a limited span of lines suggests that all (or most) of these lacunae should be seen as arising out of a single act of transcription and should be charged to the neglect of one inattentive scribe.

The first and last of these five instances of scribal eye-skip, strictly speaking, do not warrant classification as textual losses by *homoioteleuton*. Recalling the graphemic environment associated with possible lacunae in the extant verse of *Daniel*, the transmitted text of *The Three Youths* seems to witness cases in which the opening words of the poetic line to be copied (or its initial sequence of characters) have been misconstrued with similar opening words (or characters) in the line following the lost text. The first apparent case of textual loss by eye-skip reflected in the transmitted text of *The Three Youths* involves two passages in the rendition of Azariah’s prayer. (Italic type represents textual variation, and bold type indicates possible sources of eye-skip.)<sup>161</sup>

<sup>160</sup> The restricted distribution of these losses does not seem to have attracted previous critical comment; cf. Jabbour, ‘Memorial Transmission in Old English Poetry’, p. 187.

<sup>161</sup> The passages follow *Dan.* III.45: ‘. . . sciant quia tu Dominus Deus solus’ (‘. . . and let them know that you are the Lord, the only God’). Orton, *The Transmission*, pp. 153–4, does not address the palaeographical environment of the loss, concluding that there ‘is plainly not enough [evidence] to prove interpolation in [*Daniel*] rather than omission from [*The Three Youths*]’.

Dan 327–30: Gecyð cræft 7 mǣht, þæt þa [Junius 11: þ̅ þ̅] Caldeas  
 7 folca fela gefrigen habbað  
**ð̅a þ̅e** under beofenum hæðene lifigeað  
 7 þæt [Junius 11: þ̅] þ̅u ana eart ece drǣhten . . .<sup>162</sup>

TY 44–6: Gecyð cræft 7 mæht, nu þec Caldeas  
 7 eac fela folca gefreggen habban  
 þæt [*sic*: Exeter 3501] þu ana eart ece dryhten . . .<sup>163</sup>

Another apparent instance of eye-skip reflected by the extant verse of *The Three Youths* reveals a jump ahead to words (or characters) opening the poetic line following the lost text. The verse at issue is found at the end of the problematic span of lacunose verse in *The Three Youths* (TY 44–76). The verse here parallels the first major instance of textual loss (at Dan 327–30 and TY 44–6), documented above, in that it comprises a relative construction, with plural demonstrative *ð̅a* and the indeclinable particle *ð̅e*, as well as a form of the second-person pronoun *ð̅u*. These features, among others indicated by the use of bold type, may have contributed to the occurrence of the eye-skip. (Italic type again represents textual variation.)<sup>164</sup>

Dan 364–7: Heofonas 7 englas, 7 hluttur wæter,  
**þ̅a ð̅e** of [sc. ofer] roderum on rihtne gesceaft  
*wuniað in wuldre, ð̅a þ̅ec wurðiað!*  
 7 þ̅ec, ælmihtig, ealle gesceafta . . .<sup>165</sup>

TY 75–6: . . . heofonas 7 englas 7 hluttur wæter,  
 7 eal mægen eorþan gesceafta.<sup>166</sup>

<sup>162</sup> ‘Reveal your power and might, until [Brennan; or “which”?: thus Farrell] the Chaldeans and many [other] peoples have knowledge of [them] – *those who live as pagans under the heavens* – and [reveal] that you alone are the eternal Lord . . .’ (Italic type indicates matter that has been lost to a lacuna.)

<sup>163</sup> ‘Reveal your power and might, so that the Chaldeans, and many [other] peoples as well, now may have knowledge that you alone are the eternal Lord . . .’

<sup>164</sup> The passages follow a liturgical reflex of Dan. III.58–60: ‘Benedicite caeli dominum. Benedicite angeli Domini Dominum. Benedicite aquae quae super caelos sunt Dominum’, cited here from Vespasian A. i, 150r (‘You heavens, bless the Lord. You angels of the Lord, bless the Lord. All you waters that are above the heavens, bless the Lord’).

<sup>165</sup> ‘The heavens and the angels and the clear waters *which dwell in glory above* [reading *ofer*] *the skies in their rightful place, these praise you*. And all created things, [let them praise] you, the almighty [God] . . .’ (Italic type indicates matter that has been lost to a lacuna.)

<sup>166</sup> ‘[May they bless you, . . .] the heavens and the angels and the clear waters and all the power of earth’s creations.’ Here, the phrase *eal mægen* (TY 76a) offers a counterpart to the youths’ invocation of the powers of creation (Dan. III.61: *omnes uirtutes*). This invocation would appear to have been left wholly out of the account in *Daniel* were it not for the problematic reading *ælmihtig* just cited (Dan 367a: in context, ‘the almighty [God]’). Plausibly obscuring a phrase *ealle mihtas*, or a similar rendering of *omnes uirtutes*, the appearance of the adjective *ælmihtig* (Dan 367a) suggests that some sort of reasoned scribal intervention underlies the text transmitted

## Daniel and the Three Youths *fragment*

The pairs of passages adduced above in connection with lacunae in *The Three Youths* (*Dan* 327–30—*TY* 44–6 and *Dan* 364–7—*TY* 75–6) serve to frame the spans of lines in the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse under discussion (*Dan* 327–67 and *TY* 44–76). The points of lexical and syntactic correspondence in the two lapses (as treated above) thus support the view that the five lacunae detected in *The Three Youths* should be charged to a single scribe.

In two additional instances of eye-skip reflected in the extant witness of *The Three Youths*, we again find graphemic factors to account for the lapses. In the first case, the particulars more clearly recall the familiar pattern of *homoioteleuton*. (Italic type again represents textual variation; bold type indicates possible sources of eye-skip.)<sup>167</sup>

*Dan* 341–346a: *tosweop hine 7 tosweode þurh þa swiðan m̄ht,*  
*ligges leoma [sc. leoman] þæt hyre [sc. hyra] lice ne wæs*  
*owibt geegled, ac be on andan slob,*  
*fyr on feondas for fyrendædum.*  
***þa wæs*** on þam ofne, þær se engel becwom 345  
windig 7 wynsum<sup>168</sup>

*TY* 59–62a: *tosweop 7 tosweogde þurh swiðes meah̄t*  
*liges leoman, swa hyra lice ne scod* 60  
*ac wæs in þam ofne, þa se engel cwom,*  
windig 7 wynsum<sup>169</sup>

The dynamic of the eye-skip here seems to have involved a leap forward from the expression *ne wæs*, over the comparable reading *þa wæs*, and straight on to the phrase *on* (or *in*) *þam ofne*. The preterite form *scod* (‘harmed’) and conjunction *ac*

by Junius 11. The phrase *eal mægen* (*TY* 76a) in *The Three Youths* – rather than witnessing a reading going back to early texts of *Daniel* – might thus be seen as a textual restoration introduced by a redactor.

<sup>167</sup> The passages evidently witness a conflated reflex of *Dan.* III.22b and III.49b–50: ‘Porro uiros illos qui miserant Sedrac, Misac et Abdenago, interfecit flamma ignis . . . [E]t excussit flammam ignis de fornace. Et fecit medium fornacis quasi uentum roris flantem et non tetigit eos omnino ignis, neque contristauit, nec quicquam molestiae intulit’ (‘But the flame of the fire slew those men who had cast in Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego . . . And [the angel] drove the flame of the fire out of the furnace, and made the midst of the furnace like the blowing of a wind bringing dew. And the fire touched them not at all, nor troubled them, nor did them any harm’). For examples of composite treatments of the angelic rescue in early medieval liturgical sources, see Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, pp. 416–24.

<sup>168</sup> ‘[The angel] swept it [that is, the fire] away and scattered the flames of the fire, because of that great power, so that their bodies were *in no way afflicted*; however, *in anger* he drove the fire toward those enemies because of [their] sinful deeds. Then, when the angel had come into the furnace, it was breezy and pleasant’. (Italic type indicates matter that has been lost to a lacuna.)

<sup>169</sup> ‘[The angel] swept away and scattered the flames of the fire, through the power of the strong one [that is, God?], so that it did not harm their bodies; but when the angel came into the furnace, it was breezy and pleasant’.

will have been supplied, in a subsequent act of transcription, by a *Daniel*-reviser who recognized the ungrammatical (and unmetrical) result of the loss.<sup>170</sup>

The following example of textual loss by *homoioteleuton* reveals a similar pattern. In this case, however, the apparent confusion of **h** and Insular tall **s**, and of **e** and **c**, has caused the scribe to misconstrue two wholly distinct terms: *hwile* and *swylc* – or *swilc*, perhaps, in the lost exemplar. (Italic type again represents textual variation; bold type indicates possible sources of eye-skip.)<sup>171</sup>

*Dan* 348–351a: . . . dropena drearung on dæges **hwile**,  
wearmlíc wolcna scur. *Swylc* bið wedera cyst,  
**swylc** wæs on þam fyre frean mǣhtum  
halgum to helpe.<sup>172</sup>

*TY* 64–66a: . . . dropena dreorung mid dægес hwile.  
*Se* wæs in þam fyre for frean mehtum  
halgum to helpe.<sup>173</sup>

Again the occurrence of *homoioteleuton* here seems to have led the scribe’s eye to skip forward from *hwile*, over *swylc* (or *swilc*), and on to *wæs*, with the demonstrative *se* having been supplied as a patch by a *Daniel*-reviser in a subsequent act of copying.

In the final case of textual loss by eye-skip surveyed here, parallel forms of the adjective *hwæt* (‘brave, bold’) – incorporated as components of two distinct adjectival compounds (*modhwæt* and *dædhwæt*) – have caused a scribe to drop details of the youths’ perambulation in the furnace and of the angelic rescue. (Italic type represents textual variation; bold type indicates possible sources of eye-skip.)<sup>174</sup>

<sup>170</sup> Orton, *The Transmission*, pp. 142–4, argues (implausibly, in my view) that the passages reveal a ‘probable case of interpolation of two whole lines’ in *Daniel* (p. 142), even while acknowledging ‘the biblical source of the missing lines’ (p. 143).

<sup>171</sup> The passages follow the wording of *Dan*. III.50 (‘Et fecit medium fornacis quasi uentum roris flantem . . .’), as translated in n. 167; see further Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, pp. 353–4 with n. 43, for Insular analogues to the unbiblical fall of rain. Jabbour, ‘The Memorial Transmission’, p. 144, notes the ‘grammatical overhauling of the succeeding line’, but concludes that ‘[s]cribal omission seems quite unlikely here’. Orton, *The Transmission*, p. 154, does not address the circumstances of the eye-skip or the evidence for textual restoration, maintaining that ‘[t]here is nothing suspicious about this “extra” line in [*Daniel*], nor is there a sense of anything missing in [*The Three Youths*]’; so also O’Donnell, ‘Manuscript Variation’, pp. 427–8.

<sup>172</sup> ‘[It was like . . .] a falling of raindrops in the daytime, a warm shower from the clouds. Just as the finest weather may be, so it was in that fire, as a help to the holy ones, through the powers of the Lord.’ (Italic type indicates matter that has been lost to a lacuna.)

<sup>173</sup> ‘[It was like . . .] a falling of raindrops during the daytime. He [that is, the angel?; or “it”, the dew-bearing wind?] was in that fire as a help to the holy ones, on account of the powers of the Lord.’

<sup>174</sup> The passages evidently witness a conflated reflex of *Dan*. III.24, III.49 and III.51 (see Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse*, pp. 416–24): ‘Et ambulabant in medio flammae, laudantes Deum et benedicentes Domino . . . Angelus autem descendit cum Azaria et sociis eius in fornacem et



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Dan 351b–357:                      Wearð se hata lig  
 todripen 7 todwæsced   þær þa dæðhwatan  
 geond þone ofen eodon,   7 se engel mid,  
 feorb nerigende.   Se ðær feorða wæs,  
 Amnias 7 Azarias  
 7 Misael,   þær þa modhwatan  
 þry on geðancum   ðeoden heredon.<sup>175</sup>

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TY 66b–68:                      Wearð se hata lig  
 todripen 7 todwæsced,   þær þa dæðhwatan  
 þry mid geþoncum   þeoden heredon . . .<sup>176</sup>

As the break here is syntactically clean, without a trace of lexical or syntactic restoration, these lines offer an example of eye-skip that might be charged plausibly to the main scribe of Exeter 3501.<sup>177</sup> As I have suggested above, however, the circumstance that the five scribal lapses detected in the extant verse of *The Three Youths* occur within a span of thirty-three lines (TY 44–76), corresponding to a span of forty-one lines in *Daniel* (Dan 327–67), suggests that the lacunae in question should be attributed to the negligence of a single scribe.<sup>178</sup> The clear evidence of textual repair in two cases (involving Dan 341–346a—TY 59–62a and Dan 348–351a—TY 64–66a) argues against these losses having arisen as a group in the course of the production of the Exeter Book.

In the preceding analysis, I have detected as many as seven scribal lapses arising in the transmission of the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse along two stemmatic branches. These lapses will have incurred the two possible textual losses charged to the copy of *Daniel* in Junius 11 (or an exemplar) and the five lacunae evident in the extant verse of *The Three Youths*. It is a striking circumstance that all of these apparent lapses involve the loss of full alliterative lines. Not all of these

excussit flammam ignis de fornace . . . Tunc tres quasi ex uno ore laudabant et glorificabant et benedicebant Deo in fornace' ('And they walked in the midst of the flame, praising God and blessing the Lord . . . But the angel of the Lord went down with Azariah and his companions into the furnace, and he drove the flame of the fire out of the furnace . . . Then these three as with one mouth praised, and glorified, and blessed God in the furnace').

<sup>175</sup> 'The hot flame was put down and extinguished where they, brave in their actions, *went about in the furnace, and the angel with them, preserving their lives. That [angel] was the fourth one in there, [with] Ananiab and Azariab and Misael, where the three, brave in their spirits, gave praise to the Lord in their thoughts.*' (Italic type indicates matter that has been lost to a lacuna.)

<sup>176</sup> 'The hot flame was put down and extinguished where the three, brave in their actions, gave praise to the Lord with their thoughts . . .'

<sup>177</sup> In any case, citing a verbal parallel that I have treated above, p. 114 (item 4) – '7 se engel mid' (Dan 353b) and 'ac him is engel mid' (TY 177b) – Jabbour, 'The Memorial Transmission', p. 145, accepts that the parallel 'lends some support to the already nearly certain conclusion that this passage [Dan 353–6] was omitted in [*The Three Youths*], not added in [*Daniel*]; see also Orton, *The Transmission*, p. 34, correctly charging the loss of text to *The Three Youths*.

<sup>178</sup> See p. 131.

losses can be attributed to the occurrence of obvious graphemic parallels situated at the beginnings and ends of poetic lines. Moreover, as Jabbour has noted, such losses might seem unlikely to arise in the copying of texts from manuscripts whose scribes ‘wrote out poetry like prose’.<sup>179</sup> The natural inference, then, is that Anglo-Saxon copyists of vernacular poetry retained a sense of the rhythm of the verse as they read through their exemplars, either *viva voce* or in silent concentration, and thus were aware of the breaks of alliterative lines.<sup>180</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

The shared passages of the verse now printed beneath the critical titles *Daniel* and *The Canticles of the Three Youths* (or *Azarias*) can no longer be regarded as evidence for the standard practice of Anglo-Saxon scribes. The reliability of the passages’ joint witness to techniques of vernacular composition has been similarly reduced, particularly with respect to tasks commonly undertaken by poets (and revisers) engaged in the production and transmission of Old English verse. The content of the *Three Youths* fragment, in particular, is now seen to have been affected pervasively by an extraordinary turn of events in the course of its descent to the leaves of the Exeter Book. The present study has identified some faint, but unmistakable echoes of the verse of *Daniel* in the final lines of the transmitted text of *The Three Youths*, echoes whose disposition points decisively toward the presence of severe material damage in an ancestor of the extant text. The damage in question seems to have occasioned a thoroughgoing attempt at textual restoration on the part of an ambitious redactor. Forceful corroboration of this conclusion appears in the graphemically informed variation that occurs in two well-known passages excerpted as critical specimens by Kenneth Sisam. The impact of the codicological damage uncovered here may help to explain the prominent variation that extends across the extant verse of the *Three Youths* fragment *vis-à-vis* the parallel passages in *Daniel* – variation that may be characterized, by turns, as lexical, morphological, syntactic, phonological (or orthographic) and metrical. The copy of *Daniel* in Junius 11 exhibits similar variants at many points, but textual cruxes that might be charged to a faulty exemplar (such as those occurring in Sisam’s extract from *Daniel*) emerge far less frequently. A thorough analysis of the special features of the two texts, in all of the cited linguistic categories, has been undertaken in the course of the present study. The quantification of these findings, as represented by the statistical chart

<sup>179</sup> Jabbour, ‘The Memorial Transmission’, p. 145. For a valuable accumulation of evidence relating to pointing and line-breaks in medieval copies of Old English verse, see the facsimiles printed in *Old English Verse Texts from Many Sources: a Comprehensive Collection*, ed. F. C. Robinson and E. G. Stanley, EEMF 23 (Copenhagen, 1991). It appears that no extant medieval witness to Old English verse includes regular line-breaks.

<sup>180</sup> I would like to thank Andy Orchard for helpful discussion of this problem.

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in fig. 1 (above, p. 88), bears out the conclusions of the codicological discussion: the progressively decreasing legibility of a defective exemplar offers a plausible and economical explanation for the progressive textual divergence revealed by the surviving witnesses to *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*.

#### *The contributions of the Canticle-Poet and their text-historical implications*

The verse of *The Three Youths* also passed through a separate, but no less extraordinary, stage of poetical revision, a stage which again serves to distinguish the *Daniel–Three Youths* verse from all other multiple-witness specimens of Old English verse. This stage of revision saw a critically informed programme of paraliturgical versification, which was evidently undertaken by a single redactor who was also a competent alliterative poet. This individual has been identified here as the Canticle-Poet. Unambiguous contributions of the Canticle-Poet include a group of thematically and stylistically integrated evocations of botanical imagery, plausibly to be associated with the rhetorical commonplace known as the *locus amoenus* (or ‘beautiful place’). Elsewhere, the poet deploys some substantial passages conveying a range of reflective and quasi-homiletic sentiments. The Canticle-Poet’s skills include the manipulation of poeticisms and other nonstandard vocabulary as elements of a distinctive style; the coordination of rhetorically linked themes over a series of added passages; and the ability to effect sudden stylistic shifts, as from a non-narrative, essentially paraliturgical mode of expression to an expository or exhortatory mode.

The primary rationale for the Canticle-Poet’s undertaking was the rectification of deficiencies perceived in some verse, best represented now by the extant text of *Daniel*, treating a liturgical version of the canticle whose recitation is ascribed to three youths in Nebuchadnezzar’s fiery furnace (known as *Canticum trium puerorum*). The rendering in *Daniel* draws on a distinctive Old Latin-derived text of the canticle at issue, witnessed now by a group of five surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, whose ordering of Greek-derived invocations (for example, *benedicite frigus et caumas Dominum* (‘cold and heat, bless the Lord’), a reading of Vespasian A. i) differs markedly from that observed in the Vulgate. Oblivious to this fact, the Canticle-Poet set out to restore the content of several verses of the canticle by calling up – from memory, it would seem – a Vulgate-based text of *Canticum trium puerorum*, a text that is typically found in the appendix of canticles accompanying the so-called *psalterium Gallicanum*. A unique, direct quotation of the Latin text of this source by the Canticle-Poet in a macaronic passage (*lux 7 tenebre* (TY 100b): ‘light and shadows’) allows us to assign a date *c.* 960 × *c.* 980 to this redactor’s activities, a date that is compatible with evidence for the introduction and use of the *Gallicanum* in England and with the presently accepted dating of the production of Exeter 3501. (The widest conceivable range of dates for the Canticle-Poet’s floruit would extend from the 930s into the 990s.) The

Canticle-Poet's superimposition of a Vulgate-based text on a characteristically Old Latin sequence of invocations provides independent verification of the chronological priority of this part of *Daniel* over the corresponding passages of *The Three Youths*.

By means of a close study of the Canticle-Poet's language, the verifiable contributions of this reviser have been shown to include both the products of a course of wholly original verse-composition and some attempted restorations of lacunose passages in the rendition of *Canticum trium puerorum*. On grounds of textual continuity, it can be concluded safely that the major contributions of the Canticle-Poet were made subsequent to the material damage suffered by an antecedent copy of *The Three Youths*. In view of the Canticle-Poet's activities as a restorer of verse, it seems possible that the poet's paraliturgical endeavours were undertaken contemporaneously with the exemplar-related revisions spanning the whole length of the transmitted text of *The Three Youths*. Indeed, this poet may have been the principal reviser of the semi-legible verse transmitted by the damaged exemplar. On balance, however, it seems reasonable to view the repair of textual lacunae incurred through codicological defects as an occurrence that is essentially distinct from the critical revision undertaken by the Canticle-Poet. Similarly, the idiosyncratic narration of the miracle's aftermath in *The Three Youths* weaves together phrases drawn from several sections of *Daniel*, forming a pastiche that provides additional evidence for techniques practised by poetic revisers. It is clear, none the less, that with the insights made possible by these findings we gain an unprecedented, diachronic view of the transmission of verse in the *Daniel*-tradition.

#### *Lost manuscripts in the Daniel-tradition*

Each of the two main poetical witnesses discussed in this study contains readings that are not present in the other witness, but which nevertheless may be attributed reasonably to an archetype (or an early version) of the composition now known as *Daniel*. In other words, the texts preserved in Junius 11 and Exeter 3501 did not emerge directly out of a single line of transmission. These two witnesses, however, exhibit at least five textual cruces in parallel that are not easily attributable to a hypothetical archetype of the verse of *Daniel*. Accordingly, we may conclude that the extant texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* do share a line of descent; that is, the two texts go back to an ancestor that stood at one remove (or more) from a hypothetical archetype of *Daniel*. (For a more detailed presentation of these points, see the stemmatic representations in figs. 3–5.)<sup>181</sup> All told, the stemmatic analysis presented here implies the existence of at least eight manuscripts in the *Daniel*-tradition, only two of which are extant

<sup>181</sup> See above, before pp. 126–8.

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today. This group of eight manuscripts (each of which implicitly represents a redactorial stage) may be summarized under two headings. First, in the line of descent associated with the transmitted text of *Daniel*, we have to reckon with (1) the hypothetical *Daniel* archetype, (2) the exemplar including a characteristic group of textual cruces, (3) the distinctively lacunose exemplar transmitted to the scribe of Junius 11, and (4) the copy of *Daniel* preserved in Junius 11, before the loss of parchment at its end (incurring a textual lacuna after *Dan* 764) and elsewhere. Second, the evidence indicates a separate line of descent, associated with the verse of *The Three Youths*, which branches out from the second stage in the line of *Daniel*-exemplars (the common antecedent text characterized by distinctive textual cruces). In this line of descent, we must include (1) the damaged ancestor of the copy of *The Three Youths* in Exeter 3501, (2) the restored exemplar, (3) the distinctively lacunose exemplar transmitted to the scribe of Exeter 3501, and (4) the verse of *The Three Youths* copied out in Exeter 3501, before the loss of parchment. Further transmissional stages in the *Three Youths* branch might be adduced to account for the following: (1) the narrowly confined cluster of five textual losses incurred through scribal eye-skip (at *TY* 44–76); (2) variant readings arising out of attempts to patch lacunae incurred by the eye-skip; (3) the separate stage of verse-composition undertaken by the Canticle-Poet; and (4) the production of the derivative, variant account of the miracle's aftermath. If some or all of these stages are admitted to the discussion, we must reckon with the existence of as many as twelve manuscripts discernibly bound up in the *Daniel*-tradition. The two final stages in the attested transmission of the text of *The Three Youths*, as we have seen, involve developments that are codicological rather than scribal (or redactorial) in character. The present study has adduced previously unrecognized verbal parallels verifying the loss of verse from the copy of *The Three Youths* in Exeter 3501. Two stages of textual loss are in question, both of which involve codicological lacunae. These are: (1) the loss of nearly one full section of verse – and, perhaps, additional full sections – from the beginning of the extant copy of *The Three Youths*, occurring as a direct result of the loss of one or more full quires from the Exeter Book between its present sixth and seventh quires; and (2) the loss of about twelve lines of verse – including the final lines of the verse in the lost section(s), immediately before the start of the extant copy of the *The Three Youths* – as a result of the excision of a strip of parchment at the top of the fifty-third extant leaf of Exeter 3501.

#### *The dating of Junius 11 and Exeter 3501*

The evidence set out in this study has implications for the dating of the production of both the Junius manuscript and the Exeter Book, and also for the dating of the texts transmitted by their immediate exemplars. As noted, the activities of the Canticle-Poet have been assigned here to the time of the Benedictine

reforms, specifically to a period (c. 960 × c. 980) when the canticles of the *Gallicanum* were becoming more frequently recited in liturgical use. This conclusion is not problematic with respect to the currently accepted dating of the production of the Exeter Book: the later tenth century, with Donald G. Scragg recently proposing a date c. 975 and Richard Gameson proposing a range of dates c. 960 × c. 980.<sup>182</sup> The textual disruptions revealed by the verse of *The Three Youths*, however, may serve to highlight the overall quality – and, perhaps, the antiquity – of the exemplar available to the main scribe of the Junius volume. Some scholars still credit the possibility of a date as late as 1050 for the production of the main part of Junius 11 (pp. 1–212), and few have assigned a date to the monument earlier than the last decade of the tenth century.<sup>183</sup> It is always possible that a relatively late manuscript will preserve a characteristically early text, and this might be held to have occurred in the case of Junius 11 and its copy of *Daniel*, as my concluding remarks will suggest.

The transmitted texts of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths* have been shown to go back to a common antecedent text containing several distinctive textual cruces. After the emergence of this text, in the line of descent witnessed by the extant copy of *The Three Youths*, we have to reckon with at least three successive transmissional stages. These include a stage involving physical damage incurred by an exemplar, which was followed by a comprehensive textual restoration and, subsequently, by several additional types of textual alteration. All told, after branching out from the cited antecedent text, the verse transmitted along the line witnessed by the copy of *The Three Youths* will have passed through as many as eight discernible transmissional stages, including the production of Exeter 3501, by c. 960 × c. 980. The Canticle-Poet's revisions, which postdate the stage that saw the physical damage to the *Daniel*-exemplar, are not likely to have been undertaken before c. 960. The copy of *Daniel* in Junius 11 sporadically reveals a variety of exemplar-related difficulties, but I find it hard to conceive of an exemplar possessing a comparable degree of textual integrity existing in the line of transmission witnessed by the *Three Youths* fragment at any point after the central decades of the tenth century (c. 940 × c. 960). I am thus inclined to regard the common antecedent text of *Daniel* and *The Three Youths*, a text already standing at some distance from a hypothetical archetype of *Daniel*, as a production emerging before the period of vigorous Benedictine reform marked by (say) Æthelwold's consecration as bishop of Winchester in 963. The transmitted text of *The Three Youths*, by contrast, is most easily viewed as a product of the reform years.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>182</sup> See above, nn. 9 and 72.

<sup>183</sup> See, however, the discussion of Leslie Lockett below, pp. 141–73.

<sup>184</sup> My thanks to Michael Lapidge for helpful discussion of a number of points.