ON THE QUANTITY OF <I> IN OLD ENGLISH WORDS ENDING IN -LIC AND -LICE

1. INTRODUCTION

The phonology of Old English may be characterized as having quantity or weight (Lass 1994: 36) and, as such, it exhibits a vowel inventory which comprises a contrast between durationally long and short vocalic items [1]. This contrast, however, happened not to be wholly systematic and overspread among the anglosaxons as they often failed to recognize this durational feature in the pronunciation of syllables. Stutterheim (1968: 449) thus mentions that "length is not a relevant feature in the vowel systems of the OG languages" and, similarly, Jones (1989: 15) refers to the lack of standardization in Old English on this respect stating that "the relative durational contrast […] was one which speakers had no way of predicting, the length of the vowels having to be specified in the language's lexicon as being arbitrarily long or short".

Actually, this was particularly true in the case of Old English adjectives and adverbs ending up with *-lic* and *-lice*, respectively. We began to realize the lack of stability in the orthography and pronunciation of these types of items when implementing an automatic morphological analyser of Old English (Miranda et al. 1997) since the computer needed to be provided with a standard rule on this respect in order to generate a reliable and proficient morphological tagging. Jones (1972: 52) thus affirms that "the orthography […] represents the vowels sounds underlying the alternants" and thus he

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[1] In some manuscripts an acute accent is occasionally used to highlight some long vowels but this device was not systematic and it might be interpreted as a sign of emphasis. Notice that the same diacritic is also found in some dictionaries and grammars (Cf. Bosworth and Toller 1991; Skeat 1993). Some other authors, however, employ a macron to indicate the presence of long vowels whereas short ones are commonly left unmarked (Cf. pæt instead of dæµlan, etc.).

distinguishes between the abstract level (which stands for the orthographic representation of the vowel <i>) and the superficial level (which is realized by the phonological rules of that vowel, that is, [i] and [i:]). Therefore, on the grounds of the number of references consulted, we turned out to realize that there are serious controversies concerning the vowel length of adjectives like *gelic*, *cynelic* or *sweltendlic* and of adverbs like *wurplice*, *lustlice* or *souplice*. Therefore, in the course of this paper we intend to present (1) an overview of the current state of disagreement found in the specific literature and (2) introduce our own viewpoint proposing to interpret these types of adjectives and adverbs as exclusively long.

2. STATE OF THE ART

Various sources such as grammars, primers and dictionaries have been examined for our purposes and, on account of the data obtained from their analysis, we have finally come to the conclusion that scholars usually interpret the pronunciation of these word items from four different points of view, which may be reported as follows:

1. First of all, there are scholars who believe that both *-lic* and *-lice* are phonologically pronounced with a weak syllable. Campbell (1959: 263; 275), among some others, supports this point of view and employs adjectives and adverbs like *dæglic*, *heofonlic*, *stronglic* and *mihtelice*, respectively, and all of them orthographically represented without the macron. Campbell (1959: 263) thus reckons that a process of shortening of long vowels occurred in the second element of compounds and this fact explains why in these types of words "the formative element -lic underwent early shortening".

2. Secondly, we have also found those specialists who think that both *-lic* and *-lice* should be phonologically uttered as long. This view has been actually followed by several scholars. For instance, Brook (1955), in his account on the formation of adverbs from adjectives in -liµc (sic), definitely decides to make use of the long <i> and, as such, he mentions words like *lufliµce*, *freµondliµce eornostliµce*, etc. (Brook 1955: 56-57).

This point of view is also supported by the well-known dictionary of Old English by Bosworth and Toller (1991). *An Anglosaxon Dictionary* is actually

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reputed to be one of the masterpieces on the subject and it is significant that the authors prefer to use the long vowel both with adjectives and adverbs. Therefore, they maintain the same vocalic quantity in pairs of words like *leoflıμc/ leoflıμce, freμondlıμc/ freμondlıμce, wislıμc/ wislıμce*, etc.

Furthermore, Bradley's dictionary of Middle English (1994) has also been reviewed for our purposes and, likewise, we could notice how he phonologically assigns a long syllabic quantity to those adjectives and adverbs in *-lıμc*, *-lıμch* and *-lıμche* as he systematically conceives them pronounced as exclusively long. Skeat (1993) also agrees with Bradley's procedure and resolves to represent these types of words with a long syllable (*Cf. æμrlıμc* and *æμrlıμce*) and, similarly, Lass (1994: 207) employs *gelıμc* and *gelıμce* both uttered with a long vowel.

3. Thirdly, we have also noticed those who consider that there are significant phonological differences between the pronunciation of adjectives and adverbs. One of the most relevant examples is Clark Hall's creditable dictionary of Old English (1894) in which the author explicitly maintains that adjectives are in all cases pronounced with a short vowel whereas adverbs are always to be uttered as long. Clark Hall therefore provides us with contrasts like *leoflic/ leoflıμce, freμondlic/ freμondlıμce, wiμslic/ w^mslıμce* or *soμplic/ soμplıμce*, etc.

4. Finally, there is another group of scholars who do not dare to afford a definite solution towards the phonemical representation of this vowel and, on the contrary, they tend to remain somewhere in-between. This is particularly the case of Mitchell (1995) who does not make use of the macron throughout the course of the book as in *hrædlice* (1995: 52) and, paradoxically, in the glossary enclosed at the end of the book he represents both adjectives and adverbs with a long vowel. Fernández (1982) should also be included within this trend of thought since he paradoxically illustrates *-lıμc* and *-lıμce* with the macron on pages 181 and 334; but he sometimes also employs the short form of the vowel <i> on pages 225 and 399, and in some others he clearly hesitates about the length of the vowel and represents it both with the macron and the symbol of short vowels (p. 247).

Additionally, we could mention the book of C. Montes et al. (1995) in which the authors plainly affirm that adjectives and adverbs in *-lic/ -lice* are not always pronounced either short or long but, on the contrary, the quantity

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of the vowel in these cases will exclusively depend on the stress and emphasis of each word, that is, "el sufijo lice puede tener vocal larga o breve dependiendo de la fuerza acentual" (Montes et al. 1995: 328). Therefore, this reason explains why words like *freμondliμce*, *hwætliμce*, *speμdliμce* and *stearliμce* are to be conceived as long whereas *heardlice*, *holdlice* and *lætlice* could be understood both with a long or a short vowel.

This controversy, however, is not solely exclusive of Old English since a similar process has been observed in the case of Wulfila's Gothic. Thus, the kind of <i> which operates in adjectives and adverbs in *-lic/ -lice* is orthografically represented in Gothic by means of <i> and <ei>, that is, *lihts* and *leihts* (Agud et al. 1988: 31-32) and, obviously, the graphemic opposition between these graphs of Gothic completely coincides with the phonemic opposition between long and short <i>. Therefore, a conflict has arisen in the last forty years about the phonological status of the length of these two vowels, that is, "philologically oriented linguists posit a length contrast while structuralists have come to agree that length has no distinctive function in the vowel system" (Venneman 1971: 90).

On the one hand, there is a group of scholars, Venneman in the lead (1971), who believe that there is a clear-cut differentiation between the phonetic realization of <i> and <ei> in Gothic, being two distinct sounds which reflect a different vowel length. According to this fact, Venneman argues that the few occurrences of mutual substitution between these two graphs are clearly the result of scribal errors[1]. Thus, he comes to recognize the existence of length and quantity in Gothic and, therefore, they understand the phonological system of Wulfila as a set of short vowels (/i/, /ai/, /a/, /au/, /u/) and its counterpart of long ones (/ei/, /eμ/, /aiμ/, /aμ/, /auμ/, /oμ/, /uμ/).

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[1] Notice that Venneman partially defends his point of view tracing these graphs back to the Greek language stating that "in the forth century <ei> always represented a long high front vowel, while <i> could represent a short or long front vowel" (Venneman 1971: 92). Agud, on the other hand, rejects the Greek antecedent of these vowels in the following terms: "no es probable que las correspondientes grafías griegas reflejen diferencias cuantitativas […] pero lo cierto es que en gótico <ei> nota consecuentemente el resultado de la antigua <i>, del diptongo <ei> y de la contracción de dos <i>" (Agud et al. 1988: 32).

On the other hand, there is another set of scholars, especially Marchand (1955), Hamp (1958) and Jones (1958), who defend that Gothic vowels do not reveal a length contrast but, conversely, they argue that the only differences found in Wulfila's vowels are found to be a matter of tenseness and tone. Actually, it is particularly significant the following quotation by Marchand in which he states that the graphic system clearly evinces that there was no quantity and length in Gothic:

> As to Wulfila's failure to signal the […] difference between aµ and a, uµ and u, it has already been pointed out that none of the alphabets presumably known to Wulfila afforded a means of signalling two a-sounds or two u-sounds, since they all used one sign for all a-like sounds and one sign for all u-like sounds. It may well be, however, that the distinction had disappeared in Wulfila's dialect […] The evidence of the graphic system indicates that there was no such difference" (Marchand 1955: 85).

As a consequence and contrary to the opinion held by Venneman, they phonologically understand the vowel system of Gothic as an unique set in which all the vowels are uttered with the same length but with slight differences in tone and tenseness[1]. Thus, this system could be represented as follows:

/ei/
    /i/   /u/
        /e/   /o/
           /ai/   /au/
              /a/
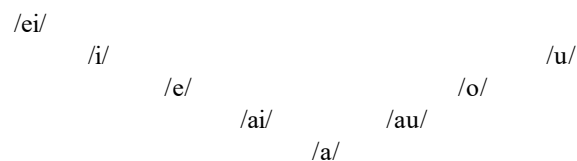
All in all, the vowel system of Wulfila's gothic is found to be in continuous discord owing to the lack of evidences and facts leading to a systematic description. As in Old English, the question of length, and especially in the case of these adjectives and adverbs in *lihts/ leihts*, remains somehow open waiting for new approaches on the matter.

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[1] Agud & al. observe on this respect that "tipológicamente este sistema de ocho o nueve timbres con sólo uno interior no resulta demasiado verosímil" (1988: 34).

3. DISCUSSION

The overall picture presented above allowed us to realize the serious controversy found in the specific literature. It is now our intention to present our own contribution on the subject and, on account of the large corpus of examples drawn from texts of the Old and Middle English period[1], we have been tempted to think that both liμc and liμce should be interpreted as exclusively long. Thus, our assumptions have been mainly based on the following hints:

1. First of all, we should take into account the formation of these adverbs ended up with liμce in Old English. On the one hand, these types of adverbs were frequently formed from adjectives in liμc by means of the addition of the suffix -e (identical in origin with the -e found in the instrumental case of adjectives), as in *geliμc > geliμce*, *freμondliμc > freμondliμce*, etc. However, on the other hand, the suffix liμce as a whole was reinterpreted during the Old English period as an adverbial ending in itself and thus it was also used to form adverbs from adjectives which did not end in *-liμc*, as in *heardliμce*[2] and even from nouns such as *freμondliμce* 'in a friendly manner' or *eornostliμce* 'earnestly' (Hogg 1992: 396-397).

As mentioned above, there are specialists (*Cf.* Clark Hall 1996) who think that adjectives in *-liμc* are to be always conceived as short whereas adverbs in *-liμce* should be interpreted as long. However, according to the formation of these types of adverbs in Old English, we are inclined to believe that there does not exist any justification which allows us to interpret adverbs formed with the suffix *-liμce* as long and those ones shaped with the suffix -e as short. This point of view happens to be misleading since it would directly imply the existence of two variants of the same lexeme in Old English.

From an etymological point of view, however, both forms *-liμc* and *-liμce* are derived from the same Germanic root -liμka, which was usually added to nouns with the meaning of 'a kind of', 'a sort of', etc. Moreover, in Old Germanic the word -liμka was considered to be pronounced as long, that is why we do not come to agree with Clark Hall's point of view since the ety-

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[1] The texts consulted were *The Old English Holy Gospels* and *The Old English Apollonius of Tyre,* on the one hand, and *The Ormulum* and Chaucer's complete works, on the other.

[2] Notice that in these cases OE counts on several adverbial doublets, that is, those ones with the suffix -e (hearde) and those with -liμce (heardliμce) (Lass 1994: 207).

mological base leads us to consider -*liμc* and -*liμce* both with the same origin and, obviously, with the same length. This statement can also be supported attending to the length of the vowel in other Germanic languages, for instance, in Old Scandinavian (-liμk), Old High German (-liμk), Middle High German (-liμch), Old Frisian (-liμk) or Old Teutonic (-liμko) where the presence of the long vowel is observed (*Cf.* Feist 1923; Krahe 1977: 208-209; OED 1993).

2. Secondly, another hint inducing us to regard these adjectives and adverbs with a long vowel is based on the orthographic representation which these forms acquire in some texts of the period. One of the most outstanding examples is that of *The Old English Holy Gospels* in which it may be noticed that the translator of the Latin version sometimes employs an acute accent in order to denote a longer syllabic quantity than the rest of the syllables. Some extracts are now illustrated where this procedure occurs:

> Sume cwædon he hyt is; Sume cwædon nese. ac is him *gelíc* [sic];
> *(The Gospel according to St. John*, 9, 9).

> *Sóplíce* [sic] ic eow secge þ þes ferde geriht-wisud to his huse.
> *(The Gospel according to St. Luke*, 18, 14).

3. Thirdly, *The Ormulum* also turned out to be a valuable asset for our purposes as the system of spelling devised by the author provides us with significant clues on the phonological nature of the vocalic quantity of -*liμc* and -*liμce*. As Mossé certainly reports, "the real interest aroused by *The Ormulum* comes from the system of spelling invented by the author and *methodically* (italics added) used by him throughout this book […]" (Mossé 1952: 165) as he "used a system of orthographic representation designed to characterize, in a very systematic way, many features of his phonological system" (Jones 1972: 55).

As a matter of fact, the word *methodically* employed by Mossé turns out to be a key concept here as it depicts the high level of consistency and stability of the author's spelling. Thus, the author of *The Ormulum* systematically duplicates the consonant after a vowel when the syllable is thought to be short whereas an only consonant follows the vowel when the latter is phonologically uttered as long. Therefore, from an orthographical point of view, it

happened to be very significant that the author of *The Ormulum* as a general rule tends to represent these types of adjectives and adverbs with just one <c>/ <¥>[1] indicating thus that in the Middle Ages, or at least in the Northern dialect in which it is written, the vowel <i> was generally pronounced as long. Notice, for instance, the form acquired by the adjectives *blipeli¥* and *unnse¥¥enndli¥* compared with the consonantal repetition of words such as *moderr*, *himmsellfenn* or *unnderr*:

> Annd tatt te Laferrd Jesu Crist
> Was borenn her to manne
> ? att time patt hiss moderr wass
> I pewwdom unnderr Laferrd,
> ? att dide he forr to shæwenn swa
> *unnse¥¥enndli¥* mecnesse,
> To tæchenn purrh himmsellfenn swa
> Annd purrh hiss hall¥he bisne
> ? att ¥uw pirrp beren *blipeli¥*
> ? ewwdom off ¥ure Laferrd
> *(The Ormulum*, 3608-16).

4. Another valuable source of information has been provided by Chaucer. Methodologically, we proceeded to compile all the adjectives and adverbs in *-lich* and *-liche*[2] available in Chaucer's complete works in order to subsequently accomplish an analysis of these forms both from a rhyming and a metrical point of view.

Chaucer's rhyme, on the one hand, turned out to be a valuable asset for our purposes as, following Jones' statement, "rhyming evidence can […] be important in showing historical homophony" (Jones 1972: 53). Therefore, we proceeded to examine Chaucer's poetry in order to locate those lines in which *-lich* and *-liche* appeared at the end of a line and to identify which words were mainly employed by Chaucer to rhyme with them. We could thus observe that the only rhyming word appearing with these types of adjectives and adverbs was *rich/ riche*, that is, an adjective whose first vowel is phonologically realized as long (*Cf.* Bradley 1994: 506) and consequently, a

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[1] In *The Ormulum* the form -lic is frequently used before a vowel and -li¥ is preferred when a consonant follows.
[2] Notice that these items may also be represented in Chaucer as -lych and -lyche.

complete phonetic equivalence is found between the two items of the rhyme. Some examples are now illustrated on this respect:

> For, as of trouthe, is there noon her *lyche*
> Of al the women in this worlde *riche*
> *(Anel*, 76-77).

> Yit mot he doon bothe ryght, to poore and *ryche*,
> Al be that hire estaat be nat *yliche*, […]
> *(LGW*, 388-89).

Apart from the rhyming evidence, on the other hand, metrics also happened to be very helpful as a way to interpret the quantity of *-lich* and *-liche*. Thus, from a metrical point of view we proceeded to analyse Chaucerian iambic pentameters in which these types of adjectives and adverbs occured in order to realize Chaucer's tendency towards the use of stressed or unstressed syllables in these word items. As a result, we could notice that Chaucer actually takes advantage of this situation using both of these forms according to his metrical needs. Although Chaucer makes use of a certain freedom on this respect, it should be accounted that we have obtained a large number of Chaucer's lines in which the forms *-lich* and *-liche* are considered to be long. Some examples are illustrated including their metrical analysis to show how Chaucer actually regarded them uttered as long:

> And *áungellych* hys wínges gán he spréde *(LGW*, 168).

> He félte_a cóold swerd *sódeynlíche* glyde *(KnT*, 1575).

> But *tréwelích*, as yét me líst nat pléye *(Tr*, V, 987).

> And háve_a mántel *róiallíche*_ybóre *(GP*, 378).

As we have shown above, Chaucer clearly tends to use these adjectives and adverbs ending up with *-lich* and *-liche* with long quantity and, therefore, it should be taken as another hint which directly persuades us to think that they were actually so in the Old English period. However, their development into Contemporary English does not seem to definitely support our hypothesis about the length of these types of adjectives and adverbs as we

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find forms such as *truly* or *wisely* as opposed to *manlike* or *womanlike.* This double development may be described as follows:

On the one hand, Contemporary English displays a set of of adverbs built by means of the addition of the suffix *-ly.* Nowadays, this group is regarded to be the most productive as the majority of present-day adverbs are basically formed using this suffix, for example, *truly*, *bitterly*, *happily* or *soothly* (now obsolete). Historically, these types of adverbs are considered to be directly derived from the Old English long forms *-liμc* and *-liμce.* Today, however, ly-adverbs are pronounced with a short vowel since, as Jespersen (1961: 128) and Gimson (1970: 103) state, it is the result of the gradual loss of the original secondary stress and the consequent shortening of the vowel ('freond,liμce > 'friendly).

On the contrary, although less frequent in appearance, present-day English also counts on another set of adverbs formed by means of the suffix *-like*, such as *manlike, queenlike, womanlike*, etc. in which the suffix is mainly employed to convey the meaning 'a sort of', 'in the manner of', etc. These types of structures started to develop in the second half of the XV century and they were basically formed adding the suffix *-liche* in the south whereas *-like* was preferred in the Northern dialects.

> ? ær wass sene patt ¥ho wass *soplike* Godess *moderr (The Ormulum,* 6445).

> And *augellych* hys winges gan he sprede (Chaucer, *LGW*, 168).

From a historical point of view, this suffix is also directly derived from the Old English long *-liμc* and *-liμce* and it was the Great Vowel Shift itself which turned them into the contemporary form *-like* phonetically represented as [laik]. Therefore, in Jespersen's terms, "the vowel was often long, resulting in a dipthong" (Jespersen 1961: 66).

Therefore, independently of their origin and the form that these adverbs have acquired in Contemporary English, both types of adverbs must be accounted to have developed from the same Old English suffix and the diachronic evidence seems to allow us to consider both as having long quantity or weigth. That is, on the one hand, like-adverbs are nowadays

pronounced as long maintaining thus the same quantity inherited from Old English whereas, on the other hand, adverbs in -ly have clearly undertaken a shortening process mainly caused by the gradual weakening of its original secondary stress. In fact, the shortening of the vowel is widely accepted (*Cf.* Jespersen 1961; Gimson 1970; OED 1993) and, therefore, it implies to consider the vowel <i> as etymologically long.

4. CONCLUSIONS

All in all, in the course of this paper we have attempted to outline the rather controversial issue concerning the length of these types of adjectives and adverbs in Old English. Various sources were reviewed for the purpose and an outstanding state of disagreement has been found in the specific literature. Nevertheless, we realized that there are certain clues which plainly afford us definite evidences about their length in Old English (such as their Germanic etymological origin, their development into Contemporary English, etc.).

Finally, it should be acknowledged that, in general, the question of length in Old English actually arises serious controversies amongst the specialists as it was a feature not wholly standardized and precis e in the Anglo-saxon period. Therefore, length stands out as an issue in which new researching is further needed in order to reach an overall and systematic description of the subject.

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