Studies in the Language of A Revelation of Love: with special reference to vacillation in nouns, pronouns and verbs

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Bulletin of Saitama Gakuen University. Faculty of Management

Volume: 4
Page Range: 159-172
Year: 2004-12-01

URL: http://id.nii.ac.jp/1354/00000996/

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Studies in the Language of A Revelation of Love:
with special reference to vacillation in nouns, pronouns and verbs.

片 見 彰 夫
KATAMI, Akio

This paper examines the lexical and grammatical features of the language of A Revelation of Love by a medieval female mystic, Julian of Norwich. Linguistic characteristics of her prose in the longer version written in Middle English, irrespective of their importance, have been overlooked so far. The present analysis builds on descriptive sketching with the aim mainly to elucidate the vacillation and style in her work with some diagrams. The parts of speech to be surveyed are nouns, personal pronouns, relative pronouns, verbs and others. Middle English is a period that permits a number of spelling and syntactic variants. The inclination is reflected in her prose as a miniature of the language of this period, as is seen in such as plurals accompanied by a singular and plural verb, dual use of some verbs in personal and impersonal constructions, and the like. At the same time some of the fluctuations are peculiar to the author such as the use of the second person pronouns. Through the study of her idiosyncratic prose, we see a vivid process of transition from Old to Modern English.

Introduction

Julian of Norwich (c.1343-c.1416) was a professional religious hermit who entered a convent in her teens. She was a popular and persuasive nun. That her preaching was influential is shown by the fact that Margery Kemp was exerted a great influence from her. The work to be investigated is classified by Chambers (1957: cxvii) under “the ordinary medieval prose of pious instruction”, and he mentions: “Yet much of it is exceedingly beautiful; for instance the Revelation of Divine Love of Dame Julian of Norwich.”

It was in the year 1373, when Julian was critically ill in bed, that she had a revelation of God. She wrote down the mystic experience in two versions, A Revelation of Love (A Revelation), a longer one and a shorter one. The shorter version is generally accepted as the first transcript, written soon after the revelations were given. The longer one is confessedly written twenty years later. The text we are going to investigate is the longer version based on the Slone Manuscript No.2499. Compared with the shorter text,
Glasscoe (1993:219) states that: ..., it is clear that the longer represents the fuller version of Julian's understanding of her own experience. The reason why this manuscript has been chosen as the most suitable for this study is that its language is much closer to the fourteenth-century English than any other manuscript. Stone (1970) also has selected the text based on this manuscript for his language oriented study, since it retains the basis for judging nearness to the original.

In Medieval era, most of the literary works were written by the male clergy or men of authority. So Julian is the first English woman of letters of devotional prose, who breaks a long tradition of feminine silence in England. Considering the background, this work is invaluable in letting us know medieval women’s language. She calls herself 'unlettered' (Chapter ii), but that is untrue. Her literary style is spontaneous and unaffected with a blend of East Anglian and Northern dialects. The period, prior to the introduction of the art of printing into England by William Caxton, permits variations of instability of the spelling system. The variation of lexicon is reflected also in A Revelation. It will be worthwhile to show some rivalries of the variant forms.

Intriguingly, the longer version is not involved in the Oxford English Dictionary nor in Middle English Dictionary. Furthermore, Julian’s text is not quoted in Mustanoja’s A Middle English Syntax. My aim in this paper is to investigate into some of the grammatical features of this important but less thoroughly investigated prose.

**Nouns**

Middle English (ME) in the beginning of the fifteenth century had become greatly different from Old English (OE): the verbal system had become simplified, the dual of the personal pronouns had disappeared, the case system had practically broken down, the variety of plural noun forms reduced, the number of endings of strong and weak adjectives had decreased. However, ME also involves a rich diversity in vocabulary and syntax. In this paper, I will start from such idiolectal features of this prose. Words with spelling variants which are incidental to ME such as Christ, Criste and God, Godd, etc.

1. **Genitives with and without -’s**

In the North and the East Midland dialects, the genitive ending -’s is the rule. According to Mustanoja (1960: 71), an uninflected genitive occurs only in the more or less stereotyped combinations, such as helle pitt, kirrke dure,sawle sallfe, and the like. Interestingly enough, however, Julian uses the inflected genitive together with the uninflected one. Moreover, in OE an -’s less genitive is a feature of feminine nouns with weak declension, but all the words listed below are masculine.

(i) Christ and Christ’s

**Christ**

And thus was I deliverd of hem be the vertue of Christ passion, for therwith is the fend overcome,... (lxix .69)
Christ's
and Christ's clothynge is now of a fair, semely medlur which is so meravelous...
(ii.80)
Christ's manhood (ii.78); the vertue of Christ passion (lxix.112).
of + Christ genitives are also found in fifty-three instances such as 'passion of Criste' (i. 1) and 'manhood of Criste' (xxii.32), etc.
(ii ) man and man's
man
thervewith was comprehended and specified the Trinite with the incarnation and unite betwix God and man soule,... (i. 1) ; and of the excellency of man makeyng, (i. 2) ; man soule is a creature in God (xliii.62); man soule made of God (liii.85).
man's
he made mans soule to ben his owen cyte and his dwellyng place, (li.76) our lord hath to mannens soule willing us to be occupyed in knowing and loveing of him (vi. 8); mans body (lii.85).
of + man genitives are found in eight instances.
(iii ) God and God's
God
The sentences below illustrate that Julian uses genitive God and Gods (Godds) indistinctively.
God Son myte not fro Adam, for by Adam I understond all man. Adam fell fro lif to deth into the slade of this wretchid world and after that into hell. Gods Son fell with Adam into the slade of the mayden wombe, which was the fairest dauter of Adam, and therfor to excuse Adam from blame in hevyn and in erth; and mytyly he fetchid him out of hell. Be the wisdam and goodnes that was in the servant is vnderstode Gods Son. (li.78)
Other instances: God wille (iii. 4); (vii.12); (x.16); (x.17); (xv. 23); (i. 1). God face (xliii.62). God hole( ivii.92). God al wisdamm (lviii.95). God al goodnes (lvii.95). God love (lxiii.117).
God's
Then was I stered to be sett upright, underlenand with helpe, for to have more fredam of my herte to be at Gods will,... (iii. 4)
Other instances: Gods gift (ii. 2); Godis goodness(xii.57); Gods goodness (xli.70); Gods handmayd (iii. 6); Gods meneyng (ix.14); Goddis menyng (xxx.41); Gods mercy (xxxiv.53); Gods sake (viii.13); Gods servants (xxviii.39); Godds syte (xxxiv.53); Godds wil (viii.13) (xii.21); etc. Goddys wille (xx1.30) (xxiii.33); Gods werkyng (xi.18) (lxxxvi.134); Gods makynge (xi.18); Gods hand (xii.20); Goddis menyng (xxx.41); Gods mercy (xxxix.53); Goddys word (xxxii.44); Gods privites (xxxiii.45); Gods worship (xxxiii.45); Gods rythfulhede (lii.85); Gods wonyng place (liii.86); Gods substance (xiii.87); Gods biddyng (lx.98); Gods faderhede (lx.98); Gods lovers (lxiii.118); Gods face (lxxv.121).
of + God genitives as 'our godeness of God' (i. 1) 'the grace of God' (ii. 2), 'the mercy of...
God’ (ii. 3) etc. are also found.

(iv) lord and lord’s

lord

Therefore our lord will we knowen it in the feith (liii.85)

the lord meneing (xiii.20); our lord menyng (liiiii .86); our lord will (xxxiii.47); our good lord words (lxviii.111).

lord’s

For this is our lords wille,...(xlii.58); our lords gracious gift (iii. 5); our lords me-neing (vii.12); our lords menyng (xii.31) (xxvi.37) (xxviii.40) (xxviii.45) (xxviii.49) (xii.59), etc.; lorde menyng (xxvIII.46) (xii.56); our lords word (xii.58); lords will (xliii.65) (li.72); our lords brest (lxviii.119).

(v) Adam and Adam’s

Adam

Adam synne was gretest (xxix.40).

Adam’s

and shewid that Adams synne was the most harme that ever was don, or ever shal,(xxxix.40)

Adams waring (li.79); Adams travel (li.79); Adams kirtle (li.79); Adams old kirtle (li.80); Adams falling (li.82); Adams wo (lii. 82).

2 . Suffix of nouns both with -hood (-hede) and -nes (-ness)

Archaic noun affix ‘-hood (-hede)’ which had almost disappeared by the Modern English (ModE) period remains and coexists with ‘-nes (-ness)’. One of the notable features of ME as a transitional period between OE and ModE is manifest itself in the following variants. The figures are a frequency of the words.

godhead 26 / goodness(e), goodness 28 ;
irkhede 1 / irkeness 1 ; blindhede 8 / blindness(s) 3 ;
kindhood 3 / kindness 8 ; grethood 1 / gretness 9 ; manhood (manhode) 10 / maness, mans, manys 23.

3 . Plurals both with the singular and plural verbs

There are some instances where a plural noun is followed by a singular verb.

thing (s)

and this is the cause why that no soule is restid till it is nowted of all things that is made. (v. 7)

for we sekyn here rest in these things that is so littil, wherein is no rest, ...(v. 7)

It is also worth mentioning that singular thing and plural things appear in the same collocation with al.

and all thing that is made, in regard to all Mighty God, it is nothing:...(v. 6)

I saw that his continue werkyng in all manner thing is don so godely...(xliii.61)

Julian puts ‘all’ irregularly before a plural and a singular noun:
he wil make al creature to loven...(xxv.37);
if a man love a creature singularly above al creatures, ...(xxv.37); And thus our good lord answerid to al the question and doubts... (xxxi.42)

In ‘and- juxtaposition’, the predicate of plural words often begins with the verb is.

in these ii is comprehendid good and ille...(xxxv.48) ; I saw that the swete skyn and the tender flesh, with the here and the blode, was al rasyd and losyd abov from the bone...(xvii.25); This geft and this mede is so blisful to lesus that his Fader myht have goven hym .... (xxii.32); al our endles frendship, our stede, our lif and our being is in God;... (xlix.69)

5. Singulars preceded by ‘these’
The singular combination preceded by these is found three times, but plurals with a(n), this and that are not used.

4. Nouns with and without -s
In addition to thing mentioned in the section 3, there are some words which have ‘-s plurals’ and ‘-s less plurals’.

manner and manners
Words of plural meaning such as all, ii, iii, iiii, v and dyvers precede the singular noun manner in forty-one out of a total of forty-eight instances (85.4 %) like: ii manner of folke (xviii.27); al manner of thing (xxxi.42); many dyvers manner (xlvii.67) and thirty-eight other instances.

In seven instances, Julian puts iii, v and dyvers (divers) also before a plural form: for feith and hope leden us to charite, which is in iii manners (lxxxiiii.133); v manners (xxiii.33); dyvers manners (lxii.100) and four other instances.

might (might) and mights (myghts)
Julian uses plural mights once out of a total of four instances:
The nombre of the words passyth my witte and al my vnderstondyng and al my mights, ... (xxvi.37)

Other three instances take singular forms: with all the might (vi.); be the same might (xi.); With might and right (xiii.).

Singulars preceded by ‘these’
The singular combination preceded by these is found three times, but plurals with a(n), this and that are not used.

with the blissid Lyte of his pretious love, seyand these word full mytyly and full mekely:(lxx.113)
al these our lord (viii.12); And for these iiii was all the shewing made, (lxxii.116).

Personal pronouns
6. Nominative case ‘Thou and Ye (You)’
/ Objective case ‘Thee and Ye (You)’
The use of ye (you) as a polite form of address to one person is found from the late thirteenth century, and is modelled on French practice. The distinction is broadly that thou is used between equals and to inferiors, whereas ye (you) is used in representations of polite speech in address to a superior. This is, however, hardly an adequate account
of the usage of Julian. When she makes a plea for mercy, she addresses the holy god as ‘thou’. To cite examples:

“Lord, thou wotith what I wou’d if it be thy will that I have it; and if it be not thy will, good lord, be not displeased, for I will nought but as thou wilt.” (ii. 3)

“God, of thy goodnesse, give me thyselfe; for thou art enow to me and I may nothing aske that is less that may be full worshippe to thee. And if I aske anything that is lesse, ever me wantith, but only in thee I have all.” (v. 7)

The lord Christ and Julian (I) call each other by ‘thou’.

Than (seide) our good lord lesus Christe, askyng: “Art thou wele payd that I suffrid for thee?” I sayd: “Ya good lord, gramercy. Ya good lord, blissid mot thou be!” (xxii.31)

On the other hand, she calls her fellow Christians by ‘you’.

I sey in the person of al myn even cristen,.... ; and therefore I pray you al for Gods sake and counsel you for your owne profitt that ye levyn the beholding of a wretch...(viii.13)

In this work, she uses 102 second person pronouns. Nominative thou occurs ninety-six times (94.1%), ye five times (4.9%) and you appears only once (1%). When Julian ad-
dresses to her fellow Christians, she always uses ye or you.

Concerning 17 occurrences of the objective case, thee appears eight times and you nine times.

7. Dative-accusative case ‘Them and hem’

The objective pronoun of the third person plural is the originally Scandinavian them and the native hem in ME. Mustanoja (1960: 134) states: “The spreading of the dative-accusative form them to the South is even slower. Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, and Occleve have only hem. Caxton uses hem more frequently than them. The Nutbrown Maid and Skelton have only the th-form.”

Julian uses them in twenty-one instances (25.6 %) and hem sixty-one times (74.4 %). The use of them had not taken root yet since the combination of ‘to they’ (viii.12) is found here. After the preposition ‘to’, them appears three times (xiii.21; xviii.27; viii.12) and hem five times (viii.13; xiii.22; xv.24; xxx.41; xxxviii.52).

Relative Pronouns

We are not concerned with the nominative who and the genitive whose at present, because the two relative pronouns scarcely occur in her prose. Instances of them are one and two. An illustration of omission of nominative who is sufficient to show here - I conceived truly and mightily that it was himselfe shewed it me without ony mene.(iv. 5). In ME it is also possible to put nominative who
between himself and shewed. I limit the discussion to the words of higher frequency, that and which at present. The following diagram shows the frequency of the relative pronouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>restrictive</th>
<th>non-restrictive</th>
<th>personal antecedent</th>
<th>non-personal antecedent</th>
<th>total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whom</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the which</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tendency that that is the best possible kind in the ME relatives is mirrored in this prose. It is worth making the point that that and which function respectively in restrictive and non-restrictive use, though the two are rivals in the same field of relative function. We can see some clues for describing the aspects of her style from some instances below.

8. That

double restriction

(i) nominative and nominative use

I may nothing aske that is less that may be full worshippe to thee. (vi. 9);
...and deliveryd al that were there which longyd to the curte of hevyn.(xii.20); there is no creature that is made that may wetyn how mekyl...(vi. 9)

(ii) nominative and objective use

for there is no licor that is made that he lekyth so wele to give us; (xii. 19)

9. Which

There are some points to mention. To begin with, ninety-nine instances (33.7%) are found in occurring in combination with preposed preposition such as be, in, of, for, with, to, out of, into. The scarcity of genitive whose may have been caused by her inclination that in which is dominant over whose.

Another usage which ModE had lost but was frequent in this prose is the demonstrative use of which as follows: it may be liken to noayne which payne is not synne. (xl.55); be the goodness of God the same vertues, be the werkyng of mercy, arn geven to us in grace, throw the Holy Gost renued; which vertues and gyfts are tresurd to us in jesus Christ;...(lvii.92)

Furthermore, in ME it is not rare that which is used with personal antecedents, singular and plural; eleven instances accompany personal antecedents like wif, servant, children, man, son, hym, labourer and person.

Verbs

10. The verb Be and Beon

This has a wide variation in form in different regions. For example, Ancrene Wisse written in West Midland dialect has beo for singular and beon for plural subjunctive. As the dialect of A Revelation is Northern and East Anglian, singular be and plural ben are found. Significantly enough, since Julian uses is and are (arn) more often than be and beon, it is reasonable to assume that the verb conjugation is in the course of demise at the end of the thirteenth century. So there is also...
the divergence between indicative and subjunctive in one sentence as follows:

that I be so festined to him that there is right nowte that is made betwix my God and me (v. 7).
till I am substantially onyd to him, I may never have full rest ne very blisse; that is to sey, that I be so festined to him...
(ibid.)
A! lord lesus, king of bliss, how shall I ben esyd? (l.71)

We also see that plural verb ‘arn’ takes singular subjects:
It arn privytes to us not only that he wil it ben privytes to us, but it arn privytes to us for our blyndnes and our onknowyng;...(xxxiiii.47)

The following table shows the frequency of Be and Beon in the main and subordinate clauses. The instances which occur with invariable forms are excluded: be(n) following auxiliaries such as ‘I would be’, a to-infinitive ‘to be occupied’ and the past participle ben ‘our peynys have ben with him’. The occurrence of is are so numerous that the instances are counted in the first five chapters only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>main clause</th>
<th>subordinate clause</th>
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<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ben</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arn</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Present participle and gerund -and / -ing (-yng)

Julian uses both -and and -ing (-yng) as a present participle and a gerund. The following diagram shows the frequency of the forms and usage in the first twenty chapters.

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>participle</th>
<th>gerund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-and</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ing (-yng)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The instance below shows the fluctuation where the forms as participles -and and -ing(e) occur in parallel.

for blisse is lestinge without ende, and peyne is passand and shal be browte to nougte to hem...(xv.23)

After the verb of sensation ‘see’, she does not make the distinction between ‘object + present participle’ and ‘object + bare infinitive’.

I saw the lord sitten solemnly, and the servant stondand reverently aforne his lord...(li.76)

Both forms appear in participial constructions, though -ing (-yng) predominates over -and in the total number in participle.

I beholdying in the same crosse, he chongyd his blissfull chere. (xxi.31)
we wilfully abydyng in the same cross with his helpe and his grace into the last poynte, sodenly he shall chonge his chere to us, and we shal be with hym in hevyn. (ibid.)
and yet I cowde have no patience for
great awer and perplexitie, thyndern:

“If I take it thus... (l.71)

Though ‘be + ~ing’ progressive forms had already existed in the ME period, no instance of them are found. An instance, ‘...the dede that is now in doying’ (xl.ii. 59) might appear as ‘...the deed is now being done’ in ModE.

12. Infinitives and present forms: variants noticeable

As we always see in ME, her words involve some different spelling variants. We should not overlook that these variants are prominent in the verbs. It draws a lot of attention that ME ‘-en infinitive’ for plural subjunctives is in decaying in this prose, so it has become only a variant of verbs.

(i) se, see(th) and seen(e), sen(e)

Wil thou see how I love hir,...(xxv.36); and we ought see of him graciously...(x.15); other fifty-six instances.

see(th)

we shall never see cleerly the blisfull cheere of our lord. (lxiii.115); out of which worshipfull see he shall never risen nor removen without end. (lxxxii.130); other eight instances.

seen(e), sen(e)

Wilt thou seen in hir how thou art lovid? (xxv.36); for than he shall seen that all the wo and tribulation...(xiii.21); for if he sen that it be more profitt to us... (lxii.100); other eighty-one instances.

(ii) know and known

know

wherby I may leryn to know myselfe and...(iiv.36); we cannot know that hey, marvelous wisdam, the myte and the goodness of the blisful Trinite; (xxxii.44); methowte me behovyd neds to know me a synner,(xliv.63); other twenty-eight instances

known

We cannot known ourself in this life but be feith and grace, but we must know ourself sinners...(xlvi.64); wherby I myte trewly known how it longyth to me...(l.71); we owen to known and levyn that the Fader is not man.(ii.76); other seventy-three instances.

Julian uses known also as a past participles in thirty-three instances as follows:

It is known that I have done miracles her any and fele...(xxxvi.50)
Also know in two examples: wherby his goodnes shall be know withoute end...(xxxv.48) and in xxxvi.50.

(f) fail(e), failith and failen

fail(e), failith

and somtyme to faile and to be left to hemselfe: vi. 8; xii.20; xv.23; l.71.

failen

After this my sight began to failen and... (iii. 4); xi.18; xlvi.67; xlviii.68; lxii.116.

(iv) make,maken and mekin

make

This shewid our our gode lord for to make us glad and mery. (xxviii.35); i. 2; vi. 8; viii.13; viii.14; other thirty-five
instances.
maken
he wil hymself maken hem more opyn to us... (xxxiii. 47); xxxiii. 45; xxxiii. 47; xxxvi. 49; xxxvi. 50; other eight instances.
mekin
we arn fallen in by synne to mekin us and maken us to dreden God... (xxxi. 50)

13. Past participles variable
The ME past participle has the prefixes; i- or y- are derived from OE ge-. Julian, however, does not follow the manner but has some variables in the ending of the verb.
(i) shewid and shewne
shewid
This bodily example was shewid so hey that manys herete might be ravished...(vii. 11); as lesus had shewid it on to you all. (viii. 13); vii. 12; ix. 13; ix. 14; and other eighty-six instances.
shewne
sothly this mervelous ioy shall be shewne us...(vii. 11)

Julian uses shewn also as infinitives as follows: he wold shewn...(xvii. 26); his special grace wil shewn him here...(xliii. 62)

In present-day English, past participle of show is ‘shown’. This instance shows the verb retains dual conjugation at that time, regular and irregular. Regular conjugation shewid is dominant over shewne which has a linkage with a modern form.
(ii) be(n) and been(e)

The instances are gathered in the perfect tense.
be(n)
he shuld not have be full plesid with the making...(lxvii. 110); if it myte any better have be done. (xii. 33); xxxiii. 46; for wickednes hath been suffrid to rysen contrarye to the goodnes, (lix. 95) xxxviii. 52; other thirteen instances.
been(e)
Methought I would have beene that time with Mary Magdalen...(ii. 3); overpassing that hath been seen and felt beforn,... (lxxv. 121)

There are not a few instances of past participles with or without ‘-e ending’ in A Revelation. To give an example that comes most quickly to my mind among them is hid and hidde.
(iii) hid and hidde
hid
And in these same words I saw a marvelous hey privyte hid in God,...(xxviii. 39); That other is hid and sperid from us;...(xxx: 41); vii. 12; x. 16; xxxii. 45; xlvi. 65.
hidd(e)
in which mystye example iii propertes of the revelation be yet mekyl hidde... (li. 74); for the privities of the revelation ben hidd therin,...(li. 79); lii. 82; llii. 86; lxxv. 121.lxxxv. 133; lxxxv. 134.
14. Impersonal and personal verbs

Julian uses some verbs both in an impersonal and a personal construction at once. In this section, we see the vacillation between the two. So the really impersonal verbs such as behove appearing twenty-seven times, be lothe and repent occurring twice each lie outside the scope of my investigations.

(i) like, leke
 me lekid to levin for ...(iii. 4); don althyng that hym lekyt;.. (xiii.61); other twelve instances.

Two instances of personal construction; and thus owen we to willen like to hem: than shal we nothyng willen ne desieren but the wille of our lord like as thei do;...(xxx.41)

(ii) need
 It needyth us to have kmoweing of the littlehede ...(v. 7); evermore it us nedyth levyn the beholding...(xxxiii.46); other sixteen instances.

Three instances of personal construction; if he nedith comforte...(ix.14); how we neede the lyte of grace...(lxxviii.125); we must nedes hove wo, but curtes God is our leder, (lxxvii.123).

(iii) think, thynk
 A line of demarcation must be drawn for this verb between the present and the past forms. In the present tense, the frequency of the occurrence of a personal verb is fourteen instances (52 %), whereas that of an impersonal verb is thirteen (48 %). The ratio of the two constructions is almost the same. On the other hand, in the past tense, ‘thowte’ merely occurs one out of a total of ten instances in impersonal construction. This rate is supposed to correlate with the occurrence of another impersonal verb ‘methought’, ‘methowte’, which occur thirty-two times only in the past tense.

us thinkeith that it be but litil, (x.15); him thinkith it fillith him thow there were no more...(xiii.22); other eleven instances.

Personal construction: he thynkyth hym-self he is not worthy...(xxxix.53); thou thynke thou myghte nowte ...(xli.57); other twelve instances.

(iv) want
 ...ever me wantith...(v. 8) Two instances of personal construction; and I wantid hym...(x.15); we shuld pray for mercy and want it...(xli.56)

15. Infinitive to and for to

For to, used to express purpose since the beginning of the ME period, becomes weakened into a mere sign of the infinitive, equivalent to to, and begins to lose ground in the course of ME. According to Mustanoja (1960: 514), the proportion between to and for to is roughly 5:1 in the Book of London English 1384-1425, and he states: “The decreasing tendency continues in the 15th century, though individual authors and scribes show even considerable variance in this respect.”

The proportion of to-infinitives to for-to-infinitives in this prose is 574:23. Below is an exam-
Then was I stered to be sett upright, underlenand with helpe, for to have more fredam of my herte to be at Gods will, and thinkeing on God while my life would lest. (iii. 4)

16. Historical present

The historical present is a present tense referring to a time in the past. Julian positively uses the tense in the subordinate clauses to show eternal truths of divinity. The following are examples whose main verbs are in the present tense and the verbs in the subordinate clauses are in the historical present.

I was sekir he doith no synne. And here I saw sothly that synn is no dede,...(xi.18)
I saw ful sikirly that he chongyth never his purpos on no manner thing, (ibid.)
In this shewid our lord that the passion of him is the overcoming of the fend. God shewid that the fend hath now the same malice that he had aform the incarnation;...(xiii.20)
And in this I saw that he wil not we dredyn to know the thyngs that he shewith (xxxvi.49)

17. Negation

As periphrastic do remains uncommon down to the end of the 15th century, it is common to negate the following verb with not alone in this prose like I wiste not how. An exception to this, however, occurs for the arbi-trariness of the position of not. The instances below draw out attention for ‘reversed not’, which is found with the object form of a pronoun and an imperative. This practice shows that the way of negation in OE placing ne immediately in front of the verb, continues in this prose. It is not rare in ME. What we need to notice here is the alternation of the position of negating word not. Julian uses both forms indiscriminately.

..., good lord, be not displeased, for I will nought but as thou wilt. (ii. 3)
...for it is profitable thow thou fele it not,... (xiii.57)

Another feature to notice is multiple negation. The notions that it is substandard and ‘two negatives make a positive’ have no historical basis. In ME piling up of negatives is common as in this prose. Julian occasionally uses triple negation to reinforce the negative.

Other sight ner sheweing of God desired I never none till the soule was departed fro the body. (ii. 3)

Other variants to note

There are numerous variants that cannot be discussed here for lack of space. Below are some instances of irregularities emerging in auxiliaries, prepositions and conjunctions in her prose.
18. Auxiliaries

ought and ought to indicating duty: ‘we ought se of him...(x.15)’ and ‘We ought to en-
joye that God wonyth...(liii.86)’; have and a
to occur before the past participle in the per-
flect tense: ‘ne peyne bodily that might be suf-
frid should have deseæd me.’(xv.23) and ‘he shuld a ben if he had not fallen’ (li.73); will
as a main verb and auxiliary: ‘And he will that
we know it; for he will have al our love fest-
nyd to him.’ (lx.98).

19. Prepositions

fulfilled of and fulfilled with; in earth and
on the earth; without to mean ‘not accompa-
nied’ and ‘outward’; double preposition.

20. Conjunctions

and signifying ‘if’ to introduce a condi-
tional clause and connecting words: ‘and we
ought se of him graciously, than arn we sterid
by the same grace to sekyn with gret desire to
...(x.15)’ and ‘This shewing was quick and
lively, and hidouse and dredfull (vii.11)’; or
meaning ‘before’ and linkage with
alternatives: ‘or anything was made, as it
should stond withoute end; (xi.18) and ‘ei-
ther be sekyng or in beholdyng,(x.17)’.

Conclusion

So far we have mainly seen certain fluctua-
tions of nouns, pronouns and verbs in relig-
ious prose, A Revelation. Quite a number of
ME words and syntax have variant forms
even within the same dialect as well as be-
tween different ones. It is noteworthy that
such vacillation exits remarkably with one
writer. Through the investigation of her
prose, we can see a vivid process of transition
from OE to ModE. In this work, the germs of
ModE are found such as the development of-
s and of genitive and wh-relative pronouns.
A careful scrutiny of the instances in this pa-
er will lead us to a better understanding of
ME by unveiling the process of the develop-
ment of the English language. It is regrettable
that there is not enough space to discuss
other crucial grammatical features such as
adjectives and adverbs as well as her rhetoric
for multipliers effect in repetition for emo-
tional exposure and underestimation. These
issues to be done will be left for the future.

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* The version also has been titled Revelations of Divine Love. The editor Glasscoe, however, adopts A Revelation of Love for its title because that is what Julian calls her shewings and because it is felt that it more justly relates to her account of her experience.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. Masatomo Ukaji, Professor Emeritus at Tokyo Gakugei University, for many generous and illuminating comments. It is he that introduced us to the present book and encouraged me to study her language. I am also grateful to Professor Osamu Koma of Tokyo Gakugei University, who offers us an opportunity to read this researched book. I would like to thank the following members of the reading group: Mr. Masahiro Kawakami, Mr. Michio Hosaka, Mr. Shinji Uchioke, Mr. Shinichro Tomine, Mr. Kanji Aihara, Mr. Hideto Hirose and Ms. Kiriko Sato. Any remaining inadequacies are, of course, my own responsibility.

1 Of the longer version three manuscripts are known to exist. In the order of antiquity they rank as follows: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Anglais 40, British Museum, Sloane Manuscripts No.2499 and No.3705.

2 In Middle English Dictionary, examples are quoted from the shorter version.

3 The figures indicate the chapter numbers and the page in the text.