論 文

Old English *Beweddian* with a Background for Engagement in Anglo-Saxon England

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要　　旨

　本論文は，古英語beweddianの定義，構成要素，統語論上の解釈，語形の変化，語源，実例検討とアングロ・サクソン時代における婚約の文化的背景といった観点から考察する。尚，本研究は，アンドレアス・フィッシャーによる先行研究を基に，本著者による修士論文 "A Semasiological Study of Old English Genesis and Exodus: OE Words Employed to Express Concepts Related to Marriage"（Aichi: Aichi University 2002）における一部を拡張・再考察したものである。

　*Beweddian*の定義として，フィッシャーやボズワース・トラーがあげるように，「婚約する・誓う・約束する」などがあったが，これらの意味はフィッシャーによると遅くとも11世紀には「婚約する」の意味へ拡張していたことが説明されている。この点に関しては*MED*における定義「妻または夫を娶る・結婚する・結婚式をあげる」によっても確認することができる。

　接頭辞*be-*，語幹*wedd*，語尾*-ian*の三要素から構成される*beweddian*は，フォルスターによると，その接頭辞は1000年頃から消失し始め，MEでは接尾辞が*-ian*から*-en*へ変化又はすでに消失し始めることが指摘されている。又，フィッシャーによる*beweddian*の文法的解釈によると，能動態においては花婿への花嫁の保護者による契約を表し，受動態においては主語が女性で叙述的，かつ限定的位置に生じるとのことである。

　　本論文は，ボズワース・トラー，スキート，*OED*（第二版）による
*beweddian*の語源に関する考察も踏まえる。それは，中英語では
*wedden*となり，それが現在のwedへと変化してきた語であり，古フリ
ジア語，中低ゲルマン語，古高ドイツ語，ゴート語とも関連し，更に
はゲルマン祖語までさかのぼる。
　　結論として，本著者は，アングロ・サクソン文化において結婚式が
行われていたこと，そして婚約に限らず結婚用語において語義変遷上
考察から，どこに，いつから，どのように類似した語義間に意味の境
界線を引くかについてが今後の研究課題であることを言及する。

キーワード：古英語，結婚用語，結婚の社会的背景，動詞「婚約する」，文献学

0. Introduction

According to Fischer Andreas (1986), Old English words employed in the sense,
"to engage or to get engaged" are the following nine verbs; *beweddian, besceatwyrpan,
behatan, befæstan, (be) befæstian, bebeodan, betæcan, handfæstan*, and also *wedfæstan*.[1]
Among those words mentioned above, the present writer would like to make a focal
point on the first term, *beweddian*, with an observation over an instance in Old English
Exodus (Exod. 21.9.).　The employment of this word would be, in this article,
corroborated by the cultural, conventional, or even as an institutional background of
engagement in Anglo-Saxon England.　This study is chiefly grounded on philology,
with highlights on semantics, etymology, and in more accurate realm, "semasiology".

1. The definitions of Old English *beweddian*

Concerning the verb *beweddian*, Fischer states that it is "by far the general OE
word for 'to engage', with other significations such as 'to pledge oneself, promise, and

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[1] Andreas, Fischer, (1986), *Engagement, Wedding, and Marriage in Old English* (Heidelberg: Carl Win-
ter Universitätsverlag 1986), p. 140.

vow'".[2] The sense, "to engage" makes an extension to that of "to marry" in the late OE period,[3] current in both Anglia and West Saxon, and it corresponded to Latin *desponsare*, occasionally also to *(de)spondere* and *(sub)arrare* in the restricted texts of *Aldhelm, De Laude Uirginitate*, and *Cleopatra Glossaries*.[4] At the latest in the 11th century at the latest, it acquired the meaning "to marry".[5] In fact, in ME, the meaning of "to engage" is not found almost any more, and in the 18th century at last the sense disappears completely.[6] This is also proved by surveying the *MED*, in which the ME *wedden* and *wed* are listed with the sense, "to take a husband or wife, marry, get married, perform a marriage ceremony for (a couple)".[7] This shows that the sense "to engage" disappears, but instead the senses "to marry" and "to perform a marriage ceremony" have replaced it and survived up to the present day, as the *OED* indicates the latter two definitions.[8] Fischer, as in the foregoing statement, regards the original and general sense of *beweddian* as "to engage" despite the acknowledged definitions, "to espouse, and to wed" by Bosworth-Toller.[9] It is noteworthy to draw attention to the *weddian* in B-T, which has extended its definitions as "to engage, covenant, undertake, wed, betroth, and to espouse".[10] This ambiguity in the neighbouring senses with a delicacy is demonstrated as a "co-existance" *ante* 1000, as the *OED* shows the sense "to engage" in *Laws Æthelstan*, while that of "to marry" in *Laws Edmund*.[11]

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2 Fischer, 1986, p. 25.

3 Fischer, 1986, p. 28.

4 Fsicher, 1986, p. 26.

5 Fischer, 1986, p. 29.

6 Fischer, 1986, p. 33.

7 Sherman M, Kuhn ed. (1980), *Middle English Dictionary* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press 1980), *s.v.* "*wedden*".

8 The *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. prepared by J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1989), *s.v.* "wed".

9 Bosworth, Joseph and T. Northcote Toller, (1954), *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1st ed. 1898, repr. 1929, 1954): Supplement by T. N. Toller (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1921, repr. 1955), with Enlarged Agenda and Corrigenda by Alistair Campell (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1921, repr. 1955), *s.v.* "*beweddian*". Henceforth B-T.

10 *S.v.* "*wedden*".

11 The *OED*, 2nd ed., *s.v.* "wed".

2. The elements of *beweddian*

The Old English *beweddian*, which consisted of the three elements, 1) the prefix *be-*, 2) the stem *wedd*, and 3) the suffix *-ian*, established itself in the present English as "wed", throughout alterations in eclipses. According to Förster, the perfective prefix *be* is gradually lost, originally from about the year 1000.[12] As demonstrated in the previous section, therefore, it changes its form in ME as *wedden* and *wed*.[13] At this stage, already, the Old English suffix "*-ian*" comes into ME suffix "*-en*", or even vanished. *The Encyclopaedia Britanica* comments that the "wed derives from the Anglo-Saxon word for security given to bind a promise."[14]

3. The grammatical functions and the forms of *beweddian*

Fischer explains that it occurs with the following semantic syntactic-patterns: in the active voice, it is used to describe the guardian's act of engaging his female person to a man; in the passive voice, the subject is always a woman, and it is found in a predicative or an attributive position.[15] B-T gives the forms of *beweddian* as follows; preterite *beweddede, beweddode*, and past participle *bewedded, beweddod*.[16] *Beweddian* is categorized by Sweet as a weak verb in the class II, which conjugates like *lufian*, "to love".[17]

4. The etymology of *beweddian*

The etymological definitions of *beweddian*, dealt with in this article, are those by B-T (1954), Skeat (1927), and also by the *OED*. B-T states that *beweddian* derives from Goth *ga-wadjón* as well as Old Frisian *weddia* meaning "to promise and pledge", which is linked with Icelandic *veðja* "to wager".[18] Skeat makes a brief definition on the

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12 Fischer, 1986, p. 30.

13 The *MED*, *s.v.* "wedden".

14 The *Encyclopaedia Britanica de luxe Millenium edition*, CD-ROM (Staffordshire: Focus Multimedia Limt. 2000), *s.v.* "family law: Marriage as a transfer of dependence".

15 Fischer, 1986, pp. 26–27.

16 *S.v.* "beweddian".

17 Norman, Davis ed. *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Primer*, ninth ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1953), p. 35.

18 *S.v.* "beweddian".

present English "to wed" coming from Anglo-Saxon *weddian* with the senses, "to pledge, engage: hence to betroth, through ME *wedden*". In addition, the present-day English "to engage" comes from Old French *engager* meaning "to bind by a pledge with further root in Latin *iungo* with the sense of 'to join'".[19] The *OED*, 2nd ed., whereas, makes the etymological points as follows; the Old English *weddian* corresponds to Old Frisian *weddia*, Middle Low German *wedden*, Old High German *wettôn* meaning "to pledge", and Goth *ga-wadjōn* with the sense "to espouse"; which all derives from Old Teutonic *wadjōjan*. In the 10th century, the form was *weddian*, in the 12th and 13th centuries *weddenn*, in the 13th and 14th centuries *wedden, weddi(-y)*, from the 13th century to the 15th century *wedd*, (in the 14th century *weed*, in the 15th century *weede, wid, weddon*), in the 13th century to 16th centuries *wedde*, in the 18th century and the 19th century *wad*, and since the 14th century *wed*.[20] This shows that 1) the prefix *-be* was already dropped in the 10th century, 2) the inflection, i. e. the endings, also disappeared in the 13th century, and 3) the double consonants in the stem seems to be simplified in the 14th century.

5. Old English *beweddian* in Old English Exodus

In Old English Exodus occur two instances of the verb *beweddian;* Exod 21.9 and Exod. 221.16 (*unbeweddodre*). The discussion here is centered upon the instance at Exod 21.9, which reads as follows:

> *Gyf he <hi his suna> <u>beweddað</u>, do hire æfter dohtra gewunan: Sin sutem filio suo <u>desponderit</u> eam, iuxta morem filiarum faciet illi.*[21]

<div align="right">(The Heptateuch, Exodus 21. 9., p. 264.)</div>

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[19] Skeat, W. W. (1927), *A Concise Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, new and corrected impression (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1927), *s.v. "engage"*. Wilson, Alastair (2002), *Latin Dictionary*, Teach Yourself Book (London: Hodder and Stoughton Educational 2002), *s.v.* "engagement" and *"iungo"*.

[20] *S.v. "wed"*.

[21] In MS L, i. e. MS. Bodleian Laud Misc. 509., parts in the OE version change for *gif, hig his suna beweddeð*, and *gewuna* in addition. (*C.f.* Crawford, Samuel J. (1922), *The Old English version of the Heptateuch, Ælfric's Treatis on the Old and New Testament and his Preface to Genesis*, EETS, OS 160 (London, 1992; repr. 1969 with the text of two additional manuscripts transcribed by N. R. Ker))

In the above rendition, the Old English *beweddað*, which is in the 3ʳᵈ person singular present indicative, meaning "(he) betroths", renders the Latin *desponderit*, which is in the 3ʳᵈ person singular perfect subjunctive, meaning "(he) has betrothed". The subjects for those verbs are "he", i. e. "a man who possesses a slave". The context of the passage concerns a slave marriage,[22] which is preceded by the Ten Commandments. The translator of the instance is an anonymous author, rather than Ælfric, which is supported by Clemoes (1953) and Marsden (2000) also.[23]

6. Engagement in Anglo-Saxon England

In this section, the following statement by Fischer is deliberated on; "we do not know whether or not an engagement was celebrated in a formal way with a ceremony, but it was certainly the occasion when guardian and bridegroom settled the term of the marriage".[24] The present author considers that the Anglo-Saxons would have engagement ceremonies for the following two reasons; 1) the gloss in Li. Matt. 1. 18 describes the settlement of the terms of the marriage, 2) the ancient Roman culture, the Celtic culture, and the Germanic culture of 500–700 A. D. all had the custom of betrothal ceremony.[25] The Anglo-Saxons, accordingly, might have followed their

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[22] Mackenzie, John L. (1965), *Dictionary of the Bible* (New York, London: Macmillan Publishing Company, Collier Macmillan Publishers (1965), p. 550.

[23] Clemoes, Peter (1953), *The Chronology of Ælfric's Work; The Anglo-Saxons*, p. 244; Marsden, Richard (2000), "Translation by Committee? The 'Anonymous' Text of the Old English Hexateuch" in *The Old English Hexateuch, Aspect and Approaches*, ed. by Rebecca Barnhouse and Benjamin C. Withers, p. 41.

[24] Fischer, 1986, p. 21.

[25] "Besides the exchange of pledges (*dos* and *donatio*) the betrothal ceremony involved the exchange of promise between groom-to-be and father of the bride-to-be". (Gies, Josep and Frances, 1987, "Roots: Roman, German, Christian" in *Marriage and the Family in the Middle Ages*, p. 22.) "Betrothal consisted of the promise of marriage and the agreement on its terms. It was followed by a feast of the two families at which the actual payment of the brideprice by the groom's family tool place". (Gies, Josep and Frances, 1987, p. 33.) "The normal Germanic marriage ceremony consisted of the three elements . . . betrothal, agreement on terms, and the marriage celebration . . . Gregory of Tours describes a betrothal ceremony completed by the young man's bestowal of a ring, a kiss, and a pair of slippers". (Galy, Charles, *La Famille à lèpoque Mèrovingienne*, quoted from "The European Family: 500–700" in *Marriage and the Family in the Middle Ages*, p. 54.)

cultures. The first reason mentioned above can be proved by the following citation from the Lindisfarne gloss;

> *abiathar ðe aldorman wæs in ðæm tid in hieru salem. fore biscob he beboed*
> *maria iosephe to gemenne 7 to begeonganne mið claennisse.*

(A marginal note in Li. Matt. 1. 18)[26]

The above marginal note refers to the occasion when the high priest Abiathar commands Joseph to associate with Mary only in a state of purity during the period of engagement.

7. Conclusion

The custom of engagement rite in Anglo-Saxon England should be verified for assertion by scanning more texts and written works. This assumption of the performance, nonetheless, is positively adhered by the present contributor. They might have had both engagement ceremony and wedding, in which case either one should have been emphasized for certain reasons. Otherwise, a matrimonial rite in the composite notions would be performed for the sake of those matrimonial senses. Old English *beweddian* has been survived up to the present day as "to wed", principally maintaining the stem. The present-day-English "wed" has been fixed its form since the 14th century,[27] with the signification of "to be a husband/ wife". This word shares the existence with the predominant synonym of "to marry". The nominal word "wedding", however, mostly monopolizes its sense as "a matrimonial ceremony". The semantic borders among matrimonial words and phrases; where to be drawn; when to be drawn; and how to be drawn, would be a part of the research to be.

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[26] Skeat, W. W. (1871–1887), *The Holy Gospels in Anglo-Saxon*, Northumbrian and Old Mercian versions, synoptically arranged, with collations exhibiting all the readings of all the MSS.; together with the early Latin version as contained in the Lindisfarne MS., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1871–1887). This edition appeared in the four volumes: *The Gospel according to Saint Mark* was published in 1871, according to Saint John in 1878, and *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew* in 1887.

[27] The *OED*, 2nd ed., *s.v. "wed"*.