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Ælfgiue on englisc, Ymma on frencisc:
linguistic and other identities in *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MS F, 1017^{1*}

ABSTRACT: Nell'annale 1017 del manoscritto F della *Cronaca anglosassone*, redatto dopo il 1100 presumibilmente a Canterbury, l'annalista riferisce brevemente del matrimonio di Cnut di Danimarca, divenuto unico re d'Inghilterra dopo la morte di Edmund 'Ironside' nel novembre 1016, ed Ælfgifu/Emma, la vedova normanna del padre di Edmund, re Æþelred II: «[...] het se cing feccan him Æðelredes laue Ricardes dohtor 'him' to cwene, þæt was Ælfgiue 'on englisc' Ymma 'on frencisc'» (Baker 2000: 110). Nel presente lavoro si cercherà di comprendere come mai lo scriba abbia aggiunto i due nomi della regina, fornendo per di più un'ulteriore spiegazione in riferimento alle lingue di origine degli stessi.

ABSTRACT: In the Old English annal for 1017 of manuscript F of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, written in 1100-Canterbury, the annalist gives a brief account of the marriage of Cnut of Denmark, who had become the only ruler of England after Edmund Ironside's death in November 1016, and Ælfgifu/Emma, the Norman-born widow of Edmund's father, king Æþelred II: «[...] het se cing feccan him Æðelredes laue Ricardes dohtor 'him' to cwene, þæt was Ælfgiue 'on englisc' Ymma 'on frencisc'» (Baker 2000: 110). In this paper I will discuss the reason why the scribe has added both the queen's names to his text and furtherly glossed them with explanatory notes referring to the language from where they originate.

PAROLE-CHIAVE: Cronaca anglosassone, manoscritto F, 1017, Emma di Normandia, nomi di persona, glottonimi

KEYWORDS: Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, manuscript F, 1017, Emma of Normandy, proper names, glottonyms

¹ * I thank Denise Filmer for her linguistic revision of the first draft of this article. Further additions and changes are my responsibility.

1. Manuscript F of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

Version F of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, preserved in the folios 30r-70v of MS London, British Library, Cotton Domitian viii, was produced at the same level as a native speaker), but this assertion is dismissed by Baker.² This scribe probably held a post of responsibility at Christ Church, perhaps that of *cantor*, as shown by the fact that he had a number of historical sources at his disposal.

2. Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, manuscript F, 1017

In the Old English entry for 1017 of the manuscript F, the annalist gives a brief account of the marriage between Cnut of Denmark, who had become the only ruler of England after Edmund Ironside's sudden death in November 1016, and Ælfgifu/Emma, the Norman-born widow of Edmund's father, king Æþelred II:

And on þysum ilcan geare het se cing feccan him Æðelredes laue Ricardes dohtor 'him' to cwene, þæt was Ælfgiue 'on englisc' Ymma 'on frencisc' (Baker 2000: 110).

'and in this same year the king ordered Æðelred's widow, Richard's daughter, to be fetched to him, so that she became his queen; that is, Ælfgiue in English, Ymma in French'.

The corresponding Latin entry, on fol. 65v, reads:

Hoc eodem anno Cnut rex misit post Ymmam, que fuit regina Æðelredi regis, ut acciperet in reginam (Baker 2000: 110).

We can easily follow the stages of the redaction of this entry: after the main information, *het se cing feccan him Æðelredes laue Ricardes dohtor 'him' to cwene*, a further explanation has been added to confirm the queen's identity: *þæt was Ælfgiue*, under which *Ymma* was added. But the scribe was still not satisfied, and decided to gloss the passage by writing *on englisc* above *Ælfgiue* and *on frencisc* above *Ymma*. Indeed, the passage with the glossed names appears as follows: *þ was ælfgiue*, with the gloss *on englisc* · above *ælfgiue*, has been inserted at the end of the last line of fol. 66r; under *ælfgiue*, introduced by the symbol (̄, *ymma* · has been added; *on frencisc* · is written in the space between *ælfgiue* and *ymma*.³

² Baker (2000: lxxix-lxxx).

³ <y> bears a dot above it; the additions are smaller than the letters of the main text. See http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=cotton_ms_domitian_a_viii_f066r (last accessed 12/2/2016). The Old English text occupies the last two lines of fol. 66r.

The added names and related explanations are found only in manuscript F. Manuscripts C-E record the event with these words:

MS C: 7 þa toforan kalendas Agustī het se cynige fetian him þæs cyniges lafe Æþelrædes him to wife Ricardes dohtor (O'Brien O'Keeffe (2001: 73);

MS D: 7 þa toforan kalendas Augusti het se cyng feccean him þæs oðres kynges lafe Æþelredes him to wife, Ricardes dohtor (Cubbin 1996: 63);

MS E: 7 þa toforan kalendas Augusti het se cyng feccan him Æðelredes lafe þes oðres cynges him to cwene Ricardes dohtor (Irvine 2004: 104).

The reason for adding these glosses is apparently very simple: the queen was known by two given names, the first one being her adopted Old English name, the other her native French Norman name. Ælfgifu/Emma could have been easily identified by the explicitation of her family ties: *Æðelredes laue* 'Æþelred's widow', *Ricardes dohtor* 'Richard's (i.e. Richard I of Normandy's) daughter', as in the C-E annals. Why did the annalist feel compelled to add the queen's names, further providing explanatory notes to them? Do these explanations merely mean 'Ælfgifu in English' and 'Ymma in French'? Or are there other political and 'identitary' considerations to be made?

3. Ælfgifu/Emma's life and career

Emma was one of the daughters of Richard I, count of Rouen, and his second wife Gunnor.⁴ It is likely that she was born around 985-990. Her marriage to Æþelred II was part of the diplomatic arrangements between the crown of England and the Norman rulers. Three children were born: Edward, Ælfred and Godgifu. After remaining in Normandy during the Danish invasion (1013-1016), Emma returned to England, where her husband died in April 1016. The English throne was divided between Cnut, son of the Danish conqueror Sveinn Forkbeard, and Edmund, the oldest surviving son from Æþelred's first marriage. Edmund died in November 1016 and Cnut became the only king of England. Despite being united with another woman *more danico*, Cnut married Emma in late July 1017. This second marriage produced a son, Hardacnut, and a daughter, Gunnhild. During Cnut's reign, Emma had considerable power as *hlæfdige* and played an important role, managing the royal establishment's relationships with the Church. After Cnut's death, Emma tried to secure the English throne for her son Hardacnut, then king of Denmark, but she temporarily failed, because in 1037 the English aristocrats chose Harold 'Harefoot',

⁴ Gunnor had been Richard's wife *more danico*, before they were married according to the Church rite.

the younger son of Cnut and his first wife, as king; Emma was exiled and fled to Bruges, where she stayed under Count Baldwin of Flanders' personal protection, till 1040, when Hardacnut became king of England after his step-brother's death. Emma was also successful in persuading Hardacnut to associate his step-brother Edward to the throne, so that two years later, when Hardacnut suddenly died, aged 24, Edward became king. In 1043 he dispossessed his mother of most of her properties. Emma died on 6 March 1052 and was buried in the Old Minster at Winchester, next to Cnut.⁵

Edward died childless on 5 January 1066. His death sparked the succession crisis that led to the Norman invasion nine months later.⁶

4. Ælfgifu/Emma's names

Emma's family was of Scandinavian descent, but her native name was of West Frankish origin and widely used in the Carolingian and Capetian royal families. The members of the Norman ruling family started receiving given names of the Frankish/French tradition quite early: already Hrólfr's heir, William 'Longsword', bore a West Frankish name. This practice was mainly due to reasons of prestige (the Norman comital family were vassals of the king of the West Franks), although Pauline Stafford hypothesises that Emma could have been born from the first marriage of Richard I and Emma, sister of Hugh Capet.⁷

Emma is a hypocorism, probably derived from a dithematic such as *Ermingard* or *Ermintrud*, with isolation and shortening of the first element, which is the Germanic adjective **ermina-*, **ermana-* 'high, excellent, elevated'.⁸ The outcomes of this stem in the Germanic languages showing it can be *Imm-* with radical vowel raising and assimilation /rm/ > /mm/, and *Emm-*, with /rm/ > /mm/ assimilation but without radical vowel raising,

⁵ A detailed account of Emma's life and political career, with reference to the main sources on her life, is in Stafford (1997), *passim*.

⁶ For a discussion on the reasons for William's claim, see for instance Douglas (1953) and John (1979).

⁷ Stafford (1997: 209-210 and footnote 1); Di Clemente (2015: 105, 120).

⁸ This adjective is residually extant in some ancient Germanic languages as first element of compounds, cf. Old High German and Old Saxon *irringot* 'great god', *irminman* '(great) man', *irmindeot/irminthiod* '(great, excellent) people', *irminsūl* 'great column', the sacred pillar of the Saxons, perhaps a tree trunk, Old English *eormencyn* 'human race', *eormengrund* 'spacious earth', *eormenlāf* 'great legacy', *eormenstrynd* 'great generation', *eormenþēod* 'great people', Old Norse *Jǫrmungandr* (proper name of the Miðgarðsormr), *jǫrmungrund* 'great earth', *Jǫrmunþrjótr* (name of a giant) (Bosworth-Toller 1898-1921, s.vv.; Cleasby-Vígfusson 1874, s.vv.; Finnur Jónsson-Sveinbjörn Egilsson 1913-1916: 330; Köbler 2014, s. vv. *irminman*, *irminsūl*, *irminthiod(a)*; Schützeichel 2012: 166; Zoëga 1910: 234). Otherwise, it occurs in personal names in the West (mostly Continental) but also East Germanic area (cf. *Ermanarig*, *Ermenrichi*, *Hermanaricus*, Francovich Onesti 2007: 45), and is probably the first stem in the ethnonyms *Erminones* and *Ermunduri* (Fürstemann 1900: cols 473-474).

or blended with a stem **am-* ‘zeal’.⁹

The form in the French Norman dialect spoken by Emma was probably *Emme*, with Romance lowering of /i/ to /e/ and weakening of the non-stressed final vowel;¹⁰ the almost universal Latin form, especially in eleventh-century Continental sources, was *Emma* (see for instance William of Jumièges and the anonymous composer of the *Encomium Emmae reginae*).¹¹ Early Anglo-Norman sources such as the verse chronicle by Geoffrei Gaimar, written in the 1140s, have the form *Emme*.¹²

Emma was renamed Ælfgifu when she came to England, during Lent of the year 1002. Her name was officially changed in order to highlight the inclusion of a new member into the Wessex royal family, which was socially superior to Emma’s native family.¹³ The choice of Ælfgifu was due to the fact that this name was symbolically representative: it had been the name of king Æþelred’s paternal grandmother, whose cult as a royal saint was diffused in England in the second half of the tenth century.¹⁴ The first wife and a daughter of Æþelred were also called Ælfgifu.¹⁵

5. *Ymma ēac on englisc?*

In spite of the apparent meaning of the annalist’s explanation (*Ymma on frencisc* ‘Ymma in French’), we have some evidence that the queen’s native name was also used in England and in (Old) English to refer to her.

First of all, a direct source exists, recorded in a foreign historical work. In a scholium to a passage of his *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum* (written in the 1070s), Adam of Bremen quotes an authentic document:

Knut, filius Suein regis, abiecto nomine gentilitatis, in baptismo Lambertus nomen accepit. Unde scripto est in Libro fraternitatis nostrae: ‘Lambrecht, rex Danorum, et Imma regina et Knut, filius eorum, devote se commendaverunt orationibus fratrum Bremensium’ (Schmeidler 1917: 112).

This note, besides being contemporary to Emma, seems to register a direct source, whether oral or written it is not possible to establish, coming from the entourage of the

⁹ Förstemann 1900: cols. 949-955, 943-946, 87-88, 96. *Aman-*, which Förstemann judges to be obscure, is related to *am-*, itself linked to *amal-*, a stem probably meaning ‘work, fatigue’ (Old Norse *ama* ‘to annoy’), or *amma*, respectively ‘grandma, nanny’ and ‘nanny, foster-mother, nanny’ in Old Norse and Old High German (Forssner 1916: 69; Morlet 1968: 84-85; Müller 1901: 119-120, Schlaug 1962: 119-120; see also McClure–Rollason 2007: 52).

¹⁰ Roncaglia (1971: 96).

¹¹ van Houts (1995), *passim*; Campbell (1949), *passim*.

¹² Wright (1850: 140-141, 155, 160).

¹³ Stafford (1997: 217).

¹⁴ PASE, Ælfgifu 3; Liebermann (1880: 17-18).

¹⁵ PASE, Ælfgifu 17 and 25.

royal family.¹⁶

Adam uses *Imma* also in other passages of his *Gesta*, e.g. in book II, chapter LIII (51): «Adelrad [...] obiit [...] relinquens filium [...], quem ab Imma uxore suscepit»;¹⁷ chapter LIII (52): «‘Chnud’ regnum Adelradi accepit uxoremque eius Immam nomine, quae fuit soror comitis Nortmannorum Rikardi»;¹⁸ and chapter LXXIII (72): «Iste [Hardechnut] cum esset filius Imme reginae, habuit sororem eam quam caesar Heinricus in coniugium postea recepit».¹⁹ It is interesting to note that in his *Gesta* Adam cites a Saxon noblewoman called Emma, wife of Liudger, brother of the Saxon duke Benno. For her, however, he has the Latin lowered form *Emma*, see book II, chapter XLVI (44); book II, chapter LXVII (65) and scholium 47 (48), and chapter LXXX (76).²⁰

The Latin form *Imma* also occurs in later Danish sources, the *Series ac brevior historia regum Daniae* and Saxo’s *Gesta Danorum* (e.g. in book 10, chapter 14, par. 7):

Adelrad rex Anglorum obsessus obiit, relinquens filium Edwardum, quem suscepit ab Imma regina, que soror fuerat Ricardi comitis Normannorum. Kanutus victor existens ipsam Immam duxit uxorem genuitque ex ea filium Harthechnut [...] electus ab Anglis Edwardus, frater Harthechnut ex Imma regina, pacem cum Suein faciens constituit eum, se mortuo, regem et heredem (Gertz 1917: 164).

Qui [Cnut] [...] Normanniae praefecti Roberti filiam Immam matrimonio duxit (Holder 1886: 344).

The form *Imma*, *Imme*, *Ymme*, *Ymma* is recorded by different annalists of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*: we can find only *Imma* in D 1023, *Imme* in C 1051 and *Ymma* in the Latin annals of F 1013, 1017, 1040 (genitive *Ymme*), 1051; both names in C 1035 (*Imme* as a gloss to *Ælfgifu*), E 1052, F 1002 (*Ymma*, *Æfgiua* added), 1013 (*Ælf’giue Ymma* as an addition), 1017 (see above), 1040 (*Ælfgife* (sunu) *Ymman*, both genitive), 1051 (*Ælfgiua Ymma*); and in the Latin annal of F 1037 (*Ælfgiua Ymma*).

Alistair Campbell maintained that the original vowel of Emma’s native name was /i/,²¹ but *Imm-*, *Ymm-* probably are an adaptation of Old French /e/, on the basis of a phonetic interpretation,²² or of an analogy to the (rare) masculine Old English given name *Imma*²³ or a feminine *Imme*, *Ymme*, which however is recorded – before Emma – only for

¹⁶ «We cannot determine if this communication was made verbally or in writing», Campbell (1949: 57).

¹⁷ Schmeidler (1917: 113-114).

¹⁸ Schmeidler (1917: 114).

¹⁹ *Imme* added in three manuscripts, see Schmeidler (1917: 134).

²⁰ Schmeidler (1917: 106, 126-127, 138).

²¹ Campbell (1949: 57).

²² An Old English vowel raising due to following nasal, or a very closed Old French /e/ which must have sounded like a [ɪ] to English ears, as hypothesised by Di Clemente (2015: 120).

²³ Recorded three times, for a *thegn* cited in Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, lib. IV,

a seventh-century Frankish-born queen of Kent.²⁴

Thus, the Norman name was also known in England and probably adapted to the Old English phonetic/morphological system (weak feminine declension, cf. the forms *Imme*, *Ymme*; the a-ending of the form *Imma*, *Ymma* is subject to different interpretations).²⁵

This use can be identified especially from the beginning of the Danish rule over England, probably in order to distinguish the queen from the ‘other Ælfgifu’, Cnut’s first wife, i.e. Ælfgifu of Northampton, whom Cnut had married *more danico* around 1013, with whom he had had two sons, Swegen and Harold, who became respectively regent of Norway (1030-1035) and king of England (1036/7-1040). Ælfgifu of Northampton was sent to Norway by Cnut in order to be co-regent with their eldest son, and Northern sources remember her for her strict rule; after King Magnus’s retaking of Norway and Swegen’s death in early 1036 she came back to England, where she worked assiduously to secure the English throne for her younger son, eventually achieving her goal and having Harold elected (Harold was king of England from 1037 to his death in 1040).²⁶ This means that Ælfgifu had official duties and played an important political role during Cnut’s reign and after, and could have been confused with Ælfgifu/Emma, who was Cnut’s *cwēn*.²⁷

The *Chronicon of Abingdon* (see below) calls Emma *regina binomia* ‘two-name queen’, which could imply that she was called both Ælfgifu and *Imme/Ymme*, presumably in different contexts; but we cannot exclude that on some occasions she may have been called at the same time by both her names, the Norman one being used as a sort of byname. In the 1017 entry of manuscript F, however, the presence of *Ymma* might be caused by the fact that *Ymma* is the only name to refer to the queen in the corresponding Latin annal: the scribe possibly tried to link the Old English entry to the Latin entry by explaining that queen Ælfgifu was the same woman called *Ymma* in the Latin text.

In this respect, it is interesting that in the Latin annals of F the form *Ymma* is found, not the far more frequent Medieval Latin form *Emma* used for example by Norman contemporaries (William of Jumièges, and the anonymous author of the *Encomium*). It implies that the Latin annalist used the anglicised form of Emma’s native name, although

chapter 22 (Plummer 1896, vol. 1: 249-251); a *presbyter* cited in the Durham *Liber vitae*, col. 29r1 (54), cf. Insley – Rollason (2007: 179), and a man appearing in a tenth-century charter (S1497).

²⁴ The name is attested in a group of eleventh- and twelfth-century texts, both in Old English and in Latin, which record the so-called Mildrith legend (Di Clemente 2015: 119, Liebermann 1880: 1-2, Rollason 1982: 75,77, 80-83, 85-86). Later Latin sources of the Mildrith legend have *Emma*.

²⁵ A nominative singular of the weak feminine declension, whose ending is analogical with the endings of the indirect cases (accusative, genitive and dative singular *-an*), or where <a> simply indicates the unstressed ending vowel, or even a latinised ending, as hypothesised by Campbell (1949: 57).

²⁶ On Ælfgifu of Northampton’s life and career, see Rognoni (2003-2004) and Bolton (2007).

²⁷ In the entries for 1035-1036 of manuscripts C, D and E of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Ælfgifu of Northampton is called ‘the other Ælfgifu’, ‘Ælfgifu, (the woman) of Northampton’ and ‘Ælfgifu, the daughter of the ealdorman Ælfhelm’ respectively.

he lived and worked in 1100-Canterbury, where English people would have been accustomed to the current Latin form *Emma* or the French Norman *Emme*. After the Conquest the variant *Imma/Imme* progressively gave way to the more frequent *Emma*: English, or Anglo-Saxon Chronicle-influenced sources, such as John of Worcester and some minor chronicles, record the form *Imma*, but quite inconsistently, often showing also the variant *Emma*.²⁸ English historical works and chronicles from the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century show different attestations: *Chronicon monasterii de Abingdon*, year 1016: «haec vero nominata regina binomia quidem, scilicet Ælfgiva Imma [...]»;²⁹ *Continuatio* to the *Historia ecclesiae Dunelmensis* by Simeon of Durham († 1129), year 1002: «anno M.ij Emmam, saxonice Elfgivam vocatam, ducis Normannorum Primi Ricardi filiam, rex Egelredus duxit uxorem».³⁰ It is highlighted that the queen had a double name; the Norman one, however, appears both as *Emma* (Simeon of Durham) and *Imma* (*Chronicon* of Abingdon). John of Worcester († 1118) uses *Emma*, except for the queen's obituary («Ælfgiva Imme, conjux regis Ægelredi et Canuti, II. nonas Martii, Wintoniae obiit, et ibi sepulta est»);³¹ in a genealogy of the kings of Wessex she appears as *Ælfgiva vel Imme*;³² two minor chronicles contained respectively in the manuscripts Cotton Nero A.viii and C.vii show *Ymma* (nominative) and *Imme* (genitive), but also *Emma*.³³ Eadmer of Canterbury (c. 1060-1126), in his *Historia novorum in Anglia*, has *Imma*: «regnante autem Edwardo, quem ex sorore Richardi comitis Northmannorum, Imma nomine, praefatus rex Anglorum Adelredus filium susceperat [...] monasteriorum [...] plurima destructio facta est» (book I); «Imma regina» (book II).³⁴ *Imma*, *Ymme* is also occasionally found in the *Domesday Book* and in some post-1066 documents, such as S 1228, which is a copy of an earlier, probably authentic, charter.³⁵

The fact that *Imme*, *Ymme*, latinised *Imma*, *Ymme*, sounds like it was the oldest variant diffused in England of the queen's native name might account for an early integration of said name into the Old English system. Norman French *Emme*, latinised *Emma*, was brought to England after the Conquest and progressively became the majority form. The late queen's Anglo-Saxon official name, *Ælfgifu*, slowly fell into oblivion and disuse.

6. *On englisc vs on frencisc: Ælfgifu/Emma in post-Conquest England*

²⁸ See Campbell (1949: 56-57).

²⁹ Stevenson (1858: 434).

³⁰ Hodgson-Hinde (1868: 78).

³¹ Thorpe (1848, vol. I: 207).

³² Thorpe (1848, vol. I: 257).

³³ Campbell (1949: 56).

³⁴ Migne (1854: cols 349, 416).

³⁵ Campbell (1949: 57), Davis (1909: 423, 425), Di Clemente (2015: 122), Galbraith (1920: 388-389).

Ælfgifu/Emma was one of the most important political figures in the English kingdom in the first forty years of the eleventh century, especially during Cnut's and Hardacnut's reigns. Indeed, after the Conquest, Emma's involvement in the events which had affected England in the first half of the eleventh century underwent a political and ideological re-interpretation. Particularly Emma, who was William the Conqueror's great-aunt, was considered the remote cause of the Norman Conquest. As Henry of Huntingdon puts it: «ex hac conjunctione regis Anglorum et filiae ducis Normannorum, Angliam iuste, secundum jus gentium, Normanni et calumniati sunt et adepti sunt» (Arnold 1879: 173); and according to William of Malmesbury, William the Conqueror's claim to the English throne was justified as he was «[...] proxime consanguineus, filius Roberti filii Ricardi secundi, quem fratrem fuisse Emmam matrem Edwardi non semel est quod diximus» (Duffus Hardy: 382-283). This aspect is also evident, some decades later, in Anglo-French chroniclers.³⁶

It is likely that this new light was shed onto Emma also in post-Conquest Canterbury, where the Norman presence was particularly strong, Canterbury being the see of the most important English archbishopric: in the years 1070-1109 the archbishops had been Lanfranc of Pavia and Anselm of Aosta, both native of Italy, but who had advanced in their ecclesiastical career in Normandy (both at the abbey of Bec; Lanfranc had been abbot of St Etienne's at Caen) and had a close relationship with William the Conqueror and his successors.

During these years, Anglo-Norman clerks and scholars living in England started incorporating the Anglo-Saxon experience into a new cultural frame (and vice-versa, English scholars started incorporating the Norman experience into their works).³⁷ Our annalist, as a man living in Norman Canterbury, could have known both versions of the (hi)story about Ælfgifu/Emma.

Evidence may suggest that the Canterbury annalist felt compelled to gloss both names by specifying 'on englisc' and 'on frencisc' not only in order to assign a name to a specific language of origin, as he himself uses an apparently anglicised form of the queen's Norman name (which had a tradition in English), but also to identify a cultural and political environment. *Englisc* and *frencisc* may imply a wider meaning and a polarisation in defining Ælfgifu/Emma's presence on the historical and political stage:

on englisc: as an official and recognised member of the Wessex royal family, as a representative of a royal family that had ceased to rule in 1066;

on frencisc: native 'French', ie Norman, name; as a representative of the family that

³⁶ Stafford (1997: 17-22).

³⁷ On the circulation of manuscripts, cultural experiences and people in post-1066 Canterbury, see Gameson 1995.

had taken over the royal power in England after 1066.

In this way, the scribe of MS F (involuntarily?) summarised a century of English history in a couple of explanatory notes.

7. Final remarks

In the 1017 entry of manuscript F of the Anglo-Saxon chronicle the annalist, who writes in 1100-Canterbury, explains that *Ælfgifu* is the name ‘on englisc’ of the queen, widow of *Æþelred*, daughter of Richard of Normandy, whom Cnut of Denmark had married that year; *Ymma* was her name ‘on frencisc’.

I have tried to highlight that both explanatory annotations do not simply refer to the original language of the names, since eleventh- and early twelfth-century English sources – including our annalist – show what was probably an anglicised form of the Norman name: it would imply that the French name of the queen was known and used also by the English in English. Indeed, the name variant *Imme*, *Ymme*, latinised *Imma*, *Ymma*, which is a minority form in comparison to the later and more frequent *Emme* and *Emma*, which was brought to England from the Continent, is significantly found in early English sources (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, twelfth-century Anglo-Latin chroniclers who probably drew from it), but also in sources whose origins can be directly linked to the Anglo-Danish royal family (Adam of Bremen) and in more recent Danish sources (e.g. *Gesta Danorum*).

The explanations ‘on englisc’ vs ‘on frencisc’ given by the annalist can be considered as a way to express the ‘double’ identity of queen *Ælfgifu/Emma*, in the light of the political role she had played during her lifetime and the historical and ideological re-interpretation this role had undergone after 1066, projected onto the wider stage of international politics and the ‘revolution’ the Norman Conquest had represented for the identity of the English kingdom, customs, and languages.

The names by which *Ælfgifu/Emma* was referred to in eleventh- and twelfth-century English sources (included the annal for 1017 of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MS F) and the forms these names take are thus not simply ‘names’, but a representation of different moments of English cultural and political history.

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