

Kenneth Solberg-Harestad

**Genre, text type and the nature
of formulaicness in Late
Medieval and Early Modern
English abjuration texts**

**MA in Literacy Studies
Spring 2018**

University of Stavanger



Faculty of Arts and Education

MASTERS THESIS

Study programme: LMLIMAS: Master in Literacy Studies	Spring, 2018 Open
Author: Kenneth Solberg-Harestad	(signature author)
Supervisor: Prof. Merja Riitta Stenroos	
Title of thesis: Genre, text type and the nature of formulaicness in Late Medieval and Early Modern English abjuration texts	
Keywords: heresy, abjuration, formulaicness, confession, early modern, late medieval	No. of pages: 115 + appendices/other: 78 Stavanger, 11/5/18 date/year

Abstract

The thesis identifies the core genre and text type characteristics present in a corpus of 30 late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century heresy abjuration texts related to the Lollard movement in England, relying on Swales' (1990) working definition of genre and Görlach's (2004) working definition of text type, with a special emphasis on uncovering the extent to which abjurers were able to assert their own voices within the highly regulated setting of heresy trials. The thesis, furthermore, identifies and documents the variation that exists between the texts themselves and their different points of origin.

The 30 texts originate from the dioceses Ely, Hereford, Lincoln, Salisbury and Winchester and are analysed using a mixed-methods approach, employing a qualitative categorisation principle based on the communicative function of textual elements, together with a quantitative approach where textual features have been counted and assessed as instances expressed as frequencies occurring in the material.

Abjuration texts and confession texts have been included in many previous enquiries or studies related to the cultural and societal implications of heresy in a broader framework. A recent study by Gertz (2012) may serve as a good example, but they have rarely been studied on their own as the main focus point of research. The present study differs from the majority of enquiries where abjurations have played a part, in that it shifts the focus entirely to the abjuration texts themselves. The implication of this shift from a research standpoint is that the entirety of the data subjected to assessment in this study, are collected solely from those same texts.

The primary contribution of the thesis to the research area of abjuration texts, is that it identifies and documents what might be called linguistic 'free spaces', where abjurers more often than not contributed non-formulaic commentary associated with their heresy confessions, content that was not required by the examiners as part of a formula. This finding runs contrary to the common conception of abjuration texts as fully formulaic texts, where the abjurers were simply repeating the words of the examiners in the heresy trials (cf. Gertz 2012).

The thesis includes two appendices: a Catalogue of the texts in the present corpus, and a comprehensive Diplomatic edition of the texts in the present corpus.

Table of contents

Abstract	i
Table of contents	ii
List of figures	v
List of tables	vi
List of abbreviations	vii
1 Introduction	1
2 Historical background	5
2.1 Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe	5
2.2 Heresy in Early Modern England: The Lollards	10
2.2.1 The early Lollard movement and John Wyclif	10
2.2.2 Oxford, scholasticism and Lollardy	11
2.2.3 The Lollard communities after Wyclif	13
2.2.4 Lollard beliefs and teachings	16
2.3 The abjuration situation and the material reality of the abjuration texts	21
2.3.1 The immediate historical background of heresy hunting and heresy trials	21
2.3.2 Heresy trial procedure: confession	22
2.3.3 Heresy trial procedure: recantation and penalties	25
2.3.4 The material reality of abjuration texts	27
3 Theoretical concepts	29
3.1 Genre, and how it relates to text type	29
3.2 Genre: A working definition and the previous approach of Gertz (2012)	30
3.3 Text type	32
3.4 Communicative function as a principle of categorisation	34
3.5 Defining formulaicness	38
4 The corpus of abjuration texts and methodology	43
4.1 General overview	43
4.2 Corpus selection	43
4.2.1 The selection process: Quantity	43
4.2.2 The selection process: Two phases	44
4.3 The corpus and implications for generalisation	45
4.3.1 Geographical/diocesan distribution	46

4.3.2	Chronological distribution	47
4.3.3	Gender distribution	49
4.4	Methodology and transcription conventions	50
4.4.1	Methodology	50
4.4.2	Transcription conventions	52
5	The content and structure of abjuration texts	54
5.1	Content	54
5.2	Structure	56
6	The opening formula	59
6.1	Two types of opening formula	59
6.1.1	Variation in the type 1 opening formula	63
6.1.2	Variation in the type 2 opening formula	65
6.2	General variation in the opening formula	67
6.2.1	Diocesan variation in the order of presentation of participants	67
6.2.2	Diocesan variation in providing the abjurer's profession	69
6.2.3	Diocesan variation in the use of deputies (representing the local bishop)	70
6.3	Formulaic verbs in the opening formula	71
7	The confession: formulaic and non-formulaic content	74
7.1	Introduction	74
7.2	Heresy charges and their order	76
7.3	Distribution of formulaic and non-formulaic content in the confessions	83
7.3.1	Three main types of confessional content with regard to formula	83
7.3.2	Formula and non-formulaic content between dioceses and heresy charges	86
7.3.3	Distribution of formulaic and non-formulaic content across genders	91
8	The closing formula	93
8.1	Two types of closing formula	93
8.1.1	Variation in the type 1 closing formula	98
8.1.2	Variation in the type 2 closing formula	99
8.2	General variation in closing formulae	100
8.2.1	Diocesan distribution of signed and unsigned texts	100
8.2.2	Diocesan distribution of closing formulae containing an apology	101
8.2.3	Diocesan distribution of promises to desist and promises to act	103
8.2.4	Diocesan distribution of texts ending with a request to bear witness	104

8.3	Formulaic verbs in the closing formula	105
9	Discussion	108
9.1	Genre: Abjuration texts as communicative functions	108
9.1.1	Communicative rationale or purpose	108
9.1.2	Various patterns of similarity	110
9.1.3	The ‘unsolicited first person’ monologue and the performance of sincerity	113
9.2	Text type: Abjuration texts as a specific linguistic pattern	116
9.2.1	Internal linguistic features in the formulaic opening and closing formulae	116
9.2.2	The confessional part	120
9.3	The freedom or constraint of the individual voice of the abjurers	122
9.3.1	Overview: Two spheres of discourse	122
9.3.2	The addition of confessional details not required by the examiners	123
10	Conclusion	127
	References	129
	Appendices	134
	Appendix 1: Catalogue of the texts in the present corpus	134
	A 1.1 Introduction	134
	A 1.2 The catalogue	134
	Appendix 2: Diplomatic edition of the texts in the present corpus	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	A 2.1 Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	A 2.1 The edition	Error! Bookmark not defined.

List of figures

Figure 1. The diocesan distribution of the texts in the study corpus.....	47
Figure 2. Chronological distribution in the study corpus.....	49
Figure 3. The constituent elements of the abjuration texts in the corpus.....	55
Figure 4. The archetypal structure of an abjuration text.....	57
Figure 5. Instances of formulaic verbs in the general proclamation of guilt in type 1 opening formulae ..	72
Figure 6. Distribution between formula and non-formulaic additions in the confessional part.....	88
Figure 7. Instances of formulaic verbs from the proclamation of guilt in type 1 closing formulae.....	106
Figure 8. Instances of formulaic verbs contained in the promise to desist from further heresy	107

List of tables

Table 1. Examples of communicative linguistic functions in an abjuration text	35
Table 2. Categorisation of the elements of an abjuration text by communicative function.....	38
Table 3. The quantity and geographical/diocesan distribution of texts in the study corpus	46
Table 4. The chronological distribution of texts in the corpus	48
Table 5. Gender distribution among abjurers in the corpus.....	49
Table 6. Fisher’s Exact Test in standard configuration with two data-sets and two parameters	51
Table 7. The distribution of type 1 and type 2 introductory formulae in the study corpus.....	63
Table 8. Diocesan variation in the order of presentation of participants	68
Table 9. Distribution of texts where the abjurer’s profession is stated in the opening formula.....	69
Table 10. Diocesan distribution of texts where a bishop’s deputy/deputies presided over the trial	71
Table 11. A list of all heresy charges/topics contained in the confessional parts of the individual texts ...	80
Table 12. The average order of heresy charges in the confessional part	81
Table 13. The distribution of heresy charges across the dioceses represented in the present corpus	82
Table 14. Distribution of formula and non-formulaic additions in the confessional parts of the texts.....	88
Table 15. Diocesan distribution of formula and non-formulaic additions in the present corpus	89
Table 16. The distribution of formula and non-formulaic additions across heresy charges/topics.....	90
Table 17. Distribution of formulaic and non-formulaic content across genders.....	92
Table 18. The distribution of type 1 and type 2 opening formulae in the present corpus.....	98
Table 19. Diocesan distribution of signed and unsigned texts.....	100
Table 20. The diocesan distribution of apologies in the formal recantation or proclamation of guilt.....	102
Table 21. The diocesan distribution of promises to act and promises to desist in the closing fomulae....	104

List of abbreviations

15a2	the period 1425–1449
15b1	the period 1450–1474
15b2	the period 1475–1499
16a1	the period 1500–1524
FET	Fisher’s Exact Test, see Chapter 4.4.1
MELD	Middle English Local Documents Corpus, see References

1 Introduction

This thesis is a linguistic study of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century heresy abjuration texts, most of which can be directly related to the Lollard movement in England, often called the only native medieval English heresy (Callan 2017: “Heresy”). These texts, which contain heresy trial records and survive as copies recorded in bishop’s registers, center around a confession of heretical beliefs and/or practices and a concluding recantation of these beliefs and practices.

The study is based on a corpus of 30 texts found in episcopal registers from five different dioceses: Ely, Hereford, Lincoln, Salisbury and Winchester. The main goal of this study is to identify the core genre and text type characteristics of these texts as they have been realised in different parts of the country, with a special emphasis on the relationship between formulaic and non-formulaic elements. The term ‘genre’ in the context of this study refers to the functional aspect of the texts, while ‘text type’ refers to the purely linguistic features found in the same texts (see 3.1-3). Despite the undeniably formulaic nature of abjuration texts and, at least in some cases, ‘the extreme ventriloquism of the situation’ as Gertz (2012: 33) puts it, this thesis will, as one of its main goals, attempt to demonstrate that even within such a formulaic framework there existed a possibility of individual expression outstepping the bounds of formula or requirement. Following from this, three main research questions may be formulated:

- I. What are the core genre and text type characteristics of fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century abjuration texts?
- II. To what extent did the individual voice of an abjurer get to assert itself within the abjuration formula and situation?
- III. Is it possible to identify variation across dioceses, either with regard to genre and text type features, or the extent of formulaicness and the kinds of formulae used?

The thesis includes a descriptive catalogue of every text included in this study, and a diplomatic edition of the same texts (Appendices 1 and 2).

Abjuration texts are texts in which one or several abjurers, or defendants, confess to having held heretical opinions contrary to the orthodoxy of the church, and consequently proceed to formally renounce or recant these same heretical opinions. It is also possible to come across texts that include a confession of having held heretical opinions, but where there is no record of the confessor, or defendant, renouncing or recanting these heresies – these texts are better described as confession texts, and they will be referred to as such in the present study when a distinction is relevant. Abjuration texts, together with the closely related confession texts, constitute a central part of the textual record of heresy trial proceedings. As such, they provide documentation for what we today might see as extraordinary events happening to ordinary people at the time. The texts contain the names of the people involved, usually where they hailed from, and occasionally their profession; above all they contain information about their beliefs. The texts are also valuable in that they are reflections on some level of the subjectivity of the person on trial, and the texts determine that subjectivity not so much by vocation, class or title, but by belief.’ (Gertz 2012: 27). It must be said that confessions given in heresy trials often were of a formulaic nature, but many abjurations contain unique confessional parts that are certainly not part of any formula, telling us about for instance ‘a deponent’s activities and those of his or her family and neighbors’ (McSheffrey 1996: 14), and not the least, about their own justifications for their beliefs.

Abjuration texts and confession texts have been included in many previous enquiries or studies related to the cultural and societal implications of heresy in a broader framework. A recent study by Gertz (2012) may serve as a good example (see 3.2), but they have rarely been studied on their own as the main focus point of research. The present study differs from the majority of enquiries where abjurations have played a part, in that it shifts the focus entirely to the abjuration texts and confession texts themselves. The implication of this shift from a research standpoint is that the entirety of the data that will be formally subjected to assessment in this study, are collected solely from those same texts.

The present study will also differ from previous studies, such as Gertz (2012), in that it challenges the fundamental assumption that abjuration texts are fully formulaic texts that do not in any way reflect the actual sentiments of the men and women subjected to heresy trials; this is achieved through a survey of the confessions being part of the texts that are included in the study, in light of the presence or absence of formulaic language.

All the texts are sampled from the Middle English Local Documents (henceforth referred to as MELD) corpus compiled at the University of Stavanger, which has as its core to ‘represent the writing and lives of real people’, as opposed to looking at history through the lens of literary texts (MELD, front page: ¶ 1). In other words, the corpus is focused on different kinds of texts that all have in common that they are contextual everyday products of the people whose lives they document. As such, the abjuration and confession texts this study is concerned with fit well into that general framework, as these texts provide us with a record of the heresy trials that real men and women were forced to take part in. The texts tell us something, not only about the people being accused, but also about the accusers and the practical situation all participants found themselves in.

The texts will be approached through a mixed methodology utilising both qualitative and quantitative method (see 4.4.1). Although the study is necessarily limited in nature, it is believed that it has the potential to provide new insight on what might be said about such texts, both as a genre and as a specific text type – especially concerning the presence or absence of what might be called linguistic ‘free spaces’, where the individual voice of an abjurer was given the opportunity to assert itself within the framework of a heavily regulated historical situation.

The thesis is divided into ten main chapters, followed by the References and Appendices. The Appendices contain a catalogue of all 30 texts making up the present corpus (Appendix 1), followed by a diplomatic edition of the same text (Appendix 2).

The thesis is structured as follows. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the historical background, both from the perspective of Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe in general, and the specific English context from which the abjurations are direct textual outcomes.

Chapter 3 introduces and discusses the theoretical framework used in the present study. In the same order that ensues, the chapter deals with: the concepts of genre and text type; communicative function as a principle of linguistic categorisation and how to define formulaicness.

Chapter 4 presents an overview of the present corpus of abjuration texts, and discusses its potential for generalisation. It also provides an overview of the methodological approach to the texts and the transcription conventions used in the thesis.

The findings in the study are presented in Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8. Chapter 5 provides an overview of the content and structure of abjuration texts, respectively.

Chapter 6 presents the two types of opening formula that occur in the present corpus, and then proceeds to discuss variation in the opening formula and between the respective dioceses represented in the corpus, concluding with a survey of formulaic verbs found in opening formulae

Chapter 7 outlines the general characteristics of the confessional part, sandwiched between the opening and closing formulae, where abjurers made confessions related to specific heresy charges, followed by a close look at how formulaic and non-formulaic elements are distributed in the confessional part and between dioceses.

Chapter 8 presents the two types of closing formula that occur in the present corpus, and then proceeds to discuss variation in the closing formula and between the respective dioceses represented in the corpus, concluding with a survey of formulaic verbs found in closing formulae.

Chapter 9 contains the discussion chapter where findings are discussed and related to genre and text type characteristics and the textual variation therein, followed by a discussion concerning the extent to which the individual voice of an abjurer got to assert itself within the framework of an abjuration text and situation.

Chapter 10 contains the conclusion, where the present study and its findings are summarised and related to previous research, followed by suggestions for further study related to Late Medieval and Early Modern English abjuration texts.

2 Historical background

2.1 Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe

Heresy is a tenet chosen on human impulse, contrary to Holy Scripture, openly declared, and obstinately defended.

The introductory quotation is attributed to Robert Grosseteste, the Bishop of Lincoln from 1225 until 1253 (cited in Hayward 2005: 19). Whether he actually uttered such a thing or not, it provides us with a very concrete and apt definition of heresy, from the perspective of those in a position to have the power of definition in these matters. That heresy, in the view of Grosseteste, needs to be ‘openly declared, and obstinately defended’ clearly demonstrates that heresy was not seen as a matter of individual spiritual error or in any way akin to the Orwellian concept of a ‘thoughtcrime’. Instead, for anything to be considered heresy it had to be communicated to other people in some way or form.

This view also had implications for the kind of behaviour or deviation from Church doctrine that would be deemed heretical: simply being ‘mistaken’ about matters of faith in public did not constitute heresy, as long as the person or persons implicated would acknowledge their mistake and refrain from the offending behaviour in the future; only if the implicated individuals – after having been corrected – persisted in spreading unorthodox teachings, would their doing so be considered heresy. In order to fit bishop Grosseteste’s definition of heresy, it is clear that any action deemed heresy would have to have real and tangible consequences in the physical world, and would not be a question of anyone’s inner thoughts or inner interpretations of doctrine.

In the period 1300-1700, the persecution of heretics ran like a red thread through Catholic Christendom, and heresy ‘appeared to be everywhere and various manifestations seemed to share common denominators.’ (Fudge 2005: 89). The most notorious long-term historical heresy hunting event is perhaps the Spanish Inquisition, which was founded by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain in 1478 with papal approval. In 1569, Antonio del Corro, a Spanish monk that had settled in England, produced a treatise – accompanying a translation to English of a Spanish account of the Inquisition – where he set out to document that the Spanish Inquisition ‘perpetrated innumerable miscarriages of justice [and] disregarded the rule of law.’ He

furthermore asserted that the Inquisition was ‘an innovation unprecedented in the history of religious practice.’ (Hossain 2007: 1280). When del Corro accused the Spanish Inquisition of having disregarded the rule of law, he means the violation of secular law, the law of the state, as opposed to ecclesiastical law: the legal situation concerning heresy at the time was characterised by what Gertz (2012: 23) calls a ‘double jurisdiction’, where it was clearly defined what the church was allowed to do on its own (investigations and trials; punishments other than execution), and where the state had to be involved (e.g. carrying out the death penalty for heresy).

In the view of Ames (2008: 3), the justification of inquisitions and other similar endeavours can to a large degree be traced back to the idea of ‘righteous persecution’, where Christ himself is seen ‘as a vehicle of violence and persecution, *a zealous punisher of wrongdoers*’ (my italics). The influential Dominican friar and inquisitor Moneta de Cremona (d.1250) was among those that explicitly espoused such interpretations of Christ’s mission on earth. This historical backdrop might explain part of the motivations and justifications that surrounded heresy hunting throughout this period, but factors other than spiritual were also heavily involved in this context:

In late Medieval Europe and into the Early Modern period, the Catholic Church was not simply a religious institution concerned with faith as a solely spiritual matter; in addition, the Church was very much involved in the economics and politics in any country or state where it had a presence. Religion, then, was not a mere matter of who or how to worship – it was also the justification for an economic, political and academic machine. It follows from this that any threat to the church apparatus was also a threat to the power and influence of the individuals making up the church organisation.

While many individuals in the English Church wielded considerable power and controlled substantial monetary resources, the Church was also the working place of ‘perhaps one in twenty of the male population over twenty-five’ in the first half of the fourteenth century in England; by estimate there might have been around 50-60,000 priests in the country at that time (Robinson 2017: 18). These men were spread all over the country and they had different family backgrounds and often very different financial situations:

A few [members of clergy] obtained a rectory or other ecclesiastical benefice early in their career, often before being ordained priest, in return for diplomatic, political, administrative or legal services to the king

and aristocracy ... Such benefices provided them not only with an income but also security of tenure. Most of the other priests received their livelihoods in return for their services in divine worship, in particular the saying of masses, and in pastoral work. Some of them might in time acquire a parochial benefice, normally a vicarage or one of the poorer rectories, but this would probably occur after they had served several years in an insecure stipendiary role, and many would remain stipendiary clergy without security of tenure throughout their lives. (Robinson 2017: 19)

This many-faceted historical reality is in stark contrast to the often exaggerated and unnuanced popular portrayal of the Late Medieval and Early Modern Catholic Church as a perfectly unified and impersonal instrument of monetary greed and fanatic oppression – and, as Harris reminds us, ‘the Middle Ages are no singular object, and [is, in this sense,] deserving of the plural.’ (2007: 4). The Middle Ages, just like any other historical period, were a mosaic of countless narratives and stories. The great diversity reflected in the different social backgrounds and financial situations of the clergy is also a testament to this reality.

On a similar note, while the Pre-Reformation English religion has often been caricatured along the lines of being a ‘swamp of superstitious corruption’, the English Church at the time has been described as more disciplined, well led (Ryrie 2017: 107–8) and as such less prone to excesses seen elsewhere in Europe at the time: In 1308, for example, Jacques Fournier (later Pope Benedict XII), Bishop of Pamiers, decided to make an example of the rural village of Montailou, which at that time was one of the last remaining bastions of Cathar heresy in the French Pyrenees:

All the residents of Montailou, both men and women, around 12–13 years of age and above, were placed under arrest. ... Some women from Montailou were able to get away by carrying a loaf of bread on their heads: They pretended to be farmers’ wives passing through from somewhere else. ... The adults and teenagers in Montailou were first locked inside the castle, shortly after they ended up imprisoned in Carcassonne. Some were burned at the stake; others remained imprisoned for long stretches of time in the jail’s communal cells for men or for women, with the possibility to receive packages of food and other items from the family (*victualia*). (Le Roy Ladurie 1986: 86–7, my translation)

In contrast to the events that took place in Montailou – being located in one of the most remote parts of France, far away from the central authority in Paris where a similar act most likely would have produced strong reactions from the common people – it would have been unthinkable in an English context that a bishop could or would imprison an entire village under suspicion of Lollardy in the same manner. This might also in part be a result of the population density in England at the time, where most places or villages would not be all too secluded and

remote in relation to one another, in addition to the restraint and discipline practiced by the English Church, if we are to subscribe to Ryrie's claim of it being especially 'well led'.

Still, the English Church followed the rest of Europe in singling out heterodoxy as an immediate and urgent concern, at a time when apostasy or other kinds of infidelities and unbelief were not unheard of, as has been pointed out by Hunter, Laursen & Nederman (2005: 1–2). The same authors go on to attribute this reaction from the European church authorities to a sense of being directly threatened from within, by members of their own Christian communities – with more potential appeal to other Christians than any outsiders might have – making statements on essential aspects of faith that are incapable of co-existing with the orthodox teachings.

Heterodoxy, as a consequence:

... was particularly horrific because those who adopted it maintained not only that they were Christians, but that their version of Christianity was truer and more pure than the orthodox one. Heresy was therefore a disease of the soul that was extremely contagious if not quickly treated; the prevention of its spread to the remainder of the believing community justified even the use of physical violence against those who persisted in upholding it. (Hunter, Laursen & Nederman 2005: 2)

When Hunter, Laursen and Nederman focus primarily on the religious motivations of the European churches involved with rooting out heresy, they are required to a large degree to take the religious justifications given by the Church at face value. These justifications might be seen in a different light when all the different roles and power spheres that the churches exercised in their home territories are considered. The English Church, for instance, was fundamentally changed after the Norman Conquest, in that the bishops, who typically had had monastic backgrounds, now gave way to secular clerics who were typically appointed bishops after serving at the royal court (Hayward 2005: 22). This shift would necessarily contribute even further to the English Church's interwovenness with secular politics and economics. In this view the European churches at the time might on the one hand be looked upon as entities where political, economic and social power were jointly justified on the grounds of religion; and where any credible challenge to orthodox doctrine, was also a challenge to the foundational justification of a very wealthy and influential institution. On the other hand, the spiritual motivations of the Church and its individual priests should not be overlooked, and it is unlikely that clerics at the time would have found a distinction between the Church as a powerful apparatus and the Church as carrying out a spiritual mission to be meaningful. Margaret Deanesly says of the typical parish priest in fourteenth-century Medieval England that while his work absolutely had its

administrative sides, the work was much more geared towards spiritual and social tasks, and furthermore that:

It was his duty to relieve the poor, and strangers, as far as he could himself: though his stipend was usually too small to permit of much almsgiving. . . . All manuals for priests and laymen stressed the “six works of mercy bodily, and the six works of mercy spiritually,” and they formed a stock syllabus for medieval sermons. The six works of mercy bodily included: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, harbouring the houseless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, visiting prisoners and burying the dead. (2005: 186–187)

This material and spiritual duality of the English Church (and the Catholic Church in general) at the time is also pointed out through Gaskill’s observation that ‘[t]he parish church lay at the heart of communal life – a focal point for civic and administrative activity, *as well as for devotion*’ (2017: 87, my italics).

In the end, it is clear that the Late Medieval ecclesiastical authorities, in England and elsewhere, considered heresy a very real and tangible threat to the cohesion of the human society of which they saw themselves as being the custodians, both at the level of faith and at the level of administration. The perceived immediacy of the threat set into motion potentially very harsh and severe responses as the Church set out to meet this threat head-on.

2.2 Heresy in Early Modern England: The Lollards

2.2.1 The early Lollard movement and John Wyclif

In 1382, a Henry Crumpe was suspended from academic acts at the university of Oxford, on the grounds that he had called and labelled some of his academic colleagues *Lollardi*; this constitutes the first recorded occurrence of the term *Lollard* in England in reference to a particular sect or movement (Hudson 1988: 2). According to the Oxford English Dictionary (henceforth OED) the term originates from Middle Dutch and originally carried the meaning of ‘mumbler’ and ‘mutterer’ (1991: “Lollardy”). In the English context the term *Lollard(y)* was applied to a heterodox Christian religious movement that arose at Oxford University around the theologian John Wyclif (c.1330–1384) in the early 1380s (Hudson 1988: 1; McSheffrey 1996: 7) and spread throughout society. The movement was characterised by a strong anticlericalism, which led to an emphasis on a direct personal relationship with God, without the mediation of a church considered to consist of mere fallible human beings:

Lollards not only condemned the clergy for their wicked lives but also denied that they had any special powers conferred upon them as a result of their ordination. Some held the extreme view that priests were not able to effect any of the seven sacraments, and they saw any such claims on the part of the clergy as an illegitimate assumption of God’s role. (McSheffrey 1996: 8)

The Lollards contested many doctrines of the Catholic Church, including the Eucharist (referred to as the ‘sacrament of the altar’ in the abjuration texts), oral confession and the act of pilgrimage. The movement remained active at least until the coming of Lutheran teaching, which arrived in England around 1520 (Hudson 1988: 508), after which it was gradually absorbed into Protestantism (ibid.: 494–507).

Ryrie (2017: 108) describes the Lollards as a ‘loose movement of dissidents who called each other ‘brethren’ or ‘known’ men’, and who were ‘scabrously anti-ceremonial and anti-hierarchical’ in their views; and that furthermore were ‘vaguely attached to the memory of the fourteenth-century Oxford theologian John Wyclif’ – though retaining ‘little of his particular doctrines beyond a passionate commitment to the English bible.’ According to Hudson (1988), views to the effect that the Lollard movement was only to a very small degree related to John Wyclif, have been commonly held by many researchers and historians. To challenge this widespread notion Hudson points out that “contemporary observers were in no doubt about the

connection between Wyclif and the Lollards”, and that they were referred to by many as “*de secta Wyclif*” (Hudson 1988: 62–3). Through a careful study of the writings connected to the Lollards, Hudson, in contrast to Ryrie, considers the ideological inheritance from Wyclif to the Lollard movement as a whole to be of clear and great magnitude, suggesting that Wyclif must be seen as the anchor point of the entire movement (ibid.: 62).

John Wyclif was a northerner hailing from the North Riding of Yorkshire, who probably between 1335 and 1350 started his studies at Oxford, depending on which date of birth is used as the basis for the inference; on the whole ‘[h]ow Wycliffe spent his earliest years, and what were his immediate surroundings, we are left to conjecture.’ (Wilson 1884: 19). The English historian John Foxe (c.1516–1587) said of Wyclif that ‘[h]e was famously reported, for a great clerk, a deep schoolman, and no less expert in all kinds of philosophy.’ (cited in Wilson 1884: 34). More is known about his later life. He became a bachelor of divinity in 1369 and a doctor of divinity in 1372 (Stacey 2017: ¶ 2), and throughout the 1370s his activity of travelling around giving sermons on many topics, among them the duties of the secular priesthood, is well attested (Hudson 1988: 64–66). In 1378 Londoners seem to have intervened on Wyclif’s behalf as he came under investigation directed from Lambeth House (ibid.: 66), the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury (Walford 1878: ‘Lambeth: Lambeth Palace’). This shows that Wyclif had the full attention of the ecclesiastical authorities in his time, on account of his teachings.

2.2.2 Oxford, scholasticism and Lollardy

In 1382, the two Wycliffites (or Lollards) Nicholas Hereford and Philip Repingdon came under investigation initiated by Archbishop William Courtenay, after having ‘certainly propagat[ed] Wyclif’s heresies within Oxford.’ (Hudson 1988: 70). This led to the assembly of the Blackfriar’s Council in the same year, which was headed by Courtenay, and which ended up condemning all of Wyclif’s 24 conclusions on Christian doctrine (ibid.: 71). The conclusions included the rejection of the necessity of oral confession (see 2.2.4), a rejection of oath and liturgy, and a rejection of the indulgences issued by the Church, as well as a rejection of the orthodox Catholic view of the Eucharist (Vasilev 2011: 145–6).

One example of the kind of heterodox teaching that the Archbishop reacted to may be set forth, by using the sermon given by Philip Repingdon on Corpus Christi Day (June 5) 1382 as a

starting point: His main topic for the sermon was the Eucharist, or ‘the sacrament of the altar’ (Hudson 1988: 71). The Lollard view of the Eucharist might be the most central and recurring religious unorthodoxy associated with the Lollards. Wyclif’s position was that ‘material bread and wine remain after the words of consecration’ in the ritual of the Eucharist (Hudson 1988: 21); this doctrine is usually referred to by the term ‘consubstantiation’, and is in direct opposition to the official Catholic view of ‘transubstantiation’, where bread and wine was said to be permanently and literally changed into the body and blood of Christ, retaining only the appearance of bread and wine (Daly, Macy and Raitt 2016: 12–13).

In the fourteenth century, Oxford was a place of learning where unorthodox ideas were tolerated to a much larger degree than, for example, in Cambridge. The leading academic philosophers and theologians of the late Middle Ages followed especially Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) in a scholastic approach to religious matters, and the core of scholasticism might be described as involving an attempt ‘to reconcile Christian theology with the Greek philosophy of Aristotle.’ (Baldick 2008: 301). Inherent to Aristotle’s philosophy is the idea of logically deducible causality (Falcon 2015), and Thomas Aquinas, in his *Summa Theologica* was not willing to apply Aristotelian reasoning to, for example, the dogmatic truth of the incarnation of Christ – knowing full well that the notion of the incarnation of Christ directly violates the Aristotelian worldview, he instead refers to it as a ‘mystery’ without relying on Aristotelian causality at all in his justification for this belief (1947: Part III, Q.1).

When John and Alice Bisshopp and Thomas Scochynn appeared before the Bishop of Salisbury ca. 1498, to confess and abjure their heresies, the reason they gave for having rejected the orthodox view on the Eucharist was fully based on the violation of a logical causal chain:

- (1) We ... John Bisshopp . Alice . and Thomas Scochynn haue thought said and byleved that in the blessyd sacrament of the Aulter is not the veray body of cryste . that was bornn of A mayde . that was putt vpomn the crosse and dyed to redeme mankynde . that aroos fromm deth to lyfe . and ascended in-to hevens ; but that it is veray pure bredd and nought ellys . **Thynkyng’ and byleuyng’ that sith Criste in his veray body Ascended in-to hevyns ; he commethe not ner shal comme agaynn hyder into the erth afor the day of dome whann he shal Juge alle the world .**

‘We ... John Bishop, Alice and Thomas Scochyn have thought, said and believed that in the blessed sacrament of the altar is not the true body of Christ; that was born of a maid, that was put upon the cross and died to redeem mankind, that arose from death to life and ascended into heaven; but that it is really only bread and nothing else. Thinking and believing that since Christ in his true body have ascended into heaven, he does not come nor shall come again down to earth, before the day of judgement when he shall judge all the world.’ (MELD: D4113#2, my highlighting)

From the perspective of natural causality, it makes no sense that the *veray body* of Christ already risen to heaven, should in physical form come down to earth again every time the Eucharist was performed, before the day of final judgement.

It is impossible to trace back the reasons provided by John and Alice Bisshopp and Thomas Schochynn with certainty to the scholasticism that Wyclif had taken part in at Oxford; but it was exactly the break from purely mystical explanations, when causal deduction and logical explanations could be forthcoming, that characterised both scholastic tradition and the Aristotelian method. From the perspective of Aquinas, believing something and at the same time being able to prove it (when an Aristotelian framework was applicable) was “better” than simply relying on faith alone; for some truths ‘though revealed [by God] ... can be known and investigated without the precondition of faith.’ (McInerny 2014: section 2).

This is also why Thomas Aquinas makes use of Aristotelian causality to prove God’s existence (1947: Part I., QQ.1–3). In contrast, he is bound to completely disregard causal arguments when examining the incarnation of Christ, as the Christian doctrine is incompatible with the Aristotelian worldview, where the further away something is from earth, and the world of humans, the more superior and more perfect its existence is (Bos 2018: 11–15).

Wyclif’s approach to the Eucharist, later echoed by Alice Bisshopp and Thomas Schochynn, was highly problematic for the Archbishop who reacted by putting him under investigation when he was travelling around giving sermons. Through the course of such sermons Wyclif would present other teachings in direct opposition to the official position of the Church, that were in turn inherited by his followers (see 2.2.4). In the view of Hudson, the development from what we might call Wyclif’s academic heresy (which was not all too uncommon at the time) to the public heresy that the Lollard movement represented, was a unique transfer of ideas from the academic world to the public sphere not commonly seen (1988: 62). The abjuration and confession texts that the present study is concerned with are direct products of this ‘public heresy’.

2.2.3 The Lollard communities after Wyclif

- (2) J [John Barown] confesse that J haue iij Englysshe bookes oon’ of the lyff of oure lady of Adam and Eve and of other sermone the Myrroor of Synners and the Myrroor of Matrimony . the secunde boke of Tales of Caunterbury . The iij boke of a play of Seint Dionise

'I [John Baron] confess that I have three English books: the first, containing the life of our lady and Adam and Eve, other sermons, as well as the Mirror of Sinners and the Mirror of Matrimony; the second book, The Canterbury Tales; the third book, a play about Saint Dionise.' (MELD: D4440#22)

In 1464, John Barorn confessed to owning three books written in *Englisshe*, as he stood before the Bishop of Lincoln as a suspected heretic. The use of the vernacular was central to the Lollards, and Ryrie (2017: 108) says of the Lollards after Wyclif that their 'religion consisted chiefly in clandestine meetings to read the Bible and other English texts aloud'. The bible Ryrie is referring to is usually called 'the Wycliffite translation', which was translated from the Latin Vulgate into English. There were at least two different translations of the Wycliffite Bible produced between 1382–c.1397 (Hudson 1988: 247; if we are to assume that Wyclif was personally involved in the translation), usually referred to as the Early Version and the Later Version. The former is characterised by Hudson as being 'a very literal, stilted and at times unintelligible rendering', while the latter as 'a fluent, idiomatic version, ... found far more commonly than the other.' (ibid.: 238–9). The Wycliffite translations, in particular the Late Version, were produced in large numbers of copies and distributed throughout the country; their proliferation seems to have been the main reason behind Archbishop Arundel's Constitutions of 1409, in which article 7 banned production and ownership 'without diocesan permission, of any such translation made since Wycliffe's time.' (Watson 1995: 828).

The Wycliffite translation of the Bible to English has often been presented as being the work of one man, John Wyclif; however, Hudson (1988: 24) points out that Wyclif's potential personal involvement must have been at the very early stage of the translation. Hudson also considers the production of Lollard texts, including the bible, to be rather a product of what she calls 'collaborative erudition', than being primarily the products of individual efforts (ibid.: 109–110): John Purvey, a Lollard that worked directly with Wyclif, has, according to Hudson, often been associated with the translation of the Later Version of the Wycliffite Bible; but Hudson (1988: 242) considers this connection to be 'based on nothing firmer than an early eighteenth-century 'hazard' at authorship.'

Why was scripture, and other books, in the vernacular seen as a threat sufficient enough to warrant, 'one of the most draconian pieces of censorship in English history, going far beyond its ostensible aim of destroying the Lollard heresy' (Watson 1995: 826)? Clearly, any diverging

opinion on the matter of faith must start with interpretation; as such, any heterodox position constitutes a divergent interpretation of a doctrine:

The opening up of interpretation to laymen that vernacular translation allows means that the power of meaning-making, and the authority that it maintains, can be contested. But in order to challenge the church by reference to scripture, scripture needs to be widely available. Translation is power or sedition, depending on your point of view. And one of the consequences of the Wycliffite Bible is the dissemination of interpretive authority. (Ng 2001: 323)

As a consequence of its use of English in order to spread its views, the Lollard movement may be said to, in many ways, itself have made the connection between heresy and the use of the vernacular (Ng 2001: 322–323). This might also, at least in part, explain why the ban on vernacular writings also extended to books in general, and not just the bible. From the perspective of the religious authorities, then, it seems that any written material in English carried with it the connotation of heresy, whether this was warranted or not: any material produced in the vernacular was material that the church could not effectively control and which carried with it the potential of rapid proliferation among the populace.

Who were these men and women who practiced their religion in ‘clandestine meetings’, as Ryrie (2017:108) puts it, and made up the Lollard movement? The men and women appearing in the abjuration and confessional texts under study in this thesis were certainly not of particularly high standing, and might very well be described as quite ‘ordinary’ men and women, usually supporting themselves through some kind of physical work, some doing menial labour and others more specialised and skilled work: millers, shoemakers, tanners and taylor. However, several members of the nobility were either sympathizers such as John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster (1340–1399) or outright Lollards themselves, as in the case of Sir John Oldcastle (d.1417) from Herefordshire (Hudson 1988: 110–117). There are also examples of priests being tried for Lollard heresy: McSheffrey (1996: 73) mentions the case of Richard Fox, a parish priest of Steple Bumpstead in Essex, and the present corpus contains an abjuration by Richard John, a priest from Haselbury (MELD: D4114#17; McSheffrey (1996: 154) is in agreement that *priest* in this particular case denotes a vocation and not a surname). In other words, the people making up the Wycliffite movement in a very real sense consisted of all walks of life.

When it comes to the practical concerns regarding Lollard religious activity, it is clear that this was not carried out in large gatherings, which would quickly have attracted the attention of the ecclesiastical authorities. Instead, we find in the abjurations many references to meetings

held in private houses, often with a limited number of people present: In 1509, Thomas Hygons of Wolastonn (appearing before the Bishop of Hereford) confessed to having:

- (3) **had susp^t coi'cacon' of late in the hows of Thomas Nasshe of Michledeane be-fore diuerse men and womenn** vnauised and of my slipir tong' saing' that a *Carpinter* cowde make a howse but the house cowde not make the *Carpinter* whiche causid me to be diffamid of heresy in the foresaide placis
'had suspect communication of late in the house of Thomas Nash of Mitcheldean before diverse men and women; thoughtlessly and of my slippery tongue saying that a carpenter could make a house, but that the house could not make the carpenter – which caused me to be disgraced by heresy in the foresaid places'
(MELD: D0746#7, my highlighting)

On a similar note, recounting a saint's eve three years back when the church commanded a fast to take place, Alice Bisshopp confessed that she *eete baconn in mynn owenn hows . hauyg' no regard vnto the sayd fast* 'ate bacon in my own house, having no regard for the said fast' (MELD: D4113#2). One might ask how a religious community could not only survive, but thrive if it always had to be confined to secret places, ever watchful of potential eavesdroppers and church authorities. McSheffrey answers this very question by putting forward the idea that Lollards were in many ways hiding in the open while conducting much of their religious activity, and that:

[t]he practice of the Lollard faith – which most often involved discussion of doctrine – took place in formal and informal situations, in almost ritualized gatherings and in casual conversations between neighbors in the street. The cement that made a Lollard community cohere was in most cases its leadership: knowing and conversing with a noted Lollard teacher ... was the thread that connected all members of the sect in a particular locality. (1996: 47)

This reality, where the Lollard religion was practiced within a flat organisational structure – in comparison to the distances in power and relations inherent to the hierarchy of the Catholic Church – mirrors in a fitting way the Lollard view that all human beings were equally subject to God's favour or disfavour, be it an Archbishop or a farmer in the field.

2.2.4 Lollard beliefs and teachings

Based on what investigators were looking for in order to identify who was a Lollard or not, Hudson identifies five recurring areas of concern that seem to be at the centre of the Lollard religion, both from the perspective of the investigators, and from the perspective of the Lollards:

(i) the Eucharist, (ii) oral confession, (iii) the papacy, (iv) the practice of pilgrimage and (v) the worshipping of images (1988: 21–22, my order of sequence). The corpus contains many examples of all five areas of concern, which is in keeping with Hudson’s observation that was based on a much larger number of texts.

The first of these areas of concern (or rather beliefs), being the Eucharist or ‘the sacrament of the altar’, and the Lollard view favouring consubstantiation over the Catholic orthodox transubstantiation has already been described and discussed previously, in Chapter 2.2.2.

The Lollard view on oral confession is directly related to the emphasis on a personal relationship with God, rather than one mediated through the Church:

(4) J the said John Bisshopp haue holdenn and byleued that it nedeth not any personn to be confessed of his synnes vnto a preest or any other mynystre of the churche . For J haue sayd It is Inow to Aske forgifnes of allemyghty god and to be sory for the synne .

‘I the said John Bishop have held and believed that it is not necessary for any person to be confessed of their sins before a priest, or any other minister of the church. For I have said that it is enough to ask forgiveness of almighty God and to be sorry for the sin.’ (MELD: D4113#2)

In the confession of John Bisshopp, and in other similar confessions of heterodox views on the subject of confession, the core principle is that it is only God alone that can grant forgiveness for sins, and that the church and the priests have no more power to influence or carry out God’s will than any other man; it is enough to ask forgiveness of almighty God, as long as the person asking is truly repentant.

The same core view that underpinned the Lollards’ rejection of the sacrament of confession also played a major part in their rejection of the papacy and the idea of the pope as an intercessor closer to God than anyone else, with privileged insight into the divine will. In 1505, appearing before the assigned deputies of the Bishop of Hereford, John Crofte gave the following confession concerning his views on the papacy and the Pope:

(5) J haue Radde and declared agaynst our’ holy father the pope showyng that he hath not the power’ of byndyng and lewsyng that criste gave to petur but in vsurpyng that power apon hym he makythe hym-selfe antecriste .

‘I have read and declared against our holy father the Pope, showing that he does not have the power of binding and loosing that Christ gave to Peter; and by usurping that power he makes himself the Antichrist.’ (MELD: D0746#1)

The biblical and rabbinical term ‘binding and loosing’, mentioned by John Crofte, denotes an ‘authoritative declaration about what is permitted or forbidden in the Law [of God]’ (Browning 2009: ‘binding and loosing’), a power only possessed by God/Christ and the apostle Peter in the biblical accounts. The claim that the Pope has usurped this power, and through this act made *hym-selfe antecriste*, resonates very well with a passage from the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians attributed to the apostle Paul, commonly interpreted as one of the biblical mentions of the Antichrist:

Let no man deceiue you by any meanes, for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sinne bee reuealed, the sonne of perdition,
Who opposeth and exalteth himselfe aboue all that is called God, or that is worshipped: so that he as God, sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himselfe that he is God.

‘Let no man deceive you by any means, for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.
Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped: so that he as God, sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.’
(Thess. 2:3–4, 1611, KJV)

The Lollards did not accept the papacy’s claim of having their spiritual authority handed down in a direct line from Peter himself; the popes and the papacy consequently came to be seen as the deceivers and usurpers that scripture repeatedly and incessantly warns against.

Considering the Lollards’ emphasis on a personal and spiritual relation to God it might at first glance seem puzzling that the Lollards would condemn the practice of pilgrimage, an undertaking today often associated with spirituality and a break from the materialism of the modern world. However, the joint testimony of John Bisshopp, his wife Alice Bisshopp, Thomas Scochynn, John Roye and John Stanwey (before the Bishop of Salisbury), makes it vividly clear that the act of pilgrimage at the time had a very material component:

(6) We ... haue holdenn byleued and said that pilgrimages whiche beenn vsed of good Crystenn people vnto the corpsys or reliques of Sayntys be not lawfull and owght not to be doon . **ner nonn offrynges shuld be maad vnto theymm . for the sayntys be in hevenn . and haue no need to suche thynges . wherfor the money spent in such pilgrimages is but wasted and lost** . And moch better it were to depart that money among’ poore people .

‘We have held, believed and said that pilgrimages which have been observed/practiced by good Christian people unto the corpses or relics of Saints, are not lawful and ought not to be performed; nor should any offerings be made to them – for the saints are in heaven and have no need for such things. Wherefore the money spent in such pilgrimages is but wasted and lost; and it would have been much better to distribute the money among poor people instead.’ (MELD: D4113#2, my highlighting)

When the five abjurers state that the *sayntys be in hevenn . and haue no need to suche thynges*, they are not only providing a logically sound causal argument for why no money should be offered to saints, they are also indirectly raising the question of the real beneficiaries of the money; since the money is evidently not distributed among *poore people*, this leaves only the church organisation itself: the accusation that the English Church and its priests were simply keeping the money was a common one among the Lollards, and at times this charge was even extended to the notion that the Church consisted of nothing more than thieves stealing possessions and riches belonging to God and his ‘true’ servants (Hudson 1988: 4). Throughout the Middle Ages and into the Early Modern period the major pilgrimage centres (Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostella) were permeated with what Bale and Dale have called a ‘franchise business’ model operating under the universal church, acting much like an umbrella corporation (2011: ¶ 7). That said, it is also necessary to point out that contrary to the repeated charges coming from the Lollards, funds collected through the pilgrimage business *did* in many cases benefit the poor to some extent:

In this business model, the shrine was a profit centre and the shrine custodians (local churches or abbeys) benefited directly as franchisees, since they had discretion over the use of the offerings they received. A typical split might be one third to the clergy, one third to building maintenance and one third to the poor. (Bale & Dale 2011: ¶ 8)

The Lollards similarly opposed what they saw as the Catholic Church’s practice of worshipping images, which in the confessions given by Lollards usually refers to the statues of saints or to crucifixes. The point that the *sayntys be in hevenn and haue no need to suche thynges*, is also applicable to the worshipping of images: if the divine resides somewhere else, why should veneration be directed towards physical objects in the church – instead of upwards, towards the transcendence of the godhead? In the confession given by Richard Herford, a miller of Letcombe Regis in the diocese of Salisbury, this train of thought is taken to its natural conclusion, as he states that such images are nothing *but dedd stockys and stonys*:

- (7) That is to wytt J haue holdern and byleved that Jimages of the crucifix . of our’ blessyd lady and of other saynctes be but dedd stockys and stonys . And therfor they owght not to be wurshipped . ner any offrynges to be maad vnto theym . ~~~ And that it is wrongfully doorn to punyssh any man as A theef for takyng’ away of suche offrynges . Inso-moche that not long agom J was in company in ledcombe aforsayd wher it was spokenn that an evyl disposed man the whiche had robbed an Jimage of our’ lady At Allesford in hamshir’ was sone after hanged therfor At winchestre . wherunto J answerd ther openly that he had the more wrong’ . for if it so were : thann was he hanged for robyng’ of A ded stocke .

‘That is to say I have held and believed that images of the crucifix of our blessed lady and of other saints are nothing but dead stocks and stones; and therefore they ought not to be worshipped, nor should any offerings be made to them – and that it is wrongful to punish any man as a thief for stealing such offerings. Not long ago I was in company in Letcombe aforesaid, where it was spoken that an evil-disposed man who had robbed an image of our lady at Alresford in Hampshire was hanged soon after in Winchester. Whereupon I stated openly that he had the more wrong, for if this was the case, then he was hanged for the robbing of a dead stock.’ (MELD: D4113#5)

Accepting the claim that images and crucifixes are simply dead material objects completely devoid of anything divine, leads directly to the perceived absurdity of hanging a man for the *robbyng of A ded stocke*, which seen in this light constitutes a kind of ‘victimless crime’ not warranting the death penalty in the least. The Lollard rejection of manmade objects as receivers of veneration might be seen to echo Stephen’s sermon to the Sanhedrin in the book of Acts, where he points out that ‘the most high dwelleth not in temples made with [human] hands’ ‘the most high dwells not in temples made with [human] hands’ (Acts 7:48, 1611, KJV). However, it should be said that the Wycliffite or Lollard approach to the worshipping of images was not a monolithic one throughout the movement’s history, something that can be found demonstrated in the textual record of the Lollards: on the one hand, the *Thirty-Seven Conclusions* ‘advocates the destruction of images if they are the cause of popular idolatry’ (Hudson 1988: 304); on the other hand, the *Rosarium* ‘admits, as do others, that images and paintings may indeed teach those who cannot read’ (ibid.: 305).

The *Thirty-Seven Conclusions* has survived in two fifteenth-century manuscripts and one from the early sixteenth century, and consists of statements of the Lollard position, followed by justifications in the form of cited authorities. This work is, according to Hudson, one for which we have no direct historical usage context (not even from one single user of the work), something that makes its interpretation difficult (1988: 214). In other words, the precise nature and extent of its connection to the Lollard movement are not easy to ascertain. The *Rosarium* is an abbreviated form of a large religious handbook called the *Floretum*; both are ‘alphabetical sets of *distinctiones* on topics of theological, ethical, and ecclesiastical interest’ (Hudson: 1988:106). John Wyclif is quoted 180 times throughout the *Floretum*, and Hudson makes the point that the book supply needed to put together such a work suggests a direct connection to the Wycliffites/Lollards at Oxford and the ‘collaborative erudition’ taking place there (ibid.: 107-110).

In addition to the five recurring areas of concern outlined throughout this sub-chapter, the Lollards also held heterodox opinions on, among others, the sacrament of baptism, the last rites given to the dying, the necessity of prayer (in a church setting), fasting, and the conduct and merits of the priesthood. This diverse assembly of religious concerns may all in some way or another be traced back to the Lollard belief in a direct and unmediated relationship with an almighty God who was the sole keeper and wielder of his own divine power: as a natural consequence of this fundamental position, any sacrament of the English Church must, from the Lollard perspective, be rejected on account of the clergy's lack of power to perform them as anything more than mere symbolic acts; for *A man shold put his trust in god alone & in no-thinge bot in him* 'a man should put his trust in God alone and in nothing but him' (MELD: D0744#2).

2.3 The abjuration situation and the material reality of the abjuration texts

2.3.1 The immediate historical background of heresy hunting and heresy trials

The perceived necessity to seek out heretics and prosecute them was not a constant one in Late Medieval and Early Modern England, and such efforts proceeded in ebbs and flows; there was also much variation from diocese to diocese, or rather, from one bishop to another. One might say that the Lollards in England were on the whole left to their own devices, provided that they kept a low profile, until 'a bishop [periodically] took it upon himself to root out these heretics' (Ryrie 2017: 108). In other words, large-scale prosecution of Lollards was highly sporadic: a series of investigations in the 1420s were, for example, followed by a lull lasting more than fifty years, during which few heretics were uncovered and prosecuted (McSheffrey 1996: 8).

The fact that the frequency of heresy hunting and prosecution could often be directly related to the personal character of the bishop(s) currently in office is well demonstrated through the case of William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1503 to 1532. He was described by Foxe as being the "most vigorous prosecutor of Lollards in almost a century" (D'Alton 2005: 105), probably alluding to Thomas Arundel, who was Archbishop from 1397 until 1414. In addition to the personal zeal of Warham, his tenure as Archbishop also coincided in time with the decade directly preceding the onset of the Lutheran Reformation (ca. 1507–1517). The

combination of Warham's determination to root out Lollard heresy, and the growing reformatory pressures that permeated Europe at the time, resulted in several other bishops joining Warham in his efforts. Among these bishops were Edmund Audley (Salisbury), Richard Fitzjames (London), William Smith (Lincoln), Geoffrey Blythe (Coventry and Lichfield), Richard Mayew (Hereford), Richard Foxe (Winchester) and Richard Nykke (Norwich) (D'Alton 2005: 105). The corpus of the present study contains eight texts from the tenure of Edmund Audley in Salisbury and two from that of Richard Mayew in Hereford. These texts represent the large number of heresy trials that were carried out in the decade leading up to the Reformation, clearly indicating that the English ecclesiastical authorities, headed by Warham, saw heresy as an especially potent threat throughout that particular decade (ibid.: 103).

However, McSheffrey (1996: 8) points out that the seeking out and prosecution of Lollards started to intensify even before Warham became Archbishop, in that 'the establishment of the Tudor dynasty [in 1485] coincided with a renewal of prosecution.' A case can be made that the period of intensified prosecution of Lollards before the Reformation lasted from ca. 1485 until ca. 1517. The present corpus contains 23 texts that originate from this period of intensified prosecution – more than two thirds of the study corpus.

In England, then, efforts to root out heresy often took the form of a chain reaction, where historical circumstance and the actions of individual bishops would trigger a response from other parts of the higher clergy. In the period 1420–1530 McSheffrey counted a total of 955 individuals suspected for Lollardy in the major episcopal registers (1996: 165). While this is certainly a substantial number, given the population at the time and the spread of Lollardy, the count would have been much higher if the church authorities had constantly and unrelentingly prosecuted heretics through large-scale efforts throughout the period.

2.3.2 Heresy trial procedure: confession

There was considerable variation with regard to the precise details and practices surrounding heresy trials in Early Modern England. However, Gertz (2012: 21–7) has been able to outline the typical sequence and content of the proceedings in a heresy trial up until the mid-sixteenth century. No heresy trials were carried out without there already having been an investigation of the suspected heretic(s), and that contrary to what we might think, 'heresy investigation was not

always initiated or conducted by church officials.’ (Gertz 2012: 22). In fact, lay persons could be directly involved not only in the detection, but also in the judgement of heresy.

In the 30 abjuration and confessional texts that this thesis is concerned with, it is clear that the norm was that the bishops themselves oversaw the trial proceedings, occasionally having to delegate that responsibility to officially appointed deputies or commissaries. Typical venues for heresy trials included ‘the consistory court of a cathedral, a chapel in one of the bishop’s palaces, the hall of a bishop’s manor house, a parish church, and sometimes even the house of a scribe.’; on occasion a scaffolding would be constructed in order to elevate the examiners physically in relation to the suspected heretic(s) (Gertz 2012: 23).

There was no set standard of how long the trials would last, and whether they would be finished through the course of one day or several. The eye-witness account of an anonymous observer of the last examination of a Marian cleric named Rowland Taylor has survived, and provides us with a very rare glimpse into the initial proceedings of (in this case) a very public trial:

The anonymous author did not know Taylor personally but was curious enough to attend his trial. He reports that he came to St. Mary Ovaries, now Southwark Cathedral, “early in the morning” and fell into conversation with another audience member, Sir Henry Darcy, for two full hours before “iiii or v persons in gownes of clothe” (all persons to be examined) walked in with Rowland Taylor, who wore “a short gowne lyke a minister, or pryest ... his berd grete, and somewhat short cut.” After Taylor kneeled at one of the pillars to say the Lord’s Prayer, “there entered into the churche, y^e Bysshopes namely of Norwych [John Hopton], and Bathe [Gilbert Bourne]” succeeded later by Gardiner, the Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor. According to this account, Taylor invoked his audience directly during the trial, warning Gardiner “yf you cut me of I can Conclude nether shall yo^e understand what I meane nor I satisfie the people that perhapps like to be perswaded by the talke betwene us.” (Gertz 2012: 23–24)

This anonymous observation, if we are to take it at face value, indicates that some trials at least were not just communicative one-way streets where the examiners would exert total control over the development of the proceedings down to a word for word level of dictation. Rather it suggests that an accused heretic, at least in some cases, was able to assert his or her own individual voice within the framework of a heresy trial.

The formal part of the trial proceedings would start with the recording of basic information such as the name of the accused (and variably their professions), their hometown, diocese, as well as who was presiding in the trial (usually a bishop):

- (8) In the name of the holy trinite father sone and holy gost J **John' Godwynn of the paryshe of fyfeld w^t-yn the dyocesse of Sarum** confesse and openly knowlege her befor yo^u **Reuerend father yn god Edmond by the grace of god byshope of Sarum my ordenary** and alle that be gatherd ...

'In the name of the holy trinity, father, son and holy ghost; I John Goodwin of the parish of Fyfield within the diocese of Salisbury, confess and openly knowledge here before you reverend father in God, Edmond, by the grace of God Bishop of Salisbury, my ordinary and all that are gathered ...'

(MELD: D4114#1, my highlighting)

A heresy trial was usually conducted in English, as it was crucial that the accused heretics (who only in very rare cases would be able to speak Latin or French) could fully understand the proceedings and what they were actually confessing to. After the initial formalities had been sorted out, the trial would quickly shift over to directly addressing matters of heresy, where those to be examined would be subjected to a point by point interrogation. Because of the large degree of similarity between abjurations, and in particular the order in which the accused seem to have been asked about different kinds of heresy, Hudson (1988: 37) argues that the examiners might have been relying on previously formulated lists during the interrogational phase of many heresy trials.

Such lists would contain the articles, or the formal heresy charges, that 'formed the substance of a trial since they established what the defendant was accused of believing.' (Gertz 2012: 28). The specific articles, or charges, would be drawn up after the initial interrogation of the individual suspected of heresy, and they were often copied over from set lists, such as the list put together by Archbishop Chichele in 1428 (ibid.). In most cases, the articles drawn up for the purpose of a heresy trial have been lost as they were written on common paper, but the Early Modern historian John Foxe, who still had access to many registry entries, quotes several examples of articles, one of which reads:

First, that he had **red, taught, preached, published**, and obstinately **defended**, agaynst the lawes of almightie God: that tythes, or paying of tythes was neuer ordeined to be due, sauing only by the couetousnes of Priestes.

'First, that he had read, taught, preached, published, and obstinately defended, against the laws of almighty God: that tithes, or paying of tithes would never have been ordained to be due, if it had not been for the covetousness of priests.' (cited in Gertz 2012: 30, my highlighting)

The language of articles was highly formulaic, and one of the characteristics of this language was its use of a limited selection of recurring verbs where the suspected heretic has '*believed, thought, said, held, affirmed* and *taught* [also *defended, maintained, concealed, declared,*

learned, preached, published, read, spoken, sustained]’ a particular heresy (Gertz 2012: 24; see 6.3 and 8.3).

The questions from the examiners are not included in the abjuration texts, but the replies, or rather confessions given by the accused are preserved in the texts, presented as unsolicited statements in the first person, one after the other in a list; the following quotation from the confession of John Polley is typical in this regard:

- (9) J haue holdenn beleved taught and affermed certeynn fals Articles & opynions of heresy and erroures agayne many and diuerse sacramentes agaynn the trew *cristen*’ faithe and the determinacomm of holy Church . / **First not beleuyng in the blessed sacrament of the Auler** to be Cristes body in foorme of Bred . **Also that the sacrament of Baptime doonn** with the obseruaunces of the Church and in the fonte is not necessary . but to cristenn a childe rather in a Ryver or a ponde . **Also that oblacomm made & doonn in the Church** vnto ymages & vigoures of seintes shuld not be doon nor offred but rather distribute suche offrynges vnto poer men . **Also that no mann shulde worshipp no ymage in the Church** with the nor in other thinges for thei be but Stokkes . **Also that ther is no place of purgatory** . / ‘I have held, believed, taught and affirmed certain false articles and opinions of heresy and errors against many and diverse sacraments, against the true Christian faith and the determination of the holy Church. First, not believing that Christ’s body in the form of bread is present in the blessed sacrament of the altar. Also, that the sacrament of baptism performed with the observances of the church and in the font is not necessary, as the child could rather be christened in a river or a pond. Also, that oblations made and done in the church unto images and figures of saints should not be performed nor offered – such offerings should rather be distributed to poor men. Also, that no man should worship any image in the church or in any way besides, for they are only stocks [= material objects made of wood]. Also, that there is no place of purgatory.’ (MELD: D4440#17, my highlighting)

The list could run as long as eight consecutive heresy charge areas of concern, or it could simply consist of only a single charge. There was no set length for the confessional part of an abjuration text, as the number of charges was highly variable (cf. Table 11).

2.3.3 Heresy trial procedure: recantation and penalties

After the men and women accused of heresy had made their confession, they were then presented with the opportunity to recant at the behest of the presiding bishop. Many of the accused defendants chose to recant in the end, ‘at which point the notary wrote an official abjuration that both summarized the articles for which the accused confessed guilt and promised future conformity.’ (Gertz 2012: 25). After reading out loud the abjuration, or having it read back to them if necessary (many people were still illiterate in Early Modern England), typically while placing their right hand on a bible, they would add their signature to the abjuration document by

making a cross sign where the notary had left a space for this purpose – in the case that somebody could write, they would at times write their names fully out in a signature instead. It has been estimated that only 15% of labourers on average were able to write out their names in East Anglia, in the period 1580–1700; while the corresponding figure was 56% for tradesmen and craftsmen in the same area (Fox 2017: 137). A typical example of the recantation and signature is seen in the abjuration given by Richard Pytsyne, appearing before the Bishop of Winchester, ca. 1490:

- (10) J the said Richard Pytsyne otherwyse called Rychard Sawyer sory contryte & veray repentant from this day forthward **solemly abiure for-swere for-sake and expresly renowice** [sic] And also the keyynng & conceilynng of Englyssh bokes for-bodenn submytynng my-selff opynly and expresly to the payne Rygor and sharpenesse of law y^e a personn relapsed aught to suffer by the lawe Jf y doo or presume to Attempte the contrary of this my present Abiuracyonn ... Ceesyng in alle this Abouesayd alle maner of fraude Decepcyon' malegyn' Cautelles and dissymilacyonn also god help me and his holy Euangelys **And Jnto the wyttensse ther'of to this present my abiuracyon' J put to my signe** †
- 'I the said Richard Pytsyne, otherwise called Richard Sawyer, sorry, contrite and very repentant, from this day forward solemnly abjure, forswear, forsake and expressly renounce [all confessed heresies], and also the keeping and concealing of forbidden English books; submitting myself openly and expressly to the pain, rigour and severity of the law, if I should do or presume to attempt the contrary of this my present abjuration ... Ceasing in all this above-said, all manner of fraud, deception, 'bad-eyeing' [?], trickery and hypocrisy; also help me God and his holy evangels; and in witness thereof I put my sign † to this my present abjuration.' (MELD: D3049#1, my highlighting)

It did happen on occasion that a confessed heretic would blatantly refuse to recant the heresies he or she had just confessed to; such incidents were, however, not dealt with lightly by the examiners and this routinely lead to 'conviction for obstinacy, excommunication, and 'relaxation to the secular arm' (transfer to the sheriff for execution).' (Gertz 2012: 25). The penalty of execution in these matters was carried out through public burnings (a practice instituted by the *De Heretico Comburendo*, a law passed by Parliament in 1401; Hudson 1988: 15; *ibid.*: 175) and anyone who had previously recanted but later acted contrary to their abjuration and promise to desist from heretical acts, was subjected to the same punishment of being burned alive – if the ecclesiastical authorities decided to hand them over to the secular authorities, which had exclusive legal authority to carry out the execution of a 'relapsed' heretic. The English Church could investigate and convict heretics, but they could not by themselves subject a heretic to the death penalty.

The average man or woman would choose to recant after their confession(s), and the harsh penalty for not doing so provided more than sufficient incentive to recant, even if the

convicted heretic in reality regretted nothing at all. By recanting, one would be spared the death penalty by burning, but a convicted heretic (having recanted) was nonetheless facing public humiliation and shaming:

Penances usually required the appearance of the penitent bare-footed, bare-headed, and in plain clothing on a market day in [his or] her hometown; flogging of the penitent; and the requirement that [he or] she offer a candle at the parish church. Usually the penitent also carried a faggot [= a bundle of sticks, symbolically related to the practice of burning heretics] and led the parish procession on Sunday, facing the congregation during the sermon and sometimes (before or after the sermon) reading a recantation. Penitents often wore embroidered faggots on the outside of their garments for life, symbolizing their recantation. (Gertz 2012: 26)

It is clear that any individual at the time that could be connected to any kind of heresy, whether they had recanted or not, or were relapsed heretics, did not come out of it unscathed. Heresy was a serious matter in Early Modern England, and being accused and convicted of heresy was either a life-changing or a life-ending event.

2.3.4 The material reality of abjuration texts

The 30 texts that make up the present corpus of abjuration and confession texts all originate from episcopal registers (also referred to as bishops' registers), where the heresy trial proceedings have been recorded. These registers are collected in codices, which are manuscript volumes constructed by using sheets gathered together, making up large books. The material written upon is without exception parchment in the case of all main English episcopal registers of the time (Hudson 1988: 34), and this material fact is the main reason that most of these registers have survived until the present day, unlike their counterparts found in the courtbooks from the same time, which often were made of paper instead.

The fundamental limitation inherent to the study of all written historical materials, and especially so for materials separated from us by the passing of centuries, is the fact that 'we have to rely on written texts with their constraints and haphazard survival histories' (Jucker & Taavitsainen 2013: 31). This entails that we will always be working with the texts that survived, as parts of a larger puzzle, where many pieces undoubtedly are lost to us forever, in an attempt to restore the underlying full picture as far as we can go. This means that we have to work with the texts that actually survived. According to Hudson, the episcopal registers (from the period 1380–

1535) where abjuration texts are usually found have not survived completely in all dioceses across England; however, she also points out that the documentation is still extensive (1988: 32). In other words, despite not having as complete a record of the texts involved that we would like, the extant texts are many, and they come from all parts of England – meaning that they do make up a sufficiently coherent total body of textual documentation for us to make use of in historical (linguistic) research, and that we to a large degree are able to make generalisations from.

Considering the fact that episcopal registers containing heresy abjurations generally were carefully written by professional scribes in a very legible script, makes it likely that the text that has survived is a copy of the actual transcript from the court proceedings. It is impossible to know with certainty if anything was removed or added by the final scribe in these situations, but considering the quantity of clearly non-formulaic additions made by the abjurors (cf. Table 14), the present study will treat the strictly confessional content at face value – while still keeping in mind that the abjuration texts do not necessarily reflect the actual words spoken by the abjurors put on trial at all times.

A direct consequence of having to work with the very texts that survived, in context with other historical factors influencing the production of such texts, is that the body of texts available to the present study will not have an ideal geographical or chronological distribution with regard to generalisation and potential variations across different dioceses in England; these issues and their implications are addressed in Chapter 4.3.

3 Theoretical concepts

3.1 Genre, and how it relates to text type

The concept of genre has proved to be a problematic one in scholarly literature: genre as a term is universally recognised as being an approach to how we denote and distinguish between types or classes of literature. ‘Even so’, as Swales puts it, ‘genre remains a fuzzy concept, a somewhat loose term of art.’ (1990: 33) – as the various ways literary works have been grouped together or distinguished from one another through history are almost innumerable and highly variable (Abrams & Harpham 2012: ‘genres’). Also, how any scholarly tradition chooses to employ the concept of genre will always be a product of how genre itself is viewed at a particular time and place: when discussing the view of genre in recent years, especially in the US, Swales’ impression is that:

genre has ... become associated with a disreputably formulaic way of constructing (or aiding the construction of) particular texts – a kind of writing or speaking by numbers. (1990: 33)

This is, however, only one of the possible ways to approach genre. In his own definition of genre, Swales focuses on communicative purpose instead of seeing genre as nothing more than ‘writing or speaking with numbers’ (see 3.2).

The present study will employ the ‘two-tier model’ presented by Jucker and Taavitsainen (2013: 148–9), which makes a clear distinction between the concept of genre and the concept of text type. Genre, in this model, refers to “classifications according to external sociocultural evidence”, whereas text type is classified ‘according to [the] internal linguistic features of a text’ (ibid.: 149).

The distinction between sociocultural function and linguistic form is a highly useful one for analytical purposes. However, since seemingly pure linguistic features are by contextual necessity identified and described according to the function they perform in a text, it is in practice impossible to separate text type from genre completely: when we are identifying purely textual traits through their function, this might be said to constitute a non-linguistic approach to the sorting of linguistic content. Any written text may be seen as a product where ‘objective’ features such as orthography must be inextricably linked in any functional sense to ‘subjective’ circumstances, such as interpretation and expectation. When we separate genre from text type,

then, we are dealing with something that might be classified as mild reductionism, akin to explaining the nature of a whole by looking at its respective immediate parts. In this sense, working within a framework where genre is separated from text type is a simplification, albeit a useful one: as long as we keep in mind that such a distinction is an artificial construct, the distinction will be helpful as it puts us in a position to address genre (sociocultural function) and text type (internal linguistic features) more precisely when the two are not conflated with each other.

Thus, even though the terms genre and text type will often be overlapping and in some cases interchangeable, they will be distinguished throughout this study. The term genre signals that the main focus lies on the sociocultural function of the textual material, and conversely, when the term text type is used, the main focus lies on the internal linguistic features. The understanding that these two concerns overlap is, however, kept in mind throughout this study.

3.2 Genre: A working definition and the previous approach of Gertz (2012)

In Jucker and Taavitsainen's 'two-tier model', the concept of genre relates primarily to the sociocultural functions of a text (see 3.1). A sociocultural perspective in the context of written materials concerns 'the social and cultural knowledge, ... and all background and experiential knowledge that inform the reader [or writer].' (Blue 2012: 165). Any number of features could, accordingly, be included in the definition of genres; however, for working purposes a simpler, practical definition will be required. To this effect the study will make use of Swales' working definition of genre, which he states in the following way:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, examples of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience.
(1990: 58)

This working definition establishes a bridge between communicative rationales (i.e. reasons and justifications for a genre's existence) and the realised schematic structures that make up the

discourse of that particular genre. Hudson (1988: 37) suggests that the examiners responsible for carrying out the heresy enquiries investigating suspected Lollards might have been using previously formulated lists of heresies as they questioned the defendants (see 2.3.2). Such lists would, if they indeed existed, be a very concrete manifestation of the ‘schematic structures’ mentioned in Swales’ definition of genre – this definition, then, seems especially applicable to the formulaic structures that are central to abjuration texts as a genre. It should also be noted, in keeping with the discussion in Chapter 3.1, that such schematic structures cannot exist on their own as abstract concepts of sociocultural function: they must at the same time exist as concrete linguistic features; as sentences, phrases, words and so on.

Abjurations as a genre have been discussed by Gertz (2012), who studied the social dynamics surrounding women’s writing and authorship in the context of religious persecution and censorship in England in the period 1400–1670. She dedicates an entire chapter of her book to what she refers to as the ‘literary genres of heresy trial’ (Gertz 2012: 19), where abjurations are assessed from a genre-centric point of view. Gertz’ approach to abjuration texts as genre corresponds well to Swales’ working definition and its focus on a communicative purpose or rationale for the genre existing in the first place, when she points out that:

Abjurations, like articles, paid homage to the individual voice. They were written in the first person, required a signature, and appeared to represent the true belief of the signatory. Despite the extreme ventriloquism of the situation, where the words of the defendant were both composed and recorded by the authority, that same authority presumed to recognize the speaking defendant as an individual. (Gertz 2012: 33)

According to Gertz (2012: 33), the abjuration situation, and thus the genre that was manifested in it, was intended to make a lasting and powerful impression on any individual subjected to a heresy trial. Throughout her discussion of the genre, Gertz is mainly interested in the sociocultural implications of abjuration texts, and especially in the ways in which they and the situation in which they were created functioned as instruments of oppression. Gertz’ view that the genre of abjurations communicates a consciously oppressive rationale, resonates with the point that Miller (1984: 165) makes about a genre’s ability to decide and delimit what is possible in a given communicative situation:

[W]hat we learn when we learn a genre is not just a pattern of forms or even a method of achieving our own ends. We learn, more importantly, what ends we may have: we learn that we may eulogize, apologize ... We learn to understand better the situations in which we find ourselves[.] (1984: 165)

The ‘ends we may have’ might be construed as a commentary on a genre’s ability to ‘dictate’ behaviour and its ability to set up boundaries for what is possible to do within its framework, without breaking out of the confines of that same genre, or situation.

Abjuration texts as instruments of oppression were, as Gertz sees it, given functional reality through ‘the words of [a] defendant [being] both *composed* and recorded by the authority’ (2012: 33, my italics), leaving no room for the individual voice of an abjurer to assert itself. In this understanding of the heresy trial situation, the abjurers are subjected to a form of ‘extreme ventriloquism’ (ibid.), where the sentiments and positions that are attributed to them in the abjuration texts are put in their mouths by the examiners through a form of dictation.

While the present study will share with Gertz (2012) an understanding of genre as a fundamentally sociocultural enterprise, it will also depart from Gertz’ approach by subjecting the texts to a thorough and systematic study in order to ascertain to which extent the texts are composed of formulaic or non-formulaic elements – thus facilitating the possibility of a different interpretation than that of Gertz.

3.3 Text type

As the present study distinguishes between the concepts of genre and text type, the latter concept should next be defined. The working definition of text type that is used throughout this study is that suggested by Görlach (2004: 105). The definition might be divided into two parts, where the first part is stated in the following way:

A text type is a specific linguistic pattern in which formal/structural characteristics have been conventionalized in a specific culture for certain well-defined and standardized uses of language[.] (Görlach 2004: 105)

The second part of the definition goes on to state that the cultural conventionalisation must be of such a nature that any speaker or listener will be able to judge: (a) whether linguistic features are being used correctly according to the expectations of a specific text type; (b) whether the formula inherent to the text type is used appropriately with regard to topic or situation etc.; (c) whether text types have intentionally or inadvertently ended up in a mixed configuration or in a situation where they are misused; (d) the designation – or rather the name – of a text type, knowing not

only the characteristic features of a text type, but also its agreed-upon name (Görlach 2004: 105). This last point, concerning the name or designation of a text type, finds a clear analogy in what Swales calls ‘[a] discourse community’s nomenclature for genres’ (1990: 54).

Görlach’s definition of text type acknowledges from the outset that when we are making sense of seemingly pure linguistic features, we are relying on non-linguistic culture-dependent judgements in order to achieve this. This is evident in the first part of the definition where Görlach talks about ‘formal/structural characteristics [that] have been conventionalized in a specific culture’ (2004: 105; see 3.3): when we are looking at linguistic information (e.g. the form of a verb), contained in a particular phrase that serves a specific communicative function, we are bound to use non-linguistic categorisation of linguistic content in order to put the pure linguistic content into a meaningful context. Otherwise, we would not be able to connect textual features to the world of human interactions, or intentions, in any shape or form; the features would be left on the page as abstract theoretical concepts incapable of interaction with the real world.

Although the designation of abjuration texts as one particular text type satisfies all the criteria given in Görlach’s definition, a case might be made that an abjuration text is actually made up of several text types simultaneously. If we, like Görlach, rely on the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (SOED) to provide a list of widely recognised text types in English, we will find that an abjuration text is at least made up by the following eight text types (2004: 24–88):

- ❖ Abjuration
- ❖ Account
- ❖ Assertion
- ❖ Confession
- ❖ Declaration
- ❖ Oath
- ❖ Proclamation
- ❖ Statement

However, the present study will treat these texts simply as ‘abjurations’ (or as ‘confessions’, see 4.1). First, the Late Medieval or Early Modern abjuration perfectly fulfils Görlach’s criteria for a self-contained text type, in that the texts might be seen as individual instances of a specific

linguistic pattern where it would be possible for a reader to notice whether this pattern has been used appropriately and/or correctly (see 9.2). Secondly, abjurations were recognised in their own time as being a self-contained text type, as is evident from contemporary designations made in the margins of manuscripts. It would also lie outside the scope of the constraints of the study to assess all the different SOED text types as distinct text types in the abjuration texts making up the corpus.

Hence, whenever the term ‘text type’ is used through the course of the study, this term is used and understood on the basis of Görlach’s definition: text type will refer to text-internal linguistic features that are categorised by non-linguistic means, such as social and historical context.

3.4 Communicative function as a principle of categorisation

Given the definition of genre as a series of communicative events, it makes sense to approach the genre characteristics of abjuration texts from the point of view of communicative function.

Accordingly, this study will use an approach from pragmatics, where utterances (written or spoken) are studied and categorised from the perspective of their communicative aspect.

Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice describe the pragmatic approach to language data in the following way:

Pragmatics focuses on contextualised uses of language, viewing language as a communicative instrument that responds to and is shaped by the pressures of actual situations of verbal [and written] interaction with specific communicative purposes and specific speech contexts. It is the pragmatician’s task to describe how larger utterances and verbal [as well as written] exchanges cohere, *what kinds of communicative functions utterances perform*, and what the unspoken “rules” of communication are. (2007: 13, my italics)

Following from this, a case might be made that an abjuration text, seen as an undivided whole, displays one specific communicative purpose in that it performs the communicative function of signalling and documenting that an individual has confessed and recanted a set of heresies spoken and held *a-gaynste the Faithe And the determinacioun of all holy church* (MELD: D4112#7). However, the act of confession on the one hand and of recantation on the other, do not share one identical communicative purpose: in the former the purpose is to admit to having committed certain heresies, whereas in the latter, the purpose is to formally communicate the

renunciation of these same heresies and admit to having held erroneous beliefs. Thus, we may divide an abjuration text into two distinct parts: (a) the confession and (b) the recantation – on account of “what kinds of communicative functions [the two parts] perform” (Taavitsainen & Fitzmaurice 2007: 13).

In the same manner we might investigate whether the first part of an abjuration can be further divided into other parts or communicatively distinct elements. The following passage represents the first four manuscript lines of Thomas Hygons’ abjuration, given in 1509 to Richard Mayew, the Bishop of Hereford:

- (11) Jn the name of god Amenn J Thomas hygons of wolastorn late of Newland and last of alle wirkyng’ in micheldeane in the diocise of hereford knowlege be-fore yow Reuerend Fadir in god Richard busshopp of hereford my Ordinarie
- ‘In the name of God, Amen; I, Thomas Hygons of Wollaston, late of Newland, and most recently working in Mitcheldean in the diocese of Hereford, acknowledge before you, reverend father in God, Richard, bishop of Hereford, my ordinary[.]’ (MELD: D0746#7)

In this passage it is possible to identify at least four different communicative functions at work. These functions might be defined as shown in Table 1:

	Communicative function	Element of text
(i)	Invocation of God for the trial proceedings.	Jn the name of god Amenn
(ii)	Introducing a confessional statement.	J ... knowlege be-fore yow
(iii)	Stating name and other identifying details.	Thomas hygons of wolastorn late of Newland and last of alle wirkyng’ in micheldeane in the diocise of hereford
(iv)	Naming the recipient of the abjuration, and recognising the recipient’s status.	Reuerend Fadir in god Richard busshopp of hereford my Ordinarie

Table 1. Examples of communicative linguistic functions in an abjuration text

Elements (i), (iii) and (iv) consist of continuous strings of text without any gaps or interruptions; in contrast, element (ii) is split into two parts with element (iii) appearing in the middle. The words *J ... knowlege be-fore yow* communicate the introduction of a confessional statement, regardless of whether we insert the name or other details from function (iii) between *J* and

knowlege. This means that one function, (iii) in this case, may be embedded inside another function, (ii) in this case, without changing the fundamental communicative coherence of (ii) in any way. In other words, we cannot always expect that communicative functions are carried out by simple and perfectly consecutive elements.

It may also be noted that the elements distinguished in Table 1 are not directly dependent on each other in terms of their communicative function. If we, for example, remove (i) the invocation, this does not affect the core communicative purpose of (ii) stating one's name and the place from where one hails. In Görlach's definition of what constitutes text type, it is essential that any person with knowledge of the typical usage of a particular text type will be able to judge whether the formula inherent to the text type is used appropriately, with regard to topic or situation (2004: 105). Categorising and dividing the features of the abjuration texts according to communicative purpose, will enable us to map an entire abjuration text and express this as a sequence of different textual elements that can be discussed separately and compared across texts (see Figures 3 and 4). In Table 2 the entire abjuration of Robert Makamm (MELD: D4114#6) has been categorised on the basis of communicative functions:

	Communicative function	Element of text
(i)	Invocation	<u>In the Name of gode Amen</u>
(ii) ^a	Proclamation of guilt, part 1	J ...
(iii)	Stating of name and toponymic	Robert Makamm othir-wise callid Robert Bragge of the pareshe of keville w ^t in the dioc' of Sarum
(ii) ^b	Proclamation of guilt, part 2	... confesse and opynly knowlege here before yo ^u ...
(iv)	Naming of the receiver of the abjuration	Reuerende Fadir Edmounde by god-is sufferance bisshopp of Sarum my Jugge and ordenari :
(ii) ^c	Proclamation of guilt, part 3	And alle that here be gedred at this tyme : that J Synfulle wreche haue presumed to movche of my owne mynde : where-throughe J haue falleynn in to the ~~~ greoue and horrible Synne of heresie . And have affirmed and Spokynn great ~~~ herresies and false opynions reproued and dampned bi alle holy churche ayenst the trew doctrine lawes and <i>determinacoun</i> of the saide churche in souche maner and forme as her-eaftur ensveth :

(v)	Confession: against prayer in a church context	that is to saye : <u>J have openly</u> : Affirmid and saide that my praieris is as good in the feilde as in the churche :
(vi)	Confession: against the worshipping of images	Allsoo J have : Affirmed and saide that the crucifix . And othir ymages in the churche y-made of Stockis and stones : Are but ydollis . And oght not to be worshipp : Addyng' and saying' : that Balle the Carpynter or Pyke the Masonn . cowde Make as goode as the crucifix : for hit is but a crowkyd Stocke : And yn reprove iff [uncertain reading] and despite thereof : J lyke an vntrew belevyng' mann have castid my cappe at the picture and figure of saint Gregori-is petey ~~~ Jtm' More-ovyr J have saide and affirmed . yf J hadde the crucifix and othur sayntis yn the churche . J wolde caste them yn-to the fyre and brenne them ~~~
(vii)	Confession: against the sacrament of the altar	Allsoo J have not Stedefastly belevid on the sacrament of the Awter : Saying' J have noought to doo therewith : by-cause hit is made with manys handis : And therefore J wil beleve on noo othir thyng' but of the great Gode ~~~
(viii)	Formal recantation	<u>Wherefore</u> J the saide Robert Makam othirwise callid Robert Bragge : now by the grace of alle-myghty god and throughe the helpe and Councelle of true doctrine And true cristenn menn : know my great offences : and am very penitent And sorie that J have offendid greuovsly : Ayenst god . and the trew feithe of his holy churche And have detestacoun of the foresaide . and alle othir heresies And erroures and ~~~ them alle forsake and abiure
(ix)	Promise to act, (in this case: to believe and hold the true faith of the church)	Promittyng' verelie and faithfully from hens-forthwarde to beleve and holde the cristenn faithe tawght prechid and obseruid by alle holy churche
(x)	Promise to desist from heresy in the future	And from this tyme forthwarde J shalle nevyr holde teche preche nor defende <i>prively</i> nor openly directely nor Indirectely . the foresaide nor anye othir hereseis [<i>sic</i>] or erroures Soo god me helpe and this holy euangelistes :
(xi)	Submission to the ecclesiastical authorities	Submyttyng' my selffe vnto the payne and Rigoor of the lawe that a mann abiurid : and fallen Agayne to heresie oought to have . and to suffur in Suche caas iff evir J doo or holde contrarie to this my abiuracoun or to any poynte of the Same :
(xii)	Signing with a cross sign	In wittnesse whereof J subscribe withe my owne hande makyng' A Croosse +

(xiii)	Request to those present to bear witness to the abjuration	And Require alle cristenn menn here present to recorde and wittnesse ayenst me of this mye confessioun and abiuracoun : iff J hereaftor offende or doo contrarie to the same in Any poynte ☞
--------	--	--

Table 2. Categorisation of the elements of an abjuration text by communicative function

The corpus includes other elements, or self-contained communicative functions, that are not represented in Table 2 (e.g. confessions concerning the sacrament of baptism and being in possession of unlawful books etc.). These other elements have, however, been categorised based on the same principles as in Table 2.

3.5 Defining formulaicness

For most researchers, the nub of the problem with identification is figuring out where novel language stops and formulaic language begins.

As Wray (2009: 28) points out in the introductory quotation, in order to say anything about potential formulaic or non-formulaic language in a text or elsewhere, we need to define these concepts in such a way that we can make a meaningful distinction between what constitutes a formula and what does not. For this purpose, the present study will rely on a modified version of Wray's *morpheme equivalent unit* (henceforth MEU) definition of formulaic language. A MEU is defined by Wray as:

a word or word string, whether incomplete or including gaps for inserted variable items, that is processed like a morpheme, that is, without recourse to any form-meaning matching of any sub-parts it may have. (Wray 2008: 12)

Morphemes might be defined as 'the smallest meaningful units which may constitute words or parts of words' (Jackson & Amvela 2007: 3). An example of a morpheme is the verb form *is* and another is the verb suffix *-ing* used to create gerunds such as *singing* (noun); neither *is* nor *-ing* can be broken into smaller units that still carry meaning. In Wray's definition of formulaic language as consisting of MEUs, this same characteristic of not being able to be broken into smaller meaningful units, is carried over to words and phrases; a good example of this is the idiomatic expression *face the music*. In that particular configuration the words *face*, *the* and

music convey a notion of confronting consequences of some sorts, but if we break the phrase into its constituent parts, that particular meaning is impossible to sustain.

Wray's definition of formulaic language is to a large degree formulated for the purpose of assessing spoken language in modern contexts, and is as a result not the best fit for a highly repetitive and formulaic historical text type such as abjuration texts in its original form. Wray's definition and its intended usage-context seem to reflect the overall field-specific bias towards spoken modern language suggested by the studies done on formulaic language since 1970 listed by Pawley (2007).

Wray's MEU approach is also clearly intended to be used with smaller units of language than those which we often find performing particular linguistic functions in abjuration texts, where such a unit may stretch over multiple sentences. One fundamental aspect that needs to be addressed in the context of linguistic functions in abjuration texts versus, for example, idiomatic expressions in spoken language is: when it comes to expressions such as *face the music*, we have no choice but to treat that particular string of words in the same way as a morpheme, if we are to keep its meaning intact at all. If we, on the other hand, look at phrases such as *Ayent the determinacoun of the holy church* (MELD: D4113#7) – frequently employed in abjuration texts to denote something that is not in accordance with orthodoxy as prescribed by the English Church – it is possible to change that phrase in many ways without fundamentally changing its meaning: the constructed phrases *not in keeping with church doctrine*, or *contrary to the true faith* might be said to mean essentially the same thing – their difference being one of nuance, and not of essential character in the context of an abjuration text. Accordingly, it would be possible to vary and reformulate much of the language in an abjuration text, but the individuals responsible for the wording of abjuration accounts or heresy trials very often *chose* not to do so. These realisations, coupled with the highly repetitive nature of abjuration texts (in relation to spoken language) have led to the following modified version of Wray's MEU approach that will serve as the working definition of what constitutes formulaic language throughout this study:

A linguistic element is formulaic if it consists of a word or word string performing a specific communicative function, whether incomplete or including gaps for inserted variable items, that is used repeatedly and consistently, by volition and not by necessity.

The requirement of being consistent is not to be taken as meaning absolute or 100% consistency, but rather a very high degree of consistency with regard to linguistic form. The consistency

required for any given textual element to be an example of any given formula is hard to quantify in numbers, and it is probably best to approach this question in the same way that Görlach (2004: 105) approaches the concept of text type (see 3.3), where a discourse community's ability to recognise whether a text type is used according to expectation or not, takes part in defining that very text type – i.e. if a textual element performing the same function usually performed by an agreed-upon formula is impossible or very hard to recognise as that particular formulaic structure, that would mean that it deviates too much from expected consistency.

Three examples from the corpus of abjuration texts, demonstrate how the working definition separates formulaic from non-formulaic language, and how these texts perform different linguistic functions (see 3.4):

- i. (12) In the name of god Amen .
'In the name of God, Amen.' (MELD: D0677)

- ii. (13) And hereuponn J the said Alice confesse that vponn thre yeres passed vponn A saynctes eve that was A fast commaunded by the church : J eete bacomm in mynn owenn hows . hauyg' no regard vnto the sayd fast .
'And hereupon I the said Alice confess that on a saint's eve three years ago that was a fast commanded by the church, I ate bacon in my own house, having no regard for the said fast.'
(MELD: D4113#2)

- iii. (14) J haue Radde and taughte agayn the veneracoun and worshipyng off Jmages stondyng in churchis callyng thaym Maumentes[.]
'I have read and taught against the veneration and worshipping of images standing in churches, calling them mammals [= false gods or idols].'
(MELD: D0746#1)

The phrase in (i), as a self-contained whole, performs the introductory function of invoking God, which also frames the entire following heresy trial proceedings in that context; the text that follows immediately after this invocation performs a very different function, being a proclamation of the accused heretic's guilt. This invocational phrase, or pattern, is almost always present in the beginning of an abjuration in identical or almost identical wording – as such it is repeated in a consistent way, as if the entire phrase is treated in the same way as a morpheme. In other words, the phrase in (i) satisfies all the criteria for formulaic language in the working definition, and is by definition, then, an example of formulaic language.

The text in (ii) might also be said to constitute a self-contained whole, where it performs the function of confessing to not having observed fasting as required by the church. This textual

element seen as a whole is, unlike the invocation in (i), not repeated in other abjurations in the study corpus, neither is it consistent in any meaningful way with other confessions related to fasting. It cannot be treated as a morpheme, as the components are not bound together in a set configuration; the abjurer might for instance replace the entire bit about eating “bacon in my own house”, with a confessional detail where the ‘I’ (Alice Bisshopp) instead had gone on a picnic in the woods with other Lollards and there consumed sausages. By not satisfying the criteria of repetition and consistency, the textual element must, according to the working definition, be an example of non-formulaic language.

There will of course be examples where a self-contained linguistic unit might include both formulaic and non-formulaic traits simultaneously, and this is often the case in the confessional part of an abjuration text (see 7.3.1): the text in (iii) is precisely such an example; and by applying the same principles as described for (i) and (ii) we see that (iii) contains both a formulaic heresy charge concerning the ‘reading’ and ‘teaching’ against the worshipping of images, and a non-formulaic addition, not repeated in other texts, where the abjurer characterises the images as being *Maumentes*. As a consequence, it will not be possible to categorise (iii) as either fully formulaic or non-formulaic. Using the working definition to draw a boundary between formulaic and non-formulaic elements is analogous to Langacker’s approach to ‘prototype’:

A prototype is a typical instance of a category, and other elements are assimilated to the category on the basis of their perceived resemblance to the prototype; there are degrees of membership based on degrees of similarity. (Langacker, cited in Taylor 2003: 69)

It will always be a *perceived* resemblance to, or difference from, a prototype or formula as we see it, that will be the final arbiter concerning where the boundary should be drawn with regard to formulaicness. Taylor (2003: 69) points out that the boundaries between prototype categories are often ‘fuzzy’, i.e. hard to pinpoint with exactness – this is inevitable when we are relying on perceived similarities or differences. On account of this, examples such as (iii) will in the present study be categorised and understood as elements that are initiated by a formulaic heresy charge, which is then followed by one or more non-formulaic additions. The ‘fuzziness’ of trying to draw clear-cut boundaries between formulaic and non-formulaic elements makes it impossible to designate (iii) as being fully one or the other.

Since the working definition depends on repetition and consistency in order to classify textual elements as either formulaic or non-formulaic, the small study corpus of only 30 texts might be problematic with regard to such classifications: the possibility will always exist that a wording that appears only once in the corpus, might in fact appear frequently in other abjuration texts. If this was the case, we would be lead to wrongly classify a formulaic element as non-formulaic element instead. We have no choice but to relate to the corpus as it stands in our classification and analysis, but the low number of texts involved carries with it the implication that when we classify something as either being formulaic or non-formulaic, there might be a chance that we are not getting the full picture in the limited corpus of abjuration texts included in the present study.

4 The corpus of abjuration texts and methodology

4.1 General overview

The corpus that constitutes the data of the present study is comprised of 30 manuscript texts sourced from materials collected for the MELD corpus assembled at the University of Stavanger. The corpus consists of 28 abjuration texts containing confessions of heresy and a following recantation of those same heresies; in addition to two confession texts that do not include a recantation of the confessed heresies. The confession texts are otherwise so similar to abjuration texts in all other respects, that they are assessed like abjuration texts when the features assessed are not related to recantation (where they have to be excluded). The texts have been preserved in English bishops' registers from the dioceses Ely, Hereford, Lincoln, Salisbury and Winchester (see 2.3.4). The historical time-frame of the texts spans from the first half of the fifteenth century to the early sixteenth century.

4.2 Corpus selection

4.2.1 The selection process: Quantity

Among the materials collected and registered for the MELD corpus, 73 abjuration texts and 6 confession texts (79 in total) have so far been identified. The present corpus assembled for the present study consists of 30 texts selected from the total number of texts available. In order to be searchable, the texts have to be transcribed from manuscript into machine-readable text. At the start of the project, 12 out of the 79 texts in total had already been transcribed by members of the MELD team and included in the first version of the MELD corpus. As transcription is a time-consuming process, it was decided to include these 12 already-transcribed texts in the present study from the start, in order to utilise all appropriate data already fully available, and to increase the total number of texts in the final study corpus. Considering the time-requirement balanced with the corpus' potential for generalisation, it was decided that adding 18 more texts to the corpus was feasible and desirable: transcribing these texts as part of the study would provide more valuable primary source material for the study, and at the same time it would benefit the MELD corpus.

4.2.2 The selection process: Two phases

From a text selection standpoint, the study corpus can be divided into two selection phases: *phase I* and *phase II*. Phase I comprises all the texts that were already transcribed at the outset of this study, and which have been selected using passive selection criteria (in that they existed and were already transcribed in the first place). Phase II comprises all the texts that have been transcribed as part of the present study, and which have been selected using active selection criteria (having actively been selected for use in the study).

As far as possible, the phase II selection of texts was based on the following five criteria:

(1) *Preference of abjuration texts over confession texts*: Some texts do not contain both a confession and a following recantation, and are as such not strictly abjurations, but rather confession texts. The present study's decision to focus strictly on abjuration texts has been translated into the following selection criterion: Only abjuration text are selected, the only exception being if the number of such texts would be insufficient for the study.

(2) *Geographical/diocesan distribution*: The MELD corpus contains no abjuration or confession texts from any diocese in Northern England, 3 texts from the diocese of Hereford in the west, Eastern England is represented with 12 texts, from the dioceses Ely and Lincoln (where 6 of the texts these are strictly confession texts) and the rest of the texts originate from Southern England, from the dioceses Salisbury and Winchester (64 texts). In order to be able to provide any generalisations concerning the texts in a wider perspective, and not just on the basis of individual dioceses, the different dioceses included need to be represented to a sufficient degree in the material. From this we might formulate the following selection criteria: The final selection of texts should, as far as is possible, consist of an equal representation of texts from all the dioceses that are included in the study.

(3) *Chronological representation*: The Salisbury texts, which on their own almost make up the entirety of the possible texts to choose from, originate from the tenure of three different bishops. In order to maximise the limited text corpus' ability to provide generalisations about late- and post-medieval fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century abjuration texts, it is important to make use the chronological spread present in the material. The selection criterion that has been decided following from this is: The texts originating from the tenure of the three bishops should

be represented according to the ratio that exists between these bodies of texts in the MELD corpus.

(4) *Text length representation*: No significant differences pertaining to text length seem to be present in the abjuration texts in the MELD corpus, also when taking geography and chronology into consideration; the texts range from being the length of a short paragraph to cover more than one codex leaf in manuscript form. For the purpose of representation and generalisation, this variety of text length should be reflected in the study corpus as well – this has been translated into the following selection criterion: The study corpus must include a varied selection where short-length, medium-length and long abjurations are all sufficiently represented.

(5) *National average gender representation*: The national average gender representation in English late- and post-medieval fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century abjuration texts was approximately 72 % men versus 28 % women (McSheffrey 1996: 165). A limited corpus of 30 texts will not be ideal with regards to generalisation, but by taking gender representation into account, the potential for generalisation will be increased. This leads directly to the last selection criterion: The study corpus should as far as is possible or feasible reflect the national average gender distribution seen in abjuration texts across England.

The criteria of chronological representation, text-length representation and gender representation will always be subject to compromise, as the different parameters are distributed across the texts in many different ways: for example, if we were to make the selection primarily based on gender representation alone, this might have introduced potentially detrimental implications for the representation of the other parameters relating to chronology and text-length – instead, in order to attain a good overall representation, a compromise must be made between all parameters involved. With this in mind, the possible texts were non-randomly grouped into five groups according to the aforesaid five parameters, and the final selection was made by random selection from these groups. The final selection on the level of concrete texts was made random in order to avoid confirmation bias and ‘cherry-picking’ of texts.

4.3 The corpus and implications for generalisation

The choice of working closely with a smaller selection of texts, looking at several parameters, will yield different kinds of results from a corpus study made with fewer parameters and a much

larger selection of texts involved. It allows us to go more in-depth, but at the same time also means that the spread and quantity of material will be more limited; this makes it more difficult to make generalisations from the results of the data collected from the texts. This will to an extent be remedied by assessing the features of the abjuration texts included in the present study in relation to the general characteristics of such texts, as outlined by Anne Hudson in her large study of the Lollard movement and associated texts (1988: 32–39); it will then be possible to use these texts as a basis for generalizations about a genre or text type.

4.3.1 Geographical/diocesan distribution

The texts originate from five different dioceses: Hereford (Herefordshire) in the west, Salisbury (Wiltshire) and Winchester (Hampshire) in the south, as well as Ely (Ely) and Lincoln (Lincolnshire) in the east. The geographical/diocesan distribution is presented in Table 3:

Place of origin (diocese)	Geographical region	Number of texts
Ely (Ely)	East of England	1
Hereford (Herefordshire)	West Midlands	3
Lincoln (Lincolnshire)	East Midlands	5*
Salisbury (Wiltshire)	South West England	17
Winchester (Hampshire)	South East England	4
Total:		30

Table 3. The quantity and geographical/diocesan distribution of texts in the study corpus

**Two of the five texts from Lincoln are not strictly abjuration texts, but rather confession texts.*

Since being able to say something on a general level about genre and text type in English abjuration texts across different dioceses is one of the main goals of the present study, it quickly becomes obvious that the diocesan distribution shown in Table 3 is far from ideal: first and foremost, there is a heavy overrepresentation of texts from southern England, the majority of these originating from Salisbury – the Salisbury texts make up well over 50% of the texts on their own, as shown in Figure 1:

Geographical distribution in %

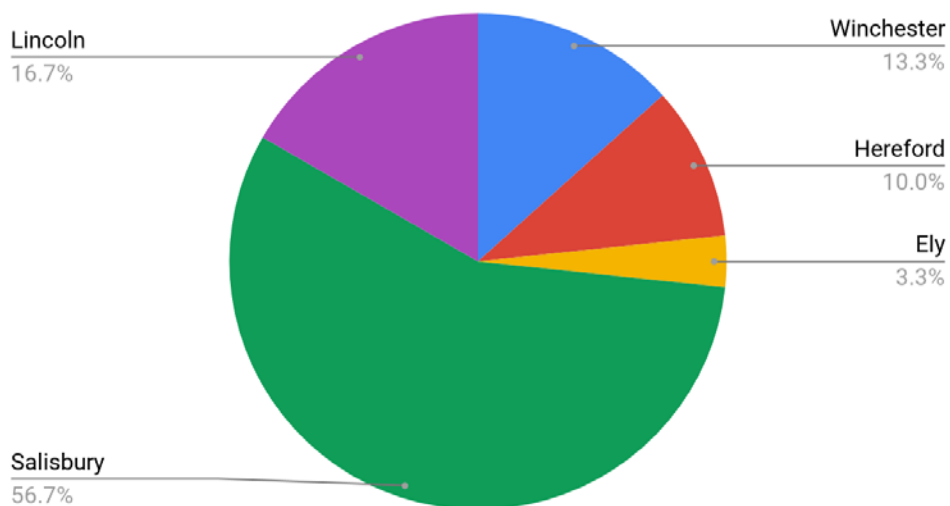


Figure 1. The diocesan distribution of the texts in the study corpus

The ideal distribution would have been an equal number of texts from all dioceses involved; that this is not the reality for the corpus carries with it inherent implications for the generalisation potential of this material: meaning that any findings based on the present corpus cannot automatically be given validity for the general situation of abjuration texts. One concrete implication is, for example, that the corpus is better suited to say something about texts from Salisbury, than it is for saying something about abjuration texts in a general perspective – as such the extent to which we will be able to generalise will be asymmetrical, and will change considerably depending on what geographic reference frame (individual dioceses or the country as a whole) we use when interpreting the data from the texts. This is a problem inherent to the study of early historical materials in general, as we have to work with the materials that were actually produced and that have survived (see 2.3.4).

4.3.2 Chronological distribution

As the oldest text in the present corpus dates from 1433, while the latest text dates from 1509 (incidentally, both are texts from Hereford), there is considerable chronological spread in the material. The materials from Hereford, Salisbury and Winchester contain texts from the tenures

of at least two bishops. Table 4 shows the chronological distribution of the texts in 25 year periods:

Period	Bishops in office and quantity of texts from their tenures (in chronological order after when the office was assumed)	No. of texts
15a2	Thomas Spofford (Hereford, 1421–48): 1 text	1
15b1	John Chadworth (Lincoln, 1452–72): 5 texts William Grey (Ely, 1454–78): 1 text	6
15b2	Thomas Langton (Salisbury, 1485–93): 4 texts Peter Courtenay (Winchester, 1487–92): 2 texts John Blythe (Salisbury, 1493–99): 5 texts Thomas Langton* ² (Winchester, 1493–1501): 2 texts	13* ¹
16a1	Edmund Audley (Salisbury, 1502–24): 8 texts Richard Mayew (Hereford, 1504–16): 2 texts	10
		Total: 30

Table 4. The chronological distribution of texts in the corpus

*¹ One of the Winchester texts has an uncertain dating, but it is more likely to be from 15b2 than 16a1.

*² Thomas Langton was translated from Salisbury to Winchester in 1493.

From the perspective of chronological distribution, two points warrant closer commentary. First, one of the texts (the abjuration of John Wodhyll, in Hereford) dates from 1433. This being the case, the text from 1433 will reflect a different historical situation, and perhaps to some extent different genre and text type expectations from those found in later texts.

Second, the chronological balance of the corpus is shifted heavily towards texts dated between 1475 and 1524 (periods 15b2 and 16a1). This becomes especially apparent if the chronological distribution is displayed along a horizontal bar on a linear scale with colour-coded time period representation, such as in Figure 2 (the time span 1475–1524 being represented by blue and green):

Chronological distribution



Figure 2. Chronological distribution in the study corpus

The consequence of this chronological imbalance is that it will be possible to make better generalisations for the later texts than for the earlier texts, which are considerably fewer in number.

4.3.3 Gender distribution

Across the 30 texts making up the present corpus, a total of 39 men and women have given their abjuration or confession; in most cases appearing before the bishop of the diocese to which they belonged. In three of the texts, more than one person appeared before the bishop to abjure together. The majority of abjurers are men, but women are substantially represented as well. Table 5 presents the gender distribution between male and female abjurers in the corpus:

	Men	Women	Total
Absolute figures	31	8	39
Proportions	79,5%	20,5%	100%

Table 5. Gender distribution among abjurers in the corpus

The gender distribution ratio of approximately 80% men and 20% women for abjurers, reflects a lower female participation rate than in the national average at the time, as shown by McSheffrey's large-scale survey of the demographics related to abjuration texts: the national average gender distribution ratio she calculated was 72% men versus 28% women (1996: 165). Despite of the corpus having a lower female participation rate than the calculated national average, the participation rate is not substantially different, and should not affect substantially the potential for generalizations.

4.4 Methodology and transcription conventions

4.4.1 Methodology

Gertz (2012; see 3.2) approaches the texts from a predominantly qualitative angle, meaning that any ‘data’ taken from the texts are (and also must be) represented by words conveying some conceptualisation contingent on human experience, “interpret[ing] phenomena in terms of the meanings people [individual researchers or any human culture etc.] bring to them.” (Lazaraton 2003: 2). Another way to represent (and interpret) data is to codify and assess the information as numbers instead of words, usually by measuring the frequency of how often a certain feature occurs in any material (cf. Nagy C. 2014: 74-76). It should be noted that the two approaches can only be kept absolutely separate on an ideal plane: for example, in order to measure the frequency of something, we need to have an understanding of what we are quantifying and why – an understanding that cannot be represented by numbers in any meaningful way. This study will be relying on both qualitative and quantitative methods, in mixed-method configuration, in that individual features of the abjuration texts will both be quantified as numerical representations of instances, and also identified, qualified and categorised by their meanings; this last aspect is addressed in Chapter 3.4 (see Table 2 for a concrete example).

The statistical significance of the results will be discussed when relevant to the interpretation of findings. Statistical significance will be calculated according to Fisher’s Exact Test, that requires the input of two data sets and where the null hypothesis (the starting assumption that is to be falsified) is that there is no significant difference between the two sets of data (for instance the texts from one diocese seen in relation to all the other dioceses), i.e. that the perceived significant difference is just a product of chance (Freeman & Campbell 2007: 11). Table 6 shows a constructed example where the difference between two sets of data (Data-set 1 and 2) are tested through Fisher’s Exact Test, calculating the statistical significance of the difference between the sets of data:

Data-sets	Parameter 1 (e.g. the presence of X)	Parameter 2 (e.g. the absence of X)
Data-set 1	5 instances	0 instances
Data-set 2	16 instances	9 instances
<i>(Fisher's Exact Test statistical significance level is $p=0,28603$ for this example)</i>		

Table 6. Fisher's Exact Test in standard configuration with two data-sets and two parameters

The difference between data-set 1 and data-set 2, while clearly noticeable, is not statistically significant according to the test (see below), with a significance level of $\sim p=0,29$: in Fisher's Exact Test statistical significance will be given with a two-tailed p-value, where $p=0.29$ would mean that there is a 29% probability that the results are products of chance or statistical 'noise'.

The reason for choosing this particular calculation of statistical significance instead of the more common Chi-square test (McEnery, Xiao and Tono 2006: 55), is that the values involved will often be very small. When the values involved are lower than five, which is often the case in the present material, Fisher's Exact Method is considered more accurate (McEnery, Xiao and Tono 2006: 56). Fisher's Exact Test belongs to the group of non-parametric statistical tests, and these tests 'make no ... assumptions about the distribution of [the] originating data' (Winters, Winters & Amedee 2010: ¶ 15–17). This also includes assumptions about normal distribution: considering the small and both geographically and chronologically uneven sample of 30 texts (see 4.3.1–2), there is no reason to assume that the data are normally distributed. Also, given the formulaic framework of the texts themselves, it would be a difficult task to ascertain how much the selection deviates from a normal distribution. Using a non-parametric test such as Fisher's Exact Test (henceforth FET) means that we can say something about statistical significance without having access to normally distributed data.

The most common practice in research is to regard $p=0.05$, or lower, to be statistically significant (Freeman & Campbell 2007: 12) – meaning that it is possible to accept a maximum of 5% chance that a result (or difference, in the case of FET) is the product of statistical 'noise'/randomness. Due to the very low sample size (30 texts) in this study, and the preliminary nature of the study, the limit for statistical significance will be set at $p=0.10$ throughout the present study. For this reason the term 'statistically relevant' will be used rather than

‘statistically significant’, in order to communicate the less strict criterion that will allow for a 10% chance (as opposed to the typical 5%) of the perceived difference being random.

An additional, and perhaps more weighty, reason for the present study to use the term ‘statistically relevant’, as opposed to the common ‘statistically significant’, is that ‘[i]t is more difficult to demonstrate statistical significance with a nonparametric test (ie, the difference between the 2 groups must be larger) than with a parametric test.’ (Winters, Winters & Amedee 2010: ¶ 15). This means that any probabilities given throughout the present study should be considered tentative and suggestive, and better suited to display the relative significance between findings in the study, than to provide any conclusive judgements on statistical significance. In other words, the method used, in combination with the low and uneven sample size, means that we should take care not to overstate the importance of the probability values.

In effect, the p-values will be more useful as a tool to grade findings (and tentative assumptions inferred on the basis of those findings) in relation to one another, than as a statistical measure that could provide conclusive results. The number of texts, their selection process (see 4.2) and the uneven geographical and chronological distribution in the corpus, do not provide the data necessary to reach firm conclusions on statistical grounds: while the data might be capable of suggestion, they are not sufficient to make strong and universal claims about the distribution of features in English late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century heresy abjuration texts.

4.4.2 Transcription conventions

The MELD corpus is available in three reading formats, or transcription standards: base transcription, diplomatic transcription and readable transcription. When texts are transcribed for use in the MELD corpus they are first transcribed in a ‘base transcription’ (Bergstrøm 2017: 84) that includes ‘extensive coding and comments, and gives the fullest information about manuscript reality’ (MELD, Manual: 2). While the base transcription provides the most detail, especially when comments are provided by the transcriber (inside tags appearing as ‘<com><text of comment></com>’, it is difficult to read and they require previous knowledge of scribal practices and the transcription conventions in order to be fully readable.

‘Diplomatic transcription’ represents the text as it appears in the manuscripts within the confines of the font that is used to display the transcription, but do not contain comments or

coding, and is easier to read as a consequence – however, it is still required that the reader is familiar with the scribal practices involved, especially with regard to abbreviation.

‘Readable transcription’, unlike the aforementioned transcription standards, makes no attempt to visually display how the manuscript actually looks like, and the abbreviations used by the scribes are written fully out and given in italics. Thomas Scochyn’s confession concerning the merits of the papacy and the church is given below in (a) base transcription, (b) diplomatic transcription and (c) readable transcription according to standard conventions:

- (a) <rub>*ALSO</rub> *J THE SAID *THOMaS *SCOCHYnN HAUE BYLEVYD AND SAID THAT THE POOP IS *ANTYCRYSTE .
AND THAT PREESTYS AND OTHER MEN OF THE CHURCHx BE HIS DISCI%PLES .
- (b) **Also** J the said Thom□s Scochyñ haue bylevyd and said that the poop is Antycryste .
and that preestys and other meñ of the church be his disciples .
- (c) **Also** J the said Thomas Scochynn haue bylevyd and said that the poop is Antycryste .
and that preestys and other memn of the churchē be his disciples .
‘Also, I the said Thomas Scochyn have believed and said that the Pope is the Antichrist,
and that priests and other men of the church are his disciples.’ (MELD: D4113#2)

The present study uses readable transcription throughout when giving quotations from the present corpus, but deviates from (c) conventional readable transcription: in order to highlight certain textual features, highlighted manuscript text will be displayed as underlined text, and highlighting will instead be used to point out important content in the quotations. For example, if we wanted to make a quotation containing the same text as in (c) as an example of Lollards accusing the Pope of being the Antichrist, the quotation would look like this in the present study (highlighting the part concerning the Pope as Antichrist):

- (15) Also J the said Thomas Scochynn haue bylevyd and said that **the poop is Antycryste** .
and that preestys and other memn of the churchē be his disciples .
(MELD: D4113#2), my highlighting)

This solution is not entirely ideal, as it implies that the word *Also* is underlined in the manuscript (when it is in fact highlighted); it also implies that the textual element *the poop is Antecryste* is highlighted in the manuscript (when it actually is written without highlighting or underlining). However, since all the texts in the present corpus are available as full and conventional diplomatic editions as part of the present study (see Appendix 2), in addition to the fact that the

aforementioned transcription practice will be adhered to systematically, it was decided that the ability to communicate clearly which textual elements that are the most central in any given quotation is more important than graphical accuracy in the main part of the study.

5 The content and structure of abjuration texts

5.1 Content

By analysing the abjuration texts as consisting of sequences of self-contained communicative functions (see 3.4, in particular Table 2), 30 different main constituent textual elements have been identified. These constituent elements might be seen as the textual ‘building blocks’ from which the texts have been constructed when viewed in light of their respective communicative functions.

Most constituent elements do not seem to be obligatory for a text to be an example of the genre or text type of abjuration texts, except for (a) stating the abjurer’s name and other identifying details, (b) stating the receiver’s name and status and (c) a formal recantation of heresy. There are two texts in the corpus (MELD: D4440#22–#23) that lack both the receiver’s name and status, and the formal recantation of heresy. These texts are rather confession texts as they do not contain an abjuration of heretical beliefs and/or practices: notes in the margins of the bishops’ registers where the texts originate from show that the distinction between abjuration and confession texts was recognised by contemporary scribes.

The constituent elements range from being very common throughout the texts, to single instances. Figure 3 lists all the identified constituent elements, and the number of texts that include the respective elements – thereby showing the full relative representation in the corpus, starting with the most common elements and ending with the least common. If a text contains more than one instance of a particular element, which is a possibility in the confessional part of an abjuration, only the first instance has been counted.

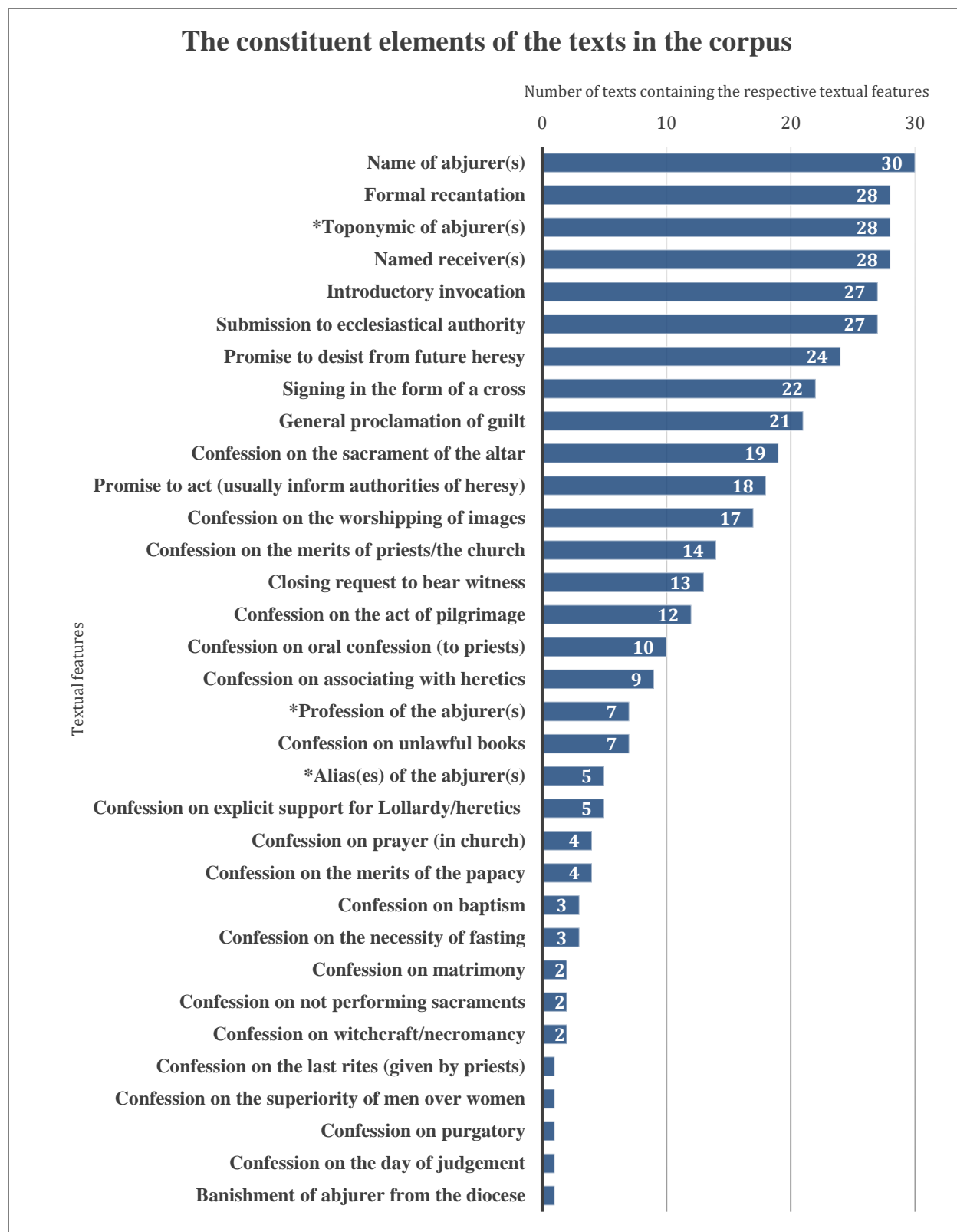


Figure 3. The constituent elements of the abjuration texts in the corpus

* These features can be considered subordinate parts of the stating of the name and details of an abjurer

The findings presented in Figure 3 demonstrate that the constituent parts of an abjuration text display a wide range of representations: for example, while 28 texts contain a formal recantation element, only 1 text (MELD: D4440#17) contains a confession concerning the rejection of the existence of purgatory; and in between the extremes we find constituent parts such as confessions concerning the conduct and merits of priests and the church, which are represented in roughly 50% of the texts (being included in 14 out of 30 texts).

5.2 Structure

At the most fundamental level it is possible to divide English late- and post-medieval abjuration texts into three main parts:

1. The opening formula
2. The confessional part
3. The closing formula

These three parts will be dealt with in chapters 6, 7 and 8, respectively, where the findings related to each part will be presented.

An analysis of the structure of every text in the present corpus has made it possible to construct what might be called ‘the archetypal abjuration text’. This archetypal text has been created by counting how many texts include a specific feature, and by calculating the average sequence of the different constituent elements (double-checking internal relationships manually). The archetypal text is as such a construction, and there is no text in the study corpus (and probably not in materials collected for the MELD corpus) with the same order and the same richness of content. The archetypal text is presented in Figure 4, which has been simplified in detail, as some constituent elements are in practice often embedded within others: this typically concerns the name of the abjurer, and the receiver of the abjuration, both being part of the introductory proclamation of guilt; resulting in a situation where the word *I* (first person singular) alone makes up the entire first part of a general proclamation of guilt (see Table 2, ii^a), and as such would have to be represented in Figure 4 on its own.

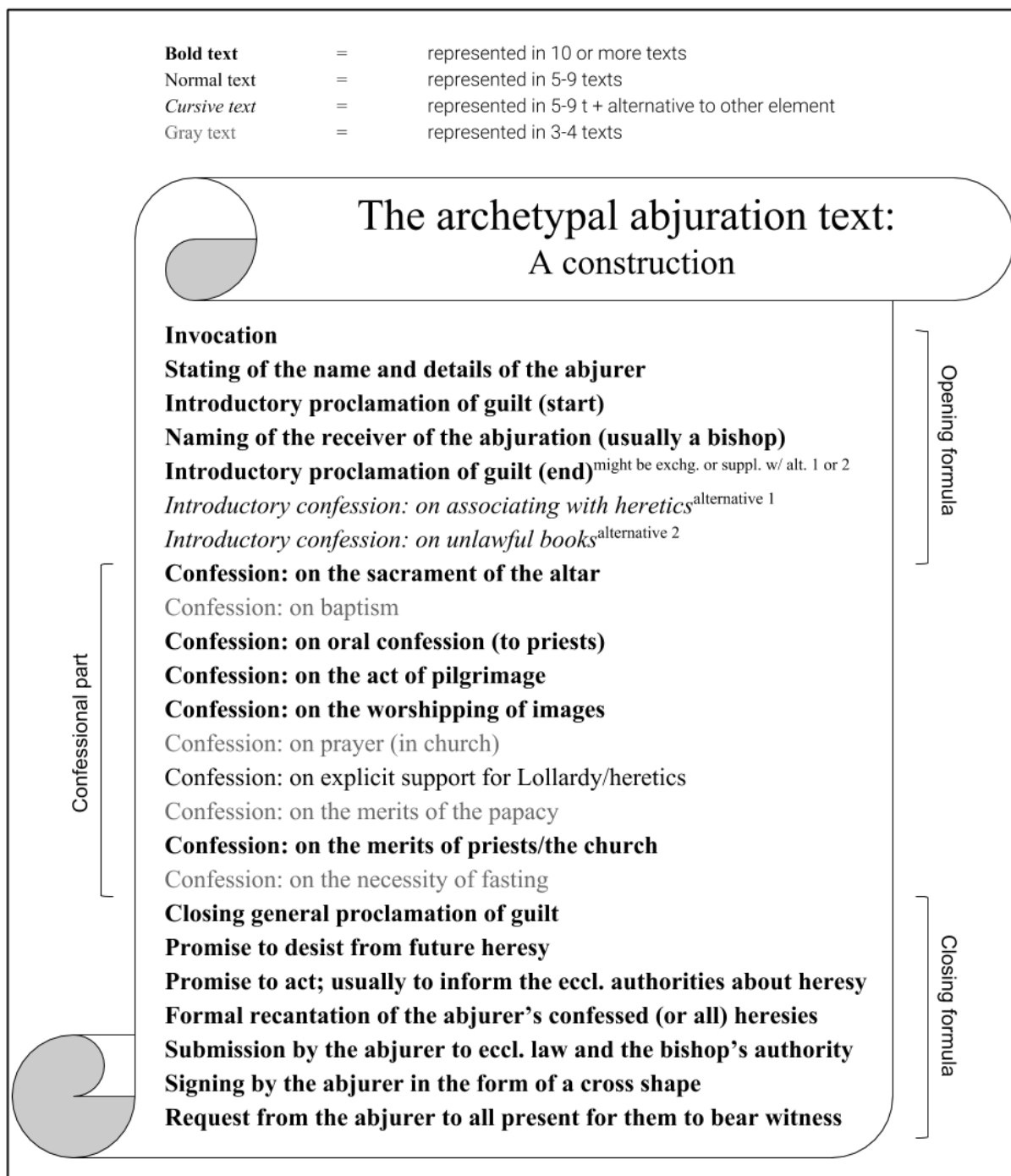


Figure 4. The archetypal structure of an abjuration text

In Figure 4, we can see that an introductory general proclamation of guilt may be exchanged by introductory confessions concerning association with heretics (e.g. MELD: D0746#7) or unlawful books (e.g. MELD: D0746#1); it may also be supplemented by the same (e.g. MELD: D4113#7 and D0744#2, respectively).

All the constituent elements represented by bold text in Figure 4, if seen together, would make up the ‘most typical’ abjuration text archetype, based on the texts contained in the study corpus. The archetypal abjuration text – which is after all a construction that does not exist anywhere in the real world – is best seen as an attempt to visualise the possibilities that exist in the structuring of an abjuration text, where some possibilities are more likely to occur than others.

6 The opening formula

6.1 Two types of opening formula

A typical abjuration text is initiated through the use of an opening formula that serves to introduce the proceedings with an invocation, state the name of the abjurer and the receiver of the abjuration, as well as starting off the abjurer's confession – through the use of a general proclamation of guilt, or a specific confession from the beginning.

While Gertz states that “abjurations followed a formulaic pattern” (2012: 33), the present study finds it more precise to talk about formulaic patterns in the plural. In the present corpus of abjuration texts there is not one pattern of formula that is being used consistently in all the texts, while at the same time it should be said that they share most of their characteristics.

Based on the 30 texts in the corpus, it is possible to identify two main types of opening formula. Both types start with a typical invocation, but can be distinguished by the parts that immediately follow: In type 1, the invocation is immediately followed by what might be called a general proclamation of guilt with regard to heresy, where no specific heresy is named. In type 2, on the other hand, the invocation is followed by a specific and concrete confession where the abjurer might typically confess to having *secretly kept and hold and prively redd* ‘secretly kept and held and privately read’ unlawful books (MELD: D3050#2), or having associated with other heretics in some way or another. Both types of formula have in common (i) the invocation, (ii) the name and status of the receiver (usually a bishop) and (iii) the abjurer's name and other details (marked in 16). In the following examples (16–23), the two types of formula, type 1 and type 2, are presented with four examples each:

Type 1: with a general proclamation of guilt (highlighted in bold)

- (16) [i] In the name of god Amen Before you [ii] Reuerend fader in god John by the grace of god Bisshopp of lincoln J [iii] John Polley of henley of youre diocise not lettred make open confessionn & knowlage in yoor presence & the presence of wittenesse here beyng at this tyme **J haue holdenn beleved taught and affermed certeynn fals Articles & opynions of heresy and erroures agayne many and diuerse sacramentes agaynn the trew cristen' faithe and the determinaconn of holy Church** .
- ‘In the name of God, Amen. Before you reverend father in God, John, Bishop of Lincoln by the grace of God, I John Polley of Henley in your diocese, not lettered, make open confession and knowledge in your presence and the presence of witnesses here present, that I have held, believed, taught and affirmed certain false articles and opinions of heresy and errors against many and diverse sacraments against the true Christian faith and the determination of the holy Church.’ (MELD: D4440#17, my highlighting)

- (17) In the name of god Ame [sic] In the presence of you mast Nicholas Mayew doctor of law Chaunceller and Commissary to the Reuerende fadre in god my lord Thomas by the soferauce of god bisshop of wynchester myn ordynary in this behalue sufficiently deputeed . J Court Lamporte of the *parissh* of Meanestoke w^hyn the dioc^o of wynchester detecte accused and put vp for a mysbeleuyng man **confese all theis erroneous opynyons and hereses to haue hold and spoken that dothe ensue**
- 'In the name of God, Amen. In the presence of you master Nicholas Mayew, doctor of law, chancellor and commissary to the reverend father in God, my lord Thomas, Bishop of Winchester by the sufferance of God, my ordinary, in this behalf sufficiently deputed, I Court Lamporte of the parish of Meonstoke within the diocese of Winchester, detected, accused and put up for a misbelieving man, confess to have held and spoken all these erroneous opinions and heresies that do ensue' (MELD: D3050#1, my highlighting)
- (18) In the Name of the holy trinite fadir son and holy gost his blessed modir and all the Compeny of hevynn . J John Tanner' of Stevyn^{tom} of the dioc^o of Sarum be-fore you my Reuerende Fadir in god Thomas bisshop of Sarum my Juge and ordinarie knowe-lege openly and w^t my fre wille make confessioun that **J haue before this tyme beleued erroneously**
- 'In the name of the holy trinity, father, son and holy ghost, his blessed mother and all the company of heaven; I John Tanner of Steventon in the diocese of Salisbury, before you my reverend father in God, Thomas, Bishop of Salisbury and ordinary, knowledge openly and with my free will confess that I have before this time believed erroneously.' (MELD: D4112#10, my highlighting)
- (19) In the name of the holy trinite father sone and holy gost J John Godwynn of the *paryshe* of fyfeld w^t-yn the dyocesse of Sarum confesse and openly knowlege her befor yo^u Reuerend father yn god Edmond by the grace of god byshope of Sarum my ordenary and alle that be gatherd at b^{is} tyme that J synfulle wreche **haue presumed to moche on my own wyt wherthowe J haue fallenn in-to great and horrybulle syne of heresy and haue affermed spoken and defended a great heresy and false opynyon** *reproved* and dampned by alle holy churche a-genst the doctryne of *crist* and hys appostels a-yenst the lawes and determynacouns of the seyd churche yn syche maner and forme as hereafter ensueth
- 'In the name of the holy trinity, father, son and holy ghost; I John Goodwin of the parish of Fyfield within the diocese of Salisbury, confess and openly knowledge here before you reverend father in God, Edmund, Bishop of Salisbury by the grace of God, my ordinary, and all that are gathered at this time, that I sinful wretch have presumed too much on my own wit wherethrough I have fallen into great and horrible sin, and have affirmed, spoken and defended a great heresy and false opinion reproved and damned by all holy church, against the doctrine of Christ and his apostels, against the laws and determinations of the said church in such manner and form as hereafter ensues' (MELD: D4114#1, my highlighting)

Type 2: with a specific introductory confession (highlighted in bold)

- (20) In the Name of god Amen . J . John Goodsonn the soon of John Goodsonn of the paresh of hyworth w^hyn the diocisies of Sarum before yo^u Reuerent fathur in god Edmond by god-is grace bisshopp of Sarum my Juge and ordenary in this cawse knowlege and confesse w^t my free wylle here in Jugement that J synfulle wreche **have belevid that the sacrament of the awter is not the very body of cryste**
- 'In the name of God, Amen. I, John Goodson, the son of John Goodson of the parish of Highworth within the diocese of Salisbury, before you reverend father in God, Edmund, Bishop of Salisbury by God's grace, my judge and ordinary in this cause, knowledge and confesse with my free will here in judgement, that I sinful wretch have believed that [in] the sacrament of the altar is not the true body of Christ.' (MELD: D4114#15, my highlighting)
- (21) In the name of god Amen J Thomas Maryet otherwise called Thomas Stayner of the *parissh* of saynt Olave in Suthwerke w^hyn the diocese of wynchester knowleghe and opynly confesse by-for you maister

Nicholas Mayew Commissary vnto the right reuerente fader in gode Thomas by the sufferauunce of god bishopp of wynchester myn ordinary in this case specially deputed and assigned . That **J haue secretly kept and hold and prively redd w'yn myn house bookes libelles volumes tretes and other werkes wretyn in englisshe compiled by John wykcliff A dampned heretik and fauored and conceled the same bookes from my said ordinary and diocesan by the space of xij yeres now last past** contrary to the lawes ordynaunce and determynacons of the holy canones and other holsome constitucions of our moder holy chirche

'In the name of God, Amen. I, Thomas Maryet, otherwise called Thomas Stayner of the parish of Saint Olav in Southwark within the diocese of Winchester, knowledge and openly confess before you, master Nicholas Mayew, commissary unto the right reverend father in God, Thomas, Bishop of Winchester by the sufferance of God, my ordinary, in this case specially deputed and assigned, that I have secretly kept and held and privately read within my house books, libels, volumes, treatises and other works written in English, compiled by John Wyclif, a damned heretic and [have] favoured and concealed the same books from my said ordinary and diocesan over a period of twelve years now, contrary to the laws, ordinances and determinations of the holy canons and other wholesome constitutions of our mother holy church.'

(MELD: D3050#2, my highlighting)

- (22) J John Baronn of Agmoundesham say and confesse that **J was conuersaunt in tyme passed w^t hugh leche heretyk and william Belgrave that taught & deteryned ayen' the sacramentes of the Church** but J never gaff faithe vnto them in the premissez

'I, John Baron of Amersham, say and confess that I have in the past associated with the heretic Hugh Leche and William Belgrave that taught and determined against the sacraments of the Church, but I never believed in their propositions' (MELD: D4440#22, my highlighting)

- (23) In the name of god Amen. J John polle of Sarum in the counte of wiltes' wevir befor' yo^u reuerend father in god Edmond bi goddes grace bishope of Sarum my Juge and ordinary knowlege openly and confesse w^t my free wille her' in Jugemet that befor' this tyme **J haue holdern and sayd that the tyme shalle com that the world shal be bired and then shalle a water com and purge hit** And so shalle hit be oon of the vij hevyns and fulle of myrth euery man of the world beyng her' dwellyng . And at the day of dome deuels hope to be saved And then shalle no thyng be i' helle but the syne of the world ;

'In the name of God, Amen. I, John Polle of Salisbury in the county of Wiltshire, before you reverend father in God, Edmund, Bishop of Salisbury by the grace of God, my judge and ordinary, knowledge openly and confess with my free will here in judgement, that before this time I have held and said that the time shall come when the world shall be burned, and then shall a water come and purge it; and so shall it be one of the seven heavens and full of mirth, every man of the world dwelling there. And at the day of judgement, devils will hope to be saved; and then nothing shall be in hell but the sin of the world;'

(MELD: D4114#8, my highlighting)

By looking at the four examples of the type 1 formula (16–19), it is immediately clear that the four blocks of texts are not identical or even near-identical to each other. However, upon closer inspection we may observe that they are constructed out of the same elements from the perspective of communicative function (see 3.4, in particular Table 2): they are all initiated with an invocation, and the names and details of the abjurer, as well as of the receiver of the abjuration (usually a bishop), are presented, one after the other. The general proclamations of guilt (highlighted in the examples) all include formulaic verb forms such as *affirmed*, *believed*, *held* and *spoken* (see 6.3), and a variety of wordings related to the concepts of *fals Articles &*

opynions of heresy and erroures (16) that are repeated throughout the abjurations included in the present corpus. Although the four examples of the type 1 formula are not 100% identical they do, on account of the aforementioned commonality of features, still satisfy the criteria of the working definition of formulaic language used in the present study (see 3.5).

The discussion in the immediately preceding paragraph is also fully applicable to the four examples of the type 2 formula (20–23), with the exception of the specific confessions contained therein. Specific heresy charges can range from the rejection of the orthodox Catholic view of the Eucharist to the keeping and holding of unlawful books. This means that there will be a higher variability with regard to the exact words being used in these specific confessions, compared to the words being used when describing heresy in general (as in the type 1 formula). However, there is still an equivalent presence of formulaic verb forms such as *believed*, *held*, *read* and *taught* – these verbs when listed after one another always signal formulaicness/formula in an abjuration text; these verbs are carried straight over from the articles that contained the exact wordings of the charges brought against suspected Lollards. The working definition concerning what constitutes formulaic language does not require 100% consistency in the textual features, and does allow for different variables to be present or absent, such as charge-specific words (see 3.5).

The two main types of opening formulae are not evenly distributed across the five dioceses, and the findings seem at first glance to suggest that the type 1 formula was more common in Ely, Salisbury and Winchester, whereas the type 2 opening formula seems to have been more common in Hereford and Lincoln. These findings are presented in Table 7:

Place of origin	Instances of type 1	MELD Code type 1	Instances of type 2	MELD Code type 2	Number of texts in the corpus
Ely (Ely)	1	D0677	0		1
Hereford (Herefordshire)	1* ¹	D0744#2	2	D0746#1, D0746#7	3
Lincoln (Lincolnshire)	2	D4440#17, D4440#18	3* ²	D4440#3, D4440#22, D4440#23	5
Salisbury (Wiltshire)	14	D4112#7 – D4114#1, D4114#6, D4114#13, D4114#17, D4114#20	3	D4114#2, D4114#8, D4114#15	17
Winchester (Hampshire)	3	D3049#1, D3049#2, D3050#1	1		4
	Total: 21		Total: 9		Total: 30

Table 7. The distribution of type 1 and type 2 introductory formulae in the study corpus

*¹ While this text is considerably older than the other texts in the corpus, and does not have an introductory invocation, it is very similar to the texts categorised into type 1, and has been assigned to the same type.

*² While two of these texts (D4440#22, -#23) are strictly confessions (lacking a recantation part), and do not have introductory invocations, they are very similar to the texts categorised into type 2, and have been assigned to the same type.

From the results in Table 7, we get the most statistically relevant result (FET $p=0,003$) if we test the assumption that Ely, Salisbury and Winchester on the one hand, differs from Hereford and Lincoln on the other hand, in that type 1 seems to be more common in the former dioceses. This result should only be regarded as suggestive, on account of, for example, the substantial overrepresentation of Salisbury texts versus the substantial underrepresentation of texts from Ely – with only one text from Ely there is a considerable chance that the text does not represent a typical example of an Ely text.

6.1.1 Variation in the type 1 opening formula

Producing a comprehensive list of all possible variants of the type 1 opening formula, as they occur in the texts included in the present corpus, lies outside the scope of the present study. Nonetheless, two main variations of the type 1 opening formula can be identified based on the

element directly preceding the name and details of the abjurer. In some abjurations the invocation is directly followed by an element performing an introductory and proclamatory function before the abjurer is introduced; this can be seen in the following quotation from the abjuration of Robert Sparke given in Ely, 1457:

- (24) In the name of god Amen . **Be it openly known to all you worshipful Maistirs and sirs . and to alle cristen people . that** J Robert Sparke of Reche of the dioc' of Ely

'In the name of God, Amen. Be it openly known to all you worshipful masters and sirs, and to all Christian people, that I Robert Sparke of Reach in the diocese of Ely' (MELD: D0677, my highlighting)

This proclamatory element is of varying length, and can for example be realised solely by the words *In the presence of you* (25) followed by the receiver of the abjuration, who is then followed by the abjurer, with the parties involved given in reverse order in relation to the norm (see 6.2.3, where the use of deputies is also addressed):

- (25) In the name of god Amen **Jn the presence of you** Maistre Michael Clene Chaunceller & Commyssary in this behalue sufficiently deputed to the Reuerende fadre in god my lord Petre by the *grace* of god Bysshop of winchestr' myn ordynary J Jsabelle Gartrygge sbgiet vnto my seid Reuerend lord & of his Diocise of wynchestre detecte acused & put vp for a mysbylyvyng' womman for that J haue belyved lernyd & taught [sic] ...

'In the name of God, Amen. In the presence of you master Michael Clene, chancellor and commissary in this behalf sufficiently deputed to the reverend father in God, my lord Peter, Bishop of Winchester by the grace of God, my ordinary, I Isabell Gartrygge, subject unto my said reverend lord and of his diocese of Winchester, detected, accused and put up for a misbelieving woman for that I have believed, learned and taught ...' (MELD: D3049#2, my highlighting)

The other main variation of the type 1 opening formula occurs when the abjurer directly follows the invocation, without the use of any proclamatory element, as seen in the abjuration of Annes Scochyn':

- (26) In the name of god Amen . **J Annes Scochyn' wyfe of Thomaz Scochyn'** ~~~ Tayloor of the pariss of Saynct Gyles Jn Rading' . of the diocise of Sarum .

'In the name of God, Amen. I, Agnes Scochyn, wife of Thomas Scochyn, taylor of the parish of St. Giles in Reading in the diocese of Salisbury.' (MELD: D4113#4, my highlighting)

By supplying the text omitted above from the opening formulae contained in the abjurations of Robert Sparke (24) and Annes Scochyn' (26), we get a glimpse of how different the opening formulae might appear with regard to length:

Remainder of the introductory formula from Robert Sparke's abjuration (79 words):

- (27) ... befor' the Reuerent fadir in god . w . Gray . Bisshopp of Ely . my iuge and ordinary . *personally* appiered . the monday next afor' the feste of th[e] ascencion of our' lord last passed . maad an open confessionn . to the said Reuerent fadir . sufficient witnessis being' thoo present . that J haue halden taught . and affermed certain fals articles and opinions of heresy and erroors ageyn the sacramentes of the chirch' . and al trewe *cristen* feithe . and ayens . the Determinacion' of the chirch' /
- '... before the reverend father in God, W. Gray, Bishop of Ely, my judge and ordinary, present in person, the Monday before the feast of the ascension of our lord recently passed made an open confession to the said reverend father, sufficient witnesses being there present, that I have held, taught and affirmed certain false articles and heretical opinions and errors against the sacraments of the church, and all true Christian faith, and against the determination of the church.' (MELD: D0677)

Remainder of the introductory formula from Annes Scochyn's abjuration (26 words):

- (28) ... Noted . diffamed and to you Reuerend Fadre in Cryste John by goddys Bisshopp [sic] of Sarum my Juge and ordinary dennounced and detect for A mysbelevyng' womann ; [followed by specific confessions]
- '... noted, defamed and to you reverend father in Christ, John, Bishop of Salisbury by God's [grace], my judge and ordinary, denounced and detected as a misbelieving woman; (MELD: D4113#4)

In the remainder of the opening formula from Robert Sparke's abjuration (27), we also get a good example of a highly formulaic text portion containing non-formulaic information in the use of the phrase *the monday next afor' the feste of th[e] ascencion of our' lord last passed* as a time adverbial that needs to be understood in relation to a particular abjurer's life. As a general rule, the type 1 opening formula of an English late fifteenth-century or early sixteenth-century abjuration text was highly formulaic and did not usually contain similar non-formulaic phrases.

An interesting variation is present in the type 1 opening formula from the abjuration of John Wodhulle (MELD: D0744#2) dating from 1433, in that it is clearly stated that the abjurer has been *comaunded* 'commanded' by the Bishop of Hereford to appear before the bishop and other potential examiners to confess and abjure. This variation is unique to Wodhulle's abjuration, and the implication of this variation is discussed in Chapter 9.1.3.

6.1.2 Variation in the type 2 opening formula

The study corpus contains two texts (MELD: D4440#22–3) that are strictly not abjurations as they lack the formal recantation part. These texts open with a type 2 opening formula where both the invocation and the naming of the recipient of the abjuration have been dropped altogether:

- (29) J Geffray Symeon' of Agmondesham confesse that J knew James wylly heretyk that was brent at london' and knew houghe J held agayn' the sevyng' sacramentes of holy church but Gaff no faith vnto him
 'I, Geoffrey Symeon of Amersham confess that I knew the heretic James Willy that was burned in London and knew Hugh; I held against the seven sacraments of the holy church, but I gave no credence to him.'
 (MELD D4440#23)

On account of the missing invocation and named recipient, it might be argued that the opening formula used in the two confession texts should be categorised as a type of their own. In the present study, however, more emphasis has been placed on what these texts have in common with the other texts of the corpus, and following from this, they have been categorised as exsmple of the type 2 formula – with the understanding that another categorisation would have been possible if the emphasis insted had been placed on how they differ from the other type 2 opening formulae instead.

A crucial difference between type 1 and type 2 opening formulae follows from the fact that the former normally contain highly general confessional details, whereas the latter contain confessions regarding specific heresies: in specific confessions there is room for minor non-formulaic elements to some extent. The following quotation from the beginning of Thomas Hygons' abjuration (given in Hereford, 1509) contains a non-formulaic element when it explicitly names a heretic from Mitcheldean:

- (30) In the name of god Amen J Thomas hygons of wolastorn late of Newland and last of alle wirkyng' in micheldeane in the diocise of hereford knowlege be-fore yow Reuerend Fadir in god Richard busshopp of hereford my Ordinarie that J haue had susp^t coi'cacon' of late in the hows of **Thomas Nasshe of Michledeane** be-fore diuerse men and womenn
 'In the name of God, Amen; I Thomas Hygons of Wollaston, late of Newland, and last of all working in Mitcheldean in the diocese of Hereford, knowledge before you reverend father in God, Richard, Bishop of Hereford, my ordinary, that I have had suspect communication of late in the house of Thomas Nash of Mitcheldean before diverse men and women;' (MELD: D0746#7, my highlighting)

In contrast to the aforementioned example from Thomas Hygon's abjuration, type 2 opening formulae can also contain a confession concerning a specific topic seemingly without using any non-formulaic elements whatsoever. When John Crofte (also in Hereford) four years earlier confessed to having owned *bookys conteynyng heresies and errouris*, the language used is highly, if not completely, formulaic throughout:

- (31) JN The' Name' of godde' Amen . J John' Crofte of the *paryshe* off Erdisley withyn the dioc' of hereford willfully knowlege' befor' you Maysters Owen pole' John' wardroper and Richard Judde' Commissaries'

of the Reuerende father in godde Richard byshop of hereford in this behalfe Lafully assigned and deputed that J haue hadde in my ward and kepyng dyuerse bookys conteynyng heresies and errouris ageyn cristen feythe and the *determinatioun* of all holy churche wiche bookes J haue Radde & declared oftyn tymes priuely and opynly holidays and festfull Dayes befor mony and dyuerse persons ...

'In the name of God, Amen. I, John Crofte, of the parish of Eardisley within the diocese of Hereford, wilfully knowledge before you masters Owen Pole, John Wardroper and Richard Judde, commissaries of the reverend father in God, Richard, Bishop of Hereford, in this behalf lawfully assigned and deputed, that I have had in my ward and keeping diverse books containing heresies and errors against Christian faith and the determination of all holy church, which books I have often read and declared, privately and openly, on holidays and festive days before many and diverse persons ...' (MELD: D0746#1)

The formulaic nature of the quotation above is made clear through its use of phrases also found in other texts (e.g. *the determinatioun of all holy churche*), but perhaps above all it becomes most clear when we look at listed verb forms such as *Radde* and *declared*, which are presented as if they had been spontaneously chosen by John Crofte as he confessed to having owned unlawful books (for the significance of such verbs and how they signal formula, see 2.3.2). It is difficult to ascertain whether a phrase like *holidays and festfull Dayes* is supplied by individuals other than the abjurer in this case, especially considering the low number (two) of Hereford texts from the early sixteenth century in the present corpus. The observation that this phrase is sandwiched between two very formulaic phrases (*priuely and opynly* and *befor mony and dyuerse persons*) might be suggestive of its formulaic nature.

6.2 General variation in the opening formula

6.2.1 Diocesan variation in the order of presentation of participants

In the introductory parts of an abjuration text, the name of the abjurer and that of the receiver of the abjuration will usually be stated. Looking at the texts of the present corpus as a whole, we can see that there was no absolute standard as to which name should be stated first. In example 1 below, the abjurer's name is stated first, whereas in example 2 the name of the receiver is the first to be stated:

Example 1: *abjurer stated first*

- (32) In the Name of god Amen J . **John Stilmann of the pareshe of seynt Gyls in Redyng**' confesse and opynly knowlege here before yo^u Reuerent fathur' in god Edmond by the grace of god bishope of Sarum my ordinary ...

'In the name of God, Amen. I, John Stillman of the parish of St. Giles in Reading, confess and openly knowledge here before you reverend father in God, Edmund, Bishop of Salisbury by the grace of God, my ordinary ...' (MELD: D4114#13, my highlighting)

Example 2: *receiver stated first*

(33) In the name of god . Amen In the *presens* of you **Reuerend Fadre in god Lord Petre by the grace of god Busshop of wynchestre myne Ordynary** . J . Richarde Pytsyne otherwyse called Richard Sawyer *yoor souget* of ys diocyse of wyncheste detecte . Accused and put up for a Mysbylevng man ...

'In the name of God, Amen. In the presence of you reverend father in God, lord Peter, Bishop of Winchester by the grace of God, my ordinary, I, Richard Pytsyne otherwise called Richard Sawyer, your subject of this diocese of Winchester, detected, accused and put up for a misbelieving man ...' (MELD: D3049#1, my highlighting)

The distribution between texts where the abjurer is given first, and texts where the receiver is given first, is presented in Table 8, with the former on the left side and the latter on the right side:

Place of origin	Abjurer first	MELD Code abjurer first	Receiver first	MELD Code receiver first	Number of texts in the corpus
Ely (Ely)	1	D0677	0		1
Hereford (Herefordshire)	3	D0744#2, D0746#1, D0746#7	0		3
Lincoln (Lincolnshire)	1	D4440#3	2	D4440#17, D4440#18	3*
Salisbury (Wiltshire)	17	D4112#7 – D4114#20	0		17
Winchester (Hampshire)	1	D3050#2	3	D3049#1, D3049#2, D3050#1	4
	Total: 23		Total: 5		Total: 28

Table 8. Diocesan variation in the order of presentation of participants

* Two of the texts from Lincoln are confessions where there are no stated receivers at all, and these two texts have been excluded when considering the sequence of an abjurer's and a receiver's name.

As the results in Table 8 show, the variant where the receiver of the abjuration is stated first only occurs in texts from Lincoln and Winchester in the present corpus. The difference between Lincoln and Winchester on the one hand, and Ely, Hereford and Salisbury on the other, is statistically relevant (FET $p=0,0002$). The uneven composition of the corpus makes it unable to

conclude firmly based on these findings on a general level, but the findings clearly support that the use of a formula variation where the receiver is stated first, would have been rare in Salisbury (if it was used at all in that diocese).

6.2.2 Diocesan variation in providing the abjurer’s profession

Typically, the profession of an abjurer (if at all given) will follow immediately after the name has been stated in the introductory part of an abjuration, as seen in the example below from the miller Richard Herford’s abjuration given in Salisbury, 1498–99:

- (34) J Richard herford **Miller** of Netherledcomb .
 ‘I, Richard Herford, miller of Letcombe Regis.’
 (MELD: D4113#5, my highlighting)

Most abjuration texts in the present corpus do not give the abjurer’s profession – Table 9 presents the diocesan distribution of texts where an abjurer’s profession has been stated:

Place of origin	No. of texts with given professions	MELD Code in the study corpus	Number of texts in the corpus
Ely (Ely)	0		1
Hereford (Herefordshire)	0		3
Lincoln (Lincolnshire)	1	D4440#18	5
Salisbury (Wiltshire)	6	D4113#2, D4113#5, D4113#7, D4114#8, D4114#17, D4114#20	17
Winchester (Hampshire)	0		4
	Total:		Total: 30

Table 9. Distribution of texts where the abjurer’s profession is stated in the opening formula

Looking at Table 9, the texts from Salisbury stand out with six instances, compared to the one instance from Lincoln. However, Salisbury is also represented with 17 texts versus the five texts from Lincoln. When accounting for both the instances of given professions and the total number

of texts, the difference between Salisbury on one side and the other dioceses seen together on the other, is only slightly below being statistically relevant (FET $p=0,104$; where $p=0,10$ would be relevant). While the very uneven diocesan representation makes it difficult to conclude decisively, these results do provide an indication that it was more common to give the profession of an abjurer in Salisbury, in comparison with the other dioceses.

6.2.3 Diocesan variation in the use of deputies (representing the local bishop)

A heresy trial was usually presided over by the bishop of the diocese where the trial took place, but on some occasions the bishops appointed deputies to take their place in the proceedings. The present corpus contains four abjurations where a deputy (or deputies) is the named recipient of the abjuration on behalf of the bishop. In the abjuration of Court Lamporte given in Winchester, 1496-1501, one Nicholas Mayew acted as the deputy of the Bishop of Winchester, Thomas Langton – his name and status in the proceedings are stated in the following way:

- (35) mast' Nicholas Mayew doctor of law Chaunceller and *Commissary* to the Reuerende fadre in god my lord Thomas by the soferauunce of god bisshop of wynchester myn ordynary in this behalue sufficienly deput'ed
'master Nicholas Mayew, doctor of law, chancellor and commissary to the reverend father in God, my lord Thomas, Bishop of Winchester by the sufferance of God, my ordinary, in this behalf sufficienly deputed'
(MELD: D3050#1)

The phrase *in this behalue sufficienly deput'ed* serves to signal that the bishop has given his deputy the full powers of the bishop in the trial proceedings. Table 10 shows the diocesan distribution of texts where a deputy was presiding over the trial:

Diocese	No. of texts with a deputy / deputies presiding	MELD Code in the study corpus	Number of texts in the corpus
Ely (Ely)	0		1
Hereford (Herefordshire)	1	D0746#1	3
Lincoln (Lincolnshire)	0		3*
Salisbury (Wiltshire)	0		17
Winchester (Hampshire)	3	D3049#2, D3050#1, D3050#2	4
	Total:		Total: 28

Table 10. Diocesan distribution of texts where a bishop's deputy/deputies presided over the trial

* Two of the texts from Lincoln are confessions where there are no stated recipients at all, and these two texts have been excluded when considering which trials were presided over by a bishop or his deputy/deputies.

Considering that the only texts in the present corpus where the bishop has appointed a deputy/deputies originate from Winchester and Hereford, it might be tempting to speculate that the practice was more common in these two dioceses: if we take the position that Winchester and Hereford were different in this regard from the other dioceses, and compare the results from these two dioceses as one body of data with the other dioceses seen together, the end result is statistically relevant (FET $p=0,002$). The fact that one of the Winchester texts (D3049#2) is several years older than the others might strengthen such a proposition. However, the textual representation in the corpus is uneven to such an extent that no firm conclusion can be reached on the grounds of that material.

6.3 Formulaic verbs in the opening formula

When abjurors – in the first person – confessed to having practiced heresy, they ostensibly conveyed this through the use of formulaic verbs taken from the articles that constituted the basis for the charges brought against them (see 2.3.2). In the example below, from the abjuration of John Swayne et. al, the lined-up verbs *hold*, *afferme*, *teche* and *defende* are all instances of such formulaic verbs that have their basis in the heresy articles:

(36) we ... And every of vs Severally greatly Noted diffamed and to yo^u ... denounced and detecte for vntrue belevyng *persons* And also that we and every of vs shuld **hold afferme teche** and **defende** pryveley heresies errors singuler opinions and false doctrines contrary to the *commyn*' doctryne of *oor* moder holy church

'We ... , every single one of us, greatly noted, defamed and to you ... denounced and detected as untrue believing persons; and also that we, every single one of us, is supposed to have held, affirmed, taught and defended, in private, heresies, errors, differing opinions and false doctrines contrary to the common doctrine of our mother holy church' (MELD: D4114#20, my highlighting)

With regard to formulaic verbs as part of the opening formula, the present study has only considered type 1 opening formulae, which contain a general proclamation of guilt: the main reasoning behind this is to provide as much comparability as possible by focusing on language describing heresy in general, as opposed to specific confessions where the verbs might be more specific to the heresy charge involved. Figure 5 shows how the different formulaic verbs are distributed through the five different dioceses, in all texts initiated by a type 1 introductory formula (the only Hereford text with a type 1 introductory formula, MELD: D0744#2, is considerable older and does not contain an equivalent verb usage; Hereford is therefore absent from Figure 5):

Instances of formulaic verbs (from heresy articles) used in type 1 opening formulae

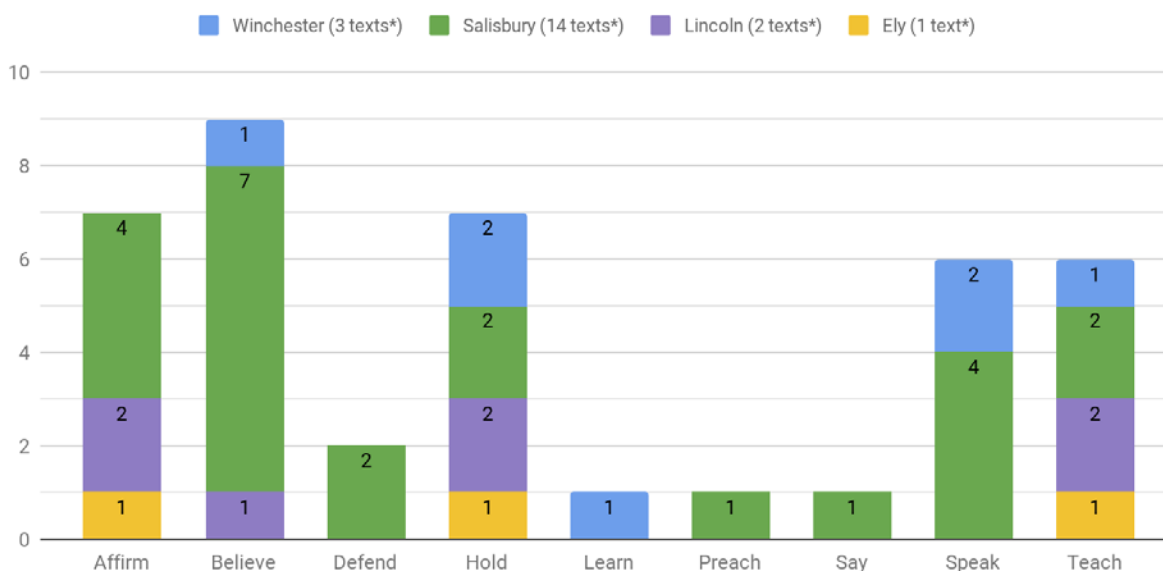


Figure 5. Instances of formulaic verbs in the general proclamation of guilt in type 1 opening formulae

* Texts containing an introductory general proclamation of guilt.

From Figure 5 it is clear that the verbs *affirm*, *believe*, *hold* and *teach* seem to be common across all the dioceses, while other verbs such as *defend*, *learn*, *preach* and *say* seem to be rare and confined to specific dioceses. At first glance it seems a case might be made that Salisbury stands out from the other dioceses when it comes to instances of verbs unique to Salisbury (*defend*, *preach* and *say*) in relation to the total number of instances of verbs; however, when we take into account the overrepresentation of Salisbury texts in the corpus, there doesn't seem to be a substantial difference after all: if we test the assumption that Salisbury stands out from the other dioceses in this regard, the result is not statistically relevant (FET $p=0,37$), meaning that there is a considerable chance that the perceived difference is simply the result of statistical 'noise'. Another difference that on the surface seems to be of some merit, is that Salisbury seems to have more relative instances of the verb *believe* in comparison with the other dioceses; this result is, however, not statistically relevant (FET $p=0,26$). Likewise, if we assume that Salisbury stands out from the other dioceses in that the verb *hold* seems to be rarer there than anywhere else, this result is also not statistically relevant (FET $p= 0,11$), albeit more statistically sound than the previous assumptions. These results *might* indicate that there are *some* differences across the dioceses in this regard, and that the data are simply not solid enough to conclude, but it could also be that there simply is no substantial difference at all. Overall, it seems that the verbs used are not dependent on which diocese the text originated from, but rather employed according to a general usage.

7 The confession: formulaic and non-formulaic content

7.1 Introduction

Every abjuration text contains a portion of text that is to contain the confession proper (cf. Figure 4), where the abjurers seemingly on their own initiative, in the first person, list the heresies they have committed (see 2.3.2). This confessional part is usually completely sandwiched between the opening formula that precedes it and the closing formula that follows it (a part of it may be contained in the opening formula, see 6.1, 20–23), and is distinct from the other two main parts by allowing for more variation on many levels.

On the level of text length and the number of different heresies addressed, the confessional part might only contain a short specific confession of one single heretical position, as in the case of the abjuration of John Qwyrk, given before the Bishop of Lincoln in 1464:

- (37) First not beleving in the blessed sacrament of the auter to be cristis body in foorme of Bred & alle the articles a-bove rehersed
'First, not believing in the blessed sacrament of the altar to be Christ's body in the form of bread, and all the foresaid articles' (MELD: D4440#18)

Despite the confession of John Qwyrk opening with the word *First* (implying more to follow), the text continues straight into the formal recantation (see Table 2, viii). The phrase *articles a-bove rehersed* only refers to the general proclamation of guilt that preceded the confession (being part of the opening formula), where no specific details were given. In contrast to Qwyrk's abjuration, the confessional part might also contain confessions concerning several distinct heresies listed in a longer sequence. In the confessional part from the abjuration of John Crofte (given in Hereford), he confesses to having held heretical views on the sacrament of the altar, oral confession, penance for satisfaction of sin, matrimony, the pope and the papacy, and the worshipping of images:

- (38) Redyng declaryng and techyng agaynst **the blessed sacrament of the Awter** othir-wise then me oghte to haue *donn* also agaynst **the sacrament of confessioun to pristres** and **penance for satisfaccioun of syn** . Also agayn the solennization of **the sacrament of mat'mony** callyng it exorzismes and coniurations . Also J haue' Radde and declared agaynst **our' holy father the pope** showyng that he hath not the power' of byndyng and lewsyng that criste gave to petur but in vsurpyng that power apon hym he he makythe hymselfe antecriste . Also J haue Radde and taughte agayn **the veneracoun and worshipyng off Jimages** stondyng in churchis callyng thaym *Maumentes* and agayn the shrynyng of seyntes bonys in goold and syluer and hangyng aboute thaym the same /

'Reading, declaring and teaching against the blessed sacrament of the altar, contrary to what I ought to have done; also against the sacrament of confession to priests and penance for satisfaction of sin; also against the solemnization of the sacrament of matrimony, calling it exorcisms and conjurations. I have also read and declared against our holy father the Pope, showing that he does not have the power of binding and loosing that Christ gave to Peter; and by usurping that power he makes himself the Antichrist. I have also read and taught against the veneration and worshipping of images standing in churches, calling them mammetts [= false gods or idols], and against the shrining of the bones of saints in gold and silver, and hanging about them the same.' (MELD: D0746#1, my highlighting)

The higher count of specific heresies, and the resulting increased text length, is not the only difference between the confession given by Qwyrk (37) and that of Crofte (38). In Qwyrk's confession where he admits to having questioned the claim that the consecrated bread is truly the body of Christ, the language used is fully formulaic (see MELD: D4440#17 for the same wording), and there is no sign of any personal input from John Qwyrk in his confession, in addition to the formula. While much of John Crofte's confession is also formulaic in how the heresies are listed and introduced, as well as the verbs being used (e.g. *Redyng declaryng and techyng*), it also contains additional content that is non-formulaic and is not repeated in other confessions:

- a) ... *othir-wise then me oghte to haue donn* – as a final comment concerning Crofte's disbelief concerning the sacrament of the altar as practiced according to Catholic doctrine.
- b) ... *callyng it exorzismes and coniurations* . – used to characterise the sacrament of matrimony.
- c) ... *showyng that he hathe not the power' of byndyng and lewsyng that criste gave to petur but in vsurpyng that power apon hym he he makythe hym-selfe antecriste* – used to question the legitimacy of the Pope/the papacy and to provide a justification for setting the Pope up as the Antichrist.
- d) ... *callyng thaym Maumentes and agayn the shrynyng of seyntes bonys in goold and syluer and hangyng aboute thaym the same* – used to provide more detail concerning Crofte's rejection of the worshipping of images/saints.

The ability of the confessional part to accommodate for idiosyncratic comments from the abjurers such as in the case of John Crofte – thereby outstepping the bounds of formula – is perhaps the feature that sets it apart the most from the opening formula that precedes it and the

closing formula that follows it in turn; in addition to displaying more variation in length, content and the order of that content.

7.2 Heresy charges and their order

In correspondence with the categorisation methodology used in the present study (see 3.4), 17 distinct heresy charges, or heresy topics, have been identified in the confessional parts of the abjuration texts in the study corpus. They range from very narrow and specific confessions, such as questioning the sacrament of the altar and the real physical presence of Christ within it, to more broad confessional categories, such as questioning the conduct and merits of priests or the church: in the present study, confessions questioning the power of priests to perform sacraments, penance for satisfaction of sin, or what the real motivations of priests or the church are etc., have been grouped together in a category holding the moniker ‘the conduct and merits of priests/the church’. The reasoning behind this choice is that treating every more or less unique confession regarding the conduct and merits of priests or the church as a separate heresy charge/topic, would produce a very high number of individual and unique topics that it would not be possible to address sufficiently within the scope of the present study. Accordingly, throughout the presentation of the heresy topics contained within the confessional parts of the texts in the present corpus, it should be kept in mind that the heresy charge ‘the conduct and merits of priests/the church’ is an especially broad topic, or categorisation, for practical considerations.

Table 11 lists all the heresy charges/topics that are included in the confessional part of all 30 abjuration texts included in the present corpus. The listing of the charges on the right hand side of the table shows the order in which every topic is first introduced in the text, and does not represent individual instances of every topic; so, if a text includes two instances of a confession concerning the worshipping of images, only the first instance is recorded. The purpose of Table 11 is to give an overview of which texts contain which heresy charges in their confessional parts (cf. Figure 3 for a clear view of the relative frequency of charges).

Abjurer/confessor	Diocese	MELD Code	No. of charges	Heresy charges in the confessional part
Robert Sparke	Ely	D0677	8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Associating with heretics 2. Sacrament of the altar 3. Baptism 4. Last rites 5. The worshipping of images / saints 6. Oral confession 7. Prayer (in church) 8. The act of pilgrimage
Richarde Pytsyne/Sawyer	Winchester	D3049#1	7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacrament of the altar 2. Oral confession 3. The act of pilgrimage 4. The worshipping of images / saints 5. Fasting 6. Matrimony 7. The conduct and merits of priests / the church
Jsabelle Gartrygge	Winchester	D3049#2	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Witchcraft
Court Lamporte	Winchester	D3050#1	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacrament of the altar 2. The conduct and merits of priests / the church
Thomas Maryet/Stayner	Winchester	D3050#2	0	(Confessional details only appear as part of the opening formula)
John' Wodhulle	Hereford	D0744#2	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unlawful books 2. Sacrament of the altar 3. The conduct and merits of priests / the church 4. Oral confession 5. Praise / support / aid of Wyclif, Lollardy or a named heretic 6. Moral superiority of men over women
John' Crofte	Hereford	D0746#1	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacrament of the altar 2. Oral confession 3. The conduct and merits of priests / the church 4. Matrimony 5. The Pope and the papacy 6. The worshipping of images / saints
Thomas Hygons	Hereford	0746#7	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacrament of the altar 2. Praise / support / aid of

				Wyclif, Lollardy or a named heretic
Thomas Hulle	Lincoln	D4440#3	0	(Confessional details only appear as part of the opening formula)
John Polley	Lincoln	D4440#17	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacrament of the altar 2. Baptism 3. The worshipping of images / saints 4. Purgatory
Johnn Qwyrk	Lincoln	D4440#18	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacrament of the altar
John Baronn	Lincoln	D4440#22	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The act of pilgrimage 2. The worshipping of images / saints 3. Associating with heretics 4. Unlawful books
Geffray Symeon'	Lincoln	D4440#23	5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The act of pilgrimage 2. The worshipping of images / saints 3. Unlawful books 4. Praise / support / aid of Wyclif, Lollardy or a named heretic 5. The conduct and merits of priests / the church
Alis [Alice] Hignelle	Salisbury	D4112#7	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The worshipping of images / saints
William Carpenter/Harford	Salisbury	D4112#8	5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oral confession 2. The worshipping of images / saints 3. The act of pilgrimage 4. The conduct and merits of priests / the church 5. Praise / support / aid of Wyclif, Lollardy or a named heretic
John Tanner'	Salisbury	D4112#10	3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacrament of the altar 2. Baptism 3. The worshipping of images / saints
Jsabelle Dorte	Salisbury	D4112#11	3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The worshipping of images / saints 2. The act of pilgrimage 3. Sacrament of the altar
John Bisshopp;	Salisbury	D4113#2	8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Associating with heretics

Alice Bisshopp; John Roye; Thomas Scochynn; John Stanwey				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Sacrament of the altar 3. The act of pilgrimage 4. The worshipping of images / saints 5. The Pope and the papacy 6. Fasting 7. The conduct and merits of priests / the church 8. Oral confession
Annes [Agnes] Scochyn'	Salisbury	D4113#4	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Associating with heretics 2. Sacrament of the altar 3. The worshipping of images / saints 4. The conduct and merits of priests / the church
Richard Herford; Richard Hughlott	Salisbury	D4113#5	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The worshipping of images / saints 2. Oral confession 3. Sacrament of the altar 4. Not performing sacraments
Thomas Boughtorn	Salisbury	D4113#7	7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Associating with heretics 2. Sacrament of the altar 3. Not performing sacraments 4. The act of pilgrimage 5. The worshipping of images / saints 6. The Pope and the papacy 7. The conduct and merits of priests / the church
Joan Martyn'	Salisbury	D4113#14	5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacrament of the altar 2. The worshipping of images / saints 3. The act of pilgrimage 4. Oral confession 5. The conduct and merits of priests / the church
John' Godwynn	Salisbury	D4114#1	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oral confession
John' Barly	Salisbury	D4114#2	0	(Confessional details only appear as part of the opening formula)
Robert Makamm	Salisbury	D4114#6	3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prayer (in church) 2. The worshipping of images / saints 3. Sacrament of the altar
John' Polle	Salisbury	D4114#8	0	(Confessional details only appear as part of the opening formula)

John Stilmann	Salisbury	D4114#13	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The act of pilgrimage 2. Sacrament of the altar
John Goodson	Salisbury	D4114#15	3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The act of pilgrimage 2. The Pope and the papacy 3. The conduct and merits of priests / the church
Richard John	Salisbury	D4114#17	3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prayer (in church) 2. The conduct and merits of priests / the church 3. Fasting
John Swayne/Barnard; Margery Swayne/Barnard; Thomas Smythe; John Nicols; Cristiann Nicolas	Salisbury	D4114#20	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sacrament of the altar 2. The act of pilgrimage 3. The worshipping of images / saints 4. Prayer (in church) 5. The conduct and merits of priests / the church 6. Oral confession
<i>The average number of confessional topics in a text:</i>			3,5	

Table 11. A list of all heresy charges/topics contained in the confessional parts of the individual texts

Most heresy charges of some frequency seem to be more or less evenly distributed among the dioceses; the confession concerning the sacrament of the altar/the Eucharist, the most frequent heresy charge, is a good example in this regard. On the other hand, some heresy charges in the confessional part seem to be more common in some dioceses in comparison with others: the charge concerning unlawful books, for example, seems to have been rare in Ely and Salisbury, with only one text out of a total of 18 containing this charge; in contrast to four out of 12 texts in the other dioceses seen together. However, this difference is not statistically relevant (FET $p=0,13$), and as such it should not be given much weight in this regard. There is a statistically relevant difference (FET $p=0,05$) between Ely, Winchester and Salisbury on one side, and Hereford and Lincoln on the other, concerning charges of questioning the merit of oral confession – where this seems to have been more common in the latter dioceses. On the whole, there is not much basis in the material to provide statistically relevant differences pertaining to the diocesan distribution of heresy charges or topics: given the nature of the present corpus (composition, selection etc.) it is difficult to find support for firm conclusions in the material.

By aligning all heresy charges, or topics, contained in a text with each other and calculating their average positions in a sequence – as well as confirming the internal

relationships manually – it is possible to make a list that shows the typical sequence of heresy charges in the confessional part (see Figure 4 for the typical sequence of an entire abjuration text). Table 12 presents the average order of charges in the texts of the present corpus:

The average order of charges in the confessional part (represented in 3 or more texts)
1. Associating with heretics
2. Sacrament of the altar
3. Baptism
4. Oral confession (to priests)
5. The act of pilgrimage
6. The worshipping of images
7. Unlawful books
8. Prayer (in church)
9. Praise / support / aid of Wyclif, Lollardy or heretics
10. The Pope and the papacy
11. The conduct and merits of priests / the church
12. Fasting

Table 12. The average order of heresy charges in the confessional part

The list produced in Table 12 is a construct that does not occur in any real text in identical configuration; it might perhaps best be thought of as an amalgam of all the texts transposed on top of each other, adapted to form one particular list. The list does, however, give us a good idea about the typical ordering of the heresy charges, or topics.

When it comes to potential differences between dioceses concerning which articles or heresy charges would be used against the abjurors, the data in general suggests that the different charges were mostly distributed evenly between the five dioceses included in the present study, when diocesan representation is taken into account. In Table 13, the diocesan distribution of the heresy charges is presented – if a text has multiple instances of one and the same heresy charge,

only the first one is given. The values given in Table 13 indicate the number of texts containing any given heresy charge, and not the number of unique instances of that charge in the texts.

Heresy charge/topic (represented in 3 or more texts)	Ely (1 text)	Hereford (3 texts)	Lincoln (5 texts)	Salisbury (17 texts)	Winchester (4 texts)
1. Associating with heretics	1	0	1	3	0
2. Sacrament of the altar	1	3	2	10	2
3. Baptism	1	0	1	1	0
4. Oral confession (to priests)	1	2	0	6	1
5. The act of pilgrimage	1	0	2	9	1
6. The worshipping of images	1	1	3	11	1
7. Unlawful books	0	1	2	0	0
8. Prayer (in church)	1	0	0	4	0
9. Praise / support / aid of Wyclif, Lollardy or heretics	0	2	1	1	0
10. The Pope and the papacy	0	1	0	3	0
11. The conduct and merits of priests / the church	0	2	1	8	2
12. Fasting	0	0	0	2	1

Table 13. The distribution of heresy charges across the dioceses represented in the present corpus

The results in Table 13 show how evenly distributed the most common heresy charges are in the present corpus, when the difference in text representation between dioceses is taken into account. However, if we look at the heresy charge concerning unlawful books, which is only contained in the confessional part of three texts (it also appears in type 2 opening formulae, see 45), Salisbury seems to stand out from the other dioceses: considering the high overrepresentation of Salisbury texts, it is interesting that the heresy charge concerning unlawful books makes no appearance at all in the Salisbury material. If we assume that Salisbury really stands out from the other dioceses in this regard, this finding is statistically relevant (FET $p=0,07$). Looking at Table 13, we might also feel warranted to make the assumption that Lincoln, with its five texts, stands out

from the other dioceses in having no texts that include the heresy charge concerning oral confession to priests; this perceived difference is, however, not statistically relevant (FET $p=0,14$), as is the case with most of the potential differences as they appear in Table 13. Due to the uneven representation in the present corpus, no findings based on this material should be given too much weight, but the data on the whole tentatively indicate that there were not many substantial differences in what kinds of heresy charges were brought against an accused heretic across the five dioceses included in the present study.

There does not seem to be any difference of note with regard to the kinds of heresy charges that were brought against men and women – the most common heresy charges, or topics, (see Figure 3) are roughly equally common among men and women. This also applies to the order in which the heresy charges are listed in the confessional parts of the abjuration texts.

7.3 Distribution of formulaic and non-formulaic content in the confessions

7.3.1 Three main types of confessional content with regard to formula

As the heresy charges brought forward by the examiners in a heresy trial were based on articles already drawn up before the trial (see 2.3.2), any confession given by an abjurer will by default always contain some formulaic language or content. In some cases it is clear that the entirety of a confession concerning one particular heresy is fully formulaic throughout, as seen in the confession concerning the sacrament of the altar/the Eucharist by John Swayne in Salisbury, 1508:

- (39) First that J John Swayne other-wyse callid John Barnard have hold affermed sayde belevid and tawght : that in the Sacrament of the Aulter is not . the veray body of Criste
'First, that I, John Swayne otherwise called John Barnard, have held, affirmed, said, believed and taught that the true body of Christ is not present in the sacrament of the altar.' (MELD: D4114#20)

The use of the verb forms *hold*, *affermed*, *sayde*, *belevid* and *tawght* provides us with the first clear clue of the formulaic nature of this confession; in addition, the wording *is not . the veray body of Criste* is highly formulaic, and is also used in the confessions of the other four abjurers in the same text (MELD: D4114#20, which is a group abjuration) concerning the sacrament of the altar, in nearly identical wording. The same kind of wording can also be found in other

Salisbury texts, for example in the group abjuration of John Bisshopp et al. (MELD: D4113#2) and the abjuration of John Stilmann (MELD: D4114#13) – similar notions to the same effect are also found in texts from other dioceses as well, in different phrasing: In the abjuration of Johnn Qwyrk given in Lincoln (MELD: D4440#18) the same notion is phrased as *First not beleving in the blessed sacrament of the auter to be cristis body in foqrme of Bred* (37), and this particular phrasing is repeated in another Lincoln abjuration, given by John Polley (see 9), in near-identical wording and spelling.

In addition to fully formulaic confessions, there are also instances of highly formulaic confessions in the present corpus, where only very small bits of non-formulaic content has been added to the formula – we might refer to such instances as examples of *minor* non-formulaic additions. This is a trait seen especially in confessions related to consorting with other heretics or being in possession of unlawful books. The confession of John' Barly given in Salisbury, 1504, concerning an unlawful book is fully formulaic except for the added detail on how long he had been in possession of this unlawful book:

(40) J synfulle wreche haue kepte by the space of xij yeres a boke conteynyng dyvers great heresys and false opinions *reproved* and da'pned by alle holy churche a-genst the doctrine of criste and hys appostels a-yenst the lawes and *determinacouns* of the seyde churche And haue red ther-yn not delyveryng hyt to my ordynary acordyng as the law byndythe me wher'-for' J haue ronmenn yn a great kynd of heresy and so reputed and adjudged by the law

'I, sinful wretch, have through a period of twelve years kept a book containing diverse great heresies and false opinions reprov'd and damnd by all holy church, against the doctrine of Christ and his apostels, against the laws and determinations of the said church; and [I] have read therein, not handing it over to my ordinary as the law binds me to do, wherefore I have committed a great kind of heresy and [am] so reputed and judged by the law.' (MELD: D4114#2)

The information given in the prepositional phrase *by the space of xij yeres*, is the only element that seems to be non-formulaic (and is not a required element in other equivalent confessions): the abjurer characterising himself or herself as a *synfulle wreche* is repeated in several Salisbury texts from the tenure of Bishop Edmund Audley (e.g. D4114#1 and D4114#6; see 63); furthermore, the verbs used throughout, in addition to phrasings such as *a-yenst the lawes and determinacouns of the seyde churche* are all indications of formula (being repeated constantly throughout the abjuration texts in the present corpus).

The most typical kind of heresy confession, however, is a confession that starts out in a formulaic manner (based on the articles drawn up beforehand), and where the abjurer adds substantial extra information that is neither required by the formula or formulaically repeated by

other abjurers – we might refer to these confessions as confessions where *major* non-formulaic content has been added by the abjurer: ‘major’ in the sense that the non-formulaic content added contributes new and substantial lexical information, as opposed to small additions such as time adverbials (see 40) that only slightly modify the lexical content already in place. This extra information usually consists of a single subordinate clause/sentence that is added to the formulaic initial stating of the heresy charge – in some cases the extra information provided by the abjurers might run as long as several sentences. The two first examples below from the abjurations of John Polley (41) and John Stilmann (42) show the non-formulaic additional content realised through a single subordinate clause/sentence, whereas in the two last examples from the abjurations of Thomas Boughtonn (43) and William Carpenter (44), this added non-formulaic content is realised over several sentences (the additional non-formulaic content is highlighted in bold throughout):

(41) Also that the sacrament of Baptime doorn withē the obseruaunces of the Churche and in the fonte is not necessary . **but to cristenn a childe rather in a Ryver or a ponde .**

‘Also, that the sacrament of baptism performed with the observances of the church and in the font is not necessary, as the child could rather be christened in a river or a pond.’

(MELD: D4440#17, my highlighting)

(42)* That is to sey J haue openly seyde : that hit is not to goo on pilgermage to oor lady of kawisham nor to none other seyntes **for they can not speke here nor walke /**

‘That is to say, I have openly said that one should not go on pilgrimage to our lady of Caversham, or to any other saints; for they cannot speak, hear or walk.’ (MELD: D4114#13, my highlighting)

(43)* First J haue holde~~nn~~ and byleved by the space of this xxv yeris passed or therup~~on~~ that in the sacrament of the Aulter is not the veray body of cryste our’ savyoor . but that it is o~~on~~ly material bredd . **For J haue thought it not possible that the preest whiche is but A mann and the handwerk of god : shuld haue power to make god his maker . And moreover J haue said and holde~~nn~~ that the said bredd was better whann it camm fromm the bakers handys ; than whann it comme fromm the preestys handys after the consecracoun . forsomoche as the preest mysved it otherwyse thann to the pleasur’ of god . and soo dyd not the baker .**

‘First, I have held and believed through 25 years or thereabouts that the true body of Christ, our saviour, is not present during the sacrament of the altar, but that it is only material bread. For I have thought that it is not possible that the priest, who is but a man and the handwork/creation of God, should have the power to make/produce God, his maker. And moreover, I have said and held that the said bread was better when it came from the baker’s hands, than when it came from the priest’s hands after the consecration, seeing that the priest misused it in ways other than to the pleasure of God, and so did not the baker.’

(MELD: D4113#7, my highlighting)

(44)* Also J many seasons haue seid a-yenst the power’ & doctrine of pristis seing’ this-wise **that prilatis of the Churche and pristis be but scribes and phariseis disseyving’ Cristen people in their’ doctrine and nothing’ profiting’** theim Ferthermor’ seyng’ in despite of them that when thei be reveste to masse **thei be as Angelis and whenn thei be vnreveste thei be as blak brondis of helle and ther’ be none odir of them but all in like so meanyng’ .**

‘Also, I have for many seasons spoken against the power and doctrine of priests, saying in this manner that prelates of the church and priests are but scribes and Pharisees deceiving Christian people in their doctrine, doing nothing to profit them [Christian people]; furthermore, speaking against them that when they are dressed for mass they are like angels, and when they are not dressed for mass they are like black-brands of hell, and there are no other of them that are not the same.’ (MELD: D4112#8, my highlighting)

**These texts contain other minor non-formulaic additions as well: the naming of a particular saint (in 66), and initial time adverbials (in 67 and 68).*

7.3.2 Formula and non-formulaic content between dioceses and heresy charges

In order to say anything about the absence or presence of formulaic language, the textual data subjected to analysis needs to be similar and comparable, so that specific patterns, or the absence of those patterns may be documented. The abjuration of John’ Wodhulle, given in Hereford before the local bishop in 1433 (MELD: D0744#2), is over 30 years older than the second oldest texts in the present corpus, from the diocese of Lincoln. This text contains wordings and textual features that at the level of text type are very different from the other texts, and the implication of this is that it will not be possible to satisfy the criteria of repetition and consistency inherent to the present working definition of formulaic language (see 3.5) – as the degree of repetition and consistency of textual elements in relation to other texts is unknown on account of a lack of comparable texts. Because of this reality, Wodhulle’s abjuration has been completely omitted from the assessment and analysis of formulaic language, presented throughout the rest of this chapter (Wodhulle’s abjuration is highly relevant in other respects where its features can be compared to the other texts in the present corpus).

By grouping every confessional instance into one of the three classificational groups described in Chapter 7.3.1, it is possible to count how many instances there are of the three different confessional types with regard to the presence or absence of formulaic language. One heresy charge, or topic, may contain several instances of independent confessions concerning the same charge/topic, and every one of these instances are counted individually. In the example below from the confession of Alis Hignelle given in Salisbury, 1485–93, concerning the worshipping of images, three separate confessions that are not directly dependent on each other may be identified (the initial words of every confessional instance have been highlighted with bold; for the remainder of her confession, see 70):

(45) **And also openly haue seid be-fore diuers / that ymages of seintes be not to be wurshipped** and for the Impugnacioun of wurshipping' of them haue mysseyd as moch as in me was for the most despite of them as her' -aftir folowithe **First that whenn deuote Cristen' people of their' deuocioun be wonte to offr' their' candels bernyng' to the Jmage of saint leonard** J haue for their' deuocioun callid them folis Ferthe-rmor' shewing' in this wise whenn sent leonard wolle ete a Candelle And blowe owte a-nodir than J wolle offr' hym' a Candelle els J wol not **Also when' J haue seenn copwebbis hangyng' be-fore the face of the Jmage of our' lady** J haue seid And reputed them folis that offerithe to that Jmage but if she couthe blowe away the same copwebbis from' her' face

'And [I] have also openly said before diverse [people] that images of saints ought not to be worshipped, and in the impugnation/disputing of worshipping them have misspoken as much as was in me, despite of them [the saints], as hereafter ensues. First, that when devote Christian people out of their devotion have been used to offer their burning candles to the image of Saint Leonard, I have for their devotion called them fools; furthermore, showing in this way that when Saint Leonard will eat a candle and blow out another, then I will offer him a candle, otherwise I will not. Also, when I have seen cobwebs hanging before the face of the image of our lady, I have called and reputed them fools that offer to that image, as she cannot [even] blow away the same cobwebs from her face.' (MELD: D4112#7, my highlighting)

The first confessional instance (*And also openly ...*) is fully formulaic and very general, whereas the second (*First that whenn ...*) and third (*Also when' ...*) instances contain major non-formulaic additions/content. Since the confessions are not directly dependent on each other, they have been counted as three instances of the same heresy charge/topic, belonging to two different groups of confession with regard their formulaicness or non-formulaicness.

The texts also contain instances of wordings that on their own seem to be non-formulaic in the abjuration situation, but that on the other hand are repeated by many abjurers. The phrase *stockys and stonys* (from MELD: D4113#2) – used to put forward the claim that images of saints are just material objects out of wood and stone – and confessional content related to the same notion, is an example of such wordings that might be either formulaic or non-formulaic: formulaic in the sense that the wording might have been part of the articles an abjurer was charged with (see 2.3.2), and non-formulaic in the sense that it could simply have been a common phrase among the Lollards not required by the examiners for any formulaic purpose. Classifying such wordings as either being formulaic or non-formulaic has an impact on whether some confessions are assessed as containing non-formulaic additions or not, when the distinction to be made rests completely on the possible addition of such wordings, as in the following example from the abjuration of Annes [Agnes] Scochyn' given in Salisbury, ca. 1498:

(46) Also J haue holdenn and byleued . that the Jimages of the crucifixe . of our' blessyd lady . // and of other saynctes shuld not be wurshipped . for they bee but stockys and stonys .

'Also, I have held and believed that the images of the crucifix of our blessed lady, and of other saints, should not be worshipped; for they are but stocks and stones.' (MELD: D4113#4)

Interpreting the subordinate clause *for they bee but stockys and stonys* as a statement already included in the articles used to charge accused heretics, causes us to classify this entire confession as being fully formulaic, as opposed to including a major non-formulaic addition in the form of a subordinate clause (and vice versa). Tables 14 and 15, together with Figure 6, shows the relative representation of the three groups of confessions across the texts in the study corpus will also include an adjustment showing the results as they would be if we interpreted all such wordings as being formulaic in nature.

Distribution of formula and non-formulaic additions in the confessional parts of the texts			
Fully formulaic confessions	Minor non-formulaic additions	Major non-formulaic additions	Total number of confessional instances
31 [49*]	6	126 [108*]	163

Table 14. Distribution of formula and non-formulaic additions in the confessional parts of the texts

Distribution between formula and non-formulaic additions in the confessional part

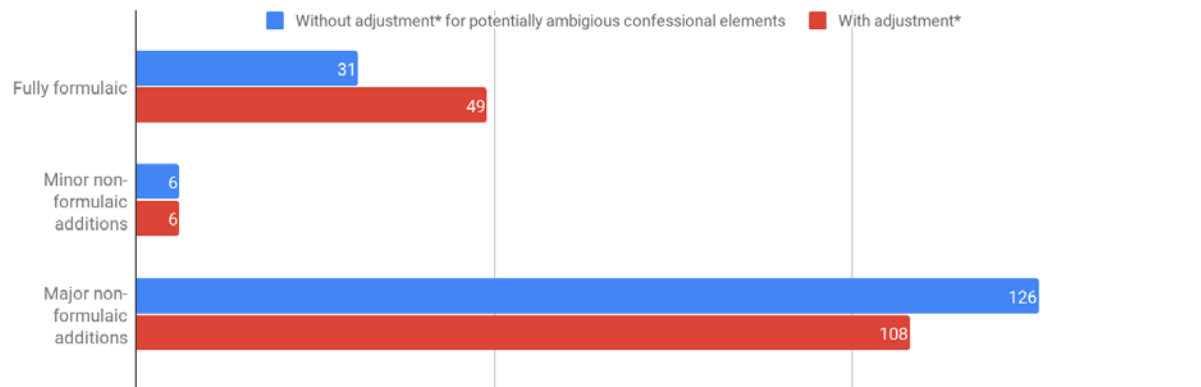


Figure 6. Distribution between formula and non-formulaic additions in the confessional part

Diocesan distribution of formula and non-formulaic additions in the present corpus					
	Ely	Hereford	Lincoln	Salisbury	Winchester
Fully formulaic confessions	8	6	4	12 [30*]	1 [3*]
Minor non-formulaic additions to formula	0	1	1	4	0
Major non-formulaic additions after formula	0	17	11	81 [63*]	17 [15*]

Table 15. Diocesan distribution of formula and non-formulaic additions in the present corpus

*The distribution if we assume that recurrent wordings regarding poer men 'poor men' (e.g. MELD: D4440#17; about the worshipping of images), stockys and stonys 'stocks and stones' (e.g. MELD: D4113#4; about the worshipping of images), grauenn w^t mannys hand 'graven with the hands of men' (e.g. MELD: D4112#11; about the worshipping of images), spende and wast money 'spend and waste money' (e.g. MELD: D4114#20; about the act of pilgrimage), for the Rumoor of the pepull 'for the rumour/gossip of the people' (e.g. MELD: D4114#20; about praying and going to church) are all formulaic on account of their repeated nature.

If we interpret all the potentially ambiguous elements (such as *stockys and stonys* etc.) as being non-formulaic additions to the confessions, Salisbury and Winchester stand out in relation to the other dioceses in that they have a much higher ratio of non-formulaic additions to the confessions. With basis in the findings presented in Table 15, counting fully formulaic confessions together with confessions containing minor non-formulaic additions (which are almost entirely formulaic) on the one hand and confessions containing major non-formulaic additions by themselves on the other, the difference between Salisbury and Winchester seen together against the other three dioceses is statistically relevant (FET $p=0,00038$) – meaning that if we claim that texts from Salisbury and Winchester contain more non-formulaic content than the other three dioceses, this assumption is statistically sound. If we instead interpret all the potentially ambiguous elements (such as *stockys and stonys* etc.) as being fully formulaic confessions, Salisbury and Winchester still seem to stand out in relation to having more major non-formulaic additions than the other three dioceses, but this finding is not statistically relevant (FET $p=0,28$). As a result, whether we can talk about a statistically relevant difference between the dioceses in this regard is a matter of how we deal with elements such as *stockys and stonys*, that could be either formulaic or non-formulaic. Now, considering the highly uneven geographical and chronological representation in the present corpus, any findings should only be considered indicative: the one text from Ely with its eight counts of fully formulaic confessions has a considerable impact on the results in particular, and there is a chance that this single text does not give a correct impression of a typical abjuration text from that diocese.

The general trend throughout the confessional part of the abjuration texts in the present corpus is that every heresy confession more often than not contains major non-formulaic additions. However, some heresy charges and their accompanying confessions seem to display a higher frequency of major non-formulaic additions than others (and vice versa). Table 16 shows the distribution between highly formulaic content (fully formulaic confessions together with confessions containing minor non-formulaic additions) and confessions containing major non-formulaic additions for every heresy charge or topic represented in three or more texts in the present corpus, in the order they appear in on average:

Heresy charge / topic	Fully formulaic + minor non-formulaic additions	Major non-formulaic additions	% of major non-formulaic add.
1. Associating with heretics	5	0	0 % ^{*1}
2. Sacrament of the altar	12	14	54 %
3. Baptism	1	2	67 %
4. Oral confession (to priests)	3	6	67 %
5. The act of pilgrimage	2 [7*]	14 [9*]	88 % [56 %*]
6. The worshipping of images	2 [11*]	27 [18*]	93 % [55 %*]
7. Unlawful books	1	2	67 %
8. Prayer (in church)	1 [3*]	4 [2*]	80 % [40 %*]
9. Praise/support of Wyclif, Lollardy or heretics	0	4	100 % ^{*2}
10. The Pope and the papacy	1	5	83 %
11. The conduct and merits of priests/the church	1 [3*]	23 [21*]	88 %
12. Fasting	1	3	75 %

Table 16. The distribution of formula and non-formulaic additions across heresy charges/topics

**The distribution if we assume that recurrent wordings regarding poor men 'poor men' (e.g. MELD: D4440#17; about the worshipping of images), stockys and stonys 'stocks and stones' (e.g. MELD: D4113#4; about the worshipping of images), grauenn w^t mannys hand 'graven with the hands of men' (e.g. MELD: D4112#11; about the worshipping of images), spende and wast money 'spend and waste money' (e.g. MELD: D4114#20; about the act of pilgrimage), for the Rumoor of the pepull 'for the rumour/gossip of the people' (e.g. MELD: D4114#20; about praying and going to church) are all formulaic on account of their repeated nature.*

**¹ The fact that the heresy charge of associating with heretics very often follows directly after the introductory*

formula might be responsible for it being realised in very formulaic language, as it might have been thought of as being closely related to the opening formula due to its sequential positioning.

**² It should be noted that the heresy charges/confessions concerning praise/support of Wyclif, Lollards or heretics in general are especially prone to containing non-formulaic additions, as any heretic mentioned specifically will be named, 'automatically' constituting non-formulaic information.*

The heresy charges/confessions related to the act of pilgrimage, the worshipping of images, prayer (in a church setting), praise and support of Wyclif/Lollardy/heretics, the conduct and merits of the papacy and the conduct and merits of priests/the church (wherein over 80% of the confessions contain major non-formulaic additions) seem to stand out in Table 16, in that they appear to be more receptive to non-formulaic content. If we assume that wordings such as *stockys and stonys* etc. are non-formulaic, this finding is highly statistically relevant (FET $p=0$). However, if we on the other hand assume that the same wordings are formulaic, we see that the situation is completely changed, and only confessions regarding praise and support of Wyclif/Lollardy/heretics, the conduct and merits of the papacy, and the conduct and merits of priests/the church seem to stand out with regard to being especially receptive to non-formulaic additions (having an over 80% ratio of major non-formulaic additions). Seeing the aforementioned three heresy charges/topics, then, in relation to all other charges/topics, the difference is statistically relevant (FET $p=0,00035$) – meaning that a case can be made that those particular heresy charges are still especially receptive to non-formulaic content. Whether we choose to interpret repeated wordings such as *stockys and stonys* etc. as formula or as non-formulaic additions, this will have a dramatic impact concerning the question whether some heresy charges/confessions were more receptive to non-formulaic content. While strongly indicative, none of these findings can be considered conclusive due to the uneven geographical and chronological representation in the present corpus.

7.3.3 Distribution of formulaic and non-formulaic content across genders

By counting the instances of formulaic and non-formulaic elements as they appear in the abjurations of both men and women, there seems to be a difference between men and women in that women seem to provide slightly more major non-formulaic additions to their confessions of heresy than men – this difference is shown in Table 17:

Abjurers (by gender)	Fully formulaic + minor non-formulaic additions*¹	Major non-formulaic additions*¹	% of major non-formulaic add.
Female abjurers (7 individuals)*	6	27	82%
Male abjurers (27 individuals)*	30	87	74%

Table 17. Distribution of formulaic and non-formulaic content across genders

* *The abjuration of Bisshopp et al. (MELD: D4113#2, a group abjuration) has been excluded on account of it being the only abjuration where abjurers are not confessing individually, but are instead grouped together for every heresy charge.*

*¹ *Whether we interpret potentially ambiguous wordings such as stockys and stonys ‘stocks and stones’ etc. have not been taken into account in this table, as it would not have made any impact on the findings – as both men and women are equally affected by the interpretation we choose to use. In Table 17 it is assumed that all such wordings are non-formulaic additions, as opposed to being part of a fully formulaic confession (see the discussion surrounding 70).*

The indicated difference between men and women in Table 17 is, however, not statistically relevant (FET $p=0,49$). There is, in other words, a roughly 50% chance that the perceived difference is due to statistical ‘noise’ or randomness – meaning that the assumption that women provided slightly more non-formulaic content in their confessions cannot be substantiated by the data in the present corpus: it *might* still be the case that women did provide more non-formulaic content in their confessions, but the composition of the data in the limited present corpus does not constitute sufficient material to support a statistically sound conclusion in this matter.

8 The closing formula

8.1 Two types of closing formula

The confessional part of an English late fifteenth-century or early sixteenth-century abjuration text is typically immediately followed by a closing formula wherein the abjurer formally recants the heresies he or she has confessed to having committed (either as part of the opening formula or as part of the confession proper, see 6.1 and 7.1, respectively). The formal recantation is often accompanied by a promise to desist from heretical behaviour in the future, as well as a promise to report any observed heresy to the ecclesiastical authorities. In many cases the abjurer signed the abjuration by making a cross sign at the end, or near the end of the closing formula.

Analogous to the opening formula (see 6.1), it is possible to identify two main types of closing formula according to how the formula is initiated: In type 1, the closing formula is initiated by a general proclamation of guilt (similar to the proclamation of guilt being part of the type 1 opening formula, see 40) that immediately follows the confessional part. In type 2, on the other hand, the closing formula is directly initiated by the formal recantation itself, without a preceding general proclamation of guilt.

A typical example of the type 1 closing formula from Salisbury consists of (i) a general proclamation of guilt, (ii) a formal recantation, (iii) a promise to desist from consorting with heretics, (iv) a pledge to inform the ecclesiastical authorities of any observed heretics, (v) a submission to ecclesiastical authority and consequences in the event of a potential relapse situation (see 2.3.3), (vi) the signing of the abjuration in the form of cross, and (vii) a request for those present to bear witness to the abjuration, in case the abjurer acts contrary to the abjuration at a later date (this sequence is marked in 47; see also Table 2). These constituent elements, with the exception of the general proclamation of guilt (specific to the type 1 closing formula), and the request for those present to bear witness (unique to Salisbury texts) are also the same constituent elements found in the type 2 closing formula. In the following examples (47–54), the two types of formula, type 1 and type 2, are presented with four examples each:

Type 1: initiated with a general proclamation of guilt (highlighted in bold)

- (47) [i] **Theis Articles** Afore rehersed and euery of theymm . to me by you Reuerend Fadre in god
Judicially obiected ; J [Thomas Boughtonn] confess and knowlege that J haue holdezn and bileved .

the whiche articles J now vnderstond and know to be fals errors and heresies ayenst the determinacoun and true byleve of holy church . And also J confesse that J holdyng' and bylevyng' the said Articles was an heretyke And A mysbelevyng' mann out of the right feythe of Cryste . [ii] But forasmoch as the lawys of holy church be grounded in mercy Remeb'ryg' that god wyl not the deth of A synner but rather that he be conuerted and lyve ; And also that the church of god here in erthe closeth not hir bosomm to hym that wyl turn' agaynn ther-unto ; J therfor willing to be party-ner of the said mercy forsake and abiure alle the said articles and euery of theymm vponn theis holy gospels . And not oomly themm but alle other errors damnable opinions and heresies Ayenst the determinacoun of the holy church . [iii] And here J promys by the oth Afor maad that from hensforthe . J shal neuyr be favourer . concealer . maynteyner . ne receyver of any suche *persones* or *personn* . openly ner pryvyly . [iv] but as sone as J shal haue vndrestondyng' of any of theym' : J shal doo as moche as in me is that they shal be detect vnto their' ordinaries or to their' officers . [v] Submyttyng' myself vnto the payn' and sharpnes of the lawe that A mann ~~fallen~~ Abiurate and fallen' ageyn' to heresy oweth to suffre in suche caas : if euyr J doo or hold contrary to this myn' abiuracyoun or to any part of the same . [vi] Jn witness wherof J subscribe it with/myn' owen' hand makyng' A crosse ~~+~~[And require alle cristenn people here present : to record and wytnes ayenst me of this my confession' and abiuracoun . Jf J fromm this day forthward offend or doo contrary therunto .

'These aforementioned articles, and every one of them, to me judicially objected, by you reverend father in God; I [Thomas Boughton] confess and acknowledge that I have held and believed the which articles I now understand and know to be false errors and heresies against the determination and true belief of the holy church. And also, I confess that I holding and believing the said articles was a heretic and a misbelieving man out of the right faith of Christ. But seeing that the laws of the holy church are grounded in mercy, remembering that God does not wish the death of a sinner, but rather that he will be converted and live; and also that the church of God here on earth closes not her bosom to him that will turn again thereto. I therefore willing to be partaker of the said mercy, forsake and abjure all the said articles, and every one of them, upon these holy gospels, and not only them, but all other errors, damnable opinions and heresies against the determination of the holy church. And here I promise by the aforementioned oath that from henceforth I shall never be favourer, concealer, maintainer, nor receiver of any such persons or person, openly or privately; but as soon as I shall have knowledge of any of them, I shall do as much as is in me that they shall be detected/pointed out to their ordinaries or to their officers. Submitting myself unto the pain and sharpness/strictness of the law that a man abjure and fallen again to heresy ought to suffer in that case, if I ever do or hold contrary to this my abjuration or to any part of the same. In witness whereof I sign it with my own hand, making a cross ~~+~~, and require all Christian people present here to record and witness against me of this my confession and abjuration, if I from this day forward offend or do contrary thereto.'

(MELD: D4113#7, my highlighting)

- (48) **And othr' articles and opnions of heresies and erroures the whiche . J haue declared and openly confessed befor' the said Reuerent fader sittyng' in iugement / And for as moche as J am enformed for certain . by the said Reuerent fadir . and by othr' notable doctoures . that the same articles and opinions benn heresyys . fals errorris . and not trewe . and ayens the determinacion of the chirche . J openly forsoke . and vtirly renounced and abiured alle the forsaid articles . and all othr' articles . and opinions of heresyys and erroures contrary to the Determiaecion' of the chirche . / And J swor' vpon' a book by the holy euangelijs . that J fro that day forward . shal not teche preche nor hold . nor afferme the said heresies . erroures opinions . nor noon othr' / nor that J shal Defende . nor maytiene hem . nor noo *persones* . that be of thair' opinionn . by me . nor by any othr' mene *persone* . openly or pryuiely . nor J shal gyve fauor' helpe . socour' . assistance or counsaile to hem . nor receive hem . nor nor to hem J shal yeue credence . nor be in felasship w^t hem . to my knouleche . nor J shal gyve nor sende giftes to hem . nor J shal halde . nor receyue Doctrine bookes . quaires nor rollis concernyng' heresies . erroures or opinions of hem . nor them vse . And in token of these fals articlis opinions and erroures openly by me confessed & vtirly forsaken ; J doo mekely and lowly . this penance . in party of my penance . enioined by the said Reuerent fadir my Juge and ordinary . // Praying' mekely and hertily . alle ministres of the chirche . and alle *cristen* Peple being' hier' present . to pray to god for me . that J may haue forgyuenes of these opinions erroures and heresies abouesaid . and grace of the holy goost . that J falle no mor' in-to these . nor noon othr' erroures in tyme comyng'**

‘And other articles and opinions of heresy and errors the which I have declared and openly confessed before the said reverend father sitting in judgement; seeing that I am informed for certain, by the said reverend father and by other notable doctors, that the same articles and opinions are heresies, false errors and not true, and against the determination of the church. I have openly forsaken and utterly renounced and abjured alle the foresaid articles, and all other articles and opinions of heresy and errors contrary to the determination of the church. And I have sworn upon a book containing the holy gospels that I from that day forward shall not teach, preach or hold, nor affirm the said heresies, errors and opinions, nor any other; nor shall I defend or maintain them, nor any person holding the same opinions, concerning both myself or any other debased person, openly or privately; nor shall I give favour, help, succour, assistance or counsel to them, nor receive them, nor shall I give them credence, nor be in fellowship with them to my knowledge; nor shall I give or send gifts to them, nor shall I hold or receive books of doctrine, pamphlets or scrolls concerning heresies, errors or opinions from them, nor use them. And in token of these false articles, opinions and errors openly confessed and utterly forsaken by me, I perform meekly and lowly this penance, in party of my penance, enjoined by the said reverend father, my judge and ordinary. Praying meekly and heartily for all ministers of the church and all Christian people being present here to pray to God for me, that I may have forgiveness of these opinions, errors and aforementioned heresies, and [have] the grace of the holy ghost, [and] that I will fall no more into these or any other errors in the time to come.’ (MELD: D0677, my highlighting)

- (49) **And these fals artecles and contrary opynyons have J belevid o^{rn} And them concilid wherfor J the seid John Goodso^{rn} the yonger now by the grace of god and the helpe of true doctrine and counelle of true crystenn menn knowythe my great offence and am very penytent and sory that J have offendid soo grevously agaynst god and the true feythe of his holy churche .** Promyttyng^r feythfully to beleve and holde as the cristynn feythe techeythe and precheythe And from hens forward shalle J neuer beleve or defend nor concylye the seyde erro^{ur}us and false hereseis [sic] or any other oppynyoun of heresy but them and alle other forsake and abiure vndur . payne of Relaps / Jn wittenes whereof J subscribe w^t my-n owne handes makyng^r a crosse desyryng^r all yo^u that be here present to bere wittenes of this my abiuracoun .:

‘And these false articles and contrary opinions I have believed in and concealed, wherefore I, the said John Goodson the younger, now by the grace of God and the help of true doctrine and counsel of true Christian men, know my great offence and am very penitent and sorry that I have offended so grievously against God and the true faith of his holy church. Promising faithfully to believe and hold as the Christian faith teaches and preaches; and from henceforward I shall never believe or defend nor conceal the said errors and false heresies or any other heretical opinion, but forsake and abjure them and all others, under pain of relaps. In witness whereof I sign with my own hands making a cross †; desiring of all you that are present here to bear witness of this my abjuration .:’ (MELD: D4114#15, my highlighting)

- (50) **of the whiche erro^{ur}s [sic] and hereses to me here in your noble presence iudicially obiected and by me confessed J by myn owⁿⁿ confessionⁿⁿ and by witenese and evydence in that behalf ayenst me had / of the forsaid erro^{ur}es and hereses as thei haue beyn opynly and singulari reherced lawfully convicte that J haue holden taught and sustened / the erro^{ur}es hereses and opynyons aforseid dampned forbodenn and the determyna^{con}n of our^r moder holy churche contraryous yelde me gilty and cupable /** The whiche forsaid erro^{ur}es and all other hereses and erroneus opynyons contrary vnto the cristen faith and the determyna^{con}n of the chirche and holsome constitu^{con}ns and ordinance of the same J the said court Lamporte sory contrite and very repentante from this day forwarde solelymly abiure forswer forsake and expresly remiete submytting my-self openly and expresly to the payne rigore and sharpnese of the law . that a persone relapsed ought to suffre by the law if J doo or presume to attempte the contrary of this my present abiura^{con}n also god me help and this holy euangelistes & [Latin: osculatus est libru] And in-to the wittenes therof to this my present abiura^{con}n J put to my signe / [Latin: et fecit signu^m cruce^s] .:

‘Of the which errors and heresies to me judicially objected, here in your noble presence, and by me confessed, I by my own confession and by witness and evidence in that behalf against me had of the foresaid errors and heresies as they have been openly and singularly rehearsed, lawfully convicted that I have held, taught and sustained the errors, heresies and foresaid opinions, damned, forbidden and against

the determination our mother holy church, [I] admit myself to be guilty and culpable. The which foresaid errors and all other heresies and erroneous opinions contrary to the Christian faith and the determination of the church and wholesome constitutions and ordinances of the same, I the said Court Lamporte, sorry, contrite and very repentant, from this day forward solemnly abjure, forswear, forsake and expressly remit; submitting myself openly and expressly to the pain, rigour and sharpness/strictness of the law, that a person relapsed ought to suffer by the law, if I do or presume to attempt the contrary of this my present abjuration; also help me God and these holy gospels and [Latin: osculatus est libru]. And to the witness thereof I put my signature to this my present abjuration. [Latin: et fecit signu'cruces] .:’
(MELD: D3050#1, my highlighting)

Type 2: initiated with the formal recantation (highlighted in bold)

- (51) **wherfore J now consideryng that J haue in the’ premisses sore erred willyng to retorne and repare to the vnite of our moder holy chirche all suche secrete keynynges and w’holdyng of dampned bookes and the lecturs of the same inspeciall w^t all other in generall J vtterly abiure and forsake promittyng** faithfully that from hensforthe J shall not kepp redd ne here any suche bookes nor to pryvate and dampned lecturus consent ne resort / but if J know or at any tyme hereafter shall know eny *person* or *persones* suspecte or gyltty of or in the *premisers* . or eny of theym or in any other article contrary to the articles of the faithe and the *determynacon*n of the chirche J shall detecte theym to myn ordynary for the tyme beyng so god be my helpp and this holy euangelistes . *promy*ttynge allso by vertu of my said othe faithfully to *performe* and fulfill all suche penance as shal be to me ynioyned for my grete offence done in this behalf Jn wittenese wherof J make here w^t myn own’ hand a crosse [the act of signing continues in Latin]

‘Wherfore I, now considering that I have severely erred in the premisses, willing to return and come back again to the unity of our mother church; all such secret keepings and withholding of damned books and the lectures in particularly, together with all other in general, I utterly abjure and forsake; promising faithfully that from henceforth, I shall not keep, read nor hear any such books, nor consent or resort to private and damned lectures, but if I know or at any time hereafter shall know any person or persons suspected or guilty in the premisses, or any of them or concerning any other article contrary to the articles of the faith and the determination of the church, I shall detect/point them out to my ordinary for the time being, so help me God and these holy gospels; promising also by virtue of my said oath to faithfully perform and fulfil all such penance as shall be enjoined to me for my great offence done in this behalf. In witness whereof I make here with my own hand a cross.’ (MELD: D3050#2, my highlighting)

- (52) **whiche Article and opynyoun by yo^u Reuerend fader in god to me Judicyally obiected and by me confessed in forme afore rehersed w^t alle other that be contrary to the feythe and *determynacoun* of holy chirche J forsake and abiur’ vponn these holy gospels** And fully *promyt* by the same othe that from hensforthe J shalle never be favorer receyver councler ner’ recetter of any *persons* or *person*n mystechyng’ or mysbelevyng’ to my knowlege : but as sone as J have knowlege of any siche J shalle detecte or caus them to be detected vnto þeyr ordenaryes or to their officers Submytting’ me to the rygour of the lawe in siche case *provided* yff ever fro this daye forthe J doo or holde contrary to this my abiuracoun Jn wittenes wherof J make a crosse w^t my owmn hand And Requyre alle cristenn pepelle her’ present to ber’ witnes to this my abiuracoun

‘Which article and opinion to me judicially objected, by you reverend father in God, and by me confessed in the form already given with all other that are contrary to the faith and determination of the holy church, I forsake and abjure upon these holy gospels; and promise fully by the same oath that from henceforth I shall never be favourer, receiver, concealer, nor a harbourer of any persons or person misteaching, or misbelieving to my knowledge; but as soon as I have knowledge of any such I shall detect/point them out or cause them to be detected to their ordinaries or to their officers. Submitting myself to the rigour of the law in the case that I from this day forward do or hold contrary to this my abjuration. In witness whereof I make a crosse † with my own hand, and require all Christian people present here to bear witness to this my abjuration.’ (MELD: D4114#17, my highlighting)

- (53) **Where-fore w^t my ownn Free wille not compellid ther-to alle heresies errors and false opinions damnid and reprovit by auctorite of holy churche in generale J forswere abiure and forsake** *promitting* feithfully that *from* hens-forthe J shalle *neuer* afferme beleve nethir holde Any errors herisies or opinions *contrarie* to the *determinacoun* of holy churche Nethir J shalle *mayntaynn* or *fauour* Any *personn* or *persons* susp^cte or guilty *contrarie* to *cristenn* faithe or Any *bokes* *reprovit* by holy churche J shalle detect & shewe them to my Lord busshopp of hereford my ordinarie or othir of his officers for the tyme being^r in as goodly haast as J *can* or may and *suche* Penance as shal be by yow reuerend fadir in god to me inioined in this behalffe J shalle mekely and deuotly *performe* and *fulfille* so god me helpe at his holy dome and the holy gospelle of god conteyned in the same Jn wites wher^r of J make this signe of the crosse w^t my hand . †

‘Wherefore with my own free will, not compelled thereto, all heresies, errors and false opinions damned and reprovit by the authority of the holy church in general, I forswear, abjure and forsake; promising faithfully that from henceforth I shall never affirm, believe, neither hold any errors, heresies or opinions contrary to the determination of the holy church; neither shall I maintain or favour any person or persons suspected or guilty contrary to Christian faith or [hold] any books reprovit by the holy church; I shall detect and show them to my lord, the Bishop of Hereford, my ordinary, or other of his officers for the time being in as much haste as I am able to and such penance as shall be by you reverend father in God to me inioined in this behalf, I shall meekly and devoutly perform and fulfil so help me God at his holy judgement and the holy gospel of God contained in the same. In witness whereof, I make this sign of the cross with my hand †.’ (MELD: D0746#7, my highlighting)

- (54) **wherefore J the seid John now penytent am sorry that J haue soo seyde And ~~~ abJur^r the same seynges and techynges** *Promyttyng* feythfully to beleve and holde as the *cristynn* feythe *techeythe* and *precheythe* And from hens forward shalle *neuer* teche nor defend the seid erro^rus and hereseys [sic] or any other opynyon of heresy vnder the payne of Relaps Jn wittnesse whereof j subscribe w^t my-n owne hand *makyng* a crosse *Desyryng* alle yo^u that be her^r present to bere wyttenes of this my *abiuracoun*

‘Wherefore I, the said John, now am penitent and sorry that I have so said, and abjure the same sayings and teachings; promising faithfully to believe and holde as the Christian faith teaches and preaches. And from henceforth, [I] shall never teach nor defend the said errors and heresies or any other opinion of heresy under pain of relapse. In witness whereof I sign with my own hand, making a cross †; desiring of all you that are present here to bear witness to this my abjuration.’ (MELD: D4114#13, my highlighting)

The diocesan distribution of the two types of closing formulae is presented in Table 18, with the instances of the type 1 closing formula given on the left side and the instances of type 2 on the right:

Diocese	Instances of type 1	MELD Code type 1	Instances of type 2	MELD Code type 2	Number of texts in the corpus
Ely (Ely)	1	D0677	0		1
Hereford (Herefordshire)	0		3	D0744#2, D0746#1, D0746#7	3
Lincoln (Lincolnshire)	0		3	D4440#3, D4440#17, D4440#18	3*
Salisbury (Wiltshire)	7	D4113#2 – D4113#14, D4114#15, D4114#20	10	D4112#7 – D4112#11, D4114#1 – D4114#13, D4114#17	17
Winchester (Hampshire)	3	D3049#1, D3049#2, D3050#1	1	D3050#2	4
	Total: 11		Total: 17		Total: 28

Table 18. The distribution of type 1 and type 2 opening formulae in the present corpus

* The two confessions (MELD: D4440#22 and -#23) that do not have a recantation part, and as such no equivalent closing formula, have been excluded in this context.

Based on the representational data concerning type 1 and type 2 closing formulae presented in Table 18, it might appear as if type 2 formulae were more prevalent in Hereford and Lincoln, than in the other dioceses – this assumption is also the most statistically relevant (FET $p=0,055$). However, the nature of the data, in particular the very uneven diocesan representation, is far from ideal in this regard, and thus, findings might well be considered indicative, but not conclusive on the basis of the current material.

8.1.1 Variation in the type 1 closing formula

As is also the case concerning variation related to the opening formulae (see 6.1.1), it will not lay within the scope of the present study to produce a comprehensive list of all the variations that occur in the two different types of closing formulae. However, some key variations will be covered in this and the following sections.

Since the primary function of the closing formula in an abjuration text is to contain a recantation of the heresies admitted to in the confessional part, one would not normally find any additional specific confessional details within it. An unique exception to the aforesaid can be

found in the abjuration of Richard Pytsyne/Sawyer, where a specific detail concerning *the kepyning & conceilynng of Englyssh bokes* has been inserted at the end of the formal recantation:

(55) J the said Richard Pytsyne otherwyse called Rychard Sawyer sory contryte & veray repentant from this day forthward solely abiure for-swere for-sake and expresly renouice [sic] **And also the kepyzng & conceilynng of Englyssh bokes for-bodenn** submytynng my-selff opynly and expresly to the payne Rygor and sharpnesse of law ...

‘I the said Richard Pytsyne, otherwise called Richard Sawyer, sorry, contrite and very repentant, from this day forward solemnly abjure, forswear, forsake and expressly renounce [all confessed heresies], and also the keeping and concealing of forbidden English books; submitting myself openly and expressly to the pain, rigour and severity of the law ...’ (MELD: D3049#1, my highlighting)

Given the limited material, consisting of only 30 texts, it is not possible to ascertain how common such additions were, but if the present corpus is to serve as an indication, they would seem to be rare. On the same note, we cannot know if this feature would have been more prevalent in type 1 formula, in comparison with type 2 – it might simply be a coincidence that this particular example of the type 1 closing formula contains an addition with specific confessional details.

8.1.2 Variation in the type 2 closing formula

When an abjurer, as part of the heresy trial proceedings, submitted to ecclesiastical authority before signing the abjuration, there would usually be no mention of any particular punishments incurred (see 2.3.3) in the English text of the abjuration (these details would usually follow in a separate section of text in Latin). The abjuration of John Qwyrk, given in Lincoln, 1464, is unique in the present corpus in that it actually provides details of a punishment in the English text, where it is explicitly stated that he has been banished from the diocese of Lincoln for life:

(56) Also as sone as J haue doon’ my penance whiche is injoynd me **J shalle departe owte of the diocese of lincoln never after to comme therin during my lyff vnder payne of relapse** as god me help and theis holy euangelies Jn wittnesse of theis premiss³ J John Qwirk forsaid subscribe my-selff withe my-n owne hand [Latin: et fec^t tale signum]

‘Also, as soon as I have done my penance which is enjoined me, I shall depart out of the diocese of Lincoln never to return during my lifetime, under pain of relapse as God me help and these holy gospels. In witness of these premisses, I, the foresaid John Qwirk, sign with my own hand [Latin: et fec^t tale signum].’ (MELD: D4440#18, my highlighting)

On account of one single instance in the corpus, it is not possible to say whether such a variation would have been more common in Lincoln than in other dioceses, or whether it would have been more closely associated with a type 1 or a type 2 closing formula, or if it was simply a unique variant regardless of geographical origin and type – keeping in mind that the typology of type 1 and type 2 formulae is defined by the present study and not by contemporary observers, who might have assessed the formulae involved in a very different way.

8.2 General variation in closing formulae

8.2.1 Diocesan distribution of signed and unsigned texts

After having confessed and abjured, it was common for the accused heretic to sign the abjuration by drawing a cross sign *withe myn awne hande* ‘with my own hand’ (from MELD: D0746#1), also when the abjurer was literate, as seen in the abjuration of Richard John, a priest that appeared before the Bishop of Salisbury in 1508 (see MELD: D4114#17). The part of the closing formula wherein which the abjurer signs the abjuration is not present in all of the texts in the present corpus, and Table 19 shows the distribution between signed and unsigned abjurations according to the dioceses they originate from.

Diocese	Signed texts	MELD Code signed	Unsigned texts	MELD Code unsigned	Number of texts in the corpus
Ely (Ely)	0		1	D0677	1
Hereford (Herefordshire)	2	D0746#1, D0746#7	1	D0744#2	3
Lincoln (Lincolnshire)	3	D4440#3, D4440#17, D4440#18	0*		3*
Salisbury (Wiltshire)	13	D4113#2 – D4114#20	4	D4112#7 – D4112#11	17
Winchester (Hampshire)	4	D3049#1 – D3050#2	0		4
	Total: 22		Total: 6		Total: 28

Table 19. Diocesan distribution of signed and unsigned texts

* *The two confessions (MELD: D4440#22 and -#23) that do not have a recantation part, and as such no equivalent closing formula that a signature would have been a part of, have been excluded in this context.*

Based on this particular data-set, no statistically relevant differences exist between single dioceses or between groups of dioceses: the assumption that comes closest to being statistically relevant (FET $p=0,29$) is the assumption that Lincoln and Winchester stand out from the other dioceses, being the only dioceses that have a 100% signing rate in the present corpus. In other words, the data *might* suggest that there were no substantial differences based on geographical location, with regard to a text being signed or not. However, with the underrepresentation of texts from Ely (one text), and the overrepresentation of texts from Salisbury (17 texts) kept in mind, any results should only be thought of as being indicative.

8.2.2 Diocesan distribution of closing formulae containing an apology

The closing formula of a number of texts in the present corpus contain a form of apology that is usually placed in the middle of the formal recantation, where the wording [*J*] *now penytent am sory that J haue soo seyde* from the abjuration of John Stilmann (MELD: D4114#13; see 54) is a typical example. In the following example, the apology, which is worded differently than in Stilmann's abjuration, is likewise placed inside the formal recantation being part of the closing formula in the abjuration of Court Lamporte given in Winchester, 1496–1501:

(57) The whiche forsaid errores and all other hereses and erroneus opynyons contrary vnto the cristen faith and the *determinacon* of the chirche and holsome constituconns and ordinaunce of the same J the said court Lamporte **sory contrite and very repentante** from' this day forwarde solemply abiure forswere forsake and expresly remiete

'The which foresaid errors and all other heresies and erroneous opinions contrary to the Christian faith and the determination of the church and wholesome constitutions and ordinances of the same, I the said Court Lamporte, sorry, contrite and very repentant, from this day forward solemnly abjure, forswear, forsake and expressly remit[.]' (MELD: D3050#1, my highlighting)

In one of the Salisbury texts, a similar kind of apology has instead been added to the end of the general proclamation of guilt being part of a type 1 closing formula, in the abjuration of John Goodsom, given in 1508 (see 49 for the full closing formula):

(58) And these fals artecles and contrary opynyons have J belevid *omn* And them concilid wherefor J the seid John Goodsonn the yonger now by the grace of god and the helpe of true doctrine and councelle of true crystenn menn knowythe my great offence **and am very penyent and sory that J have offendid soo grevously agaynst god and the f true feythe of his holy churche .**

‘And these false articles and contrary opinions I have believed in and concealed, wherefore I, the said John Goodson the younger, now by the grace of God and the help of true doctrine and council of true Christian men, know my great offence and am very penitent and sorry that I have offended so grievously against God and the true faith of his holy church.’ (MELD: D4114#15, my highlighting)

The diocesan distribution of the presence or absence of apologies in either the formal recantation or the general proclamation of guilt in type 1 closing formulae is shown in Table 20:

Diocese	With apology	MELD Code with apology	Without apology	MELD Code without apology	Number of texts in the corpus
Ely (Ely)	0		1	D0677	1
Hereford (Herefordshire)	0		3	D0744#2, D0746#1, D0746#7	3
Lincoln (Lincolnshire)	0		3	D4440#3, D4440#17, D4440#18	3*
Salisbury (Wiltshire)	8	D4113#4, D4114#1, D4114#2, D4114#6, D4114#13 – D4114#20	9	D4112#7 – D4113#2, D4113#5 – D4113#14, D4114#8	17
Winchester (Hampshire)	3	D3049#1, D3049#2, D3050#1	1	D3050#2	4
	Total: 11		Total: 17		Total: 28

Table 20. The diocesan distribution of apologies in the formal recantation or proclamation of guilt

* The two confessions (MELD: D4440#22 and -#23) that do not have a recantation part, and as such no equivalent closing formula that an apology would have been a part of, have been excluded in this context.

Looking at the diocesan distribution in Table 20, a case could be made that Salisbury and Winchester stand out from the other dioceses that do not have a single instance of such apologies – this interpretation of the data is statistically relevant (FET $p=0,02$). On the surface, it also appears as if a case could be made that the situation in Salisbury was fundamentally different from that in Winchester, with Winchester having a much higher ratio of texts containing apologies – this interpretation is, however, not statistically relevant (FET $p=0,59$). In the end, the findings seem to indicate that apologies were more common in Salisbury and Winchester, but as

a consequence of the uneven representation (geographically and chronologically) this should only be considered indicative.

8.2.3 Diocesan distribution of promises to desist and promises to act

A number of texts contain both a promise to act – in relation to exposing heresy or following the official church doctrine, and a promise to desist from further heresy – i.e. from performing heretical acts and consorting with heretics (see Table 2, ix and x); some texts only contain the promise to desist from further heresy; and there are texts that contain neither element in their closing formulae. The following example, from the abjuration of the priest Richard John, given in Salisbury, 1508, contains both [i] a promise to desist from future heresy and [ii] a promise to act if the abjurer becomes aware of any heretics in the future:

- (59) whiche Article and opynyoun by yo^u Reuerend fader in god to me Judicyally obiected and by me confessed in forme afore rehersed w^t alle other that be contrary to the feythe and *determinacoun* of holy church J forsake and abiur' vponn these holy gospels [i] **And fully promyt by the same othe that from hensforthe J shalle never be favorer receyver counciler ner' recetter of any persons or personn mystechyng' or mysbelevyng' to my knowlege** : [ii] **but as sone as J have knowlege of any siche J shalle detecte or caus them to be detected vnto þeyr ordenaryes or to their officers** Submytting' me to the rygour of the lawe in siche case *provided* yff ever fro this daye forthe J doo or holde *contrary* to this my abiuracoun In wittenes wherof J make a crosse w^t my owne hand And Requyre alle cristem pepelle her' present to ber' witnes to this my abiuracoun
(MELD: D4114#17, my highlighting; see 52 for a translation of the text)

The diocesan distribution of promises to act and promises to desist in the present corpus is presented in Table 21:

Diocese	Promise to act + desist	MELD C. act + desist	Only desist	MELD C. only desist	Neither act nor desist	MELD C. (neither)	Number of texts
Ely	0		1	D0677	0		1
Hereford	2	D0746#1 D0746#7	0		1	D0744#2	3
Lincoln	2	D4440#17 D4440#18	1	D4440#3	0		3*
Salisbury	13	D4113#2 – D4114#20	4	D4112#7 – D4112#11	0		17
Winchester	1	D3050#2	0		3	D3049#1 – D3050#1	4
	Total: 18		Total: 6		Total: 4		Total: 28

Table 21. The diocesan distribution of promises to act and promises to desist in the closing fomulae

* The two confessions (MELD: D4440#22 and -#23) that do not have a recantation part, and as such no equivalent closing formula a promise to act or desist would have been a part of, have been excluded in this context.

As Table 21 shows, the majority of the texts contain both a promise to act in a certain way and a promise to desist from future heresy. There does not seem to be any substantial difference between dioceses, except for the high proportion of texts (¾) from Winchester that do not contain any form of promise to act or desist. If we assume that Winchester stands out from the other four dioceses, when texts that contain any form of promise is seen in relation to texts that contain no form of promise at all, the difference is statistically relevant (FET $p=0,005$). This *might* be indicative of promises to act and desist being less common in Winchester, although the uneven representation the present corpus makes it difficult to say anything firm on the matter.

8.2.4 Diocesan distribution of texts ending with a request to bear witness

The majority of abjuration texts from Salisbury (13 out of 17 texts) contain a final element, following the signing of the abjuration, wherein the abjurer requests from those present in the heresy trial to bear witness against them, if they at a later date would act contrary to the statements and promises recorded in the abjuration (see Table 2, xiii) – this textual feature is unique to texts originating from Salisbury in the present corpus. The example below, of such an

abjuration-final request to bear witness, is taken from the abjuration of Joan Martyn' given in Salisbury, 1498–99:

- (60) And [J] require alle crystem peple her present to record and wytnes ayenst me of this my confessioun and abiuracoun . Jf J fromm hensforth doo ageynst the same or any part therof
'And [I] require all Christian people present here to record and witness against me of this my confession and abjuration, if I from henceforth act against the same or any part thereof.' (MELD: D4113#14)

The 13 texts (MELD: D4113#2–D4114#20) from Salisbury containing a request to bear witness do all originate from the tenures of the two bishops John Blythe and Edmund Audley (cf. Table 4); the earliest Salisbury texts from the tenure of Thomas Langton do not contain this textual feature. The assumption that Salisbury is fundamentally different than the other dioceses is predictably statistically relevant (FET $p=7,0E-5$, or 0,00007). However, a limited corpus of only 30 texts with a highly uneven representation is not sufficient material to say that this feature was in fact entirely unique to Salisbury.

8.3 Formulaic verbs in the closing formula

For a short introduction to formulaic verbs, see the beginning of Chapter 6.3.

In order to establish as much comparability as possible, only verbs that are used in a context where they refer to heresy in general have been considered (since specific heresy charges might have specific verbs associated with them); and following from this, the verb data is taken from the general proclamation of guilt that initiates the type 1 closing formula (see 47), and from the promise to desist from further heresy when given in a general sense (see 59).

Figure 7 shows the diocesan distribution of formulaic verbs as they appear in the general proclamation of guilt used in type 1 closing formulae (the text from Ely is not included as it does not contain a comparable usage of verbs):

Instances of formulaic verbs from the proclamation of guilt in type 1 closing formulae

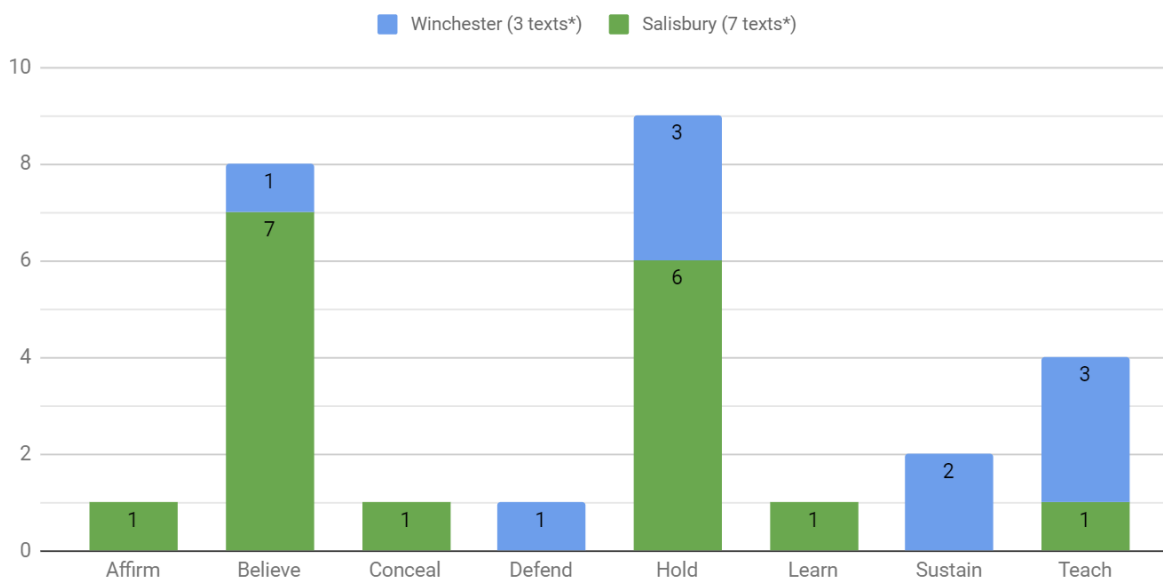


Figure 7. Instances of formulaic verbs from the proclamation of guilt in type 1 closing formulae

*The number of texts from each diocese that contain a type 1 closing formula.

The results shown in Figure 7 indicate that on the whole there was no substantial difference between Salisbury and Winchester in that they both seem to contain a relatively similar frequency of the two most common verbs *believe* and *hold*, and they both use two or three verbs that are unique to each diocese. However, considering the difference in representation between Salisbury and Winchester, the latter seems to stand out concerning the use of the verb *teach* by displaying a higher frequency of that word, both in absolute and relative numbers. The assumption that the use of the verb *teach* in general proclamations of guilt was more common in Winchester than in Salisbury, is statistically relevant (FET $p=0,033$), but should be considered indicative only, on account of the uneven representation in the present corpus.

Figure 8 shows the diocesan distribution of formulaic verbs contained within the promise to desist from further heresy, which typically follows directly after the formal recantation element in the closing formula:

Instances of formulaic verbs contained in the promise to desist from further heresy

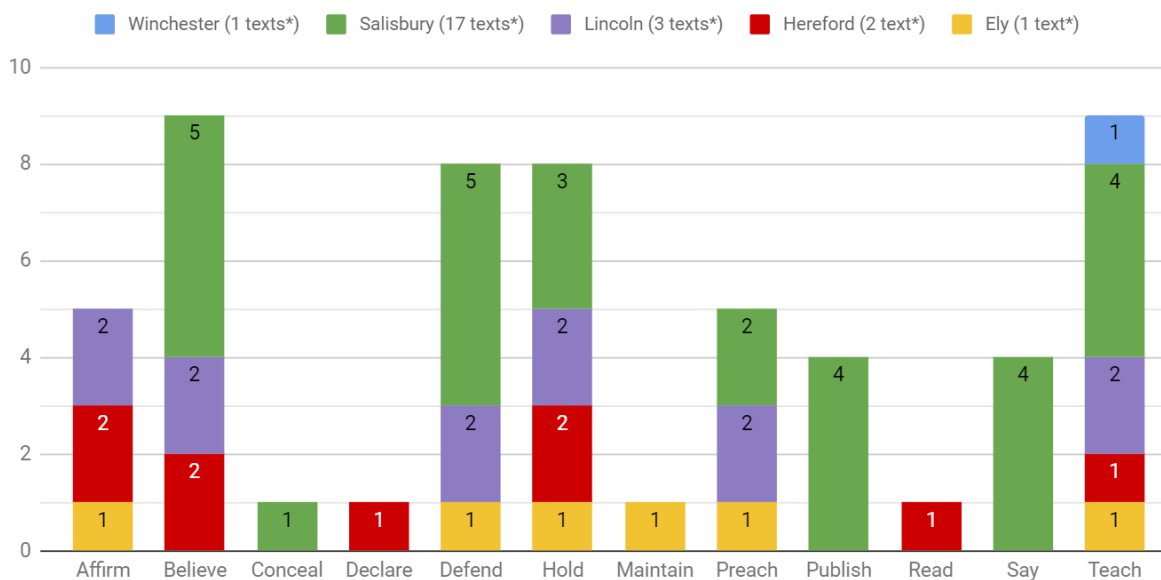


Figure 8. Instances of formulaic verbs contained in the promise to desist from further heresy

*The number of texts from each diocese where the closing formula contains a promise to desist from further heresy.

As shown in Figure 8, the overall diocesan distribution of formulaic verbs (in relation to the number of texts from each diocese) is very even, and there does not seem to be many considerable differences between the dioceses. However, looking at the results concerning the verb *preach*, a case might be made that this verb appears to have been less common in Salisbury, as only two out of 17 texts contain the verb in question. This assumption, based on the relative number of instances, is statistically relevant (FET $p=0,028$). This might provide some indication that this was indeed the case, but on account of the non-ideal diocesan representation, it will not be possible to conclude more firmly on this matter.

9 Discussion

9.1 Genre: Abjuration texts as communicative functions

Genres have beginnings, middles and ends of various kinds. (Swales 1990: 41)

This quotation from Swales, if rewritten to apply specifically to abjuration texts, might rather be stated as “Abjurations have opening formulas, confessional parts and closing formulas of various kinds.” However, in order to satisfy Swales’ criteria for what constitutes a genre (see 3.2), it is not sufficient to point out that a set of texts all have beginnings, middles and ends: in order to say that abjuration texts constitute a separate genre, we need to show that this schematic structure is a product of a certain communicative rationale or purpose; furthermore, a genre needs to ‘exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience.’ (Swales 1990: 58).

9.1.1 Communicative rationale or purpose

In Gertz (2012), abjurations and the heresy trial situation they recount are on a general level viewed as purposefully communicating and setting up a power distance between the abjurer and the examiners (especially the presiding bishop), as part of what Gertz identifies as the genre of abjurations. More specifically, Gertz says about abjuration texts as a genre that they:

... signaled the effectiveness of the prosecution by securing a defendant’s simultaneous confession and renunciation of heresy. ... Both the experience of abjuration and the document itself *were designed to make a lasting impression on the defendants*. ... [The] opening [of an abjuration text] ensures that the abjuration is understood not as a declaration to any interested person, but as a legally binding oath made in the presence of the authority who has jurisdiction over the speaking “subject’s” belief. (2012: 33–4, my italics)

This notion of formulaic language as a functional instrument signalling authority and jurisdiction over another person in a trial situation, is closely echoed by Doty and Hiltunen in their pragmatic study of the function of formulaic language in the depositions from the Salem witchcraft trials that took place in colonial Massachusetts, 1692–3: the documents that seem to most closely resemble late fifteenth-century or early sixteenth-century English abjuration texts are depositions, ‘which typically contain narrative accounts by individual deponents, sandwiched

between a conventional legal frame reflecting the institutional prestige of the documents.’ (Doty & Hiltunen 2009: 468).

A typical abjuration text has its confessional part sandwiched between the opening formula on one side and the closing formula on the other side (see Figure 4), and it is in this manner that they resemble, in particular, the depositions from the Salem witch trials. Formulations such as (a) *J ... confesse ... before yo^r Reuerent fathur’ ... That J synfulle wretche haue ...* (MELD: D4114#13) from the opening formula, and formulations such as (b) *J doo mekely and lowly . this penance . in party of my penance . enioined by the said Reuerent fadir my Juge and ordinary .* (48) from the closing formula, might in both cases be interpreted as establishing and enforcing a kind of “institutional prestige”, as Doty and Hiltunen puts it. In (a), the power distance between the accused and the bishop presiding is established and communicated through a striking contrast between the two characterisations *Reuerent fathur’* (about the bishop) and *synfulle wretche* (about the accused; found in Salisbury texts). Similarly, in (b) a striking contrast is established between *mekely and lowly*, when set up against “*Reuerent fadir my Juge and ordinary*”.

It might also be argued that formulaic language in itself in many cases implies authority, independent of the actual words contained within the formula: the rigidity and uniformity of formulaic language gives it a character of being independent of a specific context and thus valid for universal application, as opposed to language that is spontaneously put together by a single individual in order to suit the particular circumstances of one given person, at one point in time. Successfully communicating the idea that any discourse is independent of specific contexts leads to what we might call an appearance of objective authority – in the sense that the formulaic discourse with its appearance of objectivity creates the illusion that the language involved somehow acts with more authority than if it had been spontaneously created speech. Seen in this light, it is not strange that the language used for governmental purposes and by lawmakers is of formulaic nature. Though it should not be overlooked that using formulaic language makes it easier on a practical level to produce content more efficiently and with more consistency, and it adds the reassurance to any user of the formula that they are composing something that will be deemed suitable to the situation from the perspective of the intended audience.

On the question of communicative rationale or purpose, then, a case can be made, as Gertz, and Doty and Hiltunen do, that a fundamental function of formulaic legal texts is to ‘make

a lasting impression on the defendants' and to communicate a kind of 'institutional prestige', respectively. This potential communicative rationale would in this sense not be unique to abjuration texts, as it might be found in any kind of formal legal text where similar social dynamics exist between accusers and the accused.

However, regardless if we accept the notion of abjuration texts as purposefully communicating an 'institutional prestige' or not, the texts do on a fundamental level purposefully communicate that an abjurer has confessed and recanted. This communicative rationale would have been 'recognized by the expert members [for example examiners] of the parent discourse community', as Swales (1990: 58) formulates it in his working definition of genre. Consequently, the abjuration texts seem to fulfil Swales' genre requirement of displaying a communicative rationale that would have to be expressed across the texts.

9.1.2 Various patterns of similarity

In addition to the requirement of a communicative rationale, Swales' definition of genre also requires that a genre 'exhibit[s] various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience.' (1990: 58).

With regard to structure there are many and strong similarities between the texts included in the present corpus: the texts are, with the exception of the two confession texts (MELD: D4440#22–3), characterised by having an opening formula and a closing formula (see 6.1 and 8.1, respectively) with a confessional part sandwiched between them (see Figure 4). Furthermore, there is, for example, a strong tendency in the confessional parts for some heresy charges to appear closer to the beginning and vice versa: the heresy charge concerning the sacrament of the altar (the Eucharist) tends to either be the very first charge in the confessional part or very close to the beginning of the listed charges, if present in the texts (see Table 12); on the other hand, the heresy charge concerning the necessity of fasting is typically placed at the end or near the end of the confessional part, when the charge is present at all. Despite the strong similarities shared by the texts, there are also variations between the texts with regard to structure: there is for example much variation concerning the representation of promises to act and promises to desist (see 8.2.3); as well as considerable variation concerning the order of

presentation of participants (see 6.2.1). These variations do not, however, change the overall impression.

With regard to style, all the abjuration and confession texts are composed in highly formulaic language. On a general level, this language seems to be very much the same across different dioceses, and across texts that are decades apart chronologically. Two texts that demonstrate this continuation of style, across location and time, are the abjurations of Robert Sparke in Ely, 1457 (MELD: D0677) and Thomas Hygons in Hereford, 1509 (MELD: D0746#7). The examples sampled from these two texts (61 and 62, respectively) center around the formal recantation, where the confessed heresies contained in the confessional part of the abjuration are renounced by the abjurer. Considering that the two abjurations are more than 50 years apart, and that they come from two dioceses situated in different parts of the country, the similarity of the style used in both abjurations is profound:

- (61) And othr' articles and opions of heresies and erroures the whiche . J [Robert Sparke] haue declared and openly confessed ... that the same articles and opinions benn heresyys . fals erroris . and not trewe . and ayens the determinacion of the chirche . J openly forsoke . and vtirly renounced and abiured alle the forsaied articles . and all' othr' articles . and opinions of heresyys and erroures contrary to the Determiaecion' of the chirche . / And J swor' vpon a book by the holy euangelijs . that J fro that day forward . shal not teche preche nor hold . nor afferme the said heresies . erroures opinions . nor noon othr' / nor that J shal Defende . nor maytiene hem . nor noo *persones* . that be of thair' opinionn .
- 'And other articles and heretical opinions and errors, the which J [Robert Sparke] have declared and openly confessed ... that the same articles and opinions are heresies, false errors and not true, and against the determination of the church. J openly forsook and utterly renounced, and abjured all the foresaid articles, and all other articles and heretical opinions and errors contrary to the determination of the church. And I swore upon a book by the holy gospels, that I from that day onward shall not teach, preach, nor hold, nor affirm the said heresies, errors, opinions, nor any other; I shall not defend, nor maintain them, nor any individuals holding such opinions.' (MELD: D0677)
- (62) Where-fore w^t my ownn Free wille not compellid ther-to alle heresies errors and false opinions damnid and reprov^{id} by auctorite of holy church^e in generale J forswere abiure and forsake *promitting'* feithfully that from hens-forthe J shalle neuer afferme beleve nethir holde Any errors herisies or opinions *contrarie* to the *determinacoun* of holy church^e Nethir J shalle mayntaynn or fauour Any personn or *persons* susp^cte or gilty *contrarie* to cristenn faith^e
- 'Wherefore with my own free will, not compelled thereto, I forswear, abjure and forsake all heresies, errors and false opinions damned and reprov^{ed} by authority of the holy church in general; promising faithfully that from henceforth, I shall never affirm, believe, neither hold any errors, heresies or opinions contrary to the determination of the holy church; neither shall I maintain or favour any person or persons suspected or guilty [of acting] contrary to Christian faith.' (MELD: D0746#7)

Not only do the two examples (61 and 62) display an equally high degree of formulaicness, at times they are using near-identical phrasings: e.g. *opinions of heresyys and erroures contrary to the Determiaecion' of the chirche* (61), versus *errors herisies or opinions contrarie to the*

determinacoun of holy churche (62). This is typical for the texts overall, and is not only displayed in the two example quotations. Thus, the abjuration texts in the corpus seem to fulfil Swales' genre requirement of similarity in style.

With regard to content, the texts share many similarities: The abjuration texts in the corpus, when seen together, contain for the most part the same formulaic elements – this also applies to texts with different points of origin and different chronology. With the exception of the request to bear witness (see Table 2, xiii), being unique to closing formulae from Salisbury, the seven most common elements or constituent parts (which might be interpreted as the core components of the formulae involved, see Figure 3) are represented in at least 80% of the texts; the stating of the abjurer's name from the opening formula and the formal recantation from the closing formula are represented in 100% and 93% of the texts, respectively; the two confession texts that lack a recantation have been included in these calculations. While the texts as a rule are very similar to each other with regard to content, there are also examples to the contrary: for example, most of the texts from Salisbury contain an abjuration-final request to bear witness (see 8.2.4) that is completely unique to Salisbury texts in the present corpus.

There is also a clear pattern across the texts pertaining to what kind of heresy charges are included in the confessional parts that are sandwiched between the opening and closing formulae: all the texts in the corpus, save two (MELD: D3049#2 and D4440#3), contain charges and accompanying confessions directly related to Lollard heresy – this can be explicit as in the abjuration of Thomas Maryet (66) where John Wyclif is referred to as *A dampned heretik* 'a damned heretic'; or implicit as in the abjuration of Annes (Agnes) Scochyn' (MELD: D4113#4), where she states that in the sacrament of the altar *is not the veray flesh and blood of our' lord jhesu cryste ... but oonny material bredd* 'is not the true flesh and blood of our lord Jesus Christ ... but only material bread' (see 2.2.2). The two abjurations that do not deal directly with Lollard heresy are concerned with witchcraft and necromancy, respectively. Also on the level of content, then, the texts in the present corpus display a strong pattern of similarity, and as a consequence they seem to satisfy all the criteria necessary for them to constitute a separate genre, in accordance with Swales' working definition of genre. Despite the texts being very similar with regard to content, notable differences can also be found: for example, considering the overrepresentation of texts from Salisbury (17 out of 30 texts) it is interesting that no text from

that diocese includes a heresy charge related to being in possession of unlawful books (cf. Table 13). Such differences are, however, exceptions to the general rule.

A final requirement for any kind of discourse to be considered a genre per Swales' definition is that the individual instances of the genre must have in common the same intended audience. Considering that all abjuration texts were created under identical or very similar circumstances, and that they were all used for the purpose of documenting that an individual had been convicted of heresy, we might say that abjurations do indeed share the same intended audience, whether we see abjurers, examiners or society in general as the targeted audience(s).

As an ending note, it might be added that the texts also display a strong pattern of similarity with each other in that they are all recorded in the vernacular (see 2.3.2). In fact, they were the only documents from court records concerning heresy that were written in English rather than Latin (cf. Gertz 2012: 33).

9.1.3 The 'unsolicited first person' monologue and the performance of sincerity

The general trend in the abjuration and confession texts is that the abjurers are presented as first person voices that seem to offer their confessions and recantations from start to finish in a continuous stream, without being solicited to do so. In other words, the texts establish and maintain an illusion that the abjurers simply appeared in front of the examiners and emptied their hearts with no intervention from the examiners themselves. In order to show how the texts create the impression of what we might call an 'unsolicited first person' from start to finish, the abjuration of John Stilman given in Salisbury is quoted in full:

- (63) In the Name of god Amen J . John Stilman of the p[ar]ishe of seynt Gylys in Redyng' confesse and openly knowlege here before yo^u Reuerent fathur' in god Edmond by the grace of god bishope of Sarum my ordinary That J synfulle wretche haue contrary to the determinacoun of holy churche fallen in-to great hereseys [sic] And haue affirmed and spokem great heresy . That is to sey J haue openly seyde : that hit is not to goo on pilgimage to *our* lady of kawisham nor to none other seyntes for they can not speke here nor walke / Also J have belevid of my-n owne mynd that in the sacrament of the auter' / is not the very body of crist wherefore J the seid John now penytent am sorry that J haue soo seyde And ~~~ abJur' the same seynges and techynges Promyttyng' feythfully to beleve and holde as the cristynn feythe techeythe and precheythe And from hens forward shalle neuer teche nor defend the seid erro^rus and hereseys [sic] or any other opynyon of heresy vnder the payne of Relaps Jn wittenesse whereof j subscribe w^t my-n owne hand makyng' a crosse † Desyryng' alle yo^u that be her' present to bere wyttenes of this my abiuracoun
- 'In the name of God, Amen. I, John Stillman of the parish of St. Giles in Reading, confess and openly acknowledge here before you reverend father in God, Edmund, Bishop of Salisbury by the grace of God,

my ordinary, that I, sinful wretch, have contrary to the determination of the holy church fallen into great heresies, and have affirmed and spoken great heresy. That is to say, I have openly said that one should not go on pilgrimage to our lady of Caversham, nor to any other saints, for they cannot speak, hear or walk. Also, I have believed of my own mind that the true body of Christ is not present in the sacrament of the altar; wherefore I the said John, being penitent and sorry that I have so said, abjure the same statements and teachings; promising faithfully to believe and hold as the Christian faith teaches and preaches; and from henceforth [I] shall never teach nor defend the said errors and heresies, or any other heretical opinion; under pain of relapse. In witness whereof I sign with my own hand making a cross †; requesting of all those present to bear witness to this my abjuration.’ (MELD: D4114#13)

From sources other than the abjurations themselves, we know that an abjurer was charged and interrogated by the examiners, who addressed one article, or charge, at a time (see 2.3.2). In the abjuration of John Stilmann, or in any other text in the corpus, there is no sign of the examiners and their accusations and interrogations. It seems, then, that it was integral to abjuration texts that they presented the illusion of an abjurer who did not receive any kind of instruction from the examiners, and who appears to confess spontaneously and entirely out of his or her own volition. Gertz (2012: 34) sees abjuration texts as being characterised by a ‘language of confession that *performs sincerity*.’ (my italics). This ‘performance of sincerity’ would also constitute a fundamental communicative purpose or rationale that ‘shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style.’ (Swales 1990: 58). In other words, we might say that the performance of sincerity carried out by the first person abjurer is a central component to the genre of abjuration texts.

The corpus contains one text where this performance of sincerity is absent. The abjuration of John Wodhulle (MELD: D0744#2) was given in Hereford in 1433, before Thomas Spofford, who was Bishop of Hereford at the time. This text also represents the trial situation so that it gives the appearance that the only words spoken at the trial were those of the abjurer in the first person. However, it departs from all other texts in the corpus in that it does not contain a performance of sincerity related to creating the impression that the abjurer is confessing spontaneously and voluntarily – this is especially evident in the introductory parts of the text:

(64) For as much as J John wod^hulle am acused of certeyn poyntes and articles þ^t ben aȝeine the byleue of holy churche **J am comaunded be my lord the Bisshop of hereford to knowleche my byleue in thes poyntes that ben put vpon me** or in bookes J-founden wythe me to the help of myn owne sowle restorynge of myn owne name and that nowȝt by me other mennes sowles sholde be hindred either empeired . **Furst ys put to me that J shuld kepe and concele wythe-inne me bokes** aȝeins the comaundement of holy churche in the whiche er enclused dyuers erroours & heresies the whiche ben these that foloweth y-wreten .∴ on artykyl es that in the sacrament of the awter efter the consecracion es abydyng’ Materialle brede .

‘Forasmuch as I, John Wodhull, am accused of certain points and articles that are against the belief of the holy church, I am commanded by my lord the Bishop of Hereford to acknowledge my belief in these points

that are put upon me or upon books found in my possession for the benefit of my own soul, the restoring of my own name and for ensuring that nought by me should hinder or impair the souls of other men. First, it is put to me that I am supposed to have kept and concealed books against the commandment of the holy church in my possession, in the which are included diverse errors and heresies that here ensue: The first article is that in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration, only material bread remains.’ (MELD: D0744#2, my highlighting)

Where John Stilmann (63) is shown to *opynly knowleage here before yo^u Reuerent fathur*’, John Wodhulle has, in stark contrast, been *comaunded be my lord the Bisshop of hereford to knowleche my byleue*. There is, in other words, no attempt to textually disguise the fact that Wodhulle is not appearing voluntarily before the bishop. This is also in stark contrast to formulations such as *openly and w^t my fre wille* ‘openly and with my free will’ (from MELD: D4112#8) in relation to the act of confession; similar wordings can be found in many of the abjurations in the present corpus.

Also of note in Wodhulle’s abjuration (64), are formulations such as *thes poyntes that ben put vpon’me* ‘these points that are put upon me’, showing that these points are heresies that he does not necessarily see himself guilty of having committed. John Stilmann (63) on the other hand, is presented in his abjuration as accepting every charge brought against him without any reservations; this is, for example, the case when he states that *J synfulle wretche haue contrary to the determinacoun of holy churche fallen in-to great hereseys [sic] And haue affirmed and spokenn great heresy*. ‘I, sinful wretch, have contrary to the determination of the holy church fallen into great heresies, and have affirmed and spoken great heresy.’ In the confessions and abjurations included in the corpus, with the exception of Wodhulle’s abjuration from 1433, there is simply no room for questioning the heresy charges in the least or defending oneself against those charges – there is also no room for expressing the slightest notion of being innocent until proven guilty: the defendant is always and unequivocally guilty from the beginning until the end. However, had this not been the case in general, the texts would not have had much credibility as abjurations at all: if an abjurer were to recant heresies following confessions suggesting that the defendant was only ‘slightly guilty’ or probably not guilty at all, the abjuration would end up lacking internal coherence and it would be without any weight to its intended audience.

The difference between Wodhulle’s abjuration on the one hand and all the other 29 texts in the corpus on the other, might indicate that the genre of abjurations gradually developed to emphasise more and more the total submission of the abjurer to any charges brought against him or her, from the time around 1433 (Wodhulle’s abjuration) until at least 1509 (the abjuration of

Thomas Hygons, MELD: D0746#7). Whether this might be a valid interpretation or not is very difficult to determine with any certainty based on the small text sample in the corpus, and the very uneven chronological representation; however, if this was indeed the case, then it would seem to coincide with the increase of heresy hunting activities in the decades leading up to the Reformation (see 2.3.1): by giving all abjurations a stronger appearance of absolute conformity and submission to the ecclesiastical authorities of the abjurer, the documents would better support the Church's absolute and unique claim to the truth in religious matters, at a time where reformatory ideas started to take hold in Europe.

9.2 Text type: Abjuration texts as a specific linguistic pattern

The present study's working definition of text type, from Görlach (2004), is framed around the notion that a text type is a specific linguistic pattern that has been conventionalised for use within a certain cultural context (see 3.3). In the immediately preceding discussion of genre characteristics (in 9.1), the textual elements of abjuration texts were approached primarily on account of their sociocultural *function*. If we, however approach the same textual elements on account of the *form* of their internal linguistic features (e.g. the length of a certain textual element) we have now shifted away from a discussion of genre over to dealing with text type characteristics (cf. the 'two-tier model' in 3.1). Internal linguistic features might, for example, refer to the orthography, grammar and lexicon employed in a text. In order to satisfy the working definition of text type, any speaker, listener or reader must be able to recognise whether the internal linguistic features are employed in accordance with what is expected of a certain text type.

9.2.1 Internal linguistic features in the formulaic opening and closing formulae

For a body of texts to constitute a text type they must contain 'a specific linguistic pattern in which formal/structural characteristics have been conventionalized in a specific culture for certain well-defined and standardized uses of language' (Görlach 2004: 105). The similarity and uniformity found in the opening formulae, and the closing formulae of abjuration texts, testifies

to the strong conventionalisation that characterize the textual elements of which they are composed.

In dividing the opening formula into two types (1 and 2; see 6.1), and likewise with the closing formula (types 1 and 2; see 8.1), it might at first glance seem that this division introduces variation that might challenge the notion of all abjuration and confession texts in the study corpus being representatives of one particular text type. If we use the opening formula as an example, there is no doubt that type 1 formulae with a general proclamation of guilt are bound to include different internal linguistic features than type 2 formulae starting off with a specific confession, for instance concerning being in possession of unlawful books: After the parties involved have been introduced in the abjuration of John Godwynn, the text continues into a general proclamation of guilt (see 19 for the unabridged opening formula):

- (65) ... J synfulle wreche haue *presumed* to moche on my own wyt wherthowe J haue fallenn in-to great and horrybulle syne of heresy and haue affermed spoken and defended a great heresy and false opynyon *reproved* and dampned by alle holy churchē a-genst the doctryne of crist and hys appostels a-yenst the lawes and *determynacouns* of the seyde churchē ...
- ‘... I sinful wretch have presumed too much on my own wit wherethrough I have fallen into great and horrible sin, and have affirmed, spoken and defended a great heresy and false opinion reproved and damned by all holy church, against the doctrine of Christ and his apostels, against the laws and determinations of the said church ...’ (MELD: D4114#1)

Since no specific confessional details are given in a general proclamation of guilt, it is bound to contain different internal linguistic features from those which we see in the abjuration of Thomas Maryet, containing a specific confession regarding the keeping and reading of unlawful books in English (see 21 for the unabridged opening formula):

- (66) ... J haue secretly kept and hold and prively redd w^tyn myn house bookes libelles volumes tretes and other werkes wretyn in englisshē compiled by John wykcliff A dampned heretik and fauored and conceled the same bookes from my said ordinary and diocesan by the space of xij yeres now last past contrary to the lawes ordynaunce’ and *determynacons* of the holy canones and other holsome constitucions of our’ moder holy chirche
- ‘... I have secretly kept and held and privately read within my house books, libels, volumes, treatises and other works written in English, compiled by John Wyclif, a damned heretic and [have] favoured and concealed the same books from my said ordinary and diocesan over a period of twelve years now, contrary to the laws, ordinances and determinations of the holy canons and other wholesome constitutions of our mother holy church.’ (MELD: D3050#2)

While the difference between these two types of opening formula might seem substantial, the difference may on a fundamental level be seen as either the presence or absence of an

introductory general proclamation of guilt. When such a proclamation is absent, the confessional part is simply moved to an earlier position in the text, so that it ensues directly after the invocation and presentation of the abjurer and the receiver of the abjuration – the text as a whole remains very much the same. While Table 7 demonstrates that type 1 opening formulae are considerable more common than type 2 formulae (21 versus nine instances, respectively), it is clear that a general introductory proclamation of guilt is not required in order for a text to be considered an abjuration text. That we, despite the presence of two kinds of formulae, are dealing with the same text type is reflected in, among other features, the similarity of wordings such as *a-yenst the lawes and determynacouns of the seyde churche* ‘against the laws and determinations of the said church’ (65), and *contrary to the lawes ordynaunce’ and determynaconns of ... our’ moder holy chirche* ‘contrary to the laws, ordinances and determinations of ... our mother holy church.’ (66) from the opening formulae in the abjurations of John Godwynn and Thomas Maryet, respectively. Another internal linguistic feature that binds the two opening formulae together (as well as the rest of the texts in the corpus) is the use of formulaic verbs; the verbs *affirm*, *speak* and *defend* are used in Godwynn’s abjuration, whereas *keep*, *hold* and *read* are the ones used in Maryet’s abjuration:

Formulaic verbs originate from the articles containing the concrete wording of the heresy charges that were used against the defendants in a heresy trial (see 2.3.2). As demonstrated in Figures 5, 7 and 8, the verbs used to refer to heretical practices and/or beliefs in general stay the same to a large degree between the opening and closing formulae – with the verbs *affirm*, *believe*, *defend*, *hold*, *learn*, *preach*, *say* and *teach* being commonly present in both the opening formulae having a general proclamation of guilt, and in the closing formulae that contain a general proclamation of guilt and/or a promise to desist from heresy in the future (see 59). Reflecting the communicative function of an abjuration text (see 9.1), these verbs are generally either used in the past or future tense: past tense as the abjurer is supposed to have put heresy and heretical acts behind him or her, and future tense as the abjurer promises to desist from heresy in the future.

If the scribes and notaries had been free to use whatever verb or verb form that they personally saw fit, independent of any heresy charge articles, the texts would not only have been more idiosyncratic in relation to one another, the verbs in question would also not be able to be part of a ‘specific linguistic pattern’ inherent to the working definition of text type in the present

study. However, since the formulaic verb usage is highly uniform throughout and a central contributor to the style of the texts, it is clear that any reader among the intended audience would have been able to recognise that their removal from an abjuration text would have seemed out of place, and thus a violation of the expectation of what the text type of abjurations should look like. This ability for the intended audience to be able to recognise whether a text type is used or formulated correctly is a central requirement in Görlach's (and the present study's) working definition of text type (see 3.3).

The closing formulae in the majority of the texts in the corpus contain a signature by the abjurer, in the form of a cross, that appears in either the ultimate or penultimate position of the texts (example in 10) – where 22 texts are signed and six are unsigned (cf. Table 19), excluding the two confession texts (MELD: D4440#22–#23) that end directly after their confessional parts without any closing formula. The chronology in relation to the signing of abjuration texts is of interesting note: all the texts that lack a signature date from the fifteenth century, between 1433 and 1493. Since there are texts from the same stretch of time that include signatures, this might suggest that it became more and more common to require a signature from the abjurers as time progressed. The earliest abjuration from the corpus that has a final signature, is the abjuration of Thomas Hulle (MELD: D4440#3), given in 1457 before the bishop of Lincoln. In this particular abjuration the text that relates to the act of signing the document is fully given in Latin, while the rest of the text making up the abjuration is in English. Interestingly, the next Lincoln text chronologically speaking (MELD: D4440#17, John Polley) has the same section of text given exclusively in English, whereas the most recent text from the same diocese (D4440#18, Qwyrk) has the same section of text given partly in English and partly in Latin (see 56). This might suggest that there was a transition from Latin to English concerning the act of signing, at least in Lincoln diocese; however, the three texts that make up the entire data supporting such an assumption are not sufficient to be able to conclude in this matter. In the end, it seems that including an abjurer's signature was not an absolute requirement in the earlier texts included in the study corpus, and as such not necessary to the 'specific linguistic pattern' making up the text type of abjurations at that time – although this might have been different for the later texts in the study corpus, which all include the signature of the abjurer in the form of a cross.

In addition to the internal linguistic features discussed in the previous paragraphs, the opening and closing formulae contain variations that do not by themselves change the

fundamental characteristics of the text type of abjurations, but rather change the ‘flavour’ of the texts somewhat. An example of such a minor textual feature is the small apologetic element that is occasionally placed in the middle of the final recantation found in closing formulae (see 8.2.2, example in 57). The fact that such apologies do not appear in the earliest texts in the corpus (cf. Tables 4 and 20) might be related to the development of the genre-trait of the ‘unsolicited first person’ (see 9.1.3), in that it seems that the need to signal absolute submission in the abjurations appear to become more and more common in the period directly preceding the Reformation.

9.2.2 The confessional part

The structure of the confessional part being the middle part of abjuration texts (see 7.1) is based around a listing of heresy charges that are presented one after the other. While the order of these charges is not entirely fixed, there is a strong tendency of certain charges to appear in certain positions – these average positions are shown in Table 12. When we are looking at the precise sequence(s) that heresy charges are organised into, we are dealing with internal linguistic features that have a considerable impact on the appearance of the texts: There is, for example, a high chance that the heresy charge concerning the sacrament of the altar will either be the first charge listed or one of the first charges listed – and conversely there is a high chance that a heresy charge concerning the conduct or merits of priests will appear near the end of the listing. In other words, there is a pattern at work in the texts, a pattern that is probably closely related to the articles that contained the formal wordings used to introduce charges (see 7.3.1).

It is easy to imagine that a set of texts that consistently put the heresy charge concerning the sacrament of the altar at the bottom of the listing – while also consistently placing the charge concerning the conduct and merits of priest in the first position – would have appeared out of place for a contemporary observer, and would perhaps as such have constituted incorrect usage according to the expectations of the specific text type of abjurations, with regard to topic or situation (cf. Görlach’s definition of text type in 3.3). While it is difficult to gauge on the basis of the surviving sources, it seems plausible that the typical sequence of heresy charges, at least on some level, reflected the centrality and importance of the doctrines (and thus also the charge of violating them) from the perspective of the English Church. Hudson (1988: 38) considers the Wycliffite or Lollard view on the Eucharist/the sacrament of the altar to be the most

characteristic tenet of the movement, and there is a good chance that the ecclesiastical authorities saw it the same way, judging from the prominence of that particular heresy charge in the sequence of charges contained within the texts.

The listing of the charges contained in abjuration and confession texts, especially in the confessional part, are presented as a continuous stream of charges bound together through the use of listing adverbs such as *also*, *first*, *furthermore* and *item*. The confessional part of the abjuration of John Polley (see 9) is a typical example where the listing is accomplished by initiating the confessional elements with *first* and *also*. It was also possible to list each confessional element using ordinal numbering adverbs – this practice is only represented in the abjuration of John Wodhulle in the study corpus, realised through *on'*, *the secund*, *the thred* and *the fierthe*:

- (67) **on'**artykyl es that in the sacrament of the awter efter the consecracion es abydyng' **Materialle** brede . **the secund** poynt is . A man shold not gef his almes to *prestes* Feeres [sic?] ne pardoneres for thei ben fals enemyes of god ~~~ **the thred** . a man schold not set his trust in *pardouns* ne trentalis **the fierthe** A man shold put his trust in god alone & in no-thinge bot in him

'The first article is that in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration, only material bread remains. The second point is that a man should not give his almes to priests, Friars [sic?] or pardoners, for they are false enemies of God. The third [point is that] a man should not set his trust in pardons nor in trentals [= payments made for such masses]. The fourth [point is that] a man should put his trust in god alone, and in nothing but him[.]' (MELD: D0744#2, my highlighting)

In Wodhulle's abjuration the usage of the listing adverbs realised through ordinal numbers is highly systematic and uniform throughout, but it was also common to mix such adverbs in many configurations. Contained in the following quotation taken from the confessional part of the abjuration of Swayne et al. we find *first*, *furthermore*, *item* and *also* used to sequence the confessional elements:

- (68) **First** that J John Swayne other-wyse callid John Barnard have hold affermed sayde belevid and tawght : that in the Sacrament of the Aulter is not . the veray body of Criste ... **Ferthermore** shewyng that the masse is noo-thyng And preistes hath the noo power ... to make god that is in hevyn' and soo many goddes consyderyng that there is but oorn Godde **Jtem** that doyng of pylgermage and offeryng vnto ymagies of Sayntes : is not advayable or of any effect . but to spende and wast money **Jtem** that hit is as good to praye w^t-owte the churche as w^tin **Ferthermore** shewyng and Saying that J wold not have commyn' vnto the churche oft-tymes . but to advoyde the Rumour of the peple **Jtem** that the peple maye . Swere by the masse w^t-owte offence but not by god that is in hevyn' **Also J** the foresaide Thomas Smythe have hold affermed beleved and tawght that in the sacrament of the Aulter is not the veray body of Criste Saying that J cowde by xxx^{ti} of them for half oorn peny

'First, that I, John Swayne otherwise called John Barnard, have held, affirmed, said, believed and taught that the true body of Christ is not present in the sacrament of the altar ... Furthermore, showing that mass is without merit and that priests have no power ... to make God, that is in heaven, and so many gods,

considering that there is only one God. Item, that the carrying out of pilgrimage and offering to images of saints is not beneficial or of any effect but to spend and waste money; Item, that it is as good to pray outside of church as within; furthermore, showing and saying that I often have come to church only to avoid the gossip of the people. Item, that the people may swear by the mass without offence, but not by God that is in heaven. Also, I, the foresaid Thomas Smith, have held, affirmed, believed and taught that the true body of Christ is not present in the sacrament of the altar, saying that I could have bought thirty of them [hosts of consecrated bread] for half a penny.' (MELD: D4114#20, my highlighting)

The same kind of sequencing of the textual elements through the use of different listing adverbs is ubiquitous in the present corpus, and as such it seems to constitute a set of concrete linguistic realisations that are characteristic to abjurations in general.

9.3 The freedom or constraint of the individual voice of the abjurers

9.3.1 Overview: Two spheres of discourse

Throughout Gertz' discussion of abjurations as a genre (2012: 33–40; see 3.2) the texts are treated as monolithic compositions, where all content is fully formulaic from beginning until end. This view is not supported by the findings made in the present study. The findings rather suggest that the texts contain two different spheres of discourse, which we might call 'closed' and 'open', respectively, on account of their ability to allow non-formulaic content.

The 'closed discourse' takes place in the highly formulaic opening and closing formulae of the abjuration texts (see 6.1 and 8.1, respectively). It is 'closed' in the sense that it does not allow for non-formulaic content, with the exception of small additions such as time adverbials (see 21), the naming of specific saints in the opening formulae (see 42) and the rare addition of unique details of punishment in the closing formulae (see 56). Gertz' (2012) assessment of abjuration texts as being fully formulaic is, based on the findings of the present study, a good and fitting description of the content contained in the opening and closing formulae of the texts in the corpus.

The 'open discourse' takes place in the confessional part that is sandwiched between the opening and the closing formula (see Figure 4 and 7.1). It is 'open' in the sense that it does allow for non-formulaic additions to the heresy confessions that are not required by the examiners, following the heresy charges being initiated through formulaic wording (see 41–44). These non-formulaic additions usually supply further details related to the reasoning behind an abjurer's

heterodox position concerning a particular doctrine of the English Church (see example 1). The non-formulaic additions may also be used to offer more details about an action considered heretical by the church, as in the case of Alice Bisshopp informing the examiners that she is guilty of having eaten bacon on a saint's eve and thus not respected the fast (see 13). The findings made in the present study in the confessional parts of the texts, where major non-formulaic additions are roughly twice as common as minor non-formulaic additions and fully formulaic confessions (cf. Figure 6), are not consistent with Gertz' characterisation of the texts as being products of 'extreme ventriloquism' (see 3.2).

That fact that formulaic and non-formulaic elements are distributed so uniformly – with the former being primarily found in the opening and closing formulae and the latter in the confessional part – invests the abjuration texts with an intriguing dualism: on the whole, the texts are neither formulaic nor non-formulaic, but rather something in between. This dualism is in stark contrast to the monism that lies at the core of Gertz' (2012) approach to abjuration texts.

9.3.2 The addition of confessional details not required by the examiners

The systematic categorisation of heresy confessions in the present study with regard to formulaicness (see 7.3.2) seems to indicate that some abjurers chose to provide considerably more confessional detail than would have been necessary to satisfy the examiners. The bare minimum that seems to have been required was to confess to a heretical belief or action exactly as formulated in the articles that contained the concrete wordings of the charges (see 2.3.2). A concrete example of this 'bare minimum' can be found in John Swayne's confession concerning the sacrament of the altar (see 39), where no additional confessional details are provided by Swayne; nor does he provide any reason for believing that the consecrated host (bread) used in the Eucharist is not really the body of Christ.

Thomas Boughton's confession (see 43) likewise concerning the sacrament of the altar, is at the other end of the spectrum as he provides both additional information on how he has *holdenn and byleved* 'held and believed' (MELD: D4113#7) this particular heresy, as well as on his reasoning for why he has done so. First, he informs the examiners that he has believed for 25 years that the consecrated host is not the true body of Christ. He then proceeds to make the point that his disbelief in this matter is centered around the idea that a mere human being, a creation of

God, does not have the necessary power to convert anything into something that is essentially his or her own maker. This point is echoed by Thomas Hygons, albeit phrased in a different way, when he says that *a Carpinter cowde make a howse but the house cowde not make the Carpinter* ‘a carpenter could make a house, but the house could not make the carpenter’ (MELD: D0746#7). Boughtonn ends his confession on the sacrament of the altar by commenting that bread is better when it comes from the baker’s hands than from the hands of priests, in that the bread of the baker is not passed off as being the body of Christ; in that circumstance it is simply honest plain bread for human consumption, and nothing more.

If we were to approach the abjuration situation in the same way as Gertz (2012: 33–40), i.e. as a fundamentally unpleasant and oppressive event ‘designed to make a lasting impression on defendants’ (ibid.: 33), it would seem strange that the aforementioned confession of Thomas Boughtonn includes so many unnecessary details – it would have been much quicker and simpler if he had just supplied the examiners with exactly what they needed to hear at that time, in the form of a short confession similar to the fully formulaic one given by John Swayne (D4114#20; see 39). Boughtonn’s abjuration contains confessions concerning several other heresy charges, and the overall trend is the same as that found in his aforementioned confession directly concerning the Eucharist/the sacrament of the altar – across the board he keeps adding confessional details that far exceed what is required of him in the heresy trial setting. His confession concerning primarily the practices of demanding tithes to be paid and offerings to be made to the church, is another example of the amount of extra confessional details that he supplied to the examiners (the core content of the confession is highlighted in bold):

(69) Also . J confesse and knowlege that sith the tyme of my first acqueynta^mn^ce with the said heretikes ; J haue had A great mynde to here sermouns and prechynges of doctours and lerned menn of the churche . And as long’ as they spack the veray woordys of the gospels and the epistles such as J had herd afore in our’ englisshe bookys ; J herkned wele vnto them and had great delight to here them . **But as sone as they begynn to declare scripture after their’doctoures And brought in other maters and spack of tythes and offrynges J was sone wery to here them And had no savour’ in their’woordys . thynkyng’ that it was of their’oweⁿn makyng’ for their’profight and avantage .**

Also, I confess and acknowledge that since the time of my first acquaintance with the said heretics, I have had a good mind to hear sermons and the preaching of doctors and learned men of the church. And as long as they spoke the true words of the gospels and the epistles, such as I had heard before in our English books, I listened well to them and had great delight to hear them. But as soon as they began to declare scripture after their doctors, and brought in other matters and spoke of tithes and offerings, I was soon weary of listening to them, and had no taste for their words; thinking that it was of their own making for their [own] profit and advantage.’ (MELD: D4113#7, my highlighting)

In addition to supplying a high amount of non-formulaic content in the confession contained in 69, one might almost get the impression that Boughtonn is setting himself up as a storyteller, with bishop John Blythe as an involuntary audience member: the whole point of a confession is to come completely clean with regard to positions held and actions performed – this means that Thomas Boughtonn or any other abjurer for that matter, must be allowed to finish their statements to this effect. This could potentially be exploited in the abjuration situation by an abjurer who does not regret anything at all, but at the same time knows that he or she will be free to preach his or her personal religious beliefs to those present in the heresy trial, under the guise of renouncing these same beliefs in front of the bishop.

The abjuration of Alis Hignelle (MELD: D4112#7) is another case where the abjurer supplies many additional details that would not have been required by the examiners. Her abjuration only concerns the worshipping of image and the confessional part in her abjuration is quite long, considering that it only deals with one particular heresy charge, or topic. The first part of Hignelle's confession is given in 45, and the remainder is given here in 70:

(70) Also J haue myssaid a-yenst the Jmage of seint Martynn in this wise seing' seint Martynn is but a foole if he wer' wise he wold not stonde so longe in that highe place colde in the churche but comm downn and sit by som'pore mann fier' Over this when deuote Cristenn people be offering' their'candels to th emmage of seint Erasme J haue wold J had an hachet in my hand And wer' be-hynde them to knoke them on the heddis And for-the-mor' despite of the seid Jimages haue seid and beyn in fulle mynde willing' and wysshing' alle tho Jimages that stondithe in void places of the churche wer' in my yarde at home hauyng' an Axe in my hand to hewe them to sethe my mete and to make my potte to boyle ;

'Also, I have misspoken against the image of Saint Martin in this manner, saying that Saint Martin is but a fool; if he were wise he would not stand so long in that high cold place in the church, but rather come down and sit by some poor man's fire. In addition to this, when devote Christian people are offering their candles to the image of Saint Erasmus, I have wished I had a hatchet in my hand and were behind them to knock them on the heads. And furthermore, despite of the said images, [I] have said and been in full mind willing and wishing that all the images that stand in void places of the church were in my yard at home, having an axe in my hand to hew them, in order to seeth my meat and to make my pot boil[.]'

(MELD: D4112#7)

It is impossible to know with certainty whether Thomas Boughtonn or Alis Hignelle were genuinely repentant in their abjurations, or if they both (as well as other abjurers) exploited the heresy trial framework to get a chance to 'preach' their own religious beliefs, and the reasoning behind it, to those present during the trial proceedings. Hudson (1988: 373) touches upon this same issue as she points out that doubts have been expressed concerning the real attitudes of Lollards toward the oath they took at the end of a heresy trial, and that there is:

a good deal of evidence to suggest that their rejection of oaths had considerable bearing upon the significance Lollards attached to those promises, and indeed to indicate that many did not hesitate to take the oath when forced but regarded it, because any oath was illicit, as of no account and certainly as having no bearing upon their future behaviour or beliefs. (Hudson 1988: 373)

If this was indeed the case, it would help explain why so many abjurors make substantial and voluntary contributions of non-formulaic details (see 7.3.2) that far exceed what would have been required by the examiners.

Regardless of the inner motivations of abjurors, which in any case are bound to have varied immensely, it is clear that the abjuration situation allowed for the existence of linguistic ‘free spaces’, where individual abjurors were able to express themselves outside of the confines of formula. It seems likely that this allowance was not a product of any explicit policy or practice put into place by the examiner, but that it rather might be seen as a by-product of the reality of confession: the abjurer’s have been brought before the examiners precisely to confess, and to interfere with a confession by restricting it to a formula would subvert the very idea of confession, and thus the validity of the confession itself.

10 Conclusion

The present study set out to identify the core genre and text type characteristics of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century heresy abjuration texts related to the Lollard movement in England (see 3.2 and 3.3, respectively), with a special emphasis on the relationship between formulaic and non-formulaic elements (see 3.5) and potential geographic variation among texts and textual features.

A corpus comprised of 30 texts originating from the dioceses Ely, Hereford, Lincoln, Salisbury and Winchester (see 4.3) has been assessed and analysed using a mixed-methods approach, employing a qualitative categorisation principle based on the communicative function of textual elements (see 3.4, Table 2 in particular) together with a quantitative approach where textual features have been counted and assessed as instances expressed as frequencies occurring in the material.

Despite working with a limited text corpus comprised of only 30 texts, the present study has been able to (a) show that the abjuration texts included therein, for all their differences, might be seen as individual representatives of the same genre and text type, and (b) outline what those genre and text type characteristics are (see 9.1 and 9.2, respectively). These findings can be summarised in the following way: Late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century English heresy abjuration texts are initiated by a highly formulaic opening formula (see 6.1) and are terminated by an equally formulaic closing formula (see 8.1). Sandwiched between the two aforementioned formulae is a confessional part (see 7.1) where the abjurers confess to specific heresy charges, presented in a listing fashion.

One of the key findings of the present study is that despite the overall formulaic character of the texts and the heresy trial situation, there was ample opportunity for the individual voice of an abjurer to assert itself. The confessional parts of the texts contained within the corpus are filled with non-formulaic commentary from the abjurers as they more often than not chose to provide additional details concerning their violation of official church doctrine, or their justifications for holding such and such beliefs (see 7.3 and 41–44). These additions were not required by the examiners, and entirely formulaic confessions were also common, albeit less common than confessions that also contained major non-formulaic additions. This finding runs contrary to the common conception of abjuration texts as entirely formulaic texts, where the

abjurers were simply repeating the words of the examiners in the heresy trials (cf. the previous approach of Gertz 2012, in 3.2).

Though the thesis has been able to find and document many concrete variations within the texts (e.g. in 8.2), it is not possible to generalise about these findings other than to say that they *may* be indicative of certain trends in the material. The reason for this is directly related to the composition of the corpus, which in addition to being small, is highly uneven, both with regard to geographical and chronological distribution (see 4.3).

This thesis has contributed to the research concerning Late Medieval and Early Modern English abjuration texts, in that it has given insight into these texts can be understood as a genre and as a text type. More profoundly, the thesis has provided insight into how formulaicness was distributed in such texts, and thus also into the abjuration situation – especially with regard to the existence of what we might call linguistic ‘free spaces’, where abjurers were able to speak their mind in a heavily regulated situation (see 9.3).

The interesting nature of the findings in the present study, together with the problem that arises from a very uneven representation of texts, suggests that further research should be carried out within a larger corpus of texts, with a more even representation with regard to geography and chronology – in order to be able to generalise from findings, especially those related to textual variation, in a way that has not been possible in the present study.

References

- Abrams, M.H. and G.G. Harpham 2012, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 10th Ed. (International Edition), Wadsworth (Cengage Learning), Belmont.
- Acts 7:48, 1611, *The Holy Bible: Conteyning the Old Testament, and the New* (“King James Version”), Robert Barker, London, facsimile edition available at <https://archive.org/details/1611TheAuthorizedKingJamesBible> [7 Feb. 2018].
- Ames, C.C. 2008, *Righteous Persecution: Inquisition, Dominicans, and Christianity in the Middle Ages*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central. [5 Mar. 2018].
- Aquinas, T. 1947, *The Summa Theologica* (Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province), Benziger Bros., New York, available at <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/summa/index.html> [11 Dec. 2017]
- Baldick, C. 2008, *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 3rd Ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Bell, A.R. and R.S. Dale 2011, “The medieval pilgrimage business”, in the *Oxford University Press Blog* (online), Oxford University Press, available at <https://blog.oup.com/2011/12/pilgrimage/> [07 Feb. 2018]
- Bergstrøm, G. 2017, *Yeuen at Cavmbrigg’: A Study of the Medieval Documents of Cambridge*, PhD Thesis no. 355, University of Stavanger.
- Blue, E.V. 2012, “Reading and Interpretive Response to Literary Text: Drawing Upon Sociocultural Perspective”, *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, 28:2, pp. 164-178.
- Bos, A.P. 2018, *Aristotle on God's Life-Generating Power and on Pneuma as Its Vehicle*, SUNY Press, Albany.
- Browning, W.R.F 2009, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 2nd Ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford, available at <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199543984.001.0001/acref-9780199543984> [07 Feb. 2018]
- Callan, M.B. 2017, “Heresy”, *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain*, vol. 2, Wiley-Blackwell, Hoboken.
- D’Alton, C. 2005, “Heresy Hunting and Clerical Reform: William Warham, John Colet, and the Lollards of Kent 1511-1512” in I. Hunter, J.C. Laursen and C.J. Nederman (Eds.), *Heresy in Transition: Transforming Ideas of Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot.
- Daly, R.J., S.J., G. Macy and J. Raitt 2016, “The Ecumenical Significance of Eucharistic Conversion”, *Theological Studies*, Vol. 77, Issue 1, pp. 7–31, available at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0040563915620189> [11 Dec. 2017].
- Deanesly, M. 2005, *A History of the Medieval Church: 590–1500*, 9th Ed., Routledge, London & New York, e-book available through Ebook Central at: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uisbib/reader.action?docID=199913>

- [8 Dec. 2017].
- Doty, K.L. and R. Hiltunen 2009, "Formulaic discourse and speech acts in the witchcraft trial records of Salem, 1692", *Journal of Pragmatics*, n. 41, pp. 458-469, available online at <www.sciencedirect.com> [7 April 2018]
- Falcon, A. 2015, "Aristotle on Causality", in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (online), Stanford University, available at <<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-causality/>> [11 Dec. 2017].
- Fox, A. 2017, "Words, Words, Words: Education, Literacy and Print", in K. Wrightson (Ed.), *A Social History of England, 1500–1750*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Freeman, J.V. and M.J. Campbell 2007, "The Analysis of Categorical Data: Fisher's Exact Test", in *Scope*, June 07, available from University of Sheffield at <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.43998!/file/tutorial-9-fishers.pdf> [12 Mar. 2018].
- Fudge, T.A. 2005, "Seduced by the Theologians: Aeneas Sylvius and the Hussite Heretics", in I. Hunter, J.C. Laursen and C.J. Nederman (Eds.), *Heresy in Transition: Transforming Ideas of Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot.
- Gaskill, M. 2017, "Little Commonwealths II: Communities", in K. Wrightson (Ed.), *A Social History of England, 1500–1750*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Gertz, G. 2012, *Heresy Trials and English Women Writers, 1400-1670*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Görlach, M. 2004, *Text Types and the History of English*, Trends in Linguistics (series), Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin & New York.
- Greenbaum, S. and G. Nelson 2009, *An Introduction to English Grammar*, 3rd Ed., Pearson Education Limited, Harlow.
- Harris, S.J. 2007, Introduction to S.J. Harris & B.L. Grigsby (Eds.), *Misconceptions About the Middle Ages*, Routledge, New York & Abingdon, pp. 1-28.
- Hayward, P.A. 2005, "Before the Coming of Popular Heresy: The Rhetoric of Heresy in English Historiography, c. 700-1154", in I. Hunter, J.C. Laursen and C.J. Nederman (Eds.), *Heresy in Transition: Transforming Ideas of Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot.
- Hossain, K.L. 2007, "Unraveling the Spanish Inquisition: Inquisitorial Studies in the Twenty-First Century", *History Compass*, 5/4, pp. 1280-93, available at <<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1478-0542.2007.00447.x/epdf>> [5 Mar. 2018].
- Hudson, A. 1988, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History*, Clarendon Press, New York; Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Hunter, I., J.C. Laursen and C.J. Nederman (Eds.) 2005, *Heresy in Transition: Transforming Ideas of Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot.
- Jackson, H. and E.Z. Amvela 2007, *Words, Meaning and Vocabulary: An Introduction to Modern English Lexicology*, 2nd Ed., Continuum International Publishing Group,

- London & New York.
- Jucker, A.H. and I. Taavitsainen 2013, *English Historical Pragmatics*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- Le Roy Ladurie, E. 1986, *Montaillou: katarer og katolikker under inkvisisjonen i en landsby i Pyrenéene 1294-1324* (translated by K.O. Jensen), Gyldendal, Oslo.
- Laing, M. and R. Lass 2013, introduction to M. Laing 2013, *A Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English, 1150–1325*, Version 3.2, University of Edinburgh, available at http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/laeme2/laeme_intro_ch1.html [29 Oct. 2017].
- Lazaraton, A. 2003, “Evaluative Criteria for Qualitative Research in Applied Linguistics: Whose Criteria and Whose Research?”, *The Modern Language Journal*, 87, pp. 1-12.
- “Lollardy”, 1991, *The Compact Oxford English Dictionary: Complete Text Reproduced Micrographically*, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Matthews, P.H. 2007, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics*, 2nd Ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford, available at <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199202720.001.0001/acref-9780199202720> [16 Feb. 2018].
- McEnery, T., R. Xiao and Y. Tono 2006, *Corpus-Based Language Studies: An advanced resource book*, Routledge, London & New York.
- McInerny, R. 2014, “Saint Thomas Aquinas”, in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (online), Stanford University, available at <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aquinas/> [7 Mar. 2018].
- McSheffrey, S. 1996, *Gender and Heresy : Women and Men in Lollard Communities, 1420–1530*, University of Pennsylvania Press, available at <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uisbib/detail.action?docID=3441568> [15 Dec. 2017]
- MELD = See Stenroos, M., K.V. Thengs and G. Bergstrøm 2017–.
- Miller, C.R. 1984, “Genre as Social Action”, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, No. 70, pp. 151–167, available at https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Carolyn_Miller4/publication/238749675_Genre_as_Social_Action/links/56bc9c9c08ae6cc737c5c405/Genre-as-Social-Action.pdf [2 Mar. 2018]
- Nagy C., K. 2014, “Methods and argumentation in historical linguistics: A case study“, in A. Kertész & C. Rákosi (Eds.), *Evidential Basis of Linguistic Argumentation*, John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam. available at <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uisbib/reader.action?docID=1659972&query=#> [5 Mar. 2018].
- Ng, S.F. 2001, “Translation, Interpretation, and Heresy: The Wycliffite Bible, Tyndale's Bible, and the Contested Origin”, *Studies In Philology*, 98 (3), pp. 315–38, available at <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=5b9308ab-dd50-457d-b66e->

- [d14a92bf7361%40sessionmgr4008&bdata=JnNjb3B1PjNpdGU%3d#AN=4878898&db=aph](https://www.proquest.com/lib/uisbib/reader.action?docID=325641&ppg=13) [5 Mar. 2018].
- Pawley, A. 2007, “Developments in the study of formulaic language since 1970: A personal view”, in P. Skandera (Ed.), *Phraseology and Culture in English : Phraseology and Culture in English*, De Gruyter, Berlin & Boston, available at <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uisbib/reader.action?docID=325641&ppg=13> [3 Mar. 2018].
- Robinson, D. 2017, “Priesthood and Community: the Social and Economic Background of the Parochial Clergy in the diocese of Worcester to 1348”, *Midland History*, 42:1, pp. 18–35, DOI: 10.1080/0047729X.2017.1298937
- Ryrie, A. 2017, “Reformations”, in K. Wrightson (Ed.), *A Social History of England, 1500–1750*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Stacey, J. 2017, “John Wycliffe”, in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (open online version), available at <https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Wycliffe> [11 Dec. 2017].
- Stenroos, M., K.V. Thengs and G. Bergstrøm 2017–, *A Corpus of Middle English Local Documents* (MELD), version 2017.1., University of Stavanger, available at www.uis.no/meld [4 Nov. 2017].
- Swales, J.M. 1990, *Genre Analysis: English in academic and research settings*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Taavitsainen, I. and S. Fitzmaurice 2007, “Historical pragmatics: What it is and how to do it”, in S. Fitzmaurice and I. Taavitsainen (Eds.), *Methods in Historical Pragmatics*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin & New York, available at <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uisbib/reader.action?docID=325636&query=>> [10 Mar. 2018].
- Thessalonians 2:3–4, 1611, *The Holy Bible: Conteyning the Old Testament, and the New* (“King James Version”), Robert Barker, London, facsimile edition available at <https://archive.org/details/1611TheAuthorizedKingJamesBible> [7 Feb. 2018].
- Taylor, J.R. 2003, *Linguistic Categorization*, 3rd Ed., Oxford Textbooks in Linguistics, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Vasilev, G. 2011, “Bogomilism – An Important Precursor of the Reformation”, translation by G. Nyagolov, *Toronto Slavic Quarterly*, No. 38, pp. 146–161, available at http://sites.utoronto.ca/tsq/38/tsq38_vasilev.pdf [7 Mar. 2018].
- Walford, E. 1878, “Lambeth: Lambeth Palace”, in *Old and New London: Volume 6*; Cassell, Petter & Galpin, London, 1878, pp. 426–447, available at British History Online: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/old-new-london/vol6/pp426-447> [7 Mar. 2018].
- Watson, N. 1995, “Censorship and Cultural Change in Late-Medieval England: Vernacular Theology, the Oxford Translation Debate, and Arundel's Constitutions of 1409”, *Speculum*, 70(4), pp. 822–864. doi:10.2307/2865345
- Wilson, J.L. 1884, *John Wycliffe: Patriot and Reformer: A Biography*, Funk & Wagnalls, New York & London.

- Winters, R., A. Winters and R.G. Amedee 2010, “Statistics: A Brief Overview”, *The Ochsner Journal*, 10 (3), pp. 213–216, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3096219/> [16 Mar. 2018].
- Wray, A. 2008, *Formulaic language: Pushing the boundaries*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Wray, A. 2009, “Identifying formulaic language: Persistent challenges and new opportunities”, in R. Corrigan, E.A. Moravcsik & H. Ouali (Eds.), *Formulaic Language : Volume 1. Distribution and historical change*, John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam, available at <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uisbib/reader.action?docID=622573&query=>> [3 Mar. 2018]

Appendices

Appendix 1: Catalogue of the texts in the present corpus

A 1.1 Introduction

What follows is a catalogue of the texts contained in the present corpus. The catalogue entries are organised according to their MELD Code, presented in ascending order. The catalogue is based on a simplified version of the conventions that have been developed for the MELD Project at the University of Stavanger (cf. MELD: “The MELD Readable Catalogue”). Simplified in the sense that some descriptions, particularly related to the physical appearances of the texts have been omitted for conciseness. Empty fields have also been removed.

The field for ‘Source’ refers to which format the texts have been transcribed directly from by the transcriber, and not the format of the actual text itself (which is covered under ‘Format’).

Transcribers, compilers and proofreaders of the texts are represented by the following initials: GB (Geir Bergstrøm), KVT (Kjetil Vikhamar Thengs), MRS (Merja Riitta Stenroos) and (AK) Anastasia Khanukaeva, DS (Delia Schipor), in addition to KSH (Kenneth Solberg-Harestad).

A 1.2 The catalogue

Code: D0677
County: Ely
Repository: Cambridge, Cambridge University Library: EDR G/1/5, fols. 132v-133r
Place: Ely
Date: 1457
Format: Codex
Function: Abjuration
Parties: (1): Robert Spark, of Reach; (2): William Grey, Bishop of Ely
Place-names: Reche (Reach); Dioc’ of Ely
Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), confesses to having associated with heretics, and that he has “held, taught and affirmed” opinions questioning the sacrament of the

altar, the sacrament of baptism, the sacrament of the last aneling (rites), the worshipping of images or the cross, the act of confession, prayer (in a church setting) and the act of pilgrimage. (1) formally recants these positions and proclaims that he will desist from such heretical acts in the future and declares his penance to those present for this proceeding.

Transcriber: GB 15/09/2016

Proofread: MRS 16/09/2016

Code: D3049#1

County: Hampshire

Repository: Winchester, Hampshire Record Office, 21M65/A1/15, fol. 27r

Place: Winchester

Date: 1487–92

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Richard Pytsyne, also called Richard Sawyer; (2): Peter Courtenay, Bishop of Winchester

Other people: William Smart; William Carpenter

Place-names: Diocyse of Wynchester; Sarin

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), confesses to having associated with heretics, and that he has “held and spoken” opinions questioning the sacrament of the altar, the act of confession, the act of pilgrimage, the worshipping of images or the cross, fasting, and the life and conduct of priests related to priestly matrimony, the mass and financial upkeep; his confession contains many clearly non-formulaic elements. (1) provides several (non-formulaic) reasonings for his confessed heretical beliefs. (1) declares his penance and formally recants these positions, and submits fully to the “rigour and sharpness of law” that will be imposed on him if he were to violate anything in this abjuration on a later occasion, and signs the abjuration with a cross sign.

Transcriber: DS 03/06/2015

Proofread: MRS 12/09/2016

Code: D3049#2

County: Hampshire

Repository: Winchester, Hampshire Record Office, 21M65/A1/15, fol. 45v

Place: Winchester

Date: 1491

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Isabell Gartrygge; (2): Peter Courtenay, Bishop of Winchester

Other people: Master Michael Clene, Chancellor and Commissary (deputizing for Peter Courtenay, Bishop of Winchester); Yngram Baker, of Basing; Richard Mountefort, of Basing

Place-names: Diocise of Wynchestre; Basyng, Basyng

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2)'s deputy, confesses to having been a practitioner and teacher of witchcraft, made possible through the invoking of the devil for this purpose. (1) confesses to the following acts of witchcraft: cursing and thereby destroying two quarters of the malt belonging to one Yngram Baker of Basing; having caused the death of a horse belonging to the same Yngram; protecting and healing animals through witchcraft; cursing and destroying the "growth" (harvested crops) of one Richard Mountefort of Basing – the charms and incantations used are given in detail throughout in a manner that is clearly non-formulaic. (1) formally recants these beliefs and practices, declares her penance, and submits to the "pain, rigour and sharpness of law" that will be imposed on her if she were to violate anything in this abjuration on a later occasion, and signs the abjuration with a cross sign.

Transcriber: DS 08/06/2015

Proofread: MRS 08/02/2017

Comments: The final text pertaining to the act of (1) signing the abjuration with a cross symbol is given in Latin.

Code: D3050#1
County: Hampshire
Repository: Winchester, Hampshire Record Office, 21M65/A1/16, fol. 63v
Place: Winchester
Date: 1496–1501
Format: Codex
Function: Abjuration
Parties: (1): Court Lamporte, of the parish of Meonstoke; (2): Thomas Langton, Bishop of Winchester
Other people: Master Nicholas Mayew, doctor of law, Chancellor and Commissary (deputizing for Thomas Langton, Bishop of Winchester)
Place-names: *Parish of Meanestoke; Dioc' of Wynchester*
Contents: (1) while appearing before (2)'s deputy, confesses to having “held and spoken” opinions questioning the sacrament of the altar, and the conduct of priests related to the mass – stating his own reasoning for having held such beliefs in both cases. (1) declares his penance and formally recants these positions, and submits himself to the “pain, rigour and sharpness of the law” that will be imposed on him if he were to violate anything in this abjuration on a later occasion, and signs the abjuration with a cross sign.
Transcriber: DS 09/06/2015
Proofread: MRS 23/07/2015
Comments: The final text pertaining to the act of (1) signing the abjuration with a cross symbol is given in Latin.
Cross-refs.: The same Nicholas Mayew also acted as the Bishop of Winchester's deputy in the abjuration of Thomas Maryet recounted in D3050#2

Code: D3050#2
County: Hampshire

Repository: Winchester, Hampshire Record Office, 21M65/A1/16, fol. 66r
Place: Winchester
Date: 1496
Format: Codex
Function: Abjuration
Parties: (1): Thomas Maryet, also called Thomas Stayner, of the parish of St. Olav in Southwark ; (2): Thomas Langton, Bishop of Winchester
Other people: Master Nicholas Mayew, Commissary (deputizing for Thomas Langton, Bishop of Winchester)
Place-names: *Parisshe of Saynt Olave in Suthwerke; Diocese of Wynchester*
Contents: (1) while appearing before (2)'s deputy, confesses to having "secretly kept and held and privately read" a variety of books and written materials in English compiled by John Wyclif "a damned heretic". (1) formally recants, and declares that he henceforth will not "keep, read nor hear any such books", and promises to inform the church authorities about any individuals engaging in beliefs and practices deemed heretical by the church. (1) submits himself to "all such penance as shall be to me enjoined", and signs the abjuration with a cross sign.
Transcriber: DS 11/06/2015
Proofread: MRS 23/0772015
Comments: The final text pertaining to the act of (1) signing the abjuration with a cross symbol is given in Latin.
Cross-refs.: The same Nicholas Mayew also acted as the Bishop of Winchester's deputy in the abjuration of Court Lamporte recounted in D3050#1

Code: D0744#2
County: Herefordshire
Repository: Hereford, Herefordshire Archives: AL19/9, fols. 170v-171r
Place: Hereford
Date: 1433
Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): John Wodhyll; (2): Thomas Spofford, Bishop of Hereford

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), confesses to having kept and concealed books “against the commandment of holy church”, and furthermore lists the following opinions questioning: i) the sacrament of the altar, ii-iv) the merits and conduct of the priesthood and the church in spiritual matters (for example against priestly pardons), v) the act of confession, vi-xii) additional critique of priestly conduct and the church (among them that parishioners should withdraw their offerings given to priests that have fallen into sin), xiii) explicit support of John Wyclif and his ideas and xv) saying that “the worst deed that a man does is better than the best deed that a woman does”. (1) formally recants, and submits to the “penance for the keeping of such books”, and to the will of the Bishop of Hereford.

Transcriber: AK 24/11/2016

Comments: This text is considerably older than the other abjuration and confession texts included in this study.

Code: D0746#1

County: Herefordshire

Repository: Hereford, Herefordshire Archives: AL19/12, fol. 25r

Place: Hereford

Date: 1505

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1) John Crofte, of the parish Eardisley; ; (2): Richard Mayew, Bishop of Hereford

Other people: Master Owen Pole; Master John Wardroper; Master Richard Judde (all three deputizing for Richard Mayew, Bishop of Hereford)

Place-names: *Paryshe* off Erdisley; Dioc’ of Hereford

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2)’s deputies, confesses to having “had in my ward and keeping diverse books containing heresies”, and having questioned the

following doctrines: the sacrament of the altar, confession to priests, penance for satisfaction of sin, the sacrament of matrimony, the papacy and the worshipping of images; his confession contains many clearly non-formulaic elements (1) formally recants, and promises that he henceforth shall never “read, declare, or teach, affirm, believe” heresies contrary to the church, and that he will not favour any person guilty of such heresies; he furthermore promises to inform the church authorities about any individuals engaging in beliefs and practices deemed heretical by the church. (1) submits himself to “all such penance” that will be required of him as a result of his transgressions, and signs the abjuration with a cross sign.

Transcriber: KSH 01/11/2017

Code: D0746#7

County: Herefordshire

Repository: Hereford, Herefordshire Archives: AL19/12, fol. 52v

Place: Hereford

Date: 1509

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Thomas Hygons, of Wollaston; (2): Richard Mayew, Bishop of Hereford

Other people: Thomas Nassh, of Mitcheldean; Spenser; Elyn Griffith; Doctor Stremour

Place-names: Wolastonn; Newland; Micheldeane; Diocise of Hereford; Lidney

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), confesses to having had “suspect communication of late in the house of Thomas Nassh of Mitcheldean before diverse men and women”, and to having questioned the sacrament of the altar; (1) also confesses to having favoured certain heretics in the past; his confession contains many non-formulaic elements. (1) formally recants, and promises that he shall never “affirm, believe, neither hold” any heresies contrary to the church; he furthermore promises to inform the church authorities about any individuals engaging in beliefs and practices deemed heretical by the church. (1) submits to the “penance

as shall be ... to me enjoined”, and signs the abjuration by making a cross sign with his own hand.

Transcriber: KSH 01/10/2017

Proofread: MRS 27/11/2017

Code: D4440#3

County: Lincolnshire

Repository: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fol.14r

Place: Lincoln

Date: 1457

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Thomas Hulle, of Hertford; (2): John Chadworth, Bishop of Lincoln

Other people: Thomas Curteys

Place-names: Hertford

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), confesses to having given “aid, counsel, help and favour” to one Thomas Curteys, a heretic and practitioner of necromancy. (1) formally recants, and promises that he shall never in the future give such aid and favour “to any that holds heresies or uses necromancy”, and signs the abjuration with a cross sign.

Transcriber: AK 22/11/2016

Proofread: MRS 23/11/2016

Comments: The final text pertaining to the act of (1) signing the abjuration with a cross symbol is given in Latin.

Code: D4440#17

County: Lincolnshire

Repository: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fols. 57r-57v

Place: Lincoln

Date: 1462
Format: Codex
Function: Abjuration
Parties: (1): John Polley, of Henley; (2): John Chadworth, Bishop of Lincoln
Place-names: Henley
Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), proclaims that he has “held, believed, taught and affirmed certain false articles and opinions of heresy ...”, and then confesses to having questioned the following specific practices of the church: the sacrament of the altar, the sacrament of baptism, and offerings to and worshipping of images. (1) formally recants, and swears on the Bible that from henceforth he shall not hold such heresies or associate with heretics, nor receive any written material containing “heresies, errors or opinions” contrary to the church; and also that he will inform the church authorities concerning any heretics or books containing heresies, should he come across them. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”.
Transcriber: AK 28/11/2016
Proofread: MRS 05/12/2016

Code: D4440#18
County: Lincolnshire
Repository: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fols. 59v-60r
Place: Lincoln
Date: 1464
Format: Codex
Function: Abjuration
Parties: (1): John Qwyrk, labourer; (2): John Chadworth, Bishop of Lincoln
Place-names: Diocese of Lincoln
Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), proclaims that he has “held, taught and affirmed certain false articles and opinions of heresy ...”, and confesses to not having believed that the bread consecrated during the sacrament of the altar is

really the body of Christ. (1) formally recants this position, and seems to allude to other heresies that are not explicitly mentioned in his confession as well to be recanted. (1) swears on the Bible that from henceforth he shall not hold such heresies or associate with heretics, nor receive any written material containing “heresies, errors or opinions” contrary to the church; and also that he will inform the church authorities concerning any heretics or books containing heresies, should he come across them. (1) proclaims that he will depart from the diocese of Lincoln never to return (being banished under (2)’s authority) after he has made his penance. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”.

Transcriber: AK 24/11/2016

Proofread: MRS 27/11/2016

Comments: The final text pertaining to the act of (1) signing the abjuration with a cross symbol is given in Latin.

Code: D4440#22

County: Lincolnshire

Repository: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fol. 62v, item 2

Place: Lincoln

Date: 1464

Format: Codex

Function: Confession

Parties: (1): John Baronn, of Amersham (Agmoundesham)

Other people: Hugh Leche, “heretic”; William Belgrave; John White

Place-names: Agmoundesham (Amersham)

Contents: (1) confesses to having been present as the heretic Hugh Leche and William Belgrave “taught and determined against the sacraments of the church”, but states that he did not accept these teachings. (1) confesses to having believed the opinions against pilgrimage and the worshipping of saints held by Hugh Leche, and that the money given to saints should be given to the poor instead. (1)

confesses to having, on several occasions, heard John White speak against the seven sacraments of the church, but “gave no faith unto him”. Finally, (1) confesses to having in his possession three English books, among them Chaucer’s *Tales of Caunterbury*.

Transcriber: AK 23/11/2016

Proofread: MRS 23/11/2016

Comments: This text is strictly a confession, rather than an abjuration, as it does not contain a formal recantation.

Cross-refs.: (1) comes from the same place (Amersham) as Geffray Symeon, whose confession is recounted in D4440#23; the John White mentioned in the confession is probably the same White mentioned in the said confession of Geffray Symeon.

Code: D4440#23

County: Lincolnshire

Repository: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fol. 62v, item 3

Place: Lincoln

Date: 1464

Format: Codex

Function: Confession

Parties: (1): Geffray Symeon, of Amersham (Agmondesham)

Other people: James Wylly, “heretic”; Hough; William Sperman; Robert Body; John White, of Chesham

Place-names: Agmondesham; London; Chesham

Contents: (1) confesses to having known the heretic James Wylly and one Hough, and furthermore, that he has “held against the seven sacraments of holy church, but gave no faith unto him [Hough]”. (1) confesses that he, as a result of his talks with James Wylly, “had no faith, nor good conceit” in the act of pilgrimage and the worshipping of saints. (1) confesses to being in the possession of a book

containing the holy gospels in English, and that he and another warned the heretic John White when one William Sperman came to Amersham. (1) confesses to having “dogmatized that bishops should go on foot with twelve priests clothed as the sheep bears [i.e. dressed in white]”, and that they should teach the true Christian faith, instead of doing the very opposite. (1) submits to the correction of the church.

Transcriber: AK 23/11/2016

Proofread: MRS 23/11/2016

Comments: This text is strictly a confession, rather than an abjuration, as it does not contain a formal recantation.

Cross-refs.: (1) comes from the same place (Amersham) as John Baronn, whose confession is recounted in D4440#22; the John White mentioned in the confession is probably the same White mentioned in the said confession of John Baronn.

Code: D4112#7

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/12 (part 2), fol. 39v

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1485–93

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Alis (Alice) Hignell, of Newbury; (2): Thomas Langton, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: Newbery; Dioc' of Salesbery

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), offers a general confession of heresy and states that she has “before this time believed erroneously”. (1) confesses that she has called people offering a candle to St. Leonard fools for doing so, and that only if the images of saints in different ways could move and show signs of life (blowing out a candle for example) would she offer a candle to them; (1) also confesses to having “missaid against the Image of Saint Martin” that he is but a fool for

standing so long in a high and cold place when he could have warmed himself by a fire instead. Furthermore, (1) confesses to having wished that she could knock worshippers of St. Erasme on their heads with a hatchet, and to having wished that images from the church instead were in her yarde, so she could chop them up for firewood. (1) formally recants and promises that from henceforth she will desist from holding such beliefs and other beliefs contrary to the church, and that she will not associate with heretics. (1) submits to the correction of the church, in the event that she at a later time would act contrary to her abjuration.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)
Transcriber: KSH 02/02/2018
Proofread: MRS 10/02/2018
Cross-refs.: (1) comes from the same place (Newbury) as William Carpenter, whose abjuration is recounted in D4112#8

Code: D4112#8
County: Wiltshire
Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/12 (part 2), fol. 40r
Place: Salisbury
Date: 1485–93
Format: Codex
Function: Abjuration
Parties: (1): William Carpenter, also called William Harford and William Daniel, of Newbury; (2): Thomas Langton, Bishop of Salisbury
Place-names: Newbery; Dioc' of *Sarum* (Salisbury)
Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), offers a general confession of heresy and states that he has “before this time believed erroneously”. (1) confesses to having said that confession to a priest is not necessary, and that it is not beneficial for the soul; he also confesses to having held the belief that the images of saints “are not to be worshipped”, and that it would be better to give money to the poor than doing a pilgrimage. (1) confesses to having said over many years that priests are

deceivers and not of any benefit to Christians, and that when they dress for mass “they are as angels”, but when they are not dressed for mass “they are as black-brands of hell”; (1) furthermore confesses to having questioned the power of priests to perform sacraments. Finally, (1) confesses to having taught and believed “that if the faith of Lollards were not, the world would soon have been destroyed”. (1) formally recants and promises that from henceforth he will desist from holding such beliefs and other beliefs contrary to the church, and that he will not associate with heretics. (1) submits to the correction of the church, in the event that he at a later time would act contrary to his abjuration.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)
Transcriber: KSH 25/01/2018
Proofread: MRS 11/02/2018
Cross-refs.: (1) comes from the same place (Newbury) as Alis (Alice) Hignell, whose abjuration is recounted in D4112#7

Code: D4112#10
County: Wiltshire
Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/12 (part 2), fols. 41r-v
Place: Salisbury
Date: 1485–93
Format: Codex
Function: Abjuration
Parties: (1): John Tanner, of Steventon; (2): Thomas Langton, Bishop of Salisbury
Place-names: Stevyntonn; Dioc’ of Sarum (Salisbury)
Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), offers a general confession of heresy and states that he has “before this time believed erroneously”. (1) confesses to having spoken against the sacrament of the altar (the Eucharist) by questioning the doctrine of transubstantiation; he also confesses to having said against the sacrament of baptism that only true belief is necessary (there is no need for a ceremony or water) – (1) provides many details concerning his rejection of the

said two sacraments. (1) finally confesses to having rejected the worshipping of images saying that “nothing made or graven with man’s hand of no likeness of things in heaven nor earth” should be worshipped. (1) formally recants and promises that from henceforth he will desist from holding such beliefs and other beliefs contrary to the church, and that he will not associate with heretics. (1) submits to the correction of the church, in the event that he at a later time would act contrary to his abjuration.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 29/01/2018

Proofread: MRS 11/02/2018

Code: D4112#11

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/12 (part 2), fols. 41v-42r

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1485–93

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Isabell Dorte, of East Hendred; (2): Thomas Langton, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: Est Hendred (East Hendred); Dioc’ of *Sarum* (Salisbury)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), offers a general confession of heresy and states that she has “before this time believed erroneously”. (1) confesses to having spoken against the worshipping of images “showing that no man should worship no stocks nor stones [material objects of wood and stone] ...”; she also confesses to having held the opinion that it is better to give money to the poor than to spend money as part of a pilgrimage (offering to the saints etc.). (1) confesses to having questioned the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation with regards to the consecrated bread used in the sacrament of the altar, saying among other things that if “it [wheat and corn used in bread] were very God, a mouse or a rat has no

power to eat it”. (1) formally recants and promises that from henceforth she will desist from holding such beliefs and other beliefs contrary to the church, and that she will not associate with heretics. (1) submits to the correction of the church, in the event that she at a later time would act contrary to her abjuration.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 01/02/2018

Proofread: MRS 10/02/2018

Code: D4113#2

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fols. 70r-v

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1498

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): John Bisshopp, tanner; Alice Bisshopp, wife of John Bisshopp; John Roye, cooper, of the Parish of Saint Lawrence in Reading; Thomas Scochynn, taylor; John Stanwey, weaver, of the Parish of Saint Giles; (2): John Blythe, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: Paryssh of Saynt Laurence; Rading (Reading); Paryssh of Saynt Gyles;

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), give a brief statement concerning their general guilt, and then confess to having consorted with “certain misbelieving and evil teaching persons”. John Bisshopp, his wife Alice and Thomas Scochynn confess that they have “thought, said and believed” that the bread consecrated during the sacrament of the altar is not the real body of Christ – they then state their reasons for their disbelief. (1) confess to having questioned the act of pilgrimage and offerings made to saints, “for the saints are in heaven and have no need for such things”; they also confess to having believed and spoken against the worshipping of images, and Thomas Scochynn furthermore admits having said that such offerings should be given to the poor instead of being given to the saints.

Alice Bisshopp and Thomas Schochynn confess to having questioned the power of the Pope and “other prelates of the church”, and the latter admits to having believed and said that the Pope is the Antichrist. Alice Bisshopp and John Roye confess to having questioned the necessity of fasting, and the former admits that she “ate bacon in my own house” on a saint’s eve three years ago. John Bisshopp and John Roye confess to having “held and believed” that nobody is bound to give offerings to the church, and that priests are taking the money for themselves; the former also admits to having held the opinion that confession to a priest is not necessary, and that it is enough to ask God for forgiveness. Finally, John Stanwey confesses to having been doubtful that the bread consecrated during the sacrament of the altar is “the very body of our saviour Christ”. (1) offer a second and longer general proclamation of guilt with regards to heresy, and then proceed to formally recant these heresies. (1) promise that they will no longer consort with heretics, and that they will report any heretics they might come across to the church authorities; (1) submit to the “pain, rigour and sharpness of the law” that will be imposed on them, should they at a later date act contrary to their abjuration. (1) sign the abjuration with a cross sign “with our hands”, and ask of all present to witness against them if they ever go against their recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 20/11/2017

Proofread: MRS 30/01/2018

Comments: This abjuration is a rather rare group abjuration, where several people appeared before the bishop together to abjure their heresies.

Cross-refs.: The wife of Thomas Scochynn also appeared before the Bishop of Salisbury, this is recounted in D4113#4

Code: D4113#4

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fol. 72r

Place: Salisbury

Date: Ca. 1498

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Annes (Agnes) Scochynn, wife of Thomas Scochynn of the parish of St. Giles in Reading; (2): John Blythe, Bishop of Salisbury

Other people: Thomas Scochynn

Place-names: Parrish of Saynct Gyles jn Rading' (Reading); Diocise of Sarum (Salisbury)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), gives a brief statement concerning her general guilt, and then confesses to having consorted with "certain evil teaching and misbelieving persons". (1) confesses that she, due to influence from other heretics, has not believed that the bread consecrated during the sacrament of the altar is the actual body of Christ; she furthermore confesses that she has held the opinion that images are not to be worshipped, "for they are but stocks and stones". (1) confesses to having "held and believed" that curses and other sentences made by the church have no power, for that power belongs to God alone. (1) proclaims her general guilt with regards to heresy and that she has been "a heretic and a misbelieving woman". (1) formally recants all such heresies, saying she is "sorry and repentant", and promises that she will no longer consort with heretics, and that she will report any heretics she might come across to the church authorities. (1) submits to the "pain and sharpness of the law" that will be imposed on her, should she at a later date act contrary to her abjuration. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign "with my own hand", and asks of all present to witness against her if she ever goes against her recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 13/01/2018

Proofread: MRS 11/02/2018

Cross-refs.: (1) is the wife of the same Thomas Scochynn who also appeared before the Bishop of Salisbury, recounted in D4113#2.

Code: D4113#5

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fols. 72v-73r

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1498-99

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Richard Herford, miller of Letcombe Regis; Richard Hughlott, labourer, of Hanney (2): John Blythe, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: *Netherledcomb / Ledcombe Regis* (Letcombe Regis); *Diocise of Sarum* (Diocese of Salisbury); *Allesford* (New Alresford, in Hampshire); *Winchestre* (Winchester); Hanney

Contents: Richard Herford, while appearing before (2), gives a brief statement concerning his general guilt with regards to heresy, and then confesses to having held and believed that images of saints are “but dead stocks and stones” and therefore ought not to be worshipped or offered to. He furthermore confesses that he has held the opinion that it is wrong to punish someone for stealing from such images.

Richard Hughlott, while appearing before (2), likewise gives a brief statement concerning his general guilt with regards to heresy, and proceeds to confess that he has not believed that confession (shriving) to a priest is necessary or beneficial “to man’s soul”. He furthermore confesses that he has “held and believed” that the bread and wine consecrated as part of the sacrament of the altar is not the real body of Christ, and that he has not performed the sacrament of confession and the sacrament of the altar lately. (1) proclaim their general guilt with regards to heresy, and formally recant all such heresies. (1) promise that they will no longer consort with heretics, and that they will report any heretics they might come across to the church authorities. (1) submit to the “pain and sharpness of the law” that will be imposed on them, should they at a later date act contrary to their abjuration. (1) sign the abjuration with two cross signs “with our own hands”, and ask of all present to witness against them if they ever go against their recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 09/12/2017

Proofread: MRS 30/01/2018

Code: D4113#7

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fols. 74r-75r

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1498-99

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Thomas Boughtonn, shoemaker and woolwinder, of Hungerford; (2): John Blythe, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: Hungerford; *Diocise of Sarum* (Diocese of Salisbury)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), gives a brief statement concerning his general guilt, and then confesses to having consorted with “diverse and many misbelieving and misteaching persons and heretics”. (1) confesses to not having believed that the bread consecrated during the sacrament of the altar is the real body of Christ, “for I have thought it not possible that the priest, who is a man and the handwork of God, should have the power to make God, his maker ...”; (1) furthermore confesses that he has not confessed his sins to a priest in 25 years, and that he has been present for the sacrament of the altar all this time, but only for the feigned appearance of belief, and not because he in truth believed. (1) confesses to having held and believed that pilgrimages to the corpses of saints “are not profitable [beneficial] for man’s soul”, and that they should not be carried out; (1) also confesses that he has held and believed that religious images should not be worshipped, as they are simply objects manufactured by human hands. (1) confesses that he has “believed and said” that the Pope is the Antichrist and that men of the church are his disciples, and that the church is “a den of thieves and a house of merchandise (due to the fact that everything seems to cost money there).

(1) confesses to having held and believed that pardons and indulgences granted by the Pope or others in the church have no power and are of no benefit to anyone; the same applies to curses by the Pope. (1) confesses that he has listened well to the learned men of the church when they have been preaching the true content of the gospels, but that he “was soon weary to hear them” when they preached about tithes and offerings. (1) proclaims his general guilt with regards to heresy and that he has been “a heretic and a misbelieving man ...”. (1) formally recants all such heresies, and promises that he will no longer consort with heretics, openly or privately, and that he will report any heretics he might come across to the church authorities. (1) submits to the “pain and sharpness of the law” that will be imposed on him, should he at a later date act contrary to his abjuration. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”, and asks of all present to witness against him if he ever goes against his recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 20/11/2017

Proofread: MRS 01/01/2018

Code: D4113#14

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fols. 78v-79r

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1498-99

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Joan Martyn, former wife of Thomas Martyn of Wantage (deceased); (2):
John Blythe, Bishop of Salisbury

Other people: Thomas Martyn

Place-names: Wantage; *Diocise of Saresbury* (Diocese of Salisbury)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), gives a brief statement concerning her general guilt, and then confesses to not having believed that the bread consecrated as part

of the sacrament of the altar is “the very body of our saviour Christ”. (1) confesses to having “held and believed” that images should not be worshipped or offered to, and that people having done so “did [committed] idolatry”; furthermore, (1) confesses that she has held and believed that pilgrimages should not be carried out, and that all the money spent on such activities should rather be given to the poor. (1) confesses to having “thought and believed” that it is not necessary to shrive (confess) one’s sins to a priest, as any other man has exactly the same lack of authority or power in these matters. (1) finally confesses to having “believed and said” that pardons granted by the church or the Pope have no power and are of no benefit to anyone, and that they are given “only for gathering of money and for no other cause”. (1) proclaims her general guilt with regards to heresy and that she has been “a misbelieving woman and a heretic”. (1) formally recants all such heresies, and promises that she will no longer consort with heretics, and that she will report any heretics she might come across to the church authorities. (1) submits to the “pain and rigour of the law” that will be imposed on her, should she at a later date act contrary to her abjuration. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”, and asks of all present to witness against her if she ever goes against her recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 12/12/2017

Proofread: MRS 17/01/2018

Code: D4114#1

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 108r

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1504

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): John Godwynn, of the parish of *Fyfheld* (Fyfield); (2): Edmund Audley,

Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: *Paryshe of Fyfeld* (Parish of Fyfield); *Dyocesse of Sarum* (Diocese of Salisbury)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), gives a brief statement concerning his general guilt with regards to heresy, and then confesses to having “openly affirmed and said” that it is enough to be repentant if a sin has been made, and thus that confession to a priest is not necessary. (1) formally recants this heresy, saying he is “very sorry and penitent”. (1) promises to “believe and hold” the doctrines of the church, and declares that he will never in any way “hold, teach or defend” the heresy confessed to in this abjuration or any other heresies. (1) submits to the “pain and rigour of the law” that will be imposed on him, should he at a later date act contrary to his abjuration. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”, and asks of all present to witness against him if he ever goes against his recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KVT 15/11/2016

Proofread: MRS 16/11/2016

Code: D4114#2

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 108v

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1504

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): John Barly, of the parish of Newbury; (2): Edmund Audley, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: *Parysh of Nubery* (Parish of Newbury); *Diocesse of Sarum* (Diocese of Salisbury)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), confesses to having kept a book “containing diverse great heresies and false opinions” for 12 years, and to having read in this book without delivering it to the church authorities. (1) formally recants this

heresy, saying he is “very penitent and sorry”. (1) promises to “believe and hold” the doctrines of the church, and declares that he henceforth will never keep such books, nor “hold, teach, preach or defend” any heresies. (1) submits to the “rigour of the law” that will be imposed on him, should he at a later date act contrary to his abjuration. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”, and asks of all present to witness against him if he ever goes against his recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 08/10/2017

Proofread: MRS 30/11/2017

Code: D4114#6

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fols. 131r-v

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1506

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Robert Makamm, otherwise called Robert Bragge, of the parish of *Kevill*; (2): Edmund Audley, Bishop of Salisbury

Other people: Balle, “the carpenter”; Pyke, “the mason”

Place-names: *Kevill*; *Diocese of Sarum* (Diocese of Salisbury)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), proclaims his general guilt with regards to heresy, and then confesses to having affirmed and said that his prayers “are as good in the field as in the church”. (1) then confesses that he has affirmed and said that images in church are idols, and that they should not be worshipped – adding, among other things, that “Balle the carpenter or Pyke the mason could make as good as the crucifix, for it is but a crooked stock”. (1) finally confesses that he has not believed in the sacrament of the altar, “because it is made with human hands”.

(1) formally recants these heresies, saying he is “very penitent and sorry”. (1) promises to “believe and hold” the doctrines of the church, and declares that he henceforth will never in any way “hold, teach, preach or defend” the heresies confessed to in this abjuration or any other heresies. (1) submits to the “pain and rigour of the law” that will be imposed on him, should he at a later date act contrary to his abjuration. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”, and asks of all present to witness against him if he ever goes against his recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 10/11/2017

Proofread: MRS 19/12/2017

Code: D4114#8

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 134v

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1507

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): John Polle, weaver, of Salisbury (Sarum); (2): Edmund Audley, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: *Sarum* (Salisbury); *Counte of Wiltes'* (County of Wiltshire)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), confesses to having held and said that “the time shall come that the world shall be burned, and then shall a water come and purge it, and so shall it be one of the 7 heavens and full of mirth...” – also stating that at this judgement day devils will hope to be saved (possibly alluding to the English church). (1) formally recants this heresy, and declares that he henceforth will never in any way consort with heretics, and promises that he will report any heretics to the church authorities as soon as he “[has] knowledge of any such”. (1) submits to the “straightness of the law” that will be imposed on him, should he at

a later date act contrary to his abjuration. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”, and asks of all present to witness against him if he ever goes against his recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 26/01/2018

Proofread: MRS 12/02/2018

Code: D4114#13

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fols. 148r-v

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1508

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): John Stilmann, of the parish of St. Giles in Reading; (2): Edmund Audley, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: *Paresh of Seynt Gylys* (Parish of Saint Giles); *Redyng* (Reading); *Kawisham* (Caversham)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), proclaims his general guilt with regards to heresy, and then confesses to having openly said that pilgrimage to any saint should not be undertaken, “for they can not speak, hear nor walk”. (1) confesses to having “believed of my own mind” that the true body of Christ is not present in the sacrament of the altar (the Eucharist). (1) formally recants these heresies, being penitent and sorry that he has uttered such heresies. (1) promises to “believe and hold” the doctrines of the church, and declares that he henceforth will never in any way “teach nor defend” the heresies confessed to in this abjuration or any other heresies, “under the pain of relapse” (submitting to the consequences that will follow if he at a later time should violate his promises). (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”, and asks of all present to bear

witness to this abjuration.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)
Transcriber: KSH 15/01/2018
Proofread: MRS 12/02/2018

Code: D4114#15
County: Wiltshire
Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 149r
Place: Salisbury
Date: 1508
Format: Codex
Function: Abjuration
Parties: (1): John Goodsonn, son of John Goodsonn of the parish of Highworth; (2):
Edmund Audley, Bishop of Salisbury
Other people: John Goodsonn (father)
Place-names: *Paresh of Hyworth* (Parish of Highworth); *Diocisies of Sarum* (Diocese of Salisbury)
Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), confesses to having believed “that [in] the sacrament of the altar is not the very body of Christ”. (1) also confesses having believed that pilgrimages to saints should not be carried out, “for they are but stocks and stones and vain idols”. Finally, (1) confesses to having believed that the Pope is the Antichrist, and that priests in general are scribes and Pharisees (hypocrites working against Christ). (1) proclaims his general guilt with regards to heresy, and states that he is “very penitent and sorry”. (1) promises to “believe and hold” the doctrines of the church, and declares that he henceforth will never in any way “believe or defend, nor conceal” the heresies confessed to in this abjuration or any other heresies. (1) formally recants these heresies, “under pain of relapse” (submitting to the consequences that will follow if he at a later time should violate his promises). (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hands”, and asks of all present to bear witness to this abjuration.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 02/02/2018

Proofread: MRS 10/02/2018

Code: D4114#17

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 149v

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1508

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): Richard John, priest, of Haselbury; (2): Edmund Audley, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: *Hasilber'* (Haselbury Plucknett?); *Diocesse of Sarum* (Diocese of Salisbury)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), confesses to having “taught and openly said, and also believed and preached” that no manner of prayer, alms, deed or fasting shall be (spiritually) beneficial to any person, unless these acts are performed with (true) penance. (1) formally recants these heresies, and declares that he henceforth will never in any way consort with heretics, and promises that he will report any heretics to the church authorities as soon as he “[has] knowledge of any such”. (1) submits to the “rigour of the law” that will be imposed on him, should he at a later date act contrary to his abjuration. (1) signs the abjuration with a cross sign “with my own hand”, and asks of “all Christian people here present” to witness against him if he ever goes against his recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 30/01/2018

Code: D4114#20

County: Wiltshire

Repository: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fols. 155v-156r

Place: Salisbury

Date: 1508

Format: Codex

Function: Abjuration

Parties: (1): John Swayne, otherwise called John Barnard, labourer; Margery Swayne, otherwise called Margery Barnard, wife of John Swayne of the parish of Wilsford; Thomas Smyth, labourer; John Nicols, husbandman; Cristiann (Christiane?) Nicolas, wife of John Nicols of the parish of Cheriton; (2): Edmund Audley, Bishop of Salisbury

Place-names: *Willesford* (Wilsford); *Cheritonn* (Cheriton); *Diocise of Sarum* (Diocese of Sarum)

Contents: (1) while appearing before (2), give a joint statement concerning their general guilt with regards to heresy. John Swayne confesses the following heresies: a) not having believed in the real presence of the body of Christ during the sacrament of the altar; b) holding that the “doing of pilgrimage and offering unto images” is of no effect and simply a waste of money; c) holding that a prayer made outside of church is just as good as a prayer made inside the church, and that he often has gone to church only to avoid “the rumour of the people”. Margery Swayne confesses the following heresies: a) not having believed in the real presence of the body of Christ during the sacrament of the altar, as there is only one God, but many consecrated hosts (“gods” in the form of pieces of bread); b) holding that “the mass is nothing” (of no real consequence and without power); holding that the “doing of pilgrimage and offering unto images” is of no effect and simply a waste of money; c) holding that a prayer made outside of church is just as good as a prayer made inside the church, and that she often has gone to church only to avoid “the rumour of the people”; d) holding “that the people may swear by the mass without offence[,] but not by God that is in heaven”. Thomas Smyth confesses the following heresies: a) not having believed in the real presence of the body of Christ during the sacrament of the altar, comparing the consecrated bread

with any kind of bread that can be bought with money; b) having “said, spoken and believed against confession made unto priests”; c) having “held and affirmed” against going on pilgrimages and offering to the images of saints, and that going to church is only beneficial in that it avoids “the rumour of the people”. John Nicols confesses the following heresies: a) that he has “erred, wavered and not steadfastly believed” that the body of Christ is truly present in the sacrament of the altar; b) holding that pilgrimages were ordained only for the purpose of spending and wasting money; c) having held that “any man being well-disposed might as well serve God out of the church as within the church”, and that this belief often has kept him from coming to church. Cristiann (Christiane?) Nicols confesses the following heresies: a) having “erred, wavered and misbelieved” by not accepting that the consecrated bread used in the sacrament of the altar is the true and real body of Christ; b) holding that pilgrimages were ordained only for the purpose of spending and wasting money; c) having held that “any person being well-disposed might as well serve God out of the church as within the church”, and that this belief often has kept her from coming to church. (1) offer a second and longer general proclamation of guilt with regards to heresy, and then proceed to formally recant these heresies, and declare their penance. (1) promise that they will no longer consort with heretics, and that they will report any heretics they might come across to the church authorities; (1) submit to the “pain, rigour and sharpness of the law” that will be imposed on them, should they at a later date act contrary to their abjuration. (1) sign the abjuration with five cross signs “with our hands”, and ask of all present to witness against them if they ever go against their recorded abjuration at a later time.

Source: Digital photograph (KVT)

Transcriber: KSH 09/01/2017

Comments: This abjuration is a rather rare group abjuration, where several people appeared before the bishop together to abjure their heresies.

Appendix 2: Diplomatic edition of the texts in the present corpus

A 2.1 Introduction

What follows is a diplomatic edition of the texts contained in the present corpus (see 4.4.2 for a general description of diplomatic transcription; see MELD, Manual for the detailed conventions used in the edition). The font that is used to render the texts into diplomatic has been produced especially for the MELD Project at the University of Stavanger; it is based on Peter Baker's Junicode and has extra glyphs designed by Geir Bergstrøm and Kjetil V. Thengs.

The texts are organised according to their MELD Code, and are listed in ascending order.

A 2.1 The edition

County: Ely

Code: D0677

Reference: Cambridge, Cambridge University Library: EDR G/1/5, fols 132v-133r

Function: Abjuration

[fol. 132v]Jn the name of god Amen . Be it openly knowen to all you worship
ful Maistirs and Ʒs . and to alle x̄pen peple . that J Rōbt Sparke of Reche
of the dioċ of Ely . befoꝝ the Reuēnt fadir in god . w . Gray . Bīsshoḡ of
Ely . my iuge and ordinary . psonally appiered . the monday next afoꝝ the
feste of thascencion of ouꝝ lord last passed . maad an open confessioñ . to the
said Reuēnt fadir . sufficient witnessis beinḡ thoo present . that J haue halden
taught . and affermed certāin fals articles and opínions of heresy and erroꝝ²
ageyn the sacrament^f of the church- . and al trewe x̄pen feith . and ayens .
the Determinacioñ of the church- / And also that J haue ben present . wher̄
erroneus articles and opínions haue ben taught . lerned and affermed . by
othꝝ psones . and gaf faith credence . consent and beleve to hem at díuse .
tymes . that is to say . ayens the sacrament of the Auter . the sacrament

of Baptyme · the sacrament of the last Anelyng · the sacrament of ordi^r
ageyn worshipping of the cros · and ymag^f · ageyn · confessioⁿ praie^r
and pilgrymage · And oth^r articles and opⁱnions of heresies and error^f
the which · J haue declared and openly confessed befor^e the said Reu^ent fad^r
sittyng^e in iugement / And for asmoch as J am enformed for certain · by
the said Reu^ent fad^r · and by oth^r notable doctour^f · that the same articles
and opⁱnions beⁿ heresy^s · fals errorⁱs · and not trewe · and ayens the de
terminacion of the chirche · J openly forsok^e · and vttrly reno^uced and abiured
alle the forsaid articles · and al^d oth^r articles · and opⁱnions of heresy^s and
error^f contrary to the Defⁱnicioⁿ of the chirche · / And J swor^e vpon^d a book
by the holy euangelijs · that J fro that day forward · shal not teche preche
nor hold^t · nor afferme the said heresies · error^f opⁱnions · nor noon oth^r / nor
that J shal Defende · nor maytⁱene hem · nor noo p^sones · that be of thair^e
opⁱnioⁿ · by me · nor by any oth^r mene p^sone · openly or pryui^ly · nor J shal
gyve fauo^r helpe · socou^r · assistance or counsaile to hem · nor receive hem · nor
[fol·133r] nor to hem J shal yeue credence · nor be in felasship w^t hem · to my knowle^{ch} · nor
J shal gyve nor sende giftes to hem · nor J shal halde · nor receyue Doctrⁱne
book^f · quair^f nor rollis concernyng heresies · error^f or opⁱnions of hem · nor them
vse · And in token of these fals articlis opⁱnions and error^f openly by me con=
fessed & vttrly forsaken : J doo mekely and lowly · this penance · in party of my
penance · enioⁱned by the said Reu^ent fad^r my Juge and ordⁱnary · / / Praying^e
mekely and hertily · alle ministr^f of the chirche · and alle x^pen Peple being^e
hier^e present · to pray to god for me · that J may haue forgyuenes of these
opⁱnions error^f and heresies abouesaid · and grace of the holy goost · that J
falle no mo^r in to these · nor noon oth^r error^f in tyme comyng

County: Hampshire

Code: D3049#1

Reference: Winchester, Hampshire Record Office: 21M65/A1/15, fol. 27r

Function: Abjuration

[fol. 27r] [Latin:]

[item 2] Jn the name of god . Amen Jn the p̄sens of you Reuēnd Fadre in god Lord Petre by the grace of god Busshop of wynchestre

myne Ordynary · J · Rīcharde Pytsyne otherwyse called Rīchard Sawyer yō² souget of ys díocyse of wynchester detecte ·

Accused and putup for a Mysbylevyng man for that y haue be lernyd and taught by oone wylyyam Smart ⁊ of oon willm

Carpenter of the towne of Newbury in the díocise of Sar ín the company of other heretykes and lollard^þ cōfesse all thes

erronyous opynyons and heresyas me to haue hold and spoken that doth ensue · Furste that y haue Dampnably and ewro

nyesly erred holdeñ and saide a yenste the blessid Sacrament of the Auter sayng̃ opynly and affirmyng that a mān may

not make hym that made hym · And that ther² was not veray god and mān · Affirmyng̃ them that so belyued foles and

Jpocretis Furthermore also y saide that the saide blessid sacramente was but a pece of dowe bakyn and prentyd

by twyxt · ij · Jrens · And that y cowde make · xxxⁱⁱ of theym w^tin ā owy² Jf y had such Pryntyng Jrons And ouer

this y hild and said ín this mañ of wyse · Jf ín the veray sacramēt of the Awter be the veray body of Cryst ⁊

god · Jf y shuld receyve hym ⁊ etc hym · wher² shuld y haue an other god and Body of Cryst · And by syde this

þ^t y saide if the^r we^r the very body of cryst a mouse shuld not be harde to touche it no^þ to ete it ·
 And in this erro=
 nyous Bylyue J byde by the space of · 11j · dayes · Jtm̄ y haue saide and maynteyned ayenst the holy
 sacrament
 of cōfessioñ sayiñg that it were as good tobe cōfessid to a lay mān as to a Pryst · Farthermore þ^t
 confessioñ to a mān is
 not necessary but to god only by cōtrycion · Also y haue řpreved and Dampned Pílgrymeage
 gooyng^þ ⁊ offeryng^þ
 vnto Corssaynct^þ sayng and affirmyñg that it were better to yeve a peny to m̄yn ev̄yn cryst̄yn than
 to offre it to any
 sayntte · And that it was but a fayned vsage · And þ^t y wuld haue moche monye ear that J · wuld
 spend any a bowte
 any Pylgrymage · Jtm̄ that no mān is bowund to fast but if he be a Pryst · Jtm̄ · J · haue affermed
 and saide a yenst
 the Decrees of o² holy moder the Church saynge þ^t pristres ougħt and shuld haue wyff^þ p̄p̄red vnto
 them selff as
 they had in oolde lawe Jtm̄ J haue holdt ⁊ saide þ^t · Prist^þ do but blynd and disteyne the people ⁊
 saide to the ded
 Bodyes in the tyme of Buryng^þ · As thow hast do so sange too · Jtm̄ J haue affirmed and said of a
 Prist sange
 masse oñ wyke he ougħt not to syn^g masse ayē the next wyke then followyñg · And also J · haue
 saide that
 the weke þ^t they synge masse yñ · They shuld haue for eūy masse 2– 1j d̄t and no more · Jtm̄ at
 P^lst^þ shuld not
 know at nyght wher^þby they shuld lyve in the morne next folowyñg · And þt they shuld lyve by the^r
 hande
 warke · And that no mān shuld fast but only prist^þ · Of all thes errowres ⁊ heresytes to me her̄in yo²
 noble p̄sens Judiciāly obiected and by me confessid · J · by m ynowne cōfessiōn and by wyttnesse
 of the

foresaid errorres & heresydes as they haue ben opynly and syngulerly reherseid lawfully couycted that
· J ·

haue halden taught and obstynatly defended and susteyned the errorres heresydes and opynions a
foresaid

dampned forboden and to the defynacyon of o^r modre holy Church contraryous yelde me gylty &
culpable

The which foresaid errorryous & dampnable opynions errorris & heresydes And all o^r techynges
subtiltees

and Doctryne r^epugnant and contraryous to the said defynacion of the Church or offensyfe And
distrybe able to soulys of symple vnderstandyng · J the said Richard Pytysyne otherwyse called
Rychard Sawyer

sory contryte & veray repentant from this day forthward solely aboure for swere for sake & expsly
renouice [sic]

And also the kepynge & concealyng of Englyssh bokkes for bodeyn submytting my selff opynly and
expresly to the payne

Rygor and sharpenesse of law þ^t a pson relapsed aught to suffer by the lawe Jf y doo or psume to
Attempte the

contrary of this my p^resent Abiuracyon Or if y wytyngly to any heretyke or Misbyleyng psons in þ^e
faith

or to such as ben holden suspecte or defouled wth the lepre and Infeccyon of heresy þ^t holdith
redeth techeth

or obstynatly defendith contr^y & Aynste the defynacyon of holly Church On to such as been
kepers

recettors and Councillours of the saide heretyke & my felyng peple Or of such Englyssh Bokkes as is
be forne r^eherseid and forbedyn fau^r Counsaylle or Assiste puely or Aptly at any tyme hereafter
Ceesyng

in all this Abouesayd all man^s of fraude Decepcyon malegyon Cautell^s and dissymilacyon also god
help me

and his holy Eūngelys And Jnto the wyttensse therof to this p̄sent my abjuracyōn J putto my
signe

County: Hampshire

Code: D3049#2

Reference: Winchester, Hampshire Record Office: 21M65/A1/15, fol. 45v

Function: Abjuration

[fol. 45v] Jn the name of god Amen Jn the presence of you Maistre Michael Clene Chaunceller ⁊
Cōmyssary in this
behalve sufficiently deputed to the Reūende fadre in god my lord Petre by the ḡce of godt Bysshop
of winchestr̄
myn ordynary J Jsabell Gartrygge sb̄giet vnto my seid̄t Reūend̄t lord̄t ⁊ of his Dioc̄ise of wynchestre
detecte acused̄t
⁊ put vp for a mysbylyvyn̄g wōman for that J haue belyved̄t lernyd ⁊ taūght [sic] in the heretical
weys of sorcery
of Jncantacōn of wyhecrafte ⁊ Also haue enlured ⁊ enduced̄t oother to lerne the seyde abhōinable
craftys movīḡ
theym ⁊ exortyn̄ḡ to forsake almyghty god ⁊ to bylyue on the deuel ⁊ his werk̄f ⁊ Confesse al thees
erronyo-us,
wyhecrafte ⁊ abhōiāble opynyons that doōn ensue ⁊ me to haue holde wroūght ⁊ doōn the same ·
Fīrst that
J haue Stycked a Tode wyth a rodde ⁊ put hym vndre the hows oves of Yngr̄d Baker of Basyngē
Seiying
thees woord̄f Jn the devyls name Ferbe · J will the mysPAYRE And this in the name of the deuyl
Ferbe J haue

dystroyedð ij q̄rters of Malt of the seid yngrams goodþ̄ · / Also J haue holde taūght ⁊ doonð this
wych-crafte

that w^t suche a styke that J haue stycked̄ a Toode J haue strekyñ An horse of the seid yngrams
seyḡ the

wōdþ̄ aboute rehersed̄ ⁊ he hath dyed̄ of my Crafte · Also J haue by my wychecrafte holpyñ a cowe
of the seydt yngrams that was lykily to pyshe before tyme of myne owne wychecrafte · Also J haue
holde bylyued ⁊ taūght that and if a horse or a kow war^þ hurte by any means of wyches or oother
wise : that w^t the leyng of an extre of a Carte in the wey þ^t þ^c hors or kow mought goo ou^r it ⁊ he
shuld̄

be hoole · And̄ lykewyse J haue hold̄ taūght ⁊ bylyued̄ that by the leynḡ of a besom in the wey
where pultry shuld̄ entre into an hous if they haue beēn by wyched̄ before ⁊ lykely to dye yet they
shuld̄ by the Jnuocacōn ⁊ calling of the devyls revyue · And so of hoggys or pyggys if they war by
wyched̄ to ley on theyre entry the axtre of a plowe ⁊ they shulde be hoole And besydþ̄ this J haue
leyde a

Tode vndre a fate of oon Richard̄ Mountefort of Basing ⁊ by my said̄ wychecrafte destroyed̄ his
growte

Of all thees erronyous bylyues ⁊ wychecraftys to me here in yō^r p̄sence Judycially obiected̄ ⁊ by me
Confessyd J by myn owne · Confession̄ as they haue beēn singlarly rehersed̄ ⁊ lawfully Conuycted̄
þ^t

J haue holde bylyuyd ⁊ taūght the seydt wychecraftes dāpned̄ ⁊ forbod̄n by o^r modre holly church
And by the deſmīnacōn of the same J yelde me gilty ⁊ culpable · Whiche craftys ⁊ abhōiāble doyngþ̄
dampnable to sowlys of symple vndrestandynḡ J · the seid̄ Jsabel̄ Gartrych sory contryte ⁊ very
repēta^r

from this day forward̄ solemply abiure forswere forsake ⁊ exp̄sly renounce ⁊ also the cōpany of all
oother wychis ⁊ heretykþ̄ ⁊ kepynḡ or councellynḡ of theyre doyngþ̄ sbmytting my self opynly and̄
exp̄sly to the peyñ rygō² ⁊ sharpnesse of lawe that a p̄soñ relapsed̄ ouḡxht to suffre by the lawe if
J doo or p̄sume to attempte the contrary of this my p̄sent abiuracōn or if J wittingly to any wychis
or

heretyquys drawe or any suche mysdoynge p̄sons in the fayth- or ^{to} suche as ben holden suspecte or
mysguydede
people geue any fauor² Counseil¹ or ayde or assiste p̄uatly or aptly at any tyme hereaftre Seeing in al
p̄ces
aboueseyde al man¹ of Frawde decepcōn malyngyn¹ cautels ⁊ dīssīmīlacōn Also god¹ help me ⁊ thees
hoolly
eūngelyst¹ Jn to wytnesse herof to thees p̄sent³ myn Abiuracōn J putto my signe ⁊ [Latin: fecit
signū Cruc¹
Corā Magrō Cau¹ ⁊ milt¹ Alijs in Capella de Fromonde Jnfra Coll¹ bte marie v̄gīs p̄pe winton¹
1^{do} die Menss Septembris A^o dñi Millesimo CCCCxC^{mo} Primo · /]

County: Hampshire

Code: D3050#1

Reference: Winchester, Hampshire Record Office: 21M65/A1/16, fol. 63v

Function: Abjuration

Jn the name of god Ame [sic] Jn the presence of you mas^r Nicholas Mayew doctor of law
Chaunceller and
Cōmissary to the Reuēnde fadre in god my lord Thomas by the soferauce of god bisshop of
wynches^r myn
ordynary in this behalue sufficienly depu¹ed¹ · J Court Lamporte of the p̄ssh of Meanestoke w¹yn
the dio¹
of wynches^r detecte accused and put vp for a mysbeleuyng man confese all theis erroneous
opynyons and
hereses to haue hold and spoken that doth ensue Furst that J haue dampnably and erroneously
holdyn
and said ayenst the holy sacrament of the Auter sayng opynly and affirmyng^r / that a prest beyng

in

deadly syne hath no pour to make the very true sacrament. Futhermore J haue said · and ·

cōmuned: yn

opyn company that a prest in thoo days / he is pmitted: by the law to say masse twys in the secunde
masse

he may not receyve nother receyveth the holy sacrament but putith it a way in other places / of the
whiche

errous [sic] and hereses to me here in yo² noble p^sence iudicially objected: and by me confessed J by
myn owⁿ

confessioⁿ and by witenese and evydence in that behalf ayenst me had / of the forsaid errores and
hereses as thei haue beyn opynly and singlar^y reherced lawfully cōvict^e that J haue holden taught
and sustened / the errores hereses and opynyons aforseid dampned forbodeⁿ and the def^myⁿacoⁿ
of ou^r

mo^d holychurche contraryous yelde me gilty and cupable / The whiche forsaid errores and all
other

hereses and erroneous opynyons contrary vnto the cristen faith and the def^myⁿacoⁿ of the chirche
and holsome constitucoⁿs and ordinaunce of the same J the said court Lamporte sory contrite and
very repentante from[∞] this day forwarde solemply abiure forswer forsake and expresly rem[∞]te
submit

tyng my self openly and expresly to the payne rigore and sharpnese of the law · that a psone
relapsed

ought to suffre by the law if J doo or p^sume to attempte the contrary of this my p^sent abiuracoⁿ
also god me help and this holy e^ungelist[∞] ꝛ [Latin: osculatus est libru-] And in to the wittenese
therof^t to

this my p^sent abiuracoⁿ J put to my signe / [Latin: et fecit signu- cruc[∞]] .:

County: Hampshire

Code: D3050#2

Reference: Winchester, Hampshire Record Office: 21M65/A1/16, fol. 66r

Function: Abjuration

[line 19] In the name of god Amen J Thomas Maryet otherwise called Thomas Stayner of the
pisshe of saynt
Olave in Suthwerke w^tyn the diocese of wynchest^r knowleg^h and opynly confesse by for you maist^r
Nicholas Mayew
Cōmissary vnto the right reuente fader in gode Thomas by the sufferaūnce of god bishopp^e of
wynchest^r myn
ordinary in this case specially deputed^e and assigned^e · That J haue secretly kept and hold and
prively redd^e w^tyn
myn house book^e libell^e volumes tretes and other werk^e wretyn in englissh compiled^e by John
wykcliff A
dampned^e heretik and faored^e and conceled^e the same book^e from^e my said ordinary and diocesan
by the space
of xij yer^e now last past contrary to the lawes ordynaunc^e and defmynacoⁿs of the holy canones
and
other holsome constitucions of ou^r moder holy chirche wherfore J now consideryng that J haue in
th^e
p^rmisses sore erred^e willyng to re^tne and repare to the vnite of our moder holy chirche all suche
secrete
kepyng^e and w^tholdyng of dampned^e book^e and the lecturs of the same inspeciall w^t all other in
gen^rall
J vtterly abiure and forsake p^rmittyn^g faithfully that from hensforth J shall not kepp^e redd^e ne here
any suche book^e nor to pryvate and dampned^e lecturus consent ne resort / but if J know or at any
tyme hereafter shall know eny pson or psones suspecte or gyltty of or in the p^rmiss^es · or eny of
theym

or in any other article contrary to the articles of the faith and the deſynacoñ of the churche J shall

detecte theym to myn ordynary for the tyme beyng so god be my help and this holy eūngeliſtʃ · p̄mytting allso by vertu of my said othe faithfully to pforme and fulfill all suche peñnce as shalbe to me yniõyned̄ for my grete offence done in this behalfe Jn witteneſe wherof J make here w^t myn owñ hand a crosse [Latin: Et fecit signu- cruc̄ Acta sunt in Ecc̄ia Conuentuali ste marie On̄ey in Suthwerke

quinto die menſ Nouembris Anno dn̄ Milimo CCCC nonagesimo sexto p̄ntibz veñabilibz viris Carolo

Both ⁊ Riçõ wilton̄ legu- doctoribz ⁊ alijs multʃ] ·

County: Herefordshire

Code: D0744#2

Reference: Hereford, Herefordshire Archives: AL19/9, fols 170v-171r

Function: Abjuration

For as mucche as J John̄ wodhyll am acused of certeyn poyntes and articles þ^t ben azeine the byleue of holy churche J am comaunded be my lord the Bisshoþ of hereford to knowleche my byleue in thes poyntes that ben put vpon̄ me or in bookes J founden̄ wyth me to the help of myñ owne sowle restorynge of myñ owne name and that nowzt by me other mennes sowles sholde be hindred either empeired · Furst ys put to me that J shuld̄ kepe and concele wyth inne me bokes azeins the comaundement of holy churche in the whiche er enclused dyuers erroures ⁊ heresies the whiche ben these that foloweth y wreten̄ .:

on̄ artykyl es that in the sacrament of the awter efter the consecra cion es abydynḡ Materiañ brede ·

the secundu poynt is · A man shold not gef his almes to p̄stes Fecres ne pardoneres for thei ben fals enemyes of god ---

the thredt · a man schold not set his trust in pdouns ne trentalis

the fierthe A man shold put his trust in god alone ⁊ in no thinge bot in him the whiche wordes as doctores saith is in gret faut · For all 3if al myzty god be all one the end of all our trust 3it is aw for to put oure trust and hope of help in all the seyntes of heuen as menes ⁊ media tors that may brynge vs to hy- ---

the fifte --- ys 3if a man woll forsake hys synne he ys in the state of saluacion ⁊ abel to resevue the blysfull sacrament of the auter to the whiche au3t to be put that a man aut to be content of his synne schreuen and wilfol to make a seth for his trespas wyth oute purpose to turne a zeynd to his synne

p̄e vj p̄sones no p̄lates schold not wrynge the goodes of his sugettes fro hem by cursynge ne world plee .:

the viij · that tythes or dymes be pure almes geuen of wyll w^t out Reson of mannes det .:

the viij · God in the new lawe told lyteff or noght of thityng of dymes ⁊ Thee ix Ther schuld no man plect a noþ

th [sic] · x · A prest and he plete for hys gode he schulde rather leue his pepufl ⁊ goo fro tham ⁊ gete his gode be holy worchyng Paryschones schulde

the · xj · Paryschones schulde wythdrawe fro prestes ⁊ plates ther of frynges ⁊ dymes whan they fall to synne openly ⁊ fayles in ther

offis --- The · xij what so eu an yuel p̄lat or prest dos in masse matens or oder dedes they harme hem silf þ̄ p̄schoūs ⁊ all oþ̄ men .:

The · xiiij · Sogettes may lefulli deme the maner of leuyng of her p̄lates ⁊ who so seith other it is but afeynyng for yeuefl p̄latis ben the traytours of god .:

The xiiij That m̄ Johnd wylyf opinioūs ⁊ his felawes er cōmenda

ble And all thes dampnable ⁊ to be repued þ^r his bokes dampned
The xv Also it is said and put to me that J schuld say that the worst dede
that a mannd dos is better than the best dede that a womannd dos the whiche
wordes was neu^r sayde for no sooth ne to entent that mennd schuld holde them
for no trewthe · wherefor^r all those opⁱnio^us and all coclusi^ou^s ⁊ tales her^r a
for rehersed J forsake And submytte --- me to pena^us for the kepyn^g of such
[fol. 171r]bokes w^t · inne me ⁊ in all thynges to be rewled as my lord of hereford^t
here p^sent will rewle me ∴

County: Herefordshire

Code: D0746#1

Reference: Hereford, Herefordshire Archives: AL19/12, fol. 25r

Function: Abjuration

[Latin: Abiuracō Johannis

Crofte de prochio

de Erdisley here

ford ij dⁱo^c]

Jn The Name of godde Amen · J Johⁿ Crofte of the pyshe off^t
Erdisley withyn the dⁱo^c of hereford^t willfully knowlege befor^r you
Mayst^s Owen pole Johⁿ wardroper and Richard^t Judde Cōmissaries^z
of the Reu^ende father in godde Richard byshop of hereford^t in this behal
fe Laufully assigned^t and deputed^t ∴ that J haue hadde in my ward^t and ke
pyng dy^use bookys cōteynng heresies and errouris ageyn cristen feyth
and the de^finatio^u of all holy churche wich book^s J haue Radde ⁊
declared oftyn tymes puely and opynly holidays and festfull Dayes
befor mony and dy^use p^sons Redyng declaryng and techyng agaynst

the blessed sacrament of the Awful othir wise then me oughte to haue don
 also agaynst the sacrament of confession to p'st' and pen'nce for satisfacciō
 of syn · Also agayn the solennization of the sacrament of matrimony cal
 lyng it exorzismes and conūrations · Also J haue Radde and decla
 red agaynst our holy father the pope showyng that he hath not the
 power of byndyng and lewsyng that criste gave to petur but in
 vsurpyng that power apon hym he makyth hym selfe antecste · Also
 J haue Radde and taughte agayn the venacoū and worshipyng offe
 Images stonyng in churchis callyng thaym Maumēt' and agayn
 the shrynyng of scynt' bonys in goold and syl' and hangyng a
 boue thaym the same / These errour' heresies and false opynyons
 afore rehersed dampned and Reproued by auctorite of all holy church
 in especiall and all other in genall J forswere Abiur' and forsake
 promyttyng that frohensforth J shall neu' Rede declare or teche af
 ferme beleue nothir holde any errour' heresies or opynyons con
 trary to the def'minatioū of all holy church / neyther J shall Man
 teyn or fauor any p'son or p'sons suspect or gylty in this p'misses or
 any other contry to the feith and def'minatioū of all holy church
 or any book' of suche false errour' but J shall detecte and shewe
 thaym vn to my lord byshop of hereford for the tyme beyng myn
 ordynarye or to other his officers in as goodlye hast as J kan or
 may And all suche pen'nce as shalbe by you or any of you com
 missaryes aboue said to me for my trespas in this behalve Jniūged
 J shall mekely and deuoutly p'forme and fulffylle soo godde me hel
 pe at his holy dome and this hooly gospels of godde · / Jn wítnes
 wherof J make this sígne of the crosse wíth myn awne hande /
 [Latin:]

County: Herefordshire

Code: D0746#7

Reference: Hereford, Herefordshire Archives: AL19/12, fol. 52v

Function: Abjuration

[Latin: Abjuracō

Thome hignons

de wolaston]

In the name of godt Amēn J Thomas hignons of wolastōn
late of Newlandt and last of all wirkyng in micheldeane
in the diocise of herefordt knowlege be fore yow Reuēnt
Fadir in godt Richard busshopp of herefordt my Ordinarie
that J haue had susp^ct coḍcacoḍ of late in the hows of
Thomas nassh of Michledeane be fore diuse men and
womēn vnavisedt and of my slipir tonge saing that a
Carpint cowde make a howse but the house cowde
not make the Carpint which causid me to be diffa=
midt of heresy in the foresaide placis and suwhat
susp^ct a gainst the most worthiest sacment of the Awter
Also J saide that whēn oon Spēnḡ and Elyn Griffith
were brent for heretikḡ at Lidney a bowt xij yeris past
hit was saide that whēn doctō² Stremō² pchid
iff the saide Spēnḡ had a pulpite be fore hym Spēnḡ
woldt haue oucome the doctō² w^t conyng which causid
me to be suwhat susp^ct of favering the foresaide
heretikḡ Where fore w^t my oḡn Free will not cō=
pellid ther to all heresies errors and false opinions damnid and
reḡvidt by auctorite of holy church in genall J forswere abiure and

forsake p̄mittiᅅg feithfully that frō hens forth J shall neu^s afferme
beleve nethir holde Any errours herisies or opinions contrie to the det^e
minacoū of holy church Nethir J shall mayntayn or fauo² Any psōn or
psons suspcte or gilty contrie to cristēn faith or Any bok^ʃ re.pvidē by
holy church J shall detect ⁊ shewe them to my Lord^t busshop^p of hereford^t
my ordinarie or othir of his offici^s for the tyme beinᅅg in as goodly
haast as J cān or may and such Penance as shalbe by yow reuēndē
fadir in god^t to me inioined^t in this behalffe J shall mekely and deuotly
pforme and fulfill so god^t me helpe at his holy dome and the holy
gospell of god^t conteyned^t in the same Jn wītnes wher^o of J make
this signe of the crosse w^t my hand^t .

[Latin:]

[Latin:]

County: Lincolnshire

Code: D4440#3

Reference: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fol. 14r

Function: Abjuration

Jn the name of god Amen . J . Thomas hulle of hertford^t confesse afor^o yow Reuēnde Fader
in god / Johā by the grace of god Bisshop^p of lincoln^d . that . J . haue yeven ayde . coᅅseff^t help^p
and fauo² vnto ooᅅ Thomas Curteys . to thentent . that he ex^cised and vsed^t nigromācy
⁊ heresy . wherfore J . abiure and forswer^t alle maner of heresies and errors² . ⁊ pmyt .
that J shal never in tyme to come yef ayde help^p favo² nor soco² nor coᅅseff^t . to any that
holdeth heresies or vseth nigromancy in tyme to come . soo help^p me god and the holy
Eūngelīis [Latin: et iurabat supra librum / et fecit signu- crucis ⁊ c]

County: Lincolnshire

Code: D4440#17

Reference: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fols 57r-57v

Function: Abjuration

[Latin: abíuració Joh̄is polley]

[line 31]Jn the name of god Amen Before you Reuēnd̄t fader ín god Joh̄n By the grace of god
Bisshoḡ of líncoḡn

J Joh̄n Polley of henley of youre diocise not lettred̄t make open confessiōn ⁊ knowlage ín yō² p̄sence
⁊ the p̄sence of

wittensse here beyng at thís tyme that J haue holdēn beleved taught and affermed certeyn fals
Articles ⁊ opynions

of heresy and erroures agayne many and diūse sacrament^ḡ agāyn the trew xpēn̄d̄faith̄ and the
deḡminacōn of holy

Churche · / First not beleuyng ín the blessed sacrament of the Auter to be Cristes body ín fōme of
Bred · Also that

the sacrament of Bap̄tíme doōn with the obḡuaunces of the Churche and ín the fonte is not
necessary · but to

crístēn a childe rather in a Ryver or a ponde · Also that oblacōns made ⁊ doōn ín the Churche vnto
ymages ⁊ vīgoures

of seíntes shuld not be doon nor offred̄t but rather distribute suche offryng^ḡ vnto poer men · Also
that no mān shulde

worshīḡ no ymage in the Churche with̄ nor ín other thíniges for thei be but Stokk^ḡ · Also that ther
is no place

of purgatory · / The whích fals Articles with̄ many other and opynions of heresies and errors J haue
openly confessed̄t

in yo² p^sence indicially sutyng in examinacōn · And forasmoche as J am certaynly ⁊ credebly
infōmed^t by you reuēd^t
fader that theis articles bēn heresy fals error²s and not trew and agayn^d the det^fmynacon^d of holy
churche J wylling
in my hert to forsake these articles ⁊ all other heresy^s error²s ⁊ erronyouse opynyounse contrary to
the det^fminaciōn
of holy Churche · swere by this booke that frohensforthe J shal not teche preche holde nor afferme
nor byleve the
said heresy^s error²s ⁊ opynyounse nor noon other nor J sha^{ll} defend hem nor thoo p^sones that bēn
of that opynyōū
by me nor by any other meene p^sone openly or puatly nor J sha^{ll} yeff favo² help soco² assistance or
covnse^{ll} to hem
nor hem receyve nor to hem J sha^{ll} yeff credence nor be in felaship w^t hem to my knowlage nor J
shal hold nor
receyve doctrine Bookes or qwayres concnyng heresy^s error²s or opynyonse of hem nor them vse but
here openly
abiure them · And J swere by this Booke that assone as J can haue knowlage ⁊ vnderstanding of any
suche
Bookes or of any suche p^sones of suche heresy error²s ⁊ of thaire opynyonse · withoute fraude gile or
deceyte J sha^{ll}
[fol. 57v]make Knowlage to the Ordinary Bisshopp of the diocise where thei be vsed^t as god me
helpe ⁊ theis holy eūgelij^s
Jn wittenesse of theis p^miss³ J John Polley before rehersed^t subscribe my self^f w^t my nowne hand^t
[Latin:]

County: Lincolnshire

Code: D4440#18

Reference: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fols 59v-60r

Function: Abjuration

[Latin: abiuracio eiusdem]

[line 47] In the name of god Amen Before you Reuend^r fader in god John By the grace of god
bissho^p

of lincoln J Johⁿ qwyrk laborer of yo² diocise not lettered^r make opyn confessioⁿ & knowlege
in yo² presence and the presence of wittnesse here beyng at this tyme that J haue holden
taught and affermed^r certayn^d false articles and opynionse of heresy · agynse diuerse sacra=
mentis & the trew Cristenfaith and the determinacioⁿ of holy churche · First not beleving
in the blessed sacrament of the auter to be cristis body in f^ome of Bred^r & all the articles
a bove rehersed^r [Latin: vt sup^u] . the which fals articles J haue oponly confessed in Jugement
And for asmoche as J am credibly inf^omed^r by you reuend^r fadre in god that theis Articles
be heresy fals erro^rs and not trew but agayn the determinacoⁿ of all holy churche · J
wylling to forsake theis articles and all other heresies erro^rs & eronyouse opynionse con^{tr}y
to the determinacoⁿ of of [sic] holy churche swere by this boke that fro hensforth J sha^{ll} not
teche preche hold^r nor afferme nor beleue the said heresies nor non other heresies and
[fol. 60r] · opinions nor J sha^{ll} defende thaym nor thoo persones that be of that opinioⁿ by me or
any other persone .

openly or priuatly yeff favo^r help succo^r assistance or counseile nor them receyve nor to hem yeff
credence

nor be in felaship with hem to my knowlege · nor J sha^{ll} hold^r nor receyve doctrine Bokys qwayres
concernyng heresies erro^rs or opinionse of hem nor them vse · but here openly abiure them And j
swere

by this boke that as sone as J can haue knowlege and vnderstanding of any Bokys or of any
persones

suspect of heresy erro^rs & erronyouse opinions withoute fraude gyle or deceite J sha^{ll} make knowlege
to the ordinary Bissho^p of the diocise where thei be vsed^r · Also assone as J haue dooⁿ my penⁿce

which is injoynd me J shall departe owte of the diocise of lincoln never after to come therin during my lyff vnder payne of relapse as god me help and theis holy eūngelies Jn wittnesse of theis premiss3 J Johā Qwirk forsaidt subscribe my selff withmy nowne handt [Latin: et fec^t tale signū]

County: Lincolnshire

Code: D4440#22

Reference: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fol. 62v, item 2

Function: Confession

[Latin: Confessio Johāis

Barōn de

Agmondeshm [Latin:

J Johā Barōn of Agmoundeshm say and confesse that J was conūsant in tyme3 passed w^t hugh leche

heretyk and william Belgrave that taught ɾ defmynd ayen^d the sacrament^f of the Churche but J never gaff faith vnto them in the p^misseez

Jtm̄ J confesse that the said hugh leche heldt the dampnable opynyōn ayōn^d pegrynage and worshiping of saintes to the which opynyōn J gaff faith credence and beleve defmenyng myselff that it was bettir to giff poer men good then^d to seke or worship any saynt or ymage in erthe

Jtm̄ J confesse that many tymes J herd Johā white teche and holde many heresyas ayenst the vi sacramentis of holy churche but J gaff no faith vnto him

Jtm̄ J confesse that J haue iij Englyssh booke^f oōn^d of the lyff of oure lady of Adam and Eve and of other sermones the Myrr^o of Synners and the myrr^o of Matrimony · the secunde boke of Tales of Cauntbury · The iij boke of a play of Seint dionise

[Latin:]

County: Lincolnshire

Code: D4440#23

Reference: Lincoln, Lincolnshire Archives: DIOC/REG/20, fol. 62v, item 3

Function: Confession

[Latin: Confessio Gal

fridi Symeōn

de Agmondeshm]

J Geffray Symeōn of Agmondeshm^u confesse that J knew James wylly heretyk that was brent at london and knew hough J held agayn the sevynd sacrament^p of holy churche but gaff no faith vnto him

Jtm̄ J confesse that sithen J was so conusaunt w^t the said Jamys J had no faith nor good conceite in pegrynaḡ and worshiping of Sayntys

Jtm̄ J confesse that J have a Englisch book of the holy Gospellys in English that J had of the said James

Jtm̄ J confesse that when William Spman cam vnto Agmondeshm^u J and Robert Body warned John white of Cheshm^u disfamed of heresy

Jtm̄ J confesse that J haue dogmatized that Bysshoppis shuld goo on fote w^t xij p̄stis clothed as the Shep berith all in white teching the people the trew xpenfaith but thei teche the people that is fals ⁊ vntrew agayns goddis lawe wherfore J submitte me to correccion of the church

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4112#7

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/12 (part 2), fol. 39v

Function: Abjuration

In the name of godde Amēn J Alis hignell of Newbery of the dioce of Salesbery
 by fore you Thomas by the gr̄ce of godde bysshopp of Saresbury and my ordinarie knowlich
 opynly And w^t my fre wille make confessiōū that J haue before this tyme beleuid erroneosly
 And also openly haue seid be fore diuers / that ymag^f of seint^f be not to be wurshiped
 and for the Impugnaciōū of wurshipping of them haue mysseyd^t as moch as in mewas
 for the most despite of them as he^r aftir folowith First that whēn deuote Cristēn
 people of their deuociōū be wonte to offer their candels bernyn^g to the Jmage of seint
 leonard^t J haue for their deuociōū callid them folis Forthe rmo^r shewing in this wise
 whēn sent leonard^t wol^f ete a Candell And blowe owte a nodir than J wol^f offer hym
 a Candell els J wol not Also whēn J haue seen copwebbis hangyn^g be fore the
 face of the Jmage of our lady J haue seid And^t reputed them folis that offerith to
 that Jmage but if she couthe blowe away the same copwebbis from her face Also
 J haue mysseyd^t a yens^t the Jmage of seint Martyⁿ in this wise seyn^g seint Martyⁿ
 is but a foole if he wer wise he wold not stonde so longe in that high place colde in
 the church but comⁿ downⁿ and^t sit by somⁿ poremanⁿ fier^r Overthis whēn deuote
 Cristēn people be offering their candels to themmage of seint Erasme J haue
 wold J had an hachet in my hand And^t wer^r be hynde them to knoke them on
 the heddis And for the mo^r despite of the seid Jmag^f haue seid and bēn in full mynde
 willing^g and^t wysshyn^g all tho Jmag^f that stondith in void^t plac^f of the church
 wer^r in my yarde at home hauyn^g an Axe in my hand^t to hewe them to
 sethe my mete and to make my potte to boyle : Thes poyntes Artucules and^t opinions
 and^t all odir that be a gaynste the Faith And^t the defⁿminaciōū of all holy church by fore
 you J forsake and^t abiure And^t fully p^rmitte vnto you that fromhensforeward^t J wil^f not
 beleue ne say nether^r publysh thes Articules foreseyd^t ne eny odir that be a yens^t the
 feith of the Church nether^r receyue ne yeue fau^r to eny psonⁿ · that is of heresie and^t
 false opinioū suspecte And^t if J be cōuicte lafully vponⁿ eny such matier^r hereaftir J
 submitte And^t putt me to the correctiōū of the Church ·

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4112#8

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/12 (part 2), fol. 40r

Function: Abjuration

In the name of the holy trinite fadir soñ and holy goste his blessid modir and all
all [sic] the Compeny of hevyn J william Carpenter otherwise called williað harford
otherwise called william Daniell of Newbery of the dioç of Sarum · by fore you
Thomas Bisshoþ of Sarum by goddis sufferaunce and myn ordinarie knowlich
openly and w^t my fre wille make confessioū that J haue before this tyme bele=
ued erroneously And also openly haue seid before diuers / that Confessioū vball
is not necessarily to be made to pristis for that confessioū so made is not to the
helthe of Cristenmān soule Ferthermo^r seing that it were as goode for eny csten
mān to be shrive of his felowe as of a priste Also J haue beleuyd and seid
diuers tymes that ymag^f of seint^f be not to be wurshippid^t adding to the same
that no mān aught to wurshīp eny thing that is made or guēn w^t mānys
hand ferthermo^r shewing that it were bet^r to geve a poreman a peny than
to go a pilg^rmage to eny such or to do or make eny offering^f to theim adding
therto that offeryng^f be made but only for the availe and lucre of the p^tis
And not for soule helthe Also J many seasons haue seid a yenst the power^r ⁊
doctrine of pristis seing this wise that p^tatis of the Churche and pristis
be but scribes and phariseis disseyving Cristen people in thei^r doctrine and
nothing p^fiting theim Ferthermo^r seyn^g in despite of theim that when thei be reveste
to masse thei be as Angelis and when thei be vnreveste thei be as blak brondis of heff
and the^r be none odir of theim but all in like so meanyng · and beleuyng [^] by that same that
the^r shuld be no very sacramente of the Auter nether eny othir sacramente of holy church
that eny priste had power^r or auctorite to mynyst^r Also that thei nether none odir cān tell
or shewe whether thes saynt^f whōm we calle seyntis be in hevyn or in heff Jtm^d

J haue taught and beleuyd that if the feith of lollard^s we^r not the world^e shuld be
sone destroyed And in shortyme that Feith whos haue it shuld be vnto the vttermoste ·
makyng and aduancemente so he kepe that feith in counseill p^uely Thes poⁱnt^s
articules and opⁱni^ons and all odⁱr that be a gaynst the feith and defⁱnaco^u of al
holy Church byfore you J forsake and abiure And fully p^rmitte vnto you that fr^om /
hens forward J will not beleue ne say nethⁱr publiss^h · thes Articules aforeseid^e
ne eny odⁱr that be a y^enst the feith of the church nethⁱr receyve ne yeve fau^o to eny
ps^on · that is of heresie and false opⁱni^ou suspecte And if J be c^omⁱte vpp^on eny suche
matie^r heraftⁱr J submytte and put me to the correctio^u of the church ·

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4112#10

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/12 (part 2), fols 41r-v

Function: Abjuration

Jn the Name of the holy trinite fadir son and holy gost his blessed modir and all
the Compeny of hevyn · J John Tanner of Stevynton of the dio^ce of Sarum be fore you
my Reuerende Fadir in god Thomas bisshop of Sarum my Juge and ordinarie knowe^e
lege openly and w^t my fre wille make confessio^u that J haue before this tyme beleued
erroniously And also openly haue seydt befo^r · diuerse a y^enst the sacramente of the
Auter on this wise / that the sacramente is vndir this fo^rme / · As almyty god was
offerdt on the Auter to the hand of Simeon that is the sacramente of the Auter forthat
that is nowe vsed / is but a signe of his passio^u ferthermo^r seyng · howe may he be
made that was w^toute eny begynnynge and shalbe w^toute eny endyng And howe
may priste make god insomoch as god made hym and all thing^s of nough^t · Jtr^o J
haue seid and p^rched a y^enst the sacramente of Baptym shewing that it availeth not
to be wasshid in watir as thes prist^s vse nowe for it is but for the singuler aduale

of · the Crisōm · to theim / For it is J nowe to be baptised in fire and in the holy gost
that is in pfyte love and Charite and in pfite beleve to god for seint Joĥn seid
whēn Criste cōm to be baptised · he seid lord it behoveth to be baptised of the / that is
to sey in that word seint Joĥn was baptised by his beleve And so is euery mān that
stedfastly beleveth in god though he be neu^f wasshid in watir Also a yenste :
[fol. 41v] Wurshipping of ymag^f · seing that we shall wurship no stokk^f ne stonys ne nothing
made
or g^uen with mānys hande of no lykenesse of thing^f in hevēn ne erth Thes poynt^f
articles And opinions and all odir that be a yenst the Feith and defminacioū of all holy
church before you J forsake and abiure And fully pmitte vnto you that from^d hens
foreward^f J woll not beleve ne say nethir publiss^h · thes Articles aforseid^t ne eny
odir that be a yenst the Feith of the church ne^f receyve ne yeve fauou^r to eny pson^d
that is of heresie and false opinion^d suspecte And if J be cōmite of eny such matier^r
heraftir J submytt and putt me to the correctioⁿ · of the Church ·

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4112#11

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/12 (part 2), fols 41v-42r

Function: Abjuration

In the Name of the holy trinite Fadir sōn and holy gost his blessed modir
and all the Compeny of hevyn · J Jsabell Dorte of Esthenredt in the dioce of *Sarum*
be fore you my Reuēndt Fadir in god Thomas bissho^p of *Sarum* my Juge and ordinar^r
knowlege openly and w^t my Fre wille make confessioū that J haue before this
tyme beleued erroneously And also openly haue seid befor^d dyuerse A yenst
wurshipping of ymag^f of seynt^f and pilgremage doyn^g shewyn^g that
no mān shuld^t wurship no stokk^f ne stonys ne nothing made or g^uen w^t

mānys hand̄ vnd̄stondyn̄g · and̄ felynḡ in my mynde that it weŕ bet̄ to
geve a poor̄ blynd̄ or lame mān a peny than to bestowe theiŕ mony in pilḡ
[fol. 42r]magis goynḡ And wurshippynḡ themmaḡ of̄ seynt̄ for mān is the very ymage of̄ godde
whiĉ ought all only to be wurshipped and no stokk̄ ne stonys Jtm̄ J haue seid a yent
the sacramente of̄ the Auter in this wise and̄ hath hold̄ opinioū that siĉ it is so that
god was w^toute begynnyn̄g and is and shalbe w^toute endyn̄g no prist hath power̄
to make hym̄ · ne to consecrate the body of̄ criste And̄ haue seid that it is not possible
that þ^t whete or corn̄ that growiĉ in the Feld̄ this day shuld be god̄ or the body
of̄ Criste to morowe for and it weŕ very godde a mowce or a Ratte hath no power̄ to
Ete hit̄ Thes poynt̄ articules and̄ opinions and̄ all od̄ir that be ayent̄ the feiĉ
and̄ deĉminacoū of̄ all holy church̄ befoŕ you J forsake and̄ abiure and̄ feiĉfully
pmitte vnto you that froṁ this day forward̄ J woll not beleue ne say neth̄ir
publiſsh̄ thes articules aforseid̄ ne eny od̄ir that be a yent̄ the feiĉ of̄ the church̄ :
neſ̄ receyve ne yeve fauouŕ to eny p̄sōn that is of̄ heresie and false opinioū suspecte
And̄ if̄ · J be cōuicte of̄ eny such̄ matieŕ heraft̄ir J submytte and̄ put me to the
Correctioū of̄ the church̄

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4113#2

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fols 70r-v

Function: Abjuration

Jn the name of god Amen · We Joĉn Bisshop̄ Tanner · Alice Bisshop̄ · wyfe of
the said Joĉn · / Joĉn Roye Cowper of the paryssh of Saynt laurence in Rading · / Thom̄s
Scoch̄yn Taylouŕ And Joĉn Stanwey wevar of the paryssh of Saynt Gyles of the same
toĉn · Noted / diffamed And to you Reuēnd Fader in Cryste joĉn by goddys grace Bisshop̄
of Sarum our̄ Juge and ordinary denounced and detect for vntrue bylevyn̄g p̄sōnes ⁊ knowlege

and confesse of o^r free willes vnconstreyned that diuers and many tymes we and eu^{er}y of vs haue receyued^t wittingly in to o^r howses in the parishes of Saynt laurence and Saynt Gyles aforsaid : certayn mysbyleuyng^e and euyl techyng^e psōnes ayenst the veray feyth and true byleue of holy church . And with the^em we and eu^{er}y of vs hath wittingly kept company and *comunicacoū* beyng content and glad to here the^em vltre and tech their^e wrong opinions and fals heresies . // **And thorgh** their^e euyl techyng and informacoū we the sayd Jo^hn Bisshop^p . Alice . and Thom^s Scoch^yn haue thought said and byleved that in the blessyd sacrament of the Aulter is not the veray body of cryste . that was bo^rn of A mayde . that was putt vpōn the crosse and dyed to redeme mankynde . that aroos frōm deth to lyfe . and ascended in to hevens : but that it is veray pure bredd^t and nough^t ellys . Thynkyng^e and byleuyng^e that sith Criste in his veray body Ascended in to hevyns : he cōmeth not ner shal cōme aga^yn hyder into the erth afor the day of dome whā he shal Juge alle the world . And more over we confesse and knowlege that we haue receyued^t the said holy sacrament . not for any deuocoū or byleve that we had therin : but oōnly for dread of the people And to eschewe the Juberdye and daunger that we dredd^t to falle in : if we had not doōn as other crystēn people dyd .

Also we the said Jo^hn Bisshop^p . Alice Bisshop^p . Thom^s Scoch^yn . Jo^hn Roye . and Jo^hn Stanwey haue holdēn byleued and said that pilgrimages which beēn vsed of good Crystēn people vnto the corpsys or reliques of Sayntys be not lawfull and owght not to be doon . ner nōn offrynges shuld be maad vnto the^em . for the sayntys be in hevēn . and haue no need to such thynges . wherfor the money spent in such pilgrimages is but wasted and lost . And moch better it were to depart that money among^e poore people . /

Also we the said Jo^hn Bisshop^p . Alice Bisshop^p . Thom^s Scoch^yn . Jo^hn Roye And Jo^hn Stanwey haue byleuyd and sayd that No mān ner womān shuld wurshipp^e the Jimages or pictures of the crucifixe . of ou^r blessed^t lady or of any other sayntys . Ne make vnto thēn any offrynges of lightes . wex . money . or other thynges . forsomoch as they be but stockys and stonys . and that they that otherwise doo : cōmytt Jdolatrye . And J the said Thom^s Scoch^yn . vsed to say that such offrynges and giftes shuld rather be doōn vnto poore mēn thān to such Jimages . for we shuld rather wurshipp^e the Jimage that god hath maad (that

is to say the poore mān) thān the Jmage that mān hath maad and peynted · the which stondesth in the church ·

Also we the said Alice Bisshop̄ and Thom̄s Sc̄och̄yn haue holdēn and byleued that that the curses of the poop · or other p̄lates of the church ārn not to be sett by as voyde and of no strengthe · For we haue said that ther̄ is no cursyn̄g to be dredd̄t but the curs of Almyghty god · the which curs neyther the poop · bisshoppes ner p̄stys haue in their̄ power ·

Also J the said Thom̄s Sc̄och̄yn haue bylevyd and said that the poop is Antycryste · and that preestys and other mēn of the church be his disc̄iples ·

[fol. 70v]Also we the said Alice Bisshop̄ And Jōhn Roye haue holdēn and byleved that the evyns of thapostles and of other saynctys cōmaunded to be fasted by the church : ar not of necessite to be fasted̄t · but that the people may eat fless̄h at alle such̄ seasons · Except the Jmbryn̄g dayes · the Frydayes · and the tyme of Lent · And hereupōn J the said Alice confesse that vpōn thre yer̄f passed̄t vpōn A saynct̄f eve that was A fast̄t cōmaunded̄t by the church : J eete bacōn in m̄yn owēn hows · hauȳg no regard vnto the sayd fast̄t ·

Also we the said Jōhn Bisshop̄ and Jōhn Roye haue holdēn and bileved that no mān ner womān is bound vnto such̄ offrynges as be custōmably maad in the church · vnto the preestys hondys · sayyn̄g that they serve of non other thynḡ but to make the preest̄f ryche ·

Also J the said Jōhn Bisshop̄ haue holdēn and byleued̄t that it nedeth not any persōn to be confessed of his synnes vnto a preest̄t or any other mynystre of the church · For J haue sayd It is Jnow to Aske forgifnes of alle myghty god and to be sory for the synne · Not willyn̄g to retōrne therunto · without any more confessioū ·

Also · J the said Jōhn [...] haue beēn waveryn̄g in my mynde and greatly doubtȳg vpōn the sacrament of the Aultere · wheyther it were the veray body of our̄ saviour̄ Cryste or noo · Not havyn̄g stedfast and herty byleve therin as A good and true crystēn mān shuld haue · /

Theis articles, aforerehersed̄t And to vs Jōhn Bisshop̄ Tanner · Alice Bisshop̄ ·

Jōhn Roye · Thom̄s Sc̄och̄yn And Jōhn Stanwey by you reuēnd Fadre in Cryste Judicially obiected : we knowlege and confesse that we haue holdēn and byleued̄t in such̄ maner and

fōme as is A fore expressed · The which articles as they concern vs seuerally we vnder-
stond and knowe to be fals heresies and wrong opínions contrary to the techyng and
determinacoū of the church · And that we and euý of vs holdyng and bylevyng the said
articles and opínions were heretikes and mysbeleuyng psōns · out of the true feyth and
right beleue of Cryste · But forasmoch e[...]- as the lawes of holy church be grounded in
mercy : remembryng that god wyl not the deth of A synner · but rather that he be conũted
and lyve : And also that the church of god here in erth closeth not hir bosōm to hym or
theym that wyl tuŕn agaýn therunto : we therfor and euý of vs willing to be partyners
of the said mercy : forsake and abiure alle the said articles and euý of theym for eũmore
And not oonly theym but alle other articles of heresy and wrong opínions contrary to
the determinacoū of the vniũsal church of Cryste · so help vs god and theys holy gospels ·
Promyttyng by õ said othe · that we and euý of vs from hensforth shal neuyr be favo-
rers · cōncealers maynteyners ner receyvers of any psōnes to õ knowlege openly ner
pryvely · But if we or any of vs know any such hereafter : we shal denoũnce and shew
theym to their ordinaries or to their officers · Submytting vs and euý of vs of our
free willes vnconstreyned vnto the payn Rigour and sharpnes of the lawe that A m̃n
fallēn Agaýn to heresy oweth to suffer in such caas : if we or any of vs euyr doo or
hold frōm this day forthward contrary to this our abiuracoū or any part therof
In witnes wherof · we alle and euý of vs seuerally subscribe with our handys
makyng A crosse · And require alle crystēn people here present to record
and wytnes ayenst vs and euý of vs of this our confessioū and abiuracoū · if we
or any of vs hereafter doo or hold contrary to the same or any part thereof · /

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4113#4

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fol. 72r

Function: Abjuration

In the name of god Amen · J Annes Scochynd wyfe of Thom's Scochynd ---
 Tayl^o of the parisshe of Saynct Gyles Jn Radynge · of the diocise of Sarum · Noted · diffamed
 and to you Reuend Fadre in Cryste John by goddys Bisshopp [sic] of Sarum my Juge and ordinary
 dennounced and detect for A mysbelevynge womān : knowlege and confesse that dyuers tymes
 J haue bee drawynge and leanyng vnto certayn evyl techynge and mysbelevynge psones · Re=
 ceivynge them wittingly in to mynd hows And there J haue herd them speke and shew their
 fals errours and wronge opinions ageynst the true byleve of holy church · And not discovered
 theym · but favoured theym / byleved theym · and kept their counseyl in the same ·
And by their evyl techynge and informacoū J haue holden and byleuyd that in the sacrament
 of the Aulter is not the veray flesh and blood of our lord ihesu cryste · And soo not the veray
 body of hym · but oonly material bredd ·
Also J haue holden and byleued · that the Jmages of the crucifixe · of our blessyd lady · / /
 and of other saynctes shuld not be wurshipped · for they bee but stockys and stonys ·
Also J haue holden and byleued that the curses and other sentences of the church be not
 to be dradd ner sett by · for ther is no cursynge to be fearyd but the curs of almyghty god
 the which curs the bisshoppes and the preestys haue not in their power · /
Theis articles and euyl of theym · to me Annes Scochynd by you Reuend Fadre in cryste
 here in Jugement objected : J confesse that J haue holden and byleuyd · The which articles
 J now vnderstond and know to be fals opinions and heresies ayenst the techynge and deter=
 minacoū of holy church : And also J knowlege and confesse that J holdynge and bylevynge
 wilfully the said articles was an heretyke and a mysbelevynge womān · out of the true feith
 of Cristes church · But forasmoch as god wyl not the deth of A synner · but rather that
 he be conuted and lyve · And also that the church of god here in ertē closeth not hyr bosom
 to theym that wyl retorne therunto : J therfor beyng sory and repentaunt of my sayd mys=
 byleve : with an hool mynde and A pure herte of my good wyl and not constreyned · forsake
 and forswere alle the said articles and euyl of theym for eu more vpon theis holy gospels ·
 And not oonly theym but alle other errours · heresies and wronge opinions that be dāned

and reprovēd by our̄ modre holy church̄ · And moreover J make A fulle promys by my saidt
oth · ^{that} from̄ hensforth J shal neuyr wittingly be favourer · concealer · maynteyner ne receyvō²
of any such mystechynḡ or mysbelevynḡ psons or psōn · but as sone as J shal haue knowlege
of theym̄ : J shal doo that ín me is that they shal be detect and discoverd vnto their̄ ordína=
ryes or to their̄ officers · // Submyttynḡ my self vnto the payn̄ and sharpnes of the lawe
that A psōne abiured : and fallēn agayn̄ to heresy oweth to suffre in such caas : Jf euyr J
doo or hold contrary to this my confessiōū and abiuracoū or to any part therof · Jn wites
wherof : J subscribe with myn̄ owēn hand makyn̄g A crosse · And requir̄ alle crystēn
people here present : to record and wytnes ayenst me of this myn̄ open̄ confessiōū and
abiuracoū · if J frōm this forthward offend or doo contrary to the same ·

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4113#5

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fols 72v-73r

Function: Abjuration

[line 6]Jn the name of god Amēn · J Richard herford Miller of Netherledcomb · otherwise
called ledcombe Regis in the County of Berks of the diocise of Sarum · Noted diffamedt
and to you Reuēnd Fadre ín Criste Joñn by goddys grace Bisshop̄ of Sarum my Juge
and ordinary denounced and detect for a mysbelevynḡ m̄an : knowlege and confesse that J
haue mysspokēn et̄ mysbelevydt ayenst̄ the techynḡ determinacoū and laudable vse and
custōme of alle holy church̄ · That is to wytt J haue holdēn and bylevedt that Jmages of
the crucifix · of our̄ blessyd lady and of other saynctes be but̄ dedd stockys and stonys · And
therfor they owght not̄ to be wurshipped · ner any offrynges to be maad vnto theym · ---
And that it is wrongfully doōn to punyssh any m̄an as A theef for takyn̄g away of such
offrynges · Jnso moch̄ that not long agōn J was in company in ledcombe aforsayd wher it
was spokēn that̄ an evyl disposedt m̄an the which had robbedt an Jmage of our̄ lady At Al=

lesfordt in hamshir was sone after hanged therfor At winchestre · wherunto J answerd ther openly that he had the more wrong · for if it so were : thān was he hanged for robyng of A ded stocke ·

Jn the name of godt Amen · J Richard hughlott labourer of hanney in the County of Berks · of the diocise of Sarum · Noted diffamed and to you Reuend Fadre in Criste Joĥn by goddys grace bisshop of Sarum my Juge and ordinary denounced andt detect for A mysbelevyng mān · knowlege and confesse that J haue holdēn and bylevedt certayn fals errours and wrong opínions agayn the veray feyth of cryste · and ayenst the techyng and determinacoū of holy church · That is to wyte that Noman nedeth to be shryvēn of his synnes to his Curate or any other preest · but J haue thought and bylevedt that such shryft was of no strengthe ner profight to mannys sowle ·

Also J haue holdēn and byleved that in the sacrament of the Aulter is nōn other thyng but oonly breddt and w̄yne · And that therin is not the veray body of our lord Jhesu cryste --- And hereupōn J am aknowēd that of alle this yere last passedt J was neuyr confessedt vnto my curate ner to any other preest · And at this holy tyme of Ester last passedt J receyuedt not the holy sacrament of the Aulter as eūy good and true cristēn mān ̄ is boundt to doo · /

Theis, Articles afor reherced And vs Richard herfordt and Richard hughlot by you Reuerend Fadre in cryste iudicially obiected we knowlege and confesse that we haue holdēn and bylevedt in such maner and fōme as is Afore expressedt · The which Articles as they concerne ech of vs we vnderstond and know to be wrong opínions · and heresies ayenst the determinacoū of the church · And ageyn the feyth of cryste · But forasmoch as the lawys of holy church be groundedt in mercy : remembryng that god wyll not the deth of A synner but rather that he be conuerted And lyve : and also that the church of god here in erth : closeth not hir bosum to hym that wyl turn agayn therunto : we therfor and eyther of vs willing to be partyners of the said mercy forsake and abjure the said articles and heresies vpon theis holy gospels · And not oonly theym but also alle other articles of heresy and wrong [fol. 73r]opínions contrary to the determinacoū of holy church · Promyttyng by the oth that we haue

maad that frōm hensforth we ner nōn of vs shalbe favourers concealers maynteyners ner

receyvers of any such psōnes or persōn · but if we or eyther of vs shal know any such hereafter :
we shal do asmoch as is in vs that they shal be shewed and discoverd to their ordinaryes or to
their officers · / / Submytting vs and ech of vs vnto the peyn and sharpnes of the lawe that
mēn abiured and fallen agayn vnto heresy owe to suffre in such caas : if we or any of vs hold
or doo from hensforth : contrary to this our Abiuracoū or any part of the same · Jn wytnes
wherof

we and ech of vs subscribe with our owē hondʒ makynḡ ech of vs A crosse And requir
alle cristēn people here p̄sent to record and wytnes ayenst vs · if we or any of vs hereafter doo or
hold ayenst this our abiuracoū or any part therof · /

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4113#7

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fols. 74r-75r

Function: Abjuration

[line 18]Jn the name of god Amen . J Thomas Boughtōn of hungerford Shomaker
and wulleynder of the diocise of *Sarum* · Noted / diffamed And to you Reuēnd Fadre ín
Criste Jōhn by goddys grace bisshopp of Saresbury my Juge and ordinary for A mysbeleving
mān : knowlege and confesse that J haue bee moch drawynḡ vnto dyvers and many mysbe=
leving and mystechynḡ psōnes and heretikes the which haue holdēn and tawght fals errors
wronḡ opínions and great heresies ayenst the veray feyth and true byleve of holy church ·
And with the said mysbelevynḡ psōnes : J haue wittingly kept company and felashipp · beyng
with thēm present many seasons at the spekyng vtryng and techynḡ of their said opínions
and heresies · Not shewynḡ ne discoverynḡ theym : but folowynḡ theym favourynḡ thēm
kepyng their conseyls and bylevynḡ theym in the same ·

First J haue holdēn and byleved by the space of theis xxv yeris passed or therupōn
that in the sacrament of the Aulter is not the veray body of cryste our savyō² · but that

it is oonly material breddt · For J haue thought it not possible that the preest which is but
A mān and the handwerk of god : shuld haue power to make god his maker · And moreover
J haue said and holdēn that the said bredd was better whān it cām frōm the bakers handys :
than whān it cōme frōm the preestys handys after the consecracōū · forsomoch as the preest
mysved it otherwyse thān to the pleasur of god · and soo dyd not the baker · Of the which
wroṅg opiniōn and heresy : of alle this long seasoṅ of xxv yeris J was neuyr confessed to
any gostly fadre · And neūtheles J haue euŷ yere receyved the said holy sacrament · Not
for that J had any stedfast byleve therin : but that J shuld not be noted and knowēn of the
people · / And beyng in the church or ellyswher · whān the said holy sacrament was present :
J feyned with mȳn hondys to honour it as cristēn mēn vse to doo · but my mynd and entent
was nothyng therto · but to god almyghty above in hevēn · thinkyng that he was not ther
psent in the blessyd sacrament ·

[fol. 74v]Also J haue holdēn and byleuedt that pilgrimages to the corpsis of holy saīctes or to their
relig

ques bee not profightable to mannys sowle And that they owght not to be doōn · Jnsomoch :
that wher in my youthe byfor that J was acqueynted with the said heretikes J had avowedt
and promysedt to doo A pilgrimage to Saynct James in Compostella : by their euyl informacoū
J haue not yett doōn it · ne neuyr purposedt to doo ·

Also J haue holdēn and byleuyd that the Jmages of the crucifixe · of our blessed lady and of
other holy saīctes shuld not be wurshipped · For nothyng wrought or gravēn with mannys
hond : awght to be honoured or lowted too · as J haue herd reddt dyuers tymes in An engliss
booke that we calle the cōmaundment boke ·

Also J haue bylevedt and sayd that the Poop is Antycryste · And that mēn of the church bee
his disciples · And that the church is but Synagogt · A denne of thevys and an hows of mer=
chaundyse · For J haue sayd that nothyng can be hadd there without money · As Crystenynḡ
buryynḡ · Matrimony · And such other ·

Also J haue holdēn and bylevyd that the pardons and indulgencys graunted by the Poop ·
and other plātys of the church : be not profightable to mannys sowle and of nōn effect · For
J haue thought that nōn may graunt pardōn and forgifnes of synne but god Aloone ·

Also J haue holdēn and bylevyd that the cursyng of the poop is not to be settē by · For if a mān haue doone forwhy to be accursed : he is cursed of godd · and soo shal he be althowgh the poop blysse h̄ym · And if A mān be not cursed of god for his synne : the curs of the poop : is of non effect ·

Also · J confesse and knowlege that sith the tyme of my first acqueyntānce with the said heretikes : J haue had A great mynde to here sermons and prechynges of doctours and lerned mēn of the church · And as long as they spack the veray woordys of the gospels and the epistles such as J had herd afore in our englyssh bookys : J herkned wele vnto thēm and had great delight to here them · But assone as they begān to declare scripture after their doctour And brought in other maters and spack of tythes and offrynges J was sone wery to here them And had no savour in their woordys · thynkyng that it was of their owēn makynge for their profight and avauntage ·

TheisArticles Afore rehersed and euy of theym · to me by you Reuend Fadre in god Judicially objected : J confess and knowlege that J haue holdēn and bileved · the which articles J now vnderstond and know to be fals errors and heresies ayenst the determinacoū and true byleve of holy church · And also J confesse that J holdyng and bylevyng the said Articles was an heretyke And A mysbelevyng mān out of the right feyth of Cryste · But forasmoch as the lawys of holy church be grounded in mercy Remembryng that god wyl not the deth of A synner but rather that he be conuerted and lyve : And also that the church of god here in erth closeth not hir bosōm to hym that wyl turn agayn ther unto : J therfor willing to be party ner of the said m̄cy forsake and abiure alle the said articles and euy of theym vpōn this holy gospels · And not oōnly thēm but alle other errors dānable opínions and heresies Ayenst the determinacoū of the holy church · And here J promys by the oth Afor maad that fromhensforth · J shal neuyr be favourer · concealer · maynteyner · ne receyver of any such psones or psōn · openly [fol. 75r]ner pryvyly · but as sone as J shal haue vndrestondyng of any of theym : J shal doo asmoch

as in me is that they shal be detect vnto their ordinaries or to their officers · Submytting myself vnto the payn and sharpnes of the lawe that A mān fallen Abiurate and fallen ageyn

to heresy oweth to suffre in such caas : if euyr J doo or hold contrary to this myñd abiuracoū
or to any part of the same · Jn witnes wherof J subscribe it with/myñd owenñ hand makynḡ
A crosse And require alle cristēn people here present : to record and wytne ayenst me
of this my confessionñ and abiuracoū · Jf J frōm this day forthwardt offend or doo contrary
therunto ·

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4113#14

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/13, fols 78v-79r

Function: Abjuration

[line 28]Jn the name of god Amen J Joan Martyñd late the wyfe of Thom̄s Martyñd
of wantage now deceased of the diocise of Saresbury · Noted diffamed And to you
Reuēnd Father in criste Joh̄n by goddys grace bisshop̄ · of Saresbury my Juge and ·
ordinary denounced and detectedt for a mysbeleuyng womān · knowlege and cōfesse
openly and with my freewylle that byfor this tyme J haue holdēn and bylevedt
dyvers opinions and articles contrary to the veray feyth of cryste and to the de=
terminacoū of holy church̄ ·

Firstt that in the sacrament of the Aulter is not the veray body of our̄ savyour̄

Cryste but oōnly material bredt

Also J haue holdēn bylevedt and saydt that Jmages of the crucifixe · of ō blessedt

lady and of other saynct̄ shuld not be wurshippedt · ner any offrynges shuld not

[fol. 79r]be maad vnto theym̄ . And that they which wurshippedt theym̄ or offredt vnto theym̄
dyd Jdolatrye ·

Also J haue holdēn and byleuedt that mēn shuld not travail thēmself ner spend their̄

money in doynḡ of pilgrymages to holy saīctes or to their̄ reliques · Sayyng that

the money spent in such vse was but lostt and leftt with such̄ as had no nede ther of ·

Also J haue thought and byleued that euē mān myght be shryvēn v̄n to other of their synnes aswele as to a preest · thynkyng that the preest hath nomore power ner auctorite in such caas · thān A lay mān ·

Also J haue bileuyd and sayd that pardons graunted by the poop and other prelat^f of the church be of no strengthe ner doo no profight vnto mannys sowle · And that such pardons be graunted oōnly for gadryng of money and for non other cause ·

Theis Articles afor rehersed And to me Joān Martyⁿ by you reuēnd Fader in cryste iudicially obiected · And by me the said Joān in Jugement of my frewyl cōfessed : J now vnderstond and know to be fals errorrs / wrong opínions and heresies Ayenst the feyth of cryste · and the techyng of our mother holy church · And that J holdyng and byleuyng theȳm was a mysbeleuyng womān and an heretyke · But forasmoch as the lawys of holy church be groundet in mercy Remembryng that god wyl not the deth of A synnar but rather that he be conūted and lyve · : J therfor willing to be partyner of the said mercy forsake renouñce vttrely And of my frewylle vnconstreyned abiure and forswere alle the said articles and euē of theȳm vpōn theis holy gospels · And not oōnly thēm but also alle other articles and opínions contrary to the true feyth of cryste and to the determínacoū of holy church · Promyting by the vertu of my said oth · s that frō hensforth J shal neuyr be favourer maynteyner / concealar ner receyver of any heretyk or such mysbeleuyng psōns to my knowlege openly ner pryvely · But as sone As J shal haue vnderstondyng of any of thēm J shal do my devō that they shal be detected to their ordínaries or to their officers · Submitting my self vnto the payⁿ and rigou^r of the lawe · in such caas pvided : if euyr from this day forthward J doo or hold^t contry to this mȳne abiuracoū or to any parte of the same · Jn witnes wherof J subscribe with mȳn owēn hond^t makyng A crosse · And require alle crystēn peple her present to record and wytnes ayenst me of this my confessioū and abiuracoū · Jf J frōm hensforth doo ageynst the same or any part therof

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4114#1

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 108r

Function: Abjuration

[line 4] In the name of the holy trinite father sone and holy gost J Johⁿ Godwyⁿ of the pyshe of fyfeld w^t yn the dyocesse of *Sarum* confesse and openly knowlege her befor yo^u Reuēd^t father yn god^t Edmond^t by the grace of god^t byshope of *Sarum* my ordenary and all that be gatherd^t at þ^{is} tyme that J synfull wrech haue p^rsumed^t to moch on my own wyt wherthowe J haue fallen in to great and horrybull syne of heresy and haue affermed^t spoken and defended^t a great heresy and false opynyon repved^t and dampned^t by all holy church a genst the doctryne of c^hrist and hys appostels a yenst the lawes and defⁱnaco^us of the seyde church yn sych maner and forme as herafter ensueth that ys to say J haue openly affermed^t and seyde that what so eu^{er} syne a man hath doon be hyt neuer so great by cōtryco^u hyt may be forgevyn thaw he neu^{er} be cōfessed^t yn casse he mygth wherfor J the seyde John godwyn now by the grace of god^t almy³thy and throw help and counseff of true doctryne and true c^hristen meeⁿ know my great offensys and am verely penytent and sory þ^t J haue g^rouously offended^t agēst god^t and the true feyth of hys church and haue detestaco^u of the forseyd heresy and erro^r and that forsake w^t all other and abiu^r p^rmitting feythfully and verely frome hens forth to beleve and hold the c^hristen feyth thaught p^rched^t and ob^fued^t by all holy church And frome þ^{is} tyme forthward^t J shall neuer hold techⁿ nor defend^t p^rvely nor openly directly nor indir^ctly the forseyd erro^r nor any other heresys or errours so god^t me help and thes holy eūngeles Subm^ttyng my self vn to the payne and rygour of the law þ^t a man abiu^red^t and fallen agayn to heresy ought to suffer yn sych casse yff euer J do or hold contrary to þ^{is} my abiu^raco^u or to any poynt of the same In whytnesse wherof J subscribe w^t my own hond^t makyng a crosse And requyr all c^hristen meⁿ her p^rsent to record^t And w^tnesse a genst me of þ^{is} my cōfessyon and Abiu^raco^u yff euer J herafter offend^t or do cōtrary to the same yn Any point

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4114#2

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 108v

Function: Abjuration

[Latin: **Abiuracio**

Johis barly de Nubery]

Jn the name of godt Amen · J Johñ barly of the pysch of Nubery yn the diocesse of Sarum confesse and openly knowlege heʒ befoʒ yo^u Reuēnt fatheʒ yn godt Edmond^t by the ġce of godt byshope of Sarum my ordenary and all that be gathered^t at thys tyme that J synfull wrech haue kepte by the space of xij yerf a boke cōteynyng dyvers great heresys and false opínions repved^t and dāpned^t by all holy church a genst the doctne of c¹ste and hys appostels a yenst the lawes and defminacoūs of the seydt church And haue red ther yn not delyveryng hyt to my ordynary acordyng as the law byndyth me wheʒ foʒ J haue rōneñ yn a great kynd^t of heresy and so reputed and adjudged^t by the law howbehyt now J the seydt Johñ barly by the grace of god almyghty and throw help and counsell of true doctryne and true cristeñ meñ know my great offenses and ð very penytent and sory for the same that J haue so ġvously offended^t godt hys church and the lawes of the same And haue detestacoū of the forseyd^t kynd^t of heresy and that w^t all otheʒ forsake and abiuʒ Prom^ttyng feythfully and verely frō hens forwarde to beleve and hold the c¹styn feyth taugh^t p¹ched^t obfued^t by all holy church And from thys tyme forward^t J shall neu^t kepe boke of heresy nor hold tech^t prech^t or defend^t p¹vely nor openly directly nor indirectly any heresy or erroneous oppynyon so god me help and thes holy euāgelees Subm^ttyng my self vn to the ryg^o of the lawe that a mañ abiured^t and fallen a gayn to heresy ought to suffer^t in sych casse yff eu^t J do or hold contry to thys my abiuracoū or to any pont of the same · Jn whytnesse whereof

J subscribe w^t my own hand^t makyng a crosse And requyr^o all c^lsten meⁿ her^e p^rsent
to record^t and wytnesse a genst me of thys my confessyon and abⁱuraco^u yff J her^after^e
offend^t or do contry to the same yn any poynt ·

[Latin:]

[Latin:]

[Monogram]

[Latin:]

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4114#6

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fols 131r-v

Function: Abjuration

[Latin: **Abiuracō**

Roberti makā]

[fol. 131r] [line 37] Jn the Name of gode Amen : J Robert Makām othír wise callid^t Robert Bragge
of the

parish of kevil w^t in the dio^c of Sarum confesse And opynly knowleage here before
yo^u Reuēde Fadir Edmounde by god is sufferaunce bissho^p of Sarum my Jugge and
ordenarí : And all that here be gedred at thís tyme : that J Synfull wrech^e haue
presumed to movche of my owne mynde : where through^e J haue Falleyn in to the ---
greoue and horrible Synne of heresie · And have affirmed^t and Spokyn great ---
herresies and false opynions reproued^t and dampned^t bi all holy church^e ayenst the trew
doctríne lawes and de^fminaco^u of the saide church^e in souche maner and forme as
here aftur ensveth : that is to saye : J **have openly** : Affirmid^t and saide that
[fol. 131v] my praiers is as good in the feilde as in the church^e : Allsoo J have : Affirmed and saide
that

the crucifix · And othir ymages in the churche y made of Stockis and stones : Are but
ydollis · And ought not to be worshīp : Addyng and sayīng : that Balle the Carpynt^r
or Pyke the Masōn · cowde Make as goode as the crucifix : for hit is but a cro=
wkyd^r Stocke : And yn reprove iff , and despite thereof : J lyke an vntrew belevyng mān
have castid my cappe at the picture and figure of saīnt Gregorí is petey ---

Jtm^d More ovyr J have saide and affirmed · yf J hadde the crucifix and othur sayntis
yn the churche · J wolde caste them yn to the fyre and brenne them ---

Allsoo J have not Stedefastly belevíd^r on the sacrament of the Awter : Sayīng
J have nooght to doo therewith : by cause hit is made with manys handis : And
therefore J wilbeleve on noo othir thyng but of the great Gode ---

Wherefore J the saide Robert Makam othirwise callíd^r Robert Bragge : now by the
grace of all myghty god and through the helpe and Councell of true doctrine
And true cristēn mēn : know my great offences : and am very penitent And sorie
that J have offendid greuovsly : Ayenst god · and the trew feith of his holy churche
And have detestacoū of the foresaide · and all othir heresies And erroures and ---
them all for sake and abíure Promittyn^g verelie and faithfully from hens forthwarde
to beleve and holde the cristēn faith tawght prechíd and obfuíd by all holy churche
And from this tyme forthwarde J shall nevyr holde teche preche nor defende p^lvly
nor openly directely nor Jndirectely · theforesaide nor anye othir hereseis [sic] or erroures
Soo god me helpe and this holy eūngelist^p : Submytyn^g my selffe vnto the payne
and Rīg^o of the lawe that a mān abíuríd : and fallen Agayne to heresie ooght
to have · and to suffur in Such caas iff evyr J doo or holde contrarie to this my
abiuracoū or to any poynte of the Same : Jn wittnesse whereof J subscribe with my
owne hande makyn^g A Croosse And Require all cristēn mēn here p^sent to
recorde and wittnesse ayenst me of this mye confessioū and abiuracoū : iff J here=
aff² offende or doo contrarie to the same in Any poynte .:

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4114#8

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 134v

Function: Abjuration

[Latin: *abiuracio*

Joh̄n̄ poſſe de

Sarum]

In the name of god Amen · J Joh̄n̄ poſſe of Sarum in the counte of wilteſ wevir
befoꝛ yo^u reuēde fater in god Edmond bi godd^s g^{ra}ce biſhope of Sarum my Juge and ordīnary
knowlege openly and cōfeſſe w^t my free will heꝛ in Jugeme^t that befoꝛ this tyme J haue
holdēn and ſayd that the tyme ſhall com that the world ſhalbe bīrned^t and thē ſhall a
wa^t com and purge hit And ſo ſhall hit be oon of the viij hevyns and full of myrth
eūy man of the world beyng heꝛ dwellyng · And at the day of dome deuels hope to
be ſaved^t And thē ſhall no thyng be D hell but the ſyne of the world : Theſe articles
and opynions by yo^u reuēde fater D god to me Judicially obiected^t and by me cōfeſſed^t
in forme afoꝛ reherſed^t w^t all otheꝛ that be cōtrary to the feyth and deſmynacoū of holy
church J forſake and abiur^e vpon theſe holy gospels And fully pmyt by the ſame oth^t
frō hensforth J ſhall never be favorer receyveꝛ counceleꝛ neꝛ recetteꝛ of any pſons or
pſon myſtechyng or myſbelevyng to my knowlege but as ſone as J haue knowlege of
any ſich J ſhall detecte or cauſ th^e to be detected^t vnto þeyꝛ ordīnaryes or to theiꝛ offi^{ce}
cers Subm^ttyng my ſylf vn to the ſtraytnes of the lawe in ſich caſ pvided^t iff eū^f
fro this day forth J doo or hold cōtrary to this my abiuracoū or any pt of the ſame
In witnes wherfor J make a croſſe w^t my own hand^t And requyꝛ all cſtēn
pepuſ heꝛ pſent to beꝛ witnes to this my abiuracoū

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4114#13

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fols 148r-v

Function: Abjuration

[Latin: **Abjuracio**

Joħis Stilmān]

Jn the Name of god Amen J · Joħn Stilmān of the paresħ

of seynt Gylys in Redyngē confesse and opynly knowleage here before yo^u

Reuēnt fathu^r in god Edmond^t by the grace of god^t bishope of Sarum my ordiⁿ

nary That J synfull wretche haue contrary to the deċmīnacōū of holy

churche fallen in to great hereseys [sic] And haue affirmed^t and spokēn great

heresy · That is to sey J haue openly seyde : that hit is not to goo on pil^l

germage to o^r lady of kawishm nor to none other seynt^l for they can

not speke here nor walke /

Also J have belevid of my nowne mynd that in the sacrament of the aute^r /

is not the very body of crist

wherefore J the seid Joħn now penytent am sorry that J haue soo seyde And ---

abJur^t the same seyng^l and techyng^l Promyttyng^l feythfully to beleve

and holde as the cristyⁿ feythe techeyth and precheyth And from hens

forward shaft^l neu^r teche nor defend the seid erro^rus and hereseys [sic] or any

other opynyon of heresy vnder the payne of Relaps Jn wittenesse whereof

[fol. 148v] J subscribe w^t my nowne hand^t makyng^l a crosse Desyryng^l all yo^u that be he^r

p^rsent to bere wyttenes of this my abjuracoū

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4114#15

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 149r

Function: Abjuration

Jn the Name of god Amen · J · Joĥn Goodsōn the soon of Joĥn Goodsōn of the
paresh of hyworth w^tyn the diocisies of Sarum before yo^u reu^ent fathur in god Edmond
by god is grace bissho^p of Sarum my Juge and ordenary in this cawse knowlege and con=
fesse w^t my free wyll here in Jugement that J synfull wreche have belevid^t that the sac^u=
ment of the awter is not the very body of cryste
Also J haue belevid^t that pylgermageis to seynt^p ought not to be do^on for they are but
stock^p and stonys and vayne yda^s
Also J have belevid^t that the pope is but antecriste and preisteys are but scribeis
and phareseis / And these fa^ls artecles and con^utry opynyons have J belevid^t oⁿ And them
conclid^t wherefor J the seid Joĥn Goodsōn the yonger now by the grace of god and the helpe
of true doctrine and counce^ll of true crystēn mēn knowy^th my great offence and am
very penytent and sory that J have offendid^t soo greuously agaynst god and the true
fey^th of his holy churche · Promyttyn^g feythfully to beleve and holde as the cristyn
fey^th techey^th and p^ochey^th And from hens forward shall J neu^t beleve or defend
nor concylie the seyd erro^us and false hereseis [sic] or any other oppynyō^u of heresy but
them and all other forsake and abiure vnd^e · payne of Relaps / Jn wittenes whereof
J subscribe w^t my nowne hand^p makyn^g a crosse desyryn^g all yo^u that be
here p^osent to bere wittenes of this my abiuraco^u .:

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4114#17

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 149v

Function: Abjuration

Jn the Name of god Amen J Syr Richard John p¹st of hasilber w¹yn the diocesse of Sarum noted defamed And to yo^u Reuēnd fathur in crist Edmond by god is grace byshop of Sarum my Juge and ordenary denounced and detected for amysbelevyng mān knowlege and confesse opynly w^t my Free will that byfore this tyme / J have tawght and openly sayd and also beleved and p¹ched : that no man^s of prayer almes dede or fastyng shall . avayll or p¹fyt any psōn but yff hit be Jnyoyned in pe¹n¹ce whiche Article and opynyoū by yo^u Reuēnd fader in god to me Judicyally obiected and by me confessed in forme afore rehersed w^t all other that be contrary to the feyth and de¹mynacoū of holy church J forsake and abiu¹r vpōn these holy gospels And fully p¹myt by the same o¹th that from hensforth J shall never be favorer receyver councler ne¹ recetter of any psons or psōn mystechyng or mysbelevyng to my knowlege : but as sone as J have knowlege of any sich J shall dete¹cte or caus thē to be detected vnto þeyr ordenaryes or to their officers Submytting me to the ryg² of the lawe in sich case p¹vided yff ever fro this daye forth J doo or holde contry to this my abiuracoū Jn wittenes wherof J make a crosse w^t my o¹wn hand And Requyre all cristēn pepe¹ll he¹r p¹sent to be¹r w¹tnes to this my abiuracoū

County: Wiltshire

Code: D4114#20

Reference: Chippenham, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre: D1/2/14 (part 1), fol. 155v-156r

Function: Abjuration

Jn the Name of the holy Trinite Fatur and Soōn And holy goost his blessid modur mary and all the holy coumpany of hevyn¹ we John Swayne other wyse callid John Barnard laborer : Margery Swayne other wyse callid Margery barnard wyffe of the said John of the p¹ares¹h of willesford : Thomas Smyth laborer : John Nicols husbondmān And Cristiān --- Nicolas wyffe of the same John of the p¹ares¹h of Cheritōn in the diocise of Sarum And every

of vs Severally greatly Noted diffamed and to yo^u Reuēd fadur in Criste Edmond by god is
grace Bissshop of Sarum o² Jugge and ordenary denounced and detecte for vntruebelevyng psons
And also that we and every of vs shuld hold afferme teche and defende pryveley heresies erro²s
singuler opínions and false doctrínes contrary to the cōmyñ doctryne of o² moder holy churche
And w^t subtilíties evyfl Sowndyng to the erys of true symple vndurstondyng Crystē pepull
whiche be to vs and every of vs severally now by yo² auctoritie procedyng of office promoted
Judicially obiected

First that J Joñ Swayne other wyse callid Joñ Barnard have hold affermed sayde belevid
and tawght : that in the Sacrament of the Aulter is not · the veray body of Criste

Item that doyng of pylgermage and offeryng vnto ymagies of Saynt^f is not advay
able or of any effect but to Spend and wast money

Item : that hit is as good to praye w^t owte the churche asw^tin : Ferthermore shewyng and
sayng that J wold not have cōmyñ vnto the churche oft tymes but for the Rum² of the pepull

Also J the saide Margery Swayne other wyse callid Margery Barnard have hold ---

affermed^t belevid and tawght that in the sacrament of the aulter is not the veray body of
criste : Ferthermore shewyng that the masse is noo thyng And preist^f hath noo power (whiche
doth preche and teche · that in the sacrament of the aulter is the veray body of Criste And at ---
Es² daye doth take vpōn theim to consecrate many hostys) to make god that is in hevyn^ñ
and soo many godd^f consyderyng that there is but oñ Godde

Item that doyng of pylgermage and offeryng vnto ymagies of Saynt^f : is not advayable
or of any effect · but to spende and wast money

Item that hit is as good to praye w^t owte the churche as w^tin Ferthermore shewyng and Say
ing that J wold not have cōmyñ vnto the churche oft tymes · but to advoyde the Rum² of the
peple

Item that the peple maye · Swere by the masse w^t owte offence but not by god that is in hevyn^ñ

Also J the foresaide Thomas Smyth have hold affermed^t beleved^t and tawght that

in the sacrament of the Aulter is not the veray body of Criste Saying that J cowde by xxx^{ti}
of theim for half oōny peny

Item J have sayde Spokyn^ñ and belevid agaynst confessiōū made vnto preist^f

Item J have hold and affermed agaynst doying of pylgermage And offeryng vnto ymagies of Saynt^s And that goyng vnto the churche advaylith not but for advoydyng the Rum^o of the people

Also J the abovenamyd Jo^hn Nicols have errid waverid and not stedefastly belevid that in the sacrament of the aluter is the veray body of Criste

Item J have belevid that doying and goyng of pylgermage was ordeyned for noo thyng but to --- spend and wast money

Item J have belevid that any m^an beyng well disposid myght as well fue god owte of the churche as wⁱn the churche And by occasio^u of this mysbeleve J have dy^s tymes absteyned me fr^om the churche .:

Also J the aforenamyd Cristian Nicols have erryd waverid and mysbelevid that in the sacrament of the aluter is not the veray body of Criste

Item J have belevid hold tawght and sayde that doying and goyng of pylgermage was ordeyned for noo thyng but to spend and wast money

Item J have belevid hold tawght and afferme that any ps^on beyng wele disposid^e myght as wele fue god owte of the churche as wⁱn the churche and by occasio^u of this beleve J have dy^s tymes absteyned me from the churche

These Articles And every of theim afore rehersid and to vs Jo^hn Swayne other wyse callid Jo^hn barnard

Margerie Swayne other wyse callid Margerie Barnard Thomas Smyth Jo^hn Nicols and Cristi^an Nicols

and to every of vs severally by yo^u Judicially obiected : we and every of vs singlerly openly knowleage ou^r

self and confesse of o^r free wyll to have holde lerned and belevid and soo have tawght and affermyd to other

whiche Articles and every of theim as vs concernyth Severally · we and every of vs vndurstonde and beleve

heresies and opinions contrary to the c^omyn^d doctrine and determinacio^u of the vni^usall churche of Criste

And confesse vs and every of vs here to be have be heretices lerners and techers of heresies errors
 opinions
 and false doctrynes contrary to the Cristēn faith and the same have kepte Secrete by the space of
 many
 yerſ passid and nevyr made confessiōū thereof And for asmuche as hit is soo that the lawes of the
 churche
 of Criste and holy Canons of Sayntſ be groundid in mercy And that god will not the deth of a
 Synner
 but that he be conūted and leve And also the churche closith not hur lappe to hym that wull
 reto^rne ---
we therefore and every of vs wyllyng to be ptiners of this foresaide mercy : forsake and renounce
 all these Articules afore rehersed as vs concernyth pticularly And confesse them to be heresies
 errors ---
 and prohibite doctryne And now contryte and fully repentyng theim all and every of them
 Judicially and ---
 solely they forsake abiure and wilfully Renounce for eū more And not oonly theim but all
 other heresies
 errors and dampnable doctrynes contrary to the determinacioū of the vniūsaill churche of Criste
 Also that we
 [fol. 156r] And every of vs shall never hereaft^r be to any suche psons or psōn favorers conselers
 Mayneteners or of any suche
 pryvely or openly But if we or any of vs know at suche hereaft^r we and every of vs shall denounce
 and disclose
 them to yo^u Reuēnd fadur in god yo² Successōs or officers of the same or eīs to suche psōns of the
 churche as
 hath Jurisdiction oñ the psōn soo Fawty Soo help vs god and all holy eūngelistſ Submyttyng vs
 and every
 of vs openly not coact or constreyned but of o² free will to the payne Rigō² and Sharpenes of the
 lawe that

a mān relapsed owght to Suffer in suche case ife we or any ofe vs ever doo or hold contrarye to this
ō² p̄sent

abiuracioū in parte or the hole thereofe In witnes whereofe we all and every ofe vs severally subscribe
w^t

ō² awne hande makyng a Crosse And requyre all Cristēn mēn in generall here present to record and
witnes

Ageynst vs and every ofe vs and this ō² present confessioū and abiuracioū yf we or any of vs from
this daye

forewardy offend or doo contrary to the same