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Political Language in the Late Medieval English Parliament

Is there a date of birth for "political language" or "the language of politics"? To this question many answers have been proposed: Maurizio Viroli would suggest starting with Machiavelli in humanist Florence, Jacques Guilhaumou in the Paris of the French Revolution, whereas others might cite fifth-century Athens or the medieval Italian city-states. Nevertheless, we must remember that, from a purely linguistic point of view, there is no such thing as "political language". Rather there are political uses of language, and even with this reservation in mind, we must not forget that the use of the word "political" is, or ought to be, reserved to societies in which the structures of power can be said to be political. In other words, "political" is better used when dealing with a more-or-less autonomous "city" or with a kingdom in which government does not entirely depend upon personal or feudal relations. In such cases the structures of power are determined by a relationship between a ruling institution (the monarchy, or the magistrates in a city) and a social community, either organized in subgroups with their own set of institutions or, if amorphous, able to actively or passively express their own choices. To put it simply – and with full awareness of the objections it will raise – there can be no political language as such before the twelfth century in Western Europe.

There is another requisite for the existence of political language: the communication structure must be that of a public sphere, and texts, images, music and so forth must be able to circulate freely and broadly both within a given society (implying the existence, besides the Latin of the clerics, of vernacular languages which can be written and understood) and between different "national" or "regional" societies. Regarding the existence of a public sphere, medievalists can borrow Habermas's concept while acknowledging a fundamental difference: the medieval public sphere did not depend upon communication in a bourgeois society. It depended instead upon communication in a Christian society, that is to say the *ecclesia*, upon which the other *Ecclesia*, the global institution of the Middle Ages, indeed had a certain degree of authority and control – but not such as to entirely suppress freedom of discussion and individual interpretation. The educational revolution that attended the new religious constraints imposed by the Gregorian Church on Christian society was ultimately responsible for the rise and the diversification of the cultural capabilities and aspirations of the laity as well as for the transformation of various media. But to go into greater detail on this point would take us too far afield[1]. Let us turn instead to the English parliament, which occupied a central position in the structure of the medieval English state, acting as a connecting institution between the King and his government on the one hand and a society which can certainly be described as political on the other.

The English Parliament

The English parliament is probably one of the best documented medieval institutions, going all the way back to its roots. The English parliament as an institution developed out of the great councils "in parliamento", but great councils continued to be held until the end the Middle Ages, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish them from parliaments. This engendered confusion. The opponents of King Charles I would locate the origins of parliament in the reign of Alfred, and this question was eagerly debated at the Society of

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[1]   See for instance J.-Ph. GENET, La mutation de l'éducation et de la culture médiévales, 1999.

Antiquaries' meetings under the reigns of Elizabeth and James I[2]. Furthermore, John Maddicott has recently offered new evidence for a long-term view of the continuity of at least some sort of conciliar institution dating back to Anglo-Saxons times[3]. Despite this situation, or maybe because of it, it is not easy to offer a precise answer to the questions that underly this volume. Though it is possible to link the English parliament to earlier institutions such as the Anglo-Saxon *witangemot* or the feudal great councils of the Norman and Plantagenet Kings of England, from which it undoubtedly derives, or to the meetings of local communities, beginning with the county courts at which the knights of the shire were elected, the late-medieval English parliament must itself be seen as one of the new communication structures and components of the public sphere that accompanied the genesis of the modern state.

Nevertheless, two points ought to be stressed from the outset. First of all, the parliament included people from widely different social groups. Leaving aside the Lords, both lay and ecclesiastical, who were summoned individually, the members of the Commons were either representatives of the boroughs or elected by the shires, since representatives of the lower clergy ceased to attend at the beginning of the XIVth century. As for the burgesses, most were townsmen, predominantly merchants belonging to the urban oligarchies, though there were also many gentlemen and a few examples of belted knights (the first was apparently Sir Henry Ilcombe, returned for the borough of Lostwithiel [Cornwall] in 1402 and 1407). The knights of the shire were all gentry, but J.S. Roskell's introductory survey of the *Commons' Dictionary 1386–1421* reveals that the proportion of knights fell from 62% in 1386 to 30% in 1421 (and as low as 13% in 1415 and 17% in 1419, but this may be due to the fact that most knights preferred to take part in Henry V's glorious campaigns in France)[4]. In the same period, the proportion of lawyers rose from 8% in 1386 to 20% in 1421. A later example, that of John Paston, shows that lawyers of very poor ancestry, or even of none at all, could nonetheless enter parliament – though in this case the electoral process was somewhat of an ordeal[5].

Members of parliament were therefore a significant cross-section of political society. In addition, all these men had close links with other groups or networks in which they could give voice to their experiences and predicaments. We know from town archives, especially accounts dealing with expenses for hosting returning members, that these men were ready to discuss the proceedings and to give an account of what had happened in Westminster or elsewhere, since medieval parliaments met, according to the circumstances, in a variety of venues: London, as an alternative to Westminster; York, when wars in Scotland compelled the government to move North; Lincoln, Gloucester, Leicester, Coventry and other places in the kingdom. That is why some members of parliament kept records of what had taken place, though only one such document has survived: the diaries of the two members for Colchester at the 1485 parliament[6]. We also know of existing links between members of parliaments and other structures of political society. For example, Lords and members of the Commons belonged to retinues. They could be officials belonging to the royal administration or members of the King's household. They were members of confraternities and of professional groups such as crafts and guilds. Missives reporting what was going on in parliament were

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[2]   L. VAN NORDEN, The Elizabethan College of Antiquaries, 1946.

[3]   J. R. MADDICOTT, The Origins of the English Parliament, 2010.

[4]   J. S. ROSKELL/C. RAWCLIFFE/L. CLARK, The History of Parliament, 1992, p. 166–167.

[5]   K. B. MCFARLANE, Parliament and 'bastard feudalism', 1944.

[6]   The "diaries" of the Colchester members for the 1485 Parliament are in N. PRONAY/J. TAYLOR, Parliamentary Texts, 1980, p. 177–193.

also sent[7], some of them bona fide newsletters. The only social groups wholly excluded from the precincts of parliament were the peasantry at large and those inhabitants of the towns who did not belong in some capacity or another to the officially recognized crafts, which gave access to citizenship; in London such men were considered "foreigners".

This implies that the parliament's audience was not limited to those attending the parliamentary sessions. And kings were expected to receive petitions from all those who intended to seek redress. These thousands of petitions were supposed to be handled by the council, in fact by the parliament in as much as it was a variant form of the council. The routes followed by petitions underwent several changes from 1275 to the end of the fifteenth century, but with petitions addressed to the Lords, as well as to the Commons starting in the 1370s, and with the rise of the common petition, the role of parliament remained central[8]. There is nothing exceptional about this; indeed, the king of France was in the same situation[9]. The enrolment of these petitions – which occupy most of the early Rolls of parliament[10] – was complicated by the lack of specific administration. For at first petitions were dealt with by the relevant royal officers and recorded by their own agents. But starting at the end of the 13th century there was a division between English, Gascon and Irish petitions, and from the reign of Edward III onwards the royal chancery took charge of the whole process. In parliament, the petitions were handed over to receivers who in turn passed them to the triers, who would decide what answer was to be made. Most petitions received a direct answer from the king, and some were even endorsed by the Commons, who added them to their own petitions. Thus many people (or at least their lawyers) understood that parliament offered a fast route to a royal decision. If we tend to see the English parliament as a political institution, for contemporaries it was also a judicial institution, and they knew what kind of language had to be used in order to address it with some chance of success. This attitude is part of late-medieval English documentary culture, whose implications have recently been stressed by Emily Steiner[11]. Furthermore, many late medieval statutes were related, in one way or another, to petitions.

Another channel through which parliament was linked to political society – and this is the second point to be stressed – was that of text production. Two main categories of texts were by-products of the parliament's activity: the so-called Rolls of parliament, about which more will be said later, and the statutes. Today hundreds of medieval manuscript copies of the statutes are extant, either as complete "editions" of *Statuta* collections, the *Statuta Vetera* (to the death of Edward I) and the *Statuta Nova*, or more-or-less important selections of them – an enormous output, since these were copied only from the end of the thirteenth century. In addition, there were also tables, commentaries and abridgments. These collections existed in French, in English and in Latin. After each parliament, quires containing the new statutes to be added to collections of statutes were copied and issued by the stationers and booksellers of London, or by individual copyists; later on, the printing of statutes became a profitable activity and was one of the few stimuli available for the development of English printing, which was otherwise hampered by the huge output of cheaper liturgical and devotional books printed on the Continent for the English market, as well as by other Italian, German and Parisian productions[12]. It is also possible to trace copies of statutes in wills and inventories: nearly half of the common law books in private hands were collections of

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[7]   Besides the Paston letters just mentioned, there are some examples in J. KIRBY, The Plumpton Letters, 1996.
[8]   G. DODD, Justice and Grace, 2007.
[9]   S. PETIT-RENAUD, Faire loy au royaume de France, 2003.
[10]   See F.W. MAITLAND's introduction to his Memoranda de Parliamento, 1893.
[11]   E. STEINER, Documentary Culture, 2003.
[12]   J. H. BAKER, The books of the common law, 1999.

statutes (218 out of a total of 492)[13]. A book of statutes could also be read as a sort of national history book, its arrangement (when complete) endowing *Magna Carta* and the Charter of the Forest with the mythical status of a constitution – which they were not butwere often taken to be[14]. Since it gathered together a cross-section of English political society and issued at each session abundant textual material, the English parliament is obviously a remarkable source for studying medieval political rhetoric.

***Chancellors' and Speakers' speeches in the Rolls

Since collections of statutes contain only the texts of laws, let us turn to the "Rolls of Parliament". This is the traditional designation of a class of documents (most of them parchment scrolls), the vast majority of which is to be found in the National Archives under the shelf-mark "SC" and in several "C" (Chancery) files. There were early printings of many of these documents, but they were first printed as a systematic collection under the supervision of John Strachey in 1783[15]. However, a magnificent new edition has recently been produced by a group of British scholars[16]. It is now available both in numerical form, thanks to the use of an XML format, either as a CD-ROM or online[17] (this version contains photographic reproductions of the original parchments and is searchable by parchment), and in a classic printed edition issued by Boydell and Brewer[18]. Bringing together documents from several sources, including some printed outside the Rolls and others that had never before been printed, it has immensely improved our knowledge of the medieval history of the English parliament.

Properly speaking, the records of the medieval parliament start with the reign of Edward I in 1278, although Georges Sayles has preferred to begin his own collection of documents in 1258, when the Provisions of Oxford related that "the Twenty-four had ordained that there were to be three parliaments a year"[19]. These records are at first very patchy summaries of decisions and related matters (dealing with only nine parliaments out of the forty-six of the reign), but from 1290 onwards more systematic rolls of petitions begin to appear. These reports were given a somewhat misleading narrative form, probably for the first time by a clerk of the chancery, "per eundem regem ad hoc nominatum et specialiter deputatum", the future Bishop of Norwich, William Ayremine[20], who was in charge of recording the proceedings of the parliament of Lincoln in 1316. This experiment was abandoned for the following parliaments, but it gradually became the standard procedure during the reign of Edward III. This narrative structure, however, proves to be nothing other than a kind of scaffolding on which to hang isolated items, these items constituting the basic components of our documentation. Some of these were not even written by the office of the clerks of parliament but rather were submitted to it, sometimes during the session, sometimes later. Most are petitions, or were given the form of a petition, and are accompanied by a record of the laconic answers provided by the king's ministers. Nevertheless, a real narrative was

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[13]   J.-Ph. GENET, Le droit dans les bibliothèques, 2003.

[14]   J.-Ph. GENET, Droit et Histoire en Angleterre, 1980.

[15]   Rotuli Parliamentorum, 6 vols., 1783–1832.

[16]   The general editor is Chris Given-Wilson. Paul Brand has edited and provided introductions to the parliaments of Edward I; Seymour Phillips those of the period 1307–1337; W.M. Ormrod those of 1337–1377; G. Martin those of 1377–1379, Chris Given-Wilson those of 1380–1421, Anne Curry those of 1422–1453 and Rosemary Horrox those of 1455–1504.

[17]   Published by Scholarly Digital Editions in 2005. See www.sd-editions.com/PROME for information and updating.

[18]   Ch. GIVEN-WILSON, The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, 2005.

[19]   G.O. SAYLES, The Functions of the Medieval Parliament, 1988; for the Provisions, R.E. TREHARNE/I.J. SANDERS, Documents of the Baronial Movement, 1973, p. 103.

[20]   The first official narrative roll: see S. PHILLIPS, The Parliament Rolls, vol. III, Edward II, p. 202.

sometimes necessary to link these isolated items, or to give an authoritative account of events which otherwise could easily be misinterpreted. In such cases, we most often get only a few good slices of official history, cautiously worded to give an acceptable account of the unacceptable: for instance, in November 1381 the clerk notes that the Parliament was adjourned first because of the late arrival of some participants, and then because there was some sort of dispute between the earl of Northumberland, Henry Percy, and the Duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt, whereas the chronicles give us a detailed report on the four days of discussion which proved necessary to patch the quarrel[21].

Unfortunately, few other sources of information are available to us. Still, we know of some texts that are not mentioned in the Rolls, and we also have alternative versions of some that are. For instance, we have several versions of a crucial text, the renunciation of homage to King Edward II on the part of the Commons, proffered by Sir William Trussell in his capacity as proctor of the deputation of the members of parliaments who had come to Pontefract to visit the King. In that case, the original document does not seem to have been within reach of the Clerk of Parliament, whereas some monastic chroniclers apparently had access to good versions of it[22]. Some documents found their way, mostly in English versions, into a London chronicle, while the monastic chronicles of Westminster or St. Albans gave well-informed – though "reconstructed" – Latin texts of others. Chronicles made use of tracts and pamphlets which appear to have been circulated before and during parliaments, but only one such tract has survived: the *Historia sive narracio de modo et forma mirabilis parliamenti apud Westmonasterium A.D. 1386*, a partisan "history" of the Merciless Parliament of 1388 (and not 1386). Written by a clerk, Thomas Favent, apparently under the direct influence of the Clerk of Parliament, Geoffrey Martin, it unashamedly presents the Appellants' version of the session[23]. The remarkable account of the Good Parliament in the *Anonimalle Chronicle* is probably the interpolation of such a text, whereas another tract, which has not survived, is behind both the *Evesham Chronicle* and the account of the 1397–1398 Parliament found in Adam of Usk's chronicle[24].

On the whole there is a wealth of material, but we are only rarely in possession of the full texts of the speeches as they were delivered[25]. Essentially, we are left with official reports, which claim to give faithful abstracts of speeches, and with descriptions of debates and discussions in the course of which speeches could have been delivered. Other documents may also be transpositions of speeches. When looking for rhetoric and orations in medieval English parliamentary sources, we must first undertake an archaeology of the Rolls in order to distinguish speeches either from other kinds of verbal exchange or from other kinds of texts, such as petitions or judicial instruments. I have compiled a list of 260 speeches (found in the Appendix) which are assumed to have been delivered during the parliamentary sessions from 1316 to 1504. However, a vast majority of these are "virtual" texts. That is, they are speeches known to have been delivered on a given occasion, whose content may be familiar to us thanks to a more-or-less extended summary, but whose text is lacking. Virtual speeches can be identified and partially reconstructed by using two tools: the actual "remains" of the text, either a witness's description or a surviving abstract, and the idiosyncrasies of parliamentary ritual. One example will suffice. We know that speeches took place mostly at the opening (nearly always) and at the closing (sometimes) of parliamentary sessions. On the 10th of December 1485, in "full parliament", the communes,

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[21]   The Parliament Rolls, VI, p. 209 for full details and bibliographical references.

[22]   G. HOLMES, Judgment on the Younger Despenser, 1955.

[23]   M. MCKISACK, Camden Miscellany, 1926.

[24]   Precise references are given in the Appendix; see Ch. GIVEN-WILSON, Adam Usk, 1993, and Ch. GIVEN-WILSON, Chronicles, 2004.

[25]   See, e.g., speeches 237, 242 and 249 in the Appendix.

through the voice of their speaker, Thomas Lovell[26], urged the King, in accordance with the decisions made by this same parliament regarding the title and succession to the kingdom of England, to marry Elizabeth of York. The report contains only 90 words, but these words are chosen ones: "conthalorem" for "consort", or "celsitudo" for "highness". And after the Speaker's petition to the King, the Lords, "rising from their seats and, standing before the king sitting on the royal throne, bowing their heads, voiced the same request; to which the same king answered by his own mouth that he was content to proceed according to their desire and request". After that, the chancellor, John Alcock, bishop of Worcester, declared by the King's orders the prorogation of parliament[27]. Considering the matter, the occasion and the wording of the abstract, we can safely conclude that Lovell delivered a formal oration[28], and a carefully prepared one at that. On the other hand, nothing in the King's response suggests that he gave a speech, and Alcock's prorogation speech seems to contain nothing beyond customary formulae (as opposed to other prorogation speeches, which have specific political content).

We can never be certain whether something that might be easily described as a "speech" (even, for instance, when the first person is used) is not in fact a *cedula*, read aloud by a clerk or simply handed over to the trier of petitions. Sometimes there is a comment in the margin stating that the enrolled text has been delivered "par bouche", that is, orally. But does this mean that someone addressed the public in order to say, in the Earl of Arundel's words in 1394, "what he has had on his heart for a long time", in what appears to be a spontaneous outburst? Or does it mean that he is reading aloud a *cedula*, previously discussed and carefully worded by a committee of lawyers and advisers of all kinds, which we can reasonably assume was the case, for instance, in Bishop Despenser's response to Michael de la Pole's attacks? We cannot know, and the precise nature of these texts remains far from clear. This is important from a methodological point of view, since political language must be analysed with the tools of what linguistics calls "discourse analysis", that is by taking into account the situation in which the text was produced. It is clear that a speech pronounced in the heat of a public meeting, with expressions of approval or disapproval coming from the audience, will not be identical with a written text prepared with the help of a committee of advisers. Nor will it match up with a clerk's summary, in which a speech is recorded in a language that may be or may not be the language of its delivery. Nonetheless, it must be said that the Rolls of parliaments from 1324 to 1504 contain the written remains of exchanges, debates and speeches of all kind and therefore offer the historian a wealth of materials which, despite obvious deficiencies, is unparalleled for the period; we must use it as best we can.

Some help can be found in parliamentary ritual, which over time set aside specific occasions for the delivery of public orations. The first was the opening of parliament: people arrived, gathered in the meeting place and, if delays caused by bad weather called for it, heard a public recital of Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest (as at the 1380 Northampton parliament, delayed by the "outrageous cretyn [rise] de eawe q'estoit sourdez des grantz et continueles pluyes tempests"). Then the session formally began with an official public pronouncement of "the declaration of the causes of the summons". This was followed by a precise demand, which became known as the "charge", to which a reply – normally, a grant of taxation – was firmly expected. For instance, on the 30th of September 1331, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Meopham, made a solemn declaration of the causes of the summons "en fourme de predication". In the following years such declarations are always

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[26]   S.J. GUNN, Sir Thomas Lovell, 1998.

[27]   R. HORROX, The Parliament Rolls, vol. XV, 2005, p. 112–113.

[28]   See J.S. ROSKELL, The Commons and their Speakers, 1965, p. 81.

found. Some are anonymous, but between 1331 and 1386 most were made by the Chancellors, who were at first laymen and usually judges, either the Chief Justice of the King's Bench or a Baron of the Exchequer. There is an exception at the end of the period, when Michael de la Pole, Earl and later Marquess of Suffolk, became chancellor. However, the only other magnate to hold the chancellorship would be Thomas of Lancaster, in 1411, and this for purely political reasons. Gradually, the chancellorship was taken over by ecclesiastics of the highest rank. A first group of ecclesiastics, between 1362 and 1371, produced no formal changes in the declaration of the causes of summons, though Simon Langham made some attempts to use the sermon form; neither William Edington nor William de Wykeham, pure administrators who did not have a university education, were in a position to do so.

It is with Adam Houghton, bishop of Saint-David, in the aftermath of the Good Parliament, that we find in January 1377 for the first time a fully developed sermon. Indeed, we probably have a full text of the sermon; in any case, at 1,945 words it is the longest we have. We also have a reasonably good abstract of the Archbishop of Canterbury Simon Sudbury's sermon in 1378, and an even better one of a second sermon by Houghton. After that, we find only two or three sermons, badly reported, by Sudbury or by his successor on the see of Canterbury, William Courtenay, before sermons disappear altogether. Only in an attempt to give some measure of solemnity to the parliamentary proceedings of the Lancastrian revolution do sermons come back to the fore, with Arundel's widely circulated sermon to the Lords on "Vir Dominabitur populo" (I Samuel, 9:17). From 1402 onwards, the Chancellor's opening sermon seems to have become *de rigeure*, and we find a nearly uninterrupted sequel of political sermons until Cuthbert Tunstall's sermon in 1523. The only exceptions are an inaugural speech by John Stafford in 1449 and a humanistic dissertation on Roman history by John Morton in 1497. As a matter of fact, the quality of the reports is highly uneven, the Clerk apparently napping intermittently and being content with a formula such as "dominus cancellarius benissime sermocinavit". The reports are in French until 1423, and then in Latin. They cease almost completely with the beginning of the so-called War of the Roses but return with the more peaceful years of Edward IV's reign. We have good reports for Edmund Stafford, Henry Beaufort, Thomas Langley, John Morton and William Warham, while we possess copies of the three drafts which Bishop Russell had to write to adapt to changing political circumstances, from Edward V to Richard the Protector to King Richard III.[29]

These opening sermons offer much space for political reflexion[30]. Most of them stress the position of the king as the liege lord of all, as "droit et naturel seigneur". Maintaining the Church's privileges is always at the forefront of the Chancellors' preoccupations, together with the need to keep the kingdom at peace and to maintain justice and order. The importance of the council and the status of members of parliament (M.P.s) as councillors are often if not always reasserted. Many sermons deal heavily with contemporary events (victory or defeat in France, the congress of Arras, dynastic upheavals), but new themes do appear with time. The fear of France and the possible suppression of the English language vanishes with the rapturous exaltation in Henry V's victories and the glorification of the new chosen people. By the end of the fifteenth century, evocation of the common good or common profit becomes even more intense, while the Chancellors of Henry VII, such as Alcock and Morton, introduce a new theme important for the evolution of political ideas: the necessary distinction between private and public interests. The most elaborate sermons are probably

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[29]   S.B. CHRIMES, English Constitutional Ideas, 1936, p. 168–185; see A. HANHAM, Text and subtext, 1999, and J.A. WATTS, The Policie in Christen Remes, 2002.

[30]   The best study of the sermons remains S.B. CHRIMES, English Constitutional Ideas, 1936.

those of John Stafford, in which he repeatedly exhorted the king's subjects to union, justice and mutual love – indeed quite necessary virtues in these troubled times. Even though we do not possess the exact text of his sermons, Stafford would appear to be the chancellor who most keenly took rhetoric into consideration. His reports readily evince elaborate metaphors, such as comparing the nobility to mountains and the gentry to hills who together ensure peace and justice for the people (1433), or the flowers of the king's crown to the moral flowers that are the cardinal virtues which the king must possess (1437); in another sermon, he gives a detailed allegorical analysis of each step of King Solomon's throne (1442). His sermons are closely related to the *Tractatus de Regimine Principum ad Regem Henricum Sextum*[31], which has led to speculation about the authorship of this beautifully written tract[32]. Stafford freely quotes authorities, such as Seneca and Augustine. In this he is joined by William Warham (in 1504), whereas Beaufort, Russell and Warham quote Aristotle, and Russell, Morton and Warham make recourse to Cicero. The Tudor Chancellors also evoke episodes from ancient history and quote biblical texts.

The second occasion for an official speech was the declaration of the Speaker. This reminds us that the parliament is not one assembly, but two, and at times, many more. The Lords met together, and the Commons were assembled in another room. Both also worked in committees. The growing importance of the Commons in the fourteenth century necessitated a standardisation of communications procedures, and in the Good Parliament of 1376 the Commons elected their first speaker, Sir Peter de la Mare[33]. The Speaker was not only a messenger, conveying messages between the two groups and the king; he was also the voice of the Commons, though it is not clear whether, when the Rolls say that "the Commons came before the King and said", it is always the Speaker who speaks in the name of his colleagues. The election of the Speaker became a routine procedure and took place after the official opening of the parliament and the selection of the triers of petitions. The Speaker was presented to the king by the Commons, whereupon he immediately made a "protestation", following the example of Sir Peter de la Mare. First, he claimed to speak not in his own name but in that of the Commons. Second, should he say anything improper through neglect or ignorance, should his words not represent his fellows' opinions, or should they displease the king, he would be excused and allowed to correct them without harm. Finally, he would have the right to complain in the name of the Commons about the king's governance. The protestation normally has two parts: in the first, the Speaker, being presented to the king, stresses his inexperience and lack of ability; in the second, once the king has approved his election (usually through the intermediary of the Chancellor), he formally accepts his promotion. There are subtle variations in the terminology of the protestation, and these did not pass unnoticed by the king or his councillors. Although this was essential for the development of freedom of speech in parliament, and as such it constitutes an important chapter in the constitutional history of England[34], the standard format of the report left no room for rhetoric[35].

Nevertheless, the Speakers had other occasions for delivering speeches. Did they deliver a formal speech, parallel to the opening speech or sermon of the Chancellor? This is the

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[31]   J.-Ph. GENET, Four English Political Tracts, 1977.

[32]   J.A. WATTS, Henry VI, 1996.

[33]   On the origins of the institution, J.S. ROSKELL, The Commons and their Speakers, 1965, pp. 4–8; on Sir Peter's election and the Good Parliament, G. HOLMES, The Good Parliament, 1980.

[34]   J.S. ROSKELL, The Commons and their Speakers, 1965, p. 31–58.

[35]   That this was a real speech which had to be prepared with care can be seen from the chance survival of a draft protestation in a Yale manuscript; it was written for a Parliament starting on a Friday, and its editor suggests this could be the 1504 Parliament, the Speaker of which was the famous Edmund DUDLEY, author of the Tree of Commonwealth, [ed. by D.M. Brodie] 1949.

impression given by the parliaments following the Good Parliament, from 1377 to 1381, for which good reports (in French) of individual orations are extant: those of Sir Peter de la Mare, Sir James Pickering, Sir John Gildesburgh and a fascinating speech given by Sir Richard Waldegrave in the aftermath of the Peasants' Revolt. These knights appear as competent orators, quite capable of holding their own against experienced officers of the king like Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Hugh Segrave (who came, however, from the same social class). But then the reports stop, and we do not even know the name of the Speaker in 1386. Even Richard II's devoted Bussy is poorly reported, and it is only with Henry IV's reign that the Speakers appear again in full relief. If we are looking for lay parliamentary eloquence, Sir Arnald Savage and Sir John Tiptoft are certainly the best examples of rhetorical expertise that the Rolls can offer, especially the famous speech at the closing of the 1401 session in which Sir Arnald compared the sequence of events in parliament to the liturgy[36]. De la Mare, Savage, Tiptoft and Thomas Chaucer appear as leaders of the House of Commons in all respects. Other texts of Speakers' speeches are extant – those of William Stourton, Roger Hunt, John Russell, William Burley, James Strangeways and William Allington – but they do not have the same focus. They all deal with the problem of the king's legitimacy (even Burley's appeals for Richard of York), and this is certainly why they were recorded and widely circulated in English. Speeches devoted to the criticism of governmental policies, however, have disappeared. Finally, there are the numerous instances in which the Rolls simply report that "les communes vinrent" and delivered a bill or a petition, or some observations on them. Sometimes it is specified that "le parlour" spoke for them, but this is by no means always the case, and some other person – perhaps Sir John Cheyne in 1404 – could have been asked. Did the Speakers make formal speeches on these occasions? I have tried to identify some such "speeches", but these efforts remain tentative.

***Other speeches

These two main categories of speeches aside, there is still the problem of the fragmentary nature of ours sources. Indeed, the full English text is extant for only two individual pieces of oratory. The first one is a speech delivered in May 1468 to the members of both houses by the Bishop of Bath and Wells, Robert Stillington, in the presence of the King; it deals with the King's foreign policy[37]. The second one, which is not recorded at all in the Rolls but exists in a unique copy in a Canterbury manuscript, is a speech addressed to the Commons and their Speaker, William Allington, on the necessity of waging war on France as well as on the commercial implications of England's stance towards France and Burgundy. It was delivered in 1472 or perhaps in 1474 and is usually attributed to the Chancellor, though it may be the work of another man, an expert in this field (since in 1472 at least the Crowland Chronicle reports that competent outsiders were asked to give advice[38]). Here we can only speculate, for, as Nicholas Pronay and John Taylor put it: "the rolls of parliaments do not represent the order – and sometimes the form – in which matters came before the Commons. The Chancery grouped matters in what might have seemed to them a more logical or perhaps customary order …"[39]. In their "journal" of the 1485 proceedings, the Colchester members noted neither the triumphant speech of Henry VII at the beginning of Parliament – was it added later? – nor the address of Sir Thomas Lovell that we have adduced as an example, though both are mentioned in the Rolls. Furthermore, the Act reversing the attainders made in 1484 – of which Sir Thomas Lovell himself was a victim – was not passed as a single Act,

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[36] Rot. Parl., vol. III, p. 466.
[37] Rot. Parl., vol. V, pp. 622–623.
[38] N. PRONAY/J. COX, The Crowland Chronicle Continuations, 1986.
[39] N. PRONAY/J. TAYLOR, Parliamentary Texts, 1980, pp. 177–178.

but rather each of these attainders was reversed separately. Even more important is the fact, proven by the diaries but obscured by the Rolls, that each petition was heard separately and that the answer was hotly debated by the members. Discussions and debates took place, and speeches were given. The quality of these verbal exchanges is another matter, and *Mum and the Sothsegger*, an alliterative poem of the late 1390s, is rather cruel to the members, who it says either did not talk or did so to no purpose[40]. But how to disentangle the speeches, in which rhetoric could spread its wings, from the polished narrative of the Rolls?

One major problem remains the king. Did he speak? And was he expected to speak? After all, parliament was summoned because "the king intended to have a "colloquium" and "tractatum" with those present"[41]. He had to be there in person unless campaigning abroad. When in October 1386 Richard II, furious at the attack on his Chancellor Michael de la Pole, withdrew suddenly to his palace at Eltham, the Duke of Gloucester and the Bishop of Ely were sent to remind him that if he was absent for more than forty days, all members could withdraw without granting the expected taxes[42]. When present, the king sat with the Lords. These meetings were probably very similar in atmosphere and character to meetings of the councils or great councils, as A.L. Brown remarks, until Henry IV formally authorised in 1407 the Lords to meet and discuss freely, i.e. without him[43]. On the whole, the Lords' small number and the practices of the council account for why very few proper speeches, either by kings or by Lords, are ever mentioned. However, the king could also be present in majesty at plenary meetings, for example at the opening and closing sessions, and he had there the opportunity to address the Commons as well as the Lords.

In the case of the early parliaments of Edward II, we certainly get the impression that every effort was made to prevent the King from speaking, i.e. from delivering a formal speech, which he apparently did twice (but only at the end of his reign). Richard II's presence in parliament also posed problems. In his early years he was wont to go into a rage, as in 1384 when, in reply to a speech by the Earl of Arundel, he shouted, "in furorem ac torvo vultu", that Arundel lied in his teeth and could go to the Devil[44]. In the last years of his reign his demeanour was thought offensive by many. Not only did his men – like Sir John Bushy – use "strange and flattering forms of address"[45] that accorded well with his own taste for the Continental vocabulary of majesty, but he himself spoke rashly, which contributed to his reputation of immaturity[46]. Henry IV and Edward IV, according to the Rolls, spoke frequently, but the reports in the Rolls do not make clear if their speeches were formal, in the manner of those which Queen Elizabeth would later deliver. In 1377, the Duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt, gave a strongly worded speech complaining that he was continually derided and made a scapegoat by the Commons, who immediately rose to their feet to declare their commitment to his cause; this is probably the reason why the speech was recorded at all. Both the future Henry V, when he was Prince of Wales and a committed party leader, and Richard, Duke of York, spoke to parliaments: but it is noteworthy that when Richard claimed the crown for himself on the 16th of October 1460, he presented a "writyng" to the members of parliament rather than making a speech[47].

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[40]   M. DAY/R. STEELE, Mum and the Sothsegger, 1936.
[41]   S. PHILLIPS, The Parliament Rolls, vol. III, 2005, p. 6.
[42]   Ch. GIVEN-WILSON, The Parliament Rolls, vol. VII, p. 32.
[43]   A.L. BROWN, Parliament, 1981, p. 122–124.
[44]   "Quod si tu michi imponas, et mei culpa sit it malum regimen habeatur in regno, in faciem tuam mentiris. Vada ad diabolum!", in L.C. HECTOR/B. HARVEY, The Westminster Chronicle, 1982, p. 68.
[45]   N. SAUL, Richard II and the vocabulary of kingship, 1995 quoting the St. Albans chronicles and Adam of Usk's chronicle.
[46]   Ch. FLETCHER, Richard II, 2010.
[47]   Rot. Parl., vol. V, p. 375.

Explicit mention is also made of other speeches, some of which were obviously carefully prepared and staged. For instance, King Edward III, probably conscious that any appeal to the Commons' generosity coming from his own officials was doomed to failure, decided instead to send them fellow knights, heroes of the war in France, such as his chamberlain and intimate friend Sir Bartholomew Burghersh, Walter de Mauny and Lord Guy Brian, to impress the members and incline them to favour a handsome grant for the wars in France[48]. We also know that there were speeches in "committee" meetings, but since we have no equivalent of the parliamentary journals available for the Tudor and Jacobean assemblies[49], these remain inaccessible. The chronicles give the impression that some knights made more-or-less formal speeches in the separate sessions of the Commons in 1376. Sir Thomas de Hoo, for example, even reported to his fellows a vision he had had one evening while in the chapter-house of Westminster Abbey, the usual meeting place of the members of the Commons. While looking at the floor, he saw seven gold coins, and he asked one of the monks what they meant. The monk answered that these were the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit to the knights "for the utility and reformation of the state of this kingdom"[50].

Other occasions for making speeches were provided by the parliament's judicial role, which came back to the fore with the Good Parliament. Peter de la Mare recited the Commons' accusations against the Lyons-Latimer coterie, including the former mistress of the deceased Edward III, Alice Perrers. Those present were required to speak in their own defence, which they duly did, often passing the responsibility of their misdeeds onto others, who, when present, were also offered the opportunity to protest their innocence. Distant echoes of the verbal exchanges which actually took place can sometimes be heard. For instance, when the London merchant Richard Lyons was accused of having pocketed the King's money, he rose and (presumably) made some sort of speech, which was reported in the Roll. But it does not appear to have been a well-prepared defence, since he had nothing with him to prove what he said, and he was immediately condemned[51]. In the same parliament, Sir John Neville also tried to answer accusations formulated against him, and the Commons asked his accusers to give their proofs. These verbal exchanges have some appearance of spontaneity, though they do not amount to what we could call "speeches". The same seems true of certain events in the next parliament, such as the "trial" of the Lord de Gomeniz and William Weston, for abandoning castles and towns to the king's adversaries, the proceedings against Alice Perrers and the trial of Ralph Ferrers in 1380, who was brought from jail to answer accusations in full parliament. On the other hand, the speeches that make up the polemical dialogue between Michael de la Pole and the "crusading" Bishop of Norwich, Henry Despenser, were probably prepared with the help of "learned council", especially on the part of the Bishop. Michael de la Pole's impeachment certainly offers rich documentation on political ideas and processes[52], though both the Appellants' interventions and the appeals against them ten years later look more like private revenge than utterances of political principles. Half a century later, this tense atmosphere also characterised the parliaments in which Richard of York tried to have his claim to the crown recognized. In all these cases, we can only speculate.

***Conclusion

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[48]   J.-PH. GENET, Des capitaines au Parlement, 2000.

[49]   For the speeches of Sir Benjamin Rudierd, see J.A. MANNING, Memoirs of Sir Benjamin Rudierd, 1841; for the printed copies, see the Short Title Catalogue … 1475–1640, vol. II, Oxford, 1976, STC 21435 and 21435.7, and the Short Title Catalogue … 1641–1700, vol. III, New York, 1988, R2181–R2208.

[50]   G. HOLMES, The Good Parliament, 1980, p. 136; A. GOODMAN, Sir Thomas Hoo and the parliament, 1968.

[51]   Rot. Parl., vol. II, p. 324.

[52]   J.S. ROSKELL, The Impeachment of Michael de la Pole, 1984.

We have valuable and exceptionally abundant sources for the history of the English parliament. For a study of political issues, great confidence can be put in the texts of bills and petitions. Yet for the speeches and the details of verbal exchanges during the sessions, the sources are faulty. The reports were produced by the chancery, and they are far from verbatim, though they do present the historian with many opportunities for trying to reconstruct what was actually said. In most cases it is impossible to recover the letter of speeches and verbal exchanges. Nevertheless, it is possible to work from these reports, as well as from official and judicial documents[53]. One avenue of approach is that of discourse analysis, which is based upon corpus linguistics, statistical lexicology and semantics. This is precisely the approach we have taken here, though the methodological difficulties presented by the coexistence of at least three languages and the inconsistencies of medieval orthography have proved hard to overcome[54]. Thanks to an ERC [European Research Council] Advanced Grant, SAS (*Signs and States*), we now hope to make new progress: the parliamentary "speeches" have been grouped into several corpora in a database called Meditext, and software (PALM) is being devised by Mourad Aiouni to allow tagging and word standardization. We shall never recover the texts, but we might be able to recover more from what has been left to us.

Appendix 1

All texts found in PROME unless otherwise noted.
1. Sir William Inge's *opening speech*, 27/1/1316.
2. *Anonymous opening speech*, October 1320.
3. Edward II's *opening speech*, October 1324[55].
4. Edward II's *speech* at the Westminster Parliament, November 1325[56].
5. Sir William Trussell, *Judgement* on Hugh Despenser the Younger, November 1326[57].
6. Adam Orleton, *Opening speech* for an assembly of prelates and magnates, 12/1/1327[58].
7-10. Roger Mortimer, *Speech* ; Adam Orleton, *Sermon on "Rex insipiens perdet populum suum"* (Eccles. 10.16) ; John de Stratford, *Sermon sur "Cujus caput infirmum caetera membra dolent"*; Walter Reynolds, *Sermon on "Vox Populi, Vox Dei"* : one speech and three sermons delivered in succession on the afternoon of 13/1/1327[59].
11. *Judgement* against Roger Mortimer, November 1330.
12. *Opening speech* by John Stratford, Bishop of Winchester, 30/9/1331.
13-14. *Opening speech "en forme de predication"* by Simon Mepham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and *speech "en forme de predication"* by John Stratford, Bishop of Winchester, 16/3/1332.
15. Geoffrey le Scrope's *Speech*, 16/3/1332.
16. *Opening speech* by John Stratford, Bishop of Winchester, 9/9/1332.
17. Sir Geoffrey le Scrope, *Causes of the Summons*, 4/12/1332.
18. Sir Geoffrey le Scrope, *Causes of the Summons*, 21/1/1333.
19. *Anonymous opening speech*, 1/4/1340.
20. *Anonymous opening speech*, 12/7/1340.
21. *Anonymous opening speech*, 26/4/1341.
22. Chancellor Robert Parning' s *opening speech*, 30/4/1343.

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[53]   A remarkable example is provided by P. STROHM, Hochon's Arrow, 1992.
[54]   For instance J.-Ph. GENET, Un corpus de textes politiques, 1996, and "Paix et guerre dans les sermons et les discours parlementaires anglais", in: R.M. DESSI, Prêcher la paix et discipliner la société, 2005, pp. 167–200.
[55]   In P. CHAPLAIS, The War of Saint-Sardos, 1954, pp. 95–97.
[56]   In W.R. CHILDS, Vita Edwardi secundi, 2005, pp. 242–245.
[57]   In J.B. SHEPPARD, Literae Cantuarienses, 1889 and G. HOLMES, Judgément on the Younger Despenser, 1955, p. 264–267.
[58]   Mentioned in W. DENE, Historia Roffensis, 1692, I, p. 356–377.
[59]   C. VALENTE, The deposition and abdication of Edward II, 1998, with full references to the texts.

23. Sir Bartholomew Burghersh's *Speech on war*, 30/4/1343.
24. Chancellor Robert Sadington's *opening speech*, 10/6/1344.
25. *Anonymous opening speech*, Westminster, 13/9/1346.
26. Sir Bartholomew Burghersh's *Speech on the war*, 13/9/1346.
27. William Thorpe, *Cause of Summons*, 17/1/1348.
28. William Thorpe, *Cause of Summons*, 1/4/1348.
29. Sir William Shareshull, C.J.K.B. (Chief Justice of the King's Bench), *Causes of summons*, 15/2/1351.
30. Sir William Shareshull, C.J.K.B., *Causes of summons*, 17/1/1352.
31. Sir Bartholomew Burghersh, *Speech on the war*, 17/1/1352.
32. Sir William Shareshull, C.J.K.B., *Causes of Summons* (Great Council or Parliament?), 27/9/1353.
33. Sir Bartholomew Burghersh's *Speech on the war*, 7/10/1353.
34. Sir William Shareshull, C.J.K.B., *Causes of summons* (Great Council or Parliament?), 30/4/1354.
35-36. Walter de Manny [Gautier de Mauny], *Cause of summons* (at the request of Shareshull) and Sir William Shareshull, C.J.K.B., *Causes,* 25/11/1355.
37. Sir Henry Green, C.J.K.B. [for the first time, it is specified that the speech is delivered in English], *Causes of summons*, 14/10/1362.
38. William Edington, Bishop of Winchester, *Final speech*, 1362, *R.P.*, II, 273.
39. Simon de Langham, Bishop of Ely, *Causes of summons*, delivered in English, 9/10/1363.
40. Simon de Langham, Bishop of Ely, *Causes of summons*, 20/1/1365.
41. Simon de Langham, Bishop of Ely, *Speech to the Lords in the White Chamber*, 20/1/1365.
42. Simon de Langham, Bishop of Ely, *Causes of summons*, 4/5/1366.
43. Simon de Langham, Bishop of Ely, *Causes of summons "en especial"*, 5/5/1366.
44. Simon de Langham, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Causes of summons*, 4/5/1368.
45. Simon de Langham, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Causes of summons "en especial"*, 5/5/1368.
46. Simon de Langham, Bishop of Ely, *Speech to the Lords*, 8/5/1365.
47. William de Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, *Causes of summons*, 3/6/1369.
48. William de Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, *Causes of summons*, 24/2/1371.
49. Sir John Knyvet, *Causes of summons*, 5/11/1372.
50. Lord Guy Brian, soldier, *Speech on the Black Prince's financial situation*, 5/11/1372.
51. Lord Guy Brian, soldier, *Speech on the war situation*, 6/11/1372.
52. Sir John Knyvet, *Causes of summons*, 22/11/1373.
53. Sir John Knyvet, *Causes of summons*, 29/4/1376.
54. Sir Peter de la Mare, *Speaker's speeches*, 1376[60].
55. Adam Houghton, Bishop of St. David, *Sermon with causes of summons*, 28/1/1377.
56. Sir Robert Ashton, *Additional speech on the Pope*, 28/1/1377.[61]
57. Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening speech, as a sermon*, 14/10/1377 [delivered in French].
58. Richard le Scrope, *Causes of summons,* 15/10/1377.
59. John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, *Speech of protest*, 1377.
60. Sir Peter de la Mare, *Speaker's speech*, 1377.
61. Adam Houghton, Bishop of St. David, *Causes of summons and opening sermon*, 22/10/1378.
62. Sir Richard le Scrope, *Causes of summons*, October 1378.
63. Sir James Pickering, *Speaker's speech*, October 1378.
64. Sir Richard le Scrope, *Answer to the Commons*, October 1378.
65. Sir James Pickering, *Commons' answer to Sir Richard le Scrope*, October 1378.
66. Sir Richard le Scrope, *Second answer to the Commons*, October 1378.
67. Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Speech in defence of the Abbot of Westminster*, 1377, *R.P.*, III, 37.
68. Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Sermon on "Unus erit pastor noster" at the Gloucester parliament*, October 1378[62].
69. Sir Richard le Scrope, *Causes of summons*, 27/4/1379.

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[60] An aggregate of themes divided between eight different speeches, five of which are attributed to Sir Peter de la Mare and the remaining three to two anonymous knights and to Sir Richard Le Scrope, a summary of which is given in V.H. GALBRAITH, The Anonimalle Chronicle, 1927 [1970]. There is also a Latin version in Thomas Walsingham's first version of his chronicle and an English one in MS. London B.L. Harley 247, f.169, both edited by E.M. THOMPSON in Chronicon Angliae, 1874, p. lxxi and 73.

[61] "[...] lesqueux par cas ne gisent mye en bouche de Prelat, a cause que celles touchent notre Saint Pere le Pape".

[62] V.H. GALBRAITH, Anonimale Chronicle, 1927 [1970], p. 129.

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70. Sir Richard le Scrope, *Causes of summons*, 17/1/1380.
71. Sir Richard le Scrope, *Causes of summons "en especial"*, January 1380.
72. Sir John de Gildesburgh, *Speaker's speech*, January 1380.
73. Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening speech*, 8/11/1380.
74. Sir John de Gildesburgh, *Speaker's speech*, November 1380.
75. William Courtenay, Archbishop elect of Canterbury, *Opening sermon on "Rex convenire fecit concilium"*, 9/11/1381 ["*une bonne collacioun en Engleys*"].
76. Sir Hugh Segrave, *Causes of summons*, 13/11/1381.
77. Sir Richard Waldegrave, *Speaker's speech*, November 1381.
78. Sir Richard le Scrope, *Causes of summons*, 8/5/1382.
79. Robert Braybroke, Bishop of London, *Causes of summons*, 7/10/1382.
80. John Gilbert, Bishop of Hereford, *Speech at the King's command*, 9/10/1382.
81. Robert Braybroke, Bishop of London, *Causes of summons*, 24/2/1383.
82. Sir James Pickering, *Speaker's speech*, March 1383.
83. Michael de la Pole, *Causes of summons*, 27/10/1383.
84. Michael de la Pole, *First speech against Henry le Despenser, Bishop of Norwich,* November 1383.
85. Henry le Despenser, Bishop of Norwich, *Speech in defence of his conduct,* 24/11/1383.
86. Michael de la Pole, *Answer to Henry le Despenser, Bishop of Norwich*, 24/11/1383.
87. Henry le Despenser, Bishop of Norwich, *2nd Speech in defence of his conduct,* 24/11/1383.
88. Michael de la Pole, *2nd Answer to Henry le Despenser, Bishop of Norwich*, 24/11/1383.
89. Michael de la Pole, *Causes of summons*, 5/4/1384.
90. Michael de la Pole, *Defence against John Cavendish, Fishmonger of London*, 1384.
91. Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, *Speech against the bad governance of England*, April 1384[63]
92. Michael de la Pole, *Causes of summons* [in Latin], November 1384.
93. Michael de la Pole, *Causes of summons* [in Latin], 23/10/1385.
94. Walter Skirlaw, Bishop-elect of Coventry and Lichfield, Keeper of the Privy Seal, *Causes of summons* [in Latin], October 1385.
95. Michael de la Pole, *Causes of summons*, 1/10/1386.
96. Anonymous Speaker, *Accusations against Michael de la Pole*, ["*lui accuserent par demonstrance de bouche"],* October 1386.
97. Michael de la Pole, *Speech in defence of his conduct*, 1386, October 1386.
98. Thomas Arundel, Bishop of Ely, *Causes of summons*, 3/2/1388.
99. William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, *Causes of summons*, 17/1/1390.
100. William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, *Causes of summons*, 1390, 12/11/1392.
101. Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of York, *Causes of summons*, 3/11/1391.
102. Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of York, *Causes of summons*, 21/1/1393.
103. Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of York, *Causes of summons*, 28/1/1394.
104. John Bussy, *Speaker's speech*, 29/1/1394.
105. Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, *Observations to King Richard II*, January 1394.
106. Richard II, *Answer to the Earl of Arundel*, January 1394.
107. Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of York, *Causes of summons*, 28/1/1395.
108. Lawrence Dru, *Speech on Richard II's expedition in Ireland*, 28/1/1395[64].
109. Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, *Causes of summons*, 22/1/1397.
110. Sir John Bussy, *Speaker's speech*, 23/1/1397.
111. Sir John Bussy, *Speaker's speech on the expedition to Lombardy*, 25/1/1397.
112. Richard II, *Answer to the Speaker's speech*, 25/1/1397.
113. Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, *Speech in answer to the King's demand*, 2/2/1397.
114. Richard II, *Speech in answer to the Chancellor*, February 1397.
115. Sir John Bussy (?), *Speech in answer to the King's demand*, February 1397.
116. Richard II, *Answer to the Commons' answer*, February 1397.
117. Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, *Causes of summons*, 17/9/1397.
118. Sir John Bussy (?), *Speaker's speech*, 18/9/1397.
119. Sir John Bussy (?), *Speaker's speech for suppressing the pardon granted to the Appellants*, 18/9/1397.
120. Sir John Bussy (?), *Speaker's speech accusing the Appellants of treason*, 18/9/1397.
121. Richard II's *Answer to the Commons*, 20/9/1397.
122. *First speech* of Henry IV, 30/9/1399.

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[63] L.C. HECTOR/B. HARVEY, The Westminster Chronicle, 1982, p. 68.
[64] Not in the Rolls, but in letters sent by the Lords to Richard II at the end of Parliament, edited in E. CURTIS, Richard II in Ireland, 1927, pp. 137–140.

123. Thomas Arundel, *Sermon to the Lords, preached after Henry IV's formal demand on "Vir Dominabitur populo"* (1 Sam. 9:17), 30/9/1399[65].

124. *Second speech* of Henry IV, 30/9/1399.

125. Sir William Thirning, C.J.K.B., *Report of his speech on behalf of the commission on King Richard's "renunciation and cession"* [in English], 1/10/1399.

136. Thomas Arundel, *Speech to justify the continuance of Parliament, despite King Richard's "renunciation" and opening sermon on Incumbit nobis ordinare pro regno* (1 Mac.6:57), 6/10/1399.

137. Sir John Cheyne, *Speaker's potestation speech*, 14/10/1399.

138. Sir John Cheyne, *Speaker's renunciation speech*, 15/10/1399.

139. Lord Cobham's *Speech against the governance of King Richard II*[66].

140. Thomas Merk, Bishop of Carlisle, *Speech in defence of the governance of King Richard*, November 1399?[67]

141. Sir William Thirning, C.J.K.B., *Judgement passed on the supporters of King Richard* [in English], 2/11/1399[68].

142. Sir William Thirning, C.J.K.B., *Causes of summons*, 21/1/1401.

143. Sir Arnald Savage, *Speaker's protest*, 22/1/1401.

144. Sir Arnald Savage, *Speaker's speech*, 25/1/1401.

145. Sir Arnald Savage, *Speaker's speech on the rebellion in Wales*, 21/2/1401.

146. Sir Arnald Savage, *Speech at the end of Parliament*, 10/3/1401.

147. Sir Arnald Savage, *Closing speech*, 10/3/1401.

148. Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, *Opening sermon*, 2/10/1402.

149. Sir Henry Retford, *Speaker's speech*, 16/10/1402.

150. Adam Forrester, *Speech on behalf the French and Scottish war prisoners*, 20/10/1402.

151. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 14/1/1404.

152. Sir Arnald Savage, *Speaker's speech*, 25/1/1404[69].

153. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 7/10/1404.

154. Sir William Sturmy, *Speech as speaker*, October 1404[70].

155. Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, *Opening sermon*, 1/3/1406.

156. Sir John Tiptoft, *Speaker's speech I*, 23/1/1406.

157. Sir John Tiptoft, *Speaker's speech II*, 3/4/1406.

158. Sir John Tiptoft, *Speaker's speech III*, 24/5/1406.

159. Sir John Tiptoft, *Speaker's speech IV*, 7/6/1406.

160. Henry IV, *Answer to Sir John Tiptoft*, 7/6/1406.

161. Sir John Tiptoft, *Speaker's speech V*, 19/6/1406.

162. Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon on "Regem Honorificate"* (I Peter 2:17), 27/10/1407.

163. Sir Thomas Chaucer, *Speaker's speech I*, 9/11/1407.

164. Sir Thomas Chaucer, *Speaker's speech II*, 14/11/1407.

165. Sir Thomas Chaucer, *Speaker's speech at the end of Parliament*, 2/12/1407.

166. Henry, Prince of Wales, *Speech in defence of the Duke of York*, 2/12/1407.

167. Henry IV, *Thanks to the Parliament for the grants made*, 2/12/1407.

168. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 27/1/1410.

169. Sir Thomas Chaucer, *Speaker's protest*, 28/1/1410.

170. Henry IV, *Answer to the Speaker*, 28/1/1410.

171. Thom as Beaufort, Earl of Dorset, *Opening sermon*, 3/11/1411.

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[65] Latin version in Rot. Parl., vol. III, p. 423; English version in A.D. THOMAS/I.D. THORNLEY, The Great Chronicle of London, 1938, p. 69-71 (from the Guildhall manuscript); cf. C.L. KINGSFORD, Chronicles of London, 1905, p. 44–46 (from MS. London B.L. Cotton Julius B II).

[66] In Annales Henrici Quarti, edited in H.T. RILEY, Johannis de Trokelowe et Henrici, 1866, pp. 306–307

[67] Ibid., p. 290, in Latin; there is a French speech attributed to the Bishop in French in La Chronique de la Traïson et Mort de Richard II, pp. 220–222: the date here given is September the 30th, but this is hardly possible.

[68] In Annales Henrici Quarti: H.T. RILEY, Johannis de Trokelowe et Henrici, 1866, p. 315–320.

[69] According to a newsletter sent to Durham Cathedral Priory, not a speech but a tense dialogue between the King and Sir Arnald: Durham Dean and Chapter Library MS. C IV 25, fols. 123–4, ed. by C.M. FRASER, Some Durham documents, 1961, reproduced in PROME.

[70] Th. WALSINGHAM, Historia Anglicana, II, 264–267, is the best authority for the Speaker's speeches, not recorded in Rot. Parl., though he names Sir John Cheyne as Speaker.

172. Sir Thomas Chaucer, *Speaker's 1st protest*, 5/11/1411.
173. Henry IV, *Answer to the Speaker*, 5/11/1411.
174. Sir Thomas Chaucer, *Speaker's 2nd protest*, 1411.
175. Sir Thomas Chaucer, *Speaker's speech*, 30/11/1411.
176. Henry, Prince of Wales, *Speech to the King*, 30/11/1411.
177. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 30/11/1413.
178. Sir Walter Stourton, *Speaker's speech*, November 1413.
179. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 30/4/1414.
180. Sir Walter Hungerford, *Speaker's speech*, May 1414.
181. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 19/11/1414.
182. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 4/11/1415.
183. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 16/3/1416[71].
184. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening speech for the second session*, 1416.
185. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 19/10/1416[72].
186. Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, *Opening sermon*, 16/11/1417.
187. Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, *Opening sermon*, 16/10/1419.
188. Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, *Opening sermon*, 2/12/1420.
189. Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, *Opening sermon*, 2/5/1421.
190. Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, *Opening sermon*, 1/12/1421.
191. Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 9/11/1422.
192. Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, *Opening sermon*, 20/10/1423.
193. John Russell, *Speaker's speech to the King* [in English], 17/11/1423[73]?
194. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 30/4/1425 [in Latin: from that year on the Rolls of Parliament are in Latin].
195. Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 18/2/1426.
196. John Kempe, Archbishop of York, *Opening sermon*, 13/10/1429.
197. William Lyndwood, deputy-keeper of the Privy Seal and canon of Exeter, *Opening sermon*, 12/1/1431.
198. John Stafford, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Opening sermon*, 12/5/1432.
199. John Stafford, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Opening sermon*, 8/7/1433.
200. John, Duke of Bedford, Speech [in Latin], 13/7/1433, (with later "Articles", in English, 18/12/1433).
201. Roger Hunt, *Speaker's speech in support of the Duke of Bedford* [in Latin, with a memorandum in English], 1433.
202. Ralph, Lord Cromwell, *Memorandum (Speech) on financial matters*, 18/10/1433.
203. John Stafford, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Opening sermon*, 10/10/1435.
204. John Stafford, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Opening sermon*, 21/1/1437.
205. John Stafford, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Opening sermon*, 12/11/1439.
206. John Stafford, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Opening sermon*, 25/1/1442.
207. John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 25/2/1445.
208. William de la Pole, Marquess of Suffolk, *Declaration to the Lords*, 2/6/1445.
209. William Burley, *Speaker's speech in support of William de la Pole, Marquess of Suffolk* [in English], 4/6/1445.
210. John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Speech in support of William de la Pole, Marquess of Suffolk* [in English], 4/6/1445.
211. John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 10/2/1447.
212. John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Prorogation speech*, 6/11/1449.
213. John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Prorogation speech*, 17/12/1449.
214. William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, *Answer to the Commons' Articles*, 13/3/1450.
215. William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, *Answer to the Chancellor*, 17/3/1450.
216. John Kempe, Archbishop of York, *Answer to William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk*, 17/3/1450.
217. John Kempe, Archbishop of York, *Prorogation speech*, 30/3/1450.
218. John Kempe, Archbishop of York, *Causae summonitionis*, 6/11/1450.
219. William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester (?), *Opening sermon*, 6/3/1453.
220. Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 9/7/1455.
221. William Burley[74], *Speech I in favour of Richard of York's protectorate* [in English], 13/11/1455.
222. William Burley, *Speech II in favour of Richard of York's protectorate* [in English], 15/11/1455.

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[71]   There is a Latin version in F. TAYLOR/J.S. ROSKELL, Gesta Henrici Quinti, 1975, pp. 122–126.
[72]   Latin version ibid., pp. 176–178.
[73]   In a London chronicle: C.L. KINGSFORD, Chronicles of London, 1905, pp. 280–281.
[74]   Burley was not the Speaker, however, but rather John Wenlock.

223. William Burley, *Speech III in favour of Richard of York's protectorate* [in English], 17/11/1455.
224. Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Answer to the Commons* [in English], 17/11/1455.
225. Richard, Duke of York, *Acceptance of the Protectorate* [in English], 17/11/1455.
226. William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, *Opening sermon*, 20/11/1459.
227. George Neville, Bishop of Exeter, *Opening sermon*, 7/10/1460.
228. George Neville, Bishop of Exeter, *Opening sermon*, 4/10/1461.
229. Sir James Strangeways, *Speaker's speech* [in English], 6/11/1461.
230. Edward IV, *Speech "ore suo proprio"*, 21/12/1461.
231. George Neville, Bishop of Exeter, *Opening sermon*, 29/12/1463.
232. John Chedworth, Bishop of Lincoln, *Opening sermon*, 3/6/1467.
233. Edward IV, *Speech to the Parliament*, 5/6/1467.
234. Sir John Say, *Speaker's Speech at the end of Parliament,* 1/7/1467.
235. Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Answer to the Speaker's Speech,* 1/7/1467.
236. Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Speech for the prorogation of Parliament*, 1/7/1467.
237. Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *Speech on policy towards France,* 17/5/1468.
238. George Neville, Archbishop of York, *Opening sermon on "Revertimini ad me filii revertentes, ergo enim vir vester"* (Jer. 3:14), 26/11/1470[75].
239. John Alcock, Bishop of Rochester, *Opening sermon*, 6/10/1472.
240. William Allington, *Speaker's speech* [in English], 13/10/1472.
241. John Alcock, Bishop of Rochester, *Speech of thanks*, 30/11/1472.
242. Thomas Rotherham, Bishop of Lincoln (?), *Speech on trade*, 1472 or 1474[76].
243. Lawrence Boothe, Bishop of Durham, *Speech of thanks at the end of Parliament*, 13/12/1472.
244. Lawrence Boothe, Bishop of Durham, *Speech for the prorogation of Parliament*, 1/2/1474.
245. William Allington, *Speaker's final speech*, 18/7/1472, *R.P.*, VI, 8-9.
246. Thomas Rotherham, Bishop of Lincoln, *Speech of thanks at the end of Parliament*, 14/3/1475.
247. Thomas Rotherham, Bishop of Lincoln, *Opening sermon*, 16/1/1478.
248. Thomas Rotherham, Archbishop of York, *Opening sermon*, 20/11/1482.
249. John Russell, Bishop of Lincoln, *Opening sermon*, 23/1/1484[77].
250. John Alcock, Bishop of Worcester, *Opening sermon*, 7/11/1485.
251. Henry VII, *Speech to the Lords and Commons*, 9/11/1485.
252. Sir Thomas Lovell, *Speaker's speech in the name of the Commons*, 10/12/1485.
253. John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 9/11/1487.
254. John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 13/1/1489.
255. John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Speech for the prorogation of Parliament*, 4/12/1489.
256. John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 17/10/1491.
257. John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 14/10/1495.
258. John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 16/1/1497.
259. William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opening sermon*, 25/1/1504.
260. Edmund Dudley, *Protestation of the Speaker* (?)[78]

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[75] Mentioned in J.O. HALLIWELL, Warkworth's Chronicle, 1839, p.11 and in L.M. MATHESON, Death and Dissent, 1999, p. 106.
[76] In J.B. SHEPPARD, Litterae Cantuarienses, 1889, pp. 274–285; for the date, see now R. HORROX, The Parliament Rolls, vol. XIV, p. 3.
[77] The three drafts of the sermon, adapted to the rapid changes in the political situation, are published in S.B. CHRIMES, English Constitutional Ideas, 1936, pp. 168–185.
[78] In N. PRONAY/J. TAYLOR, Parliamentary Texts, 1980, pp. 195–201.

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