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Growing old among the Anglo-Saxons : the cultural conceptualisation of old age in Early Medieval England

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Citation

Porck, M. H. (2016, April 26). *Growing old among the Anglo-Saxons : the cultural conceptualisation of old age in Early Medieval England*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/39136>

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Issue Date: 2016-04-26

Appendix

Lexicological analyses of words for old age

In chapter 2, fifty-four potential lexical items for ‘human old age’ were identified: *āealdian*, *āergōd*, *ætealdod*, *blandenfeax*, *clingan*, *eald*, *ealda*, *ealddōm*, *ealdgeþungen*, *ealdhād*, *ealdian*, *ealdigende*, *ealdlic*, *ealdnes*, *ealdung*, *ealdwīf*, *forealdian*, *forealdung*, *forildu*, *forþgān*, *forweorennnes*, *forwerod*, *forwerodnes*, *forworen*, *frameald*, *frōd*, *gamol*, *gamolferhþ*, *gamolian*, *geōmēowle*, *gēomorfrōd*, *gomelian*, *hār*, *hārun*, *hārwelle*, *hārwenge*, *hārwengnes*, *ieldo*, *infrōd*, *langfære*, *langieldo*, *langlīfe*, *gelēfed*, *līflīc*, *ofereald*, *ofergēare*, *oferyldu*, *onealdian*, *onsīgende*, *oreald*, *oryldu*, *unorne*, *wintercearig* and *gewintred*. The individual analyses of each of these lexemes can be found below.

The discussion for each lexical item will take into account its etymology, senses, frequency and direct context (compounds and collocations). Information about senses, frequency, and context is taken from the *DOE* or, for those words which fall outside the present scope of the *DOE*, from an extensive analysis of the recorded forms found in the *DOEC*. Since the aim of this chapter is to uncover connotations with human old age, these connotations receive special attention. Unless otherwise noted, the Old English quotations from prose texts are taken directly from the *DOEC*, rather than from published editions. For the sake of brevity, references to these prose texts are made only in the form of the short titles used by the *DOEC* between brackets; for verse texts, I refer to standard editions. The lexical items are discussed in alphabetical order.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>āealdian</i> , v.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 02.01 Aging, growing old: To grow old/feeble with age
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	-
Connotations:	-

Whereas *āealdian* is categorised in the *TOE* under “02.01.04.03|02.01 Aging, growing old: To grow old/feeble with age”, it does not occur in Clark Hall or the *DOE*, nor do any possible forms of it appear in the *DOEC*.¹ The *TOE* bases itself on the entry *āealdian* in Bosworth-Toller, which cites a single passage from the preface of the Old English translation of Gregory’s *Dialogi*: “Þe læs þe hi þurh eorþlice dæda a ealdodon (aealdodon ?[...]) fram hyra modes niwnysse”.²

In essence, Bosworth-Toller conjecture the otherwise unattested *āealdian*, a combination of the intensifying prefix *ā-* and the verb *ealdian* ‘to grow old’, in favour

¹ Based on simple searches in the *DOEC* for <aeald->, <aald-> and <aæld->, which did not yield any results. Searching for <aeld-> yielded 31 results, but none of these could be interpreted as forms of *aealdian*.

² Bosworth-Toller, s.v. *ealdian* II. Campbell’s supplement lists *āealdian* as a head-word, with a reference to *ealdian* II.

of the actual manuscript reading “a ealdian”, a combination of the adverb *ā* ‘forever, always, continuously’ and the verb *ealdian* ‘to grow old’. This latter interpretation, however, does not at all appear problematic within the context and is followed by the most recent edition of the passage:

Se ælmihtiga God nolde hy abysgian mid þam geswinceum þyses middaneardes, þe læs þe hi þurh eorþlice dæda **a ealdodon** fram hyra modes niwnysse.³

[The almighty God did not wish to trouble them with the toils of this earth, lest they through worldly deeds **would continuously grow older**, away from the newness of their spirit.]

Here, the combination of the adverb *ā* and the past tense form of *ealdian* may have been the Anglo-Saxon translator’s way to render the subjunctive imperfect form “veterascerent” of the corresponding passage in the Latin original: “qui ne per humanos actus a novitate mentis veterascerent, eos omnipotens Deus hujus mundi laboribus noluit occupari”.⁴

Given the manuscript reading and the absence of other attestations of potential word forms in the *DOEC*, *āealdian* should be considered a ghost word. Consequently, following its exclusion from the *DOE*, *āealdian* ought to be struck from the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old”.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>ǣrgōd</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	07.02.04 03.01 Excellence: Old and excellent, very good
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	5
Connotations:	Lacking former excellence

With its categorisation ‘old and excellent, very good’ for *ǣrgōd*, the *TOE* follows Bosworth-Toller and Clark Hall. Here, the prefix *ǣr-* is interpreted as both a temporal prefix (the adverb *ǣr* means ‘earlier, previously, formerly’, hence ‘old and excellent’) and an intensifying prefix (hence ‘very good’). The *DOE*, s.v. *ǣrgōd*, however, notes that, despite earlier claims,⁵ there is no support for *ǣr-* as an intensifying prefix in Old English. Instead, the *DOE* suggests that the lexeme probably means ‘good of old’, ‘formerly good’ or ‘hitherto excellent’.

Ǭrgōd occurs only five times in the *DOEC*, all in *Beowulf*, and the context of the word forms supports the reading of the *DOE*. In all cases, *ǣrgōd* refers to either a person or a sword that is no longer able to live up to former expectations. The term is first applied to Hrothgar, the old king of the Danes, who had been a glorious warlord

³ *Übersetzung der Dialoge Gregors*, ed. Hecht, 6, ll. 29–33. The reading “a ealdodon” is only found in MS H of Gregory’s *Dialogi*; the other manuscripts give “hi ne ealdodon næfre fram heora modes niwnysse þurh eorðlice dæde, 7 ælmihtig God nolde hi abysgian mid þam gewinnum þises middaneardes” [they never grew older, away from the newness of their spirit, through worldly deeds and the almighty God did not wish to trouble them with the toils of this earth].

⁴ Gregory, *Dialogues*, ed. de Vogüé, I, prol.6.

⁵ E.g., P. J. Cosijn, ‘Anglosaxonica II’, *BGdSL* 20 (1895), 101.

in the past, but now proved helpless against the monster Grendel. The phrase that is used to describe Hrothgar, “æþeling ærgod” (l. 130a), is also applied Æschere (l. 1329a), after he had been killed by Grendel’s mother. The third time *ærgōd* refers to a person is when the poet describes how Beowulf, after having grown old, sets out to kill a dragon and meets his doom:

Sceolde (li)þend daga,
æþeling **ærgod** ende gebidan,
worulde lifes. (*Beowulf*, ll. 2341b–3a)

[The seafarer, the nobleman, **formerly good**, must await the end of his days, of life on the world.]

The other occurrences of *ærgōd* refer to swords that are rendered useless. The first time, the poet describes how Grendel’s arm could not be cut by “iren ærgod” (l. 989a), that is: by no sword, however good it used to be. The last time the poet uses the word is to describe the sword Nægling, when it breaks during Beowulf’s encounter with the dragon (l. 2586a). In other words, as W. F. Bryan has observed: “The fact is that *ærgōd* is not once applied to object or person at a moment when the situation demands an epithet expressing intensified actual vigor or strength or excellence, and that in at least two instances such a sense is altogether incongruous with the situation”.⁶ The senses ‘formerly good’ and ‘hitherto excellent’, therefore, appear to be best suited for the contexts in which *ærgōd* appears.

Notably, in four of its five occurrences *ærgōd* refers to someone or something ‘old’. When they are described with the term *ærgōd*, both Hrothgar and Beowulf have been on the throne for fifty years and, hence, would have been old men. Like the two aged kings, Æschere, too, is an old man, “frodan fyrnwitan” [an old and wise councillor] (l. 2123a), when he is described as *ærgōd*. The sword Nægling, similarly, is not only “iren ærgod” (l. 2586a) but also “gomol and grægmæl” (l. 2682) [old and grey-hued].⁷ Only the age of the hypothetical sword that is unable to cut Grendel’s arm is not made explicit, although the term “ærgod” (l. 989a) marks it out as anything but a new sword.

Given the evidence presented above, the sense “old and excellent”, provided by the *TOE*, might best be superseded by “old and hitherto excellent”. As such, *ærgōd* does not reflect that old age was associated with intensified vigour, but rather with the absence of former excellence.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>ætealdod</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 05.04 Aging, growing old: Too old
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	1
Connotations:	-

⁶ W. F. Bryan, ‘*Ærgōd* in *Beowulf*, and Other Old English Compounds of *æþ*’, *Modern Philology* 28 (1930), 158.

⁷ On epithets used for Nægling, see P. L. Henry, ‘*Beowulf* Cruces’, *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete der indo-germanischen Sprachen* 77 (1961), 140–6.

Ætealdod ‘too old’ is a combination of the prefix *æt-* and the past participle form of *ealdian* ‘to grow old’. The intensifying function of the prefix *æt-* is rare,⁸ but might also be found in the verb *æt-eglan* ‘to trouble, afflict, harm’, where the standard, locative function of *æt-* ‘close, to, away, from’ seems similarly inapplicable. The *TOE* categorisation of *ætealdod* ‘too old’ is confirmed by the *DOE*, s.v. *ætealdod*, which lists one occurrence in the *DOEC*:

Hit byð swyðe sceandlic, þæt eald wif sceole ceorles brucan, þonne heo forwerod byð and teames **ætealdod**, ungehealtsumlice, forðan ðe gesceafta ne beoð for nanum oðran þinge astealde butan for bearnteame anum, swa swa us secgað halige bec. (ÆLet 5 [Sigefyrth])

[It is very shameful that an old woman should have sex with a man, when she is worn out with age and **too old for childbearing**, unchastely, because sexual relations are not meant for any other thing except for procreation only, just as holy books tell us.]

Ætealdod survives in Middle English as *at-ōld* and is typically found in a context of infertility, as in this Old English citation; hence, the *MED* provides the sense ‘aged beyond (having progeny)’.⁹

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>blandenfeax</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.04.04.03.02 04 Colour of Hair: Grey-haired, hoary
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	7
Connotations:	Grey-haired

Blandenfeax ‘grey-haired, hoary’ is a zero-derived denominal adjective from a compound noun, formed of the past participle form of the class VII strong verb *blandan* ‘to mix, mingle’ and the noun *feax* ‘hair’.¹⁰ The *DOE*, s.v. *blandenfeax*, like the *TOE*, assigns the meaning ‘having hair which is mingled with grey, grey-haired’. All seven instances of *blandenfeax* in the *DOEC* are found in poetic texts and refer to elderly people: Sarah and Lot in *Genesis*, Constantine in *The Battle of Brunanburh* and Hrothgar and Ongentheow in *Beowulf*.¹¹ Consequently, the *DOE* notes that this lexical item can also be used as a general term for old; *blandenfeax*, therefore, should also be included in the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old” as well.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>clingan</i> , v.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 02.01 Aging, growing old: To grow old/feeble with age 03.01.17.01 04 A coagulating, mixing: To congeal, stick together

⁸ Cf. H. Koziol, *Handbuch der englischen Wortbildungslehre*, 2nd ed. (Heidelberg, 1972), §207.

⁹ *MED*, s.v. *at-ōld*.

¹⁰ Kastovsky, ‘Semantics and Vocabulary’, 395.

¹¹ *Genesis* A, ed. Doane, ll. 2343a, 2602b; *Battle of Brunanburh*, ed. Campbell, l. 45a; *Beowulf*, ll. 1549b, 1791a, 1873a, 2962a.

	03.01.18 08 Dryness (not wetness): (Of plants, people, etc.) to wither, dry up 05.10.05.02.03 07 To reduce, make thin(ner): To shrink together from heat or cold
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	5
Connotations:	-

Forms of the class III strong verb *clingan* occur five times in the *DOEC* and are restricted to poetry (four occurrences) and glosses (once). The *DOE*, s.v. *clingan*, provides two senses: “1. to congeal, adhere, cling together” and “2. to shrink, contract, shrivel”. With these two senses, the *DOE* deviates from the categorisation proposed by the *TOE*, which also includes *clingan* in the category “02.01.04.03|02.01 Aging, growing old: To grow old/feeble with age”.¹²

However, the attribution of the sense ‘to grow old’ to *clingan* is ungrounded. To begin with, the sense cannot be derived from its etymology, PGmc **klingan-* ‘to stick together’; nor is it found for any of its cognates in related languages: Dutch *klinken* ‘to clinch’, Danish *klynge sig* ‘to gather in clusters, crowds together’ and German *sich klinken* ‘to fasten oneself to’.¹³ Furthermore, a closer look at all the *DOEC* occurrences reveals that the process of congealing or shrinking, described by forms of *clingan*, is never attributed to old age. Rather, the cause in each case is excessive heat or cold:

sipþan þa yslan eft onginnað
æfter lig-þræce lucan togædre,
geclungne to cleowenne.¹⁴

[afterwards the ashes begin to lock together after the violence of flames,
clung together to a clew.]

Land wæron freorig;
cealdum cyle-gicelum **clang** wæteres þrym.¹⁵

[The lands were frosty; the water’s might **congealed** in cold icicles.]

Clinge þu alswa col on heorþe,
sring þu alswa scerne awage.¹⁶

[(the speaker addresses a “wenne”, a cyst or skin blemish) You **must shrivel** like a coal in the fire, you must shrink away like dung.]

¹² This sense is not found in Bosworth-Toller, s.v. *clingan*, nor in Clark Hall, s.v. *clingan*.

¹³ G. Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic* (Leiden, 2013), s.v. **klingan-*; *OED*, s.v. *cling*, v.1.

¹⁴ *The Phoenix*, ed. Blake, ll. 224–6a.

¹⁵ *Andreas*, ed. Krapp, ll. 1259b–60.

¹⁶ *Metrical Charm 12: Against a Wen*, ed. R. E. Bjork, *Old English Shorter Poems. Volume II: Wisdom and Lyric*, DOML 32 (Cambridge, MA, 2014), ll. 8–9.

ac forhwon fealleð se snaw, foldan behydeð,
 bewrihð wyrta cið, wæstmas getigeð,
 geðyð hie and geðreatað, ðæt hie ðrage beoð
 cealde **geclungne**?¹⁷

[but why does the snow fall, covering the folds, covering the bud of the roots, binding the fruits, pressing and harassing them, so that they are cruelly **shrunk** by the cold?]

The fifth occurrence of the word is a lexical gloss for Lat. *marceo* ('I become weak') in Ælfric's *Glossary*. All things considered, then, the inclusion of *clingan* in the *TOE* category "02.01.04.03|02.01 Aging, growing old: To grow old/feeble with age" is unwarranted.

Possibly, the editors of the *TOE* were influenced by the definition provided by the *OED*, s.v. *cling*, v.1:

2. Applied to the drawing together or shrinking and shrivelling up of animal or vegetable tissues, when they lose their juices under the influence of heat, cold, hunger, thirst, disease, *age*; to become 'drawn', to shrink up, wither, decay. (emphasis mine)

As shown above, however, the connection with (old) age is not attested in the Old English data and may, therefore, be a later development. Consequently, *clingan* should be struck from the *TOE* category "02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old".

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>eald</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 05 Aging, growing old:(Of beings, etc.) old, of great age 02.01.04 02 Age: Having a certain age 02.03.02.03.04 (Of degrees of descent) great-, grand- 05.11.07.03 06 Former times, days of old: Ancient, former, earlier 05.11.07.03.03 Old, not new 05.11.07.03.03 01 Old, not new: Old, having lasted long 05.11.07.03.03 02 Old, not new: Ancient, of time long past 11.05 11 Natural/proper way/manner/mode of action: Habitually done, customary 12.01.01.06.08 A person of rank, elder, great man
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	ca. 3000
Connotations:	High rank/Authority, Wisdom

Eald 'old' derives from the past participle form of PGmc **alan-* 'to grow, to bring up',¹⁸ a verb that survives in Goth. and OE *alan* 'to nourish' and is related to Lat. *alere* 'to nourish'. The Germanic cognates of OE *eald* include OFr *ald*, OS *ald*, OHG *alt* and

¹⁷ *Solomon and Saturn II*, ed. Anlezark, ll. 124–7a.

¹⁸ Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary*, s.v. **alda-*.

Goth. *alpeis*, which all mean ‘old’.¹⁹ The distinctive vowel in OE *eald* reflects the outcome of fronting (PGmc **ald* > **æld*), followed by Breaking (**æld* > *eald*) in the West Saxon dialect of Old English.²⁰

The *DOE*, s.v. *eald*, differentiates between three broadly applicable senses: ‘having lived or existed for a long time, advanced in age’, ‘belonging to an earlier period of time and still in existence, long established’ and ‘belonging to an age or period now past: ancient; former’. In addition, the term can be used simply to refer to one’s age; as in Present-day English, people were ‘twenty years old’ rather than ‘twenty years young’.

With approximately three thousand occurrences in the *DOEC*, *eald* is by far the most frequently used term for old age in Old English. Forms of *eald* are documented in almost every text, appearing in poetry, prose and glosses. Moreover, *eald* knows no restrictions when it comes to referents; it is used for ditches, buildings, wounds, plants, laws, animals, humans and trees. Naturally, outlining and discussing all instances and senses of *eald* is beyond the scope of this study. Consequently, the discussion below focuses on the two connotations with human old age as can be gathered from the information about *eald* provided by the *DOE* and the compounds with *eald*- as a first element.

In line with the *TOE* categorisation, the *DOE* notes that *eald* is connected with authority or superior rank.²¹ This connection is exemplified by the Old English translation of Luke 9:46 “quis eorum maior esset” [which of them was the greater/more important] as “hwylc hyra yldest wære” (Lk [WSCp]). The connotation of old age with authority is also clear from the recurring phrase “yldestan ðegnas” to denote the most important thanes (ChronC; Ch 1422; Ch 1409) and the Old English gloss “yldesta wicing” (AntGl 2) for *archipirata* ‘arch-pirate, pirate chief’. In addition, Old English *ealdor* ‘chief, leader’ and *ealdorman* ‘nobleman, thane’ may be etymologically related to *eald*, suggesting a connection between authority and old age.²²

A second connotation of *eald* is ‘experience’ or ‘wisdom’. The *DOE* indicates that *eald* can be used figuratively, to mean ‘experienced’ or ‘skilled’.²³ This figurative use is best illustrated by Ælfric’s explanation of the word *eald-wita* ‘priest (lit. old-knower, old wise man)’ in his letter to Wulfsgie:

Presbiter is mæssepreost oððe ealdwita. Na þæt ælc eald sy, ac þæt he eald sy on wisdom. (ÆLet 1 [Wulfsgie X^a])

¹⁹ D. Boutkan and S. M. Siebinga, *Old Frisian Etymological Dictionary* (Leiden, 2005), s.v. *ald*; W. P. Lehmann, *A Gothic Etymological Dictionary* (Leiden, 1986), s.v. *alpeis*; A. L. Lloyd and O. Springer, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Althochdeutschen. Bd. 1: -a – bezzisto* (Göttingen, 1988), s.v. *alt*; F. Heidermanns, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der germanischen Primäradjektive* (Berlin, 1993), s.v. *alda-*; V. F. Faltings, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der friesischen Adjektiva* (Berlin, 2010), s.v. *alda-*.

²⁰ Cf. the Anglian form *ald*, which does not show breaking, since *æ* is retracted to *a* in Anglian forms before *l* followed by a consonant. On these developments, see A. Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford, 1959), §§143, 248–50; R. M. Hogg, *A Grammar of Old English. Volume 1: Phonology* (Oxford, 1992), §§5.10–3.

²¹ *DOE*, s.v. *eald*, senses II.A.5, II.B.3 and III.B.

²² *OED*, s.v. *alder*, n. 2.

²³ *DOE*, s.v. *eald*, sense I.A.10.

[A presbyter is the mass-priest or the *ealdwita*. Not that each of them is aged, but he is ‘old’ in wisdom.]

Here, Ælfric translates the definition of *presbiter* from Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*:

Presbyter graece Latine senior interpretatur; non pro aetate uel decrepita senectute, sed propter honorem et dignitatem quam acceperunt presbyteri nominantur.²⁴

[Priest, *presbyter* in Greek, is translated *senior*, elder, in Latin. They are called *presbyters* not from years or decrepit old age, but because of the honor and rank they received.]

In addition, the *DOE* shows that *eald* is often collocated with lexemes meaning ‘wise’, such as *frōd* and *wīſ*.²⁵

Apart from the connections drawn between old age and authority and wisdom, the Old English compounds with *eald-* are worth discussing, since Sheila M. Ingersoll has argued that most of these compounds have positive connotations.²⁶ Before her claim can be discussed properly, the *eald*-compounds first need to be established. The *DOE* lists thirty-three compounds with *eald-* as the first element, but misses nine compounds with *eald-* that feature as headwords in Bosworth-Toller and/or Clark Hall: *eald-cot* ‘old cottage’, *eald-cwēn* ‘old queen’, *eald-land-rāden* ‘established law of landed property’, *eald-letre* ‘next word’, *eald-ge-nēat* ‘old companion’, *eald-ge-þungen* ‘old and distinguished’, *eald-ge-winn* ‘old conflict’, *eald-ge-winna* ‘old enemy’ and *eald-wīf* ‘old woman’ (see table 10.1). Compounds like these are difficult to distinguish from syntactic phrases, especially since they occasionally occur in the manuscript with a space between the two elements. However, in the case of element-separation by a space, a compound may be easily recognised by the lack of inflection on the first element.²⁷

Closer analysis of the nine *eald*-compounds which are not included in the *DOE* reveals that a number of them have erroneously been overlooked. *Eald-cot* ‘old cottage’, for example, certainly is a compound. Forms of *eald-cot* occur twice in the *DOEC*, in the boundary clauses of two Anglo-Saxon charters, in the phrase “æt Sceolles ealdcotan” [at the old cottage of Sceoll] (Ch 855 [Kem 1282]; Ch 1020 [Kem 792]). Since the first element of “ealdcotan” is uninflected, *eald-cot* must be interpreted as a compound, rather than a phrase. The same goes for *eald-cwēn*, which occurs in the *DOEC* as a gloss for Lat. *anacula* ‘little old woman’: “*Anacula eald cwene*” (CIGl 1 [Stryker]). The manuscript reading “eald cwene”, despite the intervening space, must be interpreted as a compound, since only the second element,

²⁴ Isidore, *Etymologiae*, ed. J.-Y. Guillaumin (Paris, 2012), VII.xii.20. Trans. Throop.

²⁵ *DOE*, s.v. *eald*, sense I.A.1.c.

²⁶ S. M. Ingersoll, *Intensive and Restrictive Modification in Old English* (Heidelberg, 1978), 128.

²⁷ Kastovsky, ‘Semantics and Vocabulary’, 362.

“cwene”, is inflected for the dative case. *Eald-cot* and *eald-cwēn*, therefore, should be included in the *DOE*.

Two further potential compounds, *eald-land-ræden* and *eald-letre*, are problematic. *Eald-land-ræden* is only attested once, in the eleventh-century manual of estate management *Rectitudines singularum personarum*, where the elements are separated in the manuscript by a space: “Hede se ðe scire healde, þæt he wite a, hwæt eald landræden sy & hwæt ðeode ðeaw” [He that would hold a shire should heed that he know what the old estate customs and what the customs of the region are] (LawRect).²⁸ Once more, the first element in the manuscript reading “eald landræden” is uninflected. However, in this case, the test is inconclusive, since, in this context, the strong feminine nominative singular adjective form of *eald* would also lack an inflectional ending. *Eald-letre* ‘next word’, only found in Bosworth-Toller, is problematic for another reason. Potential forms of *eald-letre* cannot be found in the *DOEC*, nor is a citation provided by Bosworth-Toller, which only provides a reference to Thomas Wright’s *A Second Volume of Vocabularies* (1873). In this edition of one of the glossaries of London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra a. iii, Wright apparently read “*Authentica ueterum* mid eald letre”.²⁹ The phrase “eald letre”, however, turns out to be a misreading of “ealdlecre”, a form of *ealdlic* ‘old’ (see below).³⁰ Hence, *eald-letre* must be regarded a ghost word, whereas *eald-land-ræden* may be a syntactical phrase, even though this cannot be proven by the *DOEC* data.

Forms of three further compounds that are not included in the *DOE*, *eald-ge-nēat*, *eald-ge-winn* and *eald-ge-winna*, all appear in poetry and the first element is uninflected for case:

Byrhtwold mæpelode, bord hafenode
(se wæs **eald geneat**), æsc acwehte.³¹

[Byrhtwold spoke, raised his shield, (he was **an old companion**), shook his spear.]

þæt ic on þone hafelan heorodreorigne
ofer **eald gewin** eagum starige.³²

[that I could gaze at the blood-stained head with my eyes after **the ancient struggle**.]

²⁸ Translation from *Rectitudines singularum personarum*, ed. and trans. T. Gobbitt, <http://www.earlyenglishlaws.ac.uk/laws/texts/rect/>. In Gobbitt’s edition, the phrase reads “ealdland ræden”, which should still be interpreted as a compound, since the first element is uninflected.

²⁹ T. Wright, *A Second Volume of Vocabularies* (n.p., 1873), 2.

³⁰ P. G. Rusche, ‘The Cleopatra Glossaries: An Edition with Commentary on the Glosses and Their Sources’, unpublished PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1996, 163; see also *DOE*, s.v. *ealdlic*, sense 3.

³¹ *Battle of Maldon*, ll. 309–10.

³² *Beowulf*, ll. 1780–1.

open **eald-gewin**, þæt wæs fyr mycle,
 geara gongum.³³ þonne þeos æðele gewyrd,

[That famous, **ancient struggle** was much longer ago in the passage of years than this noble incident.]

seopðan Grendel wearð,
ealdgewinna, ingenga min.³⁴

[afterwards Grendel, **the old enemy**, became my invader.]

While the lack of inflection on the first element suggests that they are all part of compounds, rather than syntactic phrases, this evidence remains inconclusive, since, in poetry, the inflectional endings of adjectives could be dropped in favour of the metre.³⁵ Hence, the question whether *eald-ge-nēat*, *eald-ge-winn* and *eald-ge-winna* should be considered compounds or syntactic phrases cannot be answered on the basis of the Old English evidence. The last two potential compounds that are not listed as such in the *DOE*, *eald-ge-þungen* and *eald-wīf*, are discussed individually below, as the *TOE* identifies them as separate lexemes belonging to the lexical field of old age.

With respect to all compounds on *eald-*, Ingersoll argued that this first element functioned not only as a temporal marker, but also as an intensifier. She saw most of these compounds in a positive light: “[t]o the Anglo-Saxon, something which was very old and tried was far preferable to something new and unproven”.³⁶ She illustrated this claim with proposed translations for, amongst others, *eald-cyðð* ‘old (and dear) home’, *eald-ge-segen* ‘old (and good) tradition’, *eald-ge-strēon* ‘ancient and valuable treasure’ and *eald-ge-sīð* ‘old and good (or loyal) comrade’. These proposed translations should be regarded as mostly conjecture, however, as the words she discussed occur infrequently; hence, their connotation, whether positive or negative, is impossible to establish.³⁷ In addition, the proposed positive connotations of the element *eald-* in *eald-ge-winn* ‘ancient and important conflict’ and the various words for Satan, such as *eald-fēond*, *eald-hettend* and *eald-ge-nīpla* ‘ancient enemy, arch-enemy’ are dubious, at best.³⁸ As the element *eald-* combines with both positive and negative second elements, it is best to follow the *DOE* in assuming that the element *eald-* in these compounds is a neutral term denoting age or ancientness.

³³ Cynewulf, *Elene*, ed. Gradon, ll. 646b–8.

³⁴ *Beowulf*, ll. 1775a–6.

³⁵ R.M. Hogg and R. D. Fulk, *A Grammar of Old English. Volume 2: Morphology* (Chichester, 2011), §3.146. In addition, adjectives following the strong declension would not be inflected for the nominative case, which means that the examples above from *The Battle of Maldon* (for *eald-ge-neat*), Cynewulf’s *Elene* (for *eald-ge-winn*) and *Beowulf* (for *eald-ge-winna*) cannot provide conclusive evidence for the status of these potential compounds.

³⁶ Ingersoll, *Intensive and Restrictive Modification*, 128.

³⁷ Forms of *eald-cyðð*, *eald-gesegen*, *eald-gestrēon* and *eald-gesīð* occur, respectively, five, one, two and two times in the *DOEC*.

³⁸ Cf. Ingersoll, *Modification*, 129–31.

Compounds with <i>eald-</i>	B-T	CH	DOE
<i>eald-bacen</i> ‘stale, literally ‘baked some time ago’’	√	√	√
<i>eald-cot</i> ‘old cottage’	√	-	-
<i>eald-cwēn</i> ‘old queen’	√	-	-
<i>eald-ge-cynd</i> ‘original nature’	√	√	√
<i>eald-cýþþ</i> ‘native land, old home; old acquaintance’	√	√	√
<i>eald-dagas</i> ‘former days, days of old’	√	√	√
<i>eald-dōm</i> ‘old age’	√	√	√
<i>ealde-ealde-fæder</i> ‘great-grandfather’	√	-	√
<i>ealde-fæder</i> ‘grandfather; (male) ancestor’	√	√	√
<i>ealde-mōdor</i> ‘grandmother, (female) ancestor’	√	√	√
<i>eald-ge-fā</i> ‘old enemy’	√	√	√
<i>eald-fæder</i> ‘forefather, ancestor’	√	√	√
<i>eald-fēond</i> ‘old enemy, Satan’	√	√	√
<i>eald-ge-fēra</i> ‘old comrade’	√	√	√
<i>eald-gyddung</i> ‘old saying’	-	√	√
<i>eald-hettend</i> ‘old enemy’	√	√	√
<i>eald-hlāford</i> ‘old ruler, ruler by ancient right’	√	√	√
<i>eald-hlāford-cynn</i> ‘old, noble family’	√	-	√
<i>eald-hrýþer</i> ‘maure/full-grown bullock’	√	√	√
<i>eald-hrýþer-flæsc</i> ‘meat of a mature/full-grown bullock’	√	√	√
<i>eald-land</i> ‘old land, arable land left untilled’	√	√	√
<i>eald-land-ræden</i> ‘established law of landed property’	-	√	-
<i>eald-letre</i> ‘next word’	√	-	-
<i>eald-ge-mære</i> ‘ancient boundary’	√	√	√
<i>eald-ge-nēat</i> ‘old comrade’	√	√	-
<i>eald-ge-nīþla</i> ‘old enemy, Satan’	√	√	√
<i>eald-port-ge-rēfa</i> ‘chief town official’	-	-	√
<i>eald-riht</i> ‘ancient right, old law’	√	√	√
<i>eald-ge-segen</i> ‘old story, ancient legend’	√	√	√
<i>eald-ge-sīþ</i> ‘old retainer, old comrade’	√	√	√
<i>eald-spell</i> ‘old story’	√	√	√
<i>eald-spræc</i> ‘ancient utterance’	√	√	√
<i>eald-ge-strēon</i> ‘ancient treasure’	√	√	√
<i>eald-ge-þungen</i> ‘old and distinguished’	-	√	-
<i>eald-ge-weorc</i> ‘ancient work’	√	√	√
<i>eald-werigu? eald-wearg?</i> ‘accursed from old times’	√	√	√
<i>eald-ge-winn</i> ‘old-time conflict’	√	√	-
<i>eald-ge-winna</i> ‘old enemy’	√	√	-
<i>eald-wīf</i> ‘old woman’	√	√	-
<i>eald-wita</i> ‘venerable man, sage, priest’	√	√	√
<i>eald-writere</i> ‘scribe, one who copies ancient manuscripts’	√	√	√
<i>eald-ge-wyrht</i> ‘ancient deed, deed or old’	√	√	√

Table 10.1 Compounds on *eald-* and their presence in the main Old English dictionaries (B-T= Bosworth-Toller; CH = Clark Hall)

TOE lemma:	<i>ealda</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.03.01.08 01 Adult male: Old man 16.01.05.02.01 The devil
Frequency (DOEC):	See <i>eald</i>
Connotations:	-

The categories proposed by the *TOE* are confirmed by the *DOE*, which treats the weak substantival adjective *ealda* in its entry for *eald*. The use of the word *ealda* to refer to Satan is in the sense of ‘the ancient one, the one from days of old’, hence the ‘arch-enemy’, rather than ‘the aged one’.³⁹

TOE lemma:	<i>ealddōm</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 03 Aging, growing old: Old age
Frequency (DOEC):	1
Connotations:	-

Ealddōm ‘old age’, a combination of *eald* and the abstract suffix *-dōm*,⁴⁰ occurs only once in the *DOEC*. In the *Old English Orosius*, *ealddōm* translates a form of Lat. *senectus* ‘old age’:

ac heo for hie cristendome nu giet is gescild, ðæt ægþer ge hio self ge
hie anweald is ma hreosende for **ealddome** þonne of æniges cyninges
niede. (Or 2)⁴¹

[but she (Rome) because of her Cristian faith is now still shielded, so that
both she herself and her power has more gone to ruin because of **old age**
than of the force of any king.]

Given that *ealddōm* is only used for an abstraction (the power of Rome), this lexeme falls outside the semantic field of human old age.

TOE lemma:	<i>ealdgebungen</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 05.01 Aging, growing old: Old, venerable 07.08.01 02.03 Nobility (of character, rank, etc.): Old and distinguished
Frequency (DOEC):	-
Connotations:	Distinguished

Ealdgebungen, a possible compound of the adjectives *eald* ‘old’ and *gebungen* ‘distinguished’,⁴² has an entry in neither Bosworth-Toller nor the *DOE*. As a

³⁹ *DOE*, s.v. *eald*, sense I.B.1.b.

⁴⁰ Cf. Heidemanns, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *alda-dōma*-.

⁴¹ *DOE*, s.v. *eald-dōm*, provides the corresponding Latin: “si potentissimae illae quondam Romanae reipublicae moles nunc magis inbecillitate propriae senectutis quam alienis concussae uiribus contremescunt”.

headword, *ealdgeþungen* is only found in Meritt's supplement to Clark Hall, with a reference to Napier's edition of Wulfstan's homilies.⁴³ In the *DOEC*, the passage of Wulfstan's homily, based on Napier's edition,⁴⁴ is found with the words "eald" and "geðungen" separated by a space:

þa ablende he þurh deofles cræft swa þæs caseres eagan and ðæra, þe him mid wæron, þæt heom ðuhte oðre hwile, þa hy hine beheoldon, þæt he wære, swylce hit cild wære, þæt hy on locedon, oðre hwile eft, swylce he medemre ylde man wære, and oðre hwile, swylce he **eald geðungen** man wære; and swa on mænige wisan he hiwode þurh drycræft fela leasbregda. (HomU 58 (Nap 16))

[then through the devil's power he blinded the Emperor's eyes and those of the people with him, so that they thought at one time, when they looked at him, that he was like a child whom they looked at; a second time again as if he were a middle-aged man; and another time as if he were a **distinguished, old** man; and so in many ways he practiced many deceptions through sorcery.]

As noted above, the separation of the two words by a space does not necessarily mean that they constitute a syntactic phrase, on the condition that the first element is uninflected. However, the fact that "eald" is uninflected cannot be used to prove that "eald geðungen" is a compound here: as the subject predicative, "eald geðungen man" is in the nominative case and the nominative, strong masculine form of the adjective *eald* would also be uninflected. The evidence is thus inconclusive.

In view of the above, *ealdgeþungen* cannot definitively be identified as a compound; hence, following its exclusion from Bosworth-Toller and the *DOE*, *ealdgeþungen* is perhaps best taken out of the *TOE* category "02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old".

	<i>ealdhād</i> , n.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	-
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	-
Connotations:	-

Ealdhād 'old age', a compound of *eald* and *-hād* 'hood',⁴⁵ is found in Bosworth-Toller.⁴⁶ Bosworth-Toller provides a reference to another entry, the spelling variant *aldhād*, which, similarly, is not found in the *DOE*, *TOE* or Clark Hall. Moreover, in its entries for both *ealdhād* and *aldhād*, no sources or citations are provided to evince the

⁴² OE *geþungen* 'respected' is the lexicalised past participle of the class III strong verb (*ge*)þingan 'to respect' and cognate with OS *gi-thungan* 'respected'. Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary*, s.v. *þinhan-.

⁴³ Clark Hall, s.v. *ealdgeþungen*.

⁴⁴ Napier, hom. 16, p. 99.

⁴⁵ On the status of *-hād* as a suffix or root, see Kastovsky, *Semantics and Vocabulary*, 263–4. Cf. Faltings, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *alda-haidu*.

⁴⁶ Also listed by Amos, 99–100, n. 19, probably on the basis of Bosworth-Toller.

existence of this lexeme. Similarly, searching the *DOEC* for possible forms of *eal dhād* does not yield any results.⁴⁷ It must be assumed, therefore, that *eal dhād* is either a ghost word or is only attested in material outside the *DOEC* and unknown to Clark Hall and the editors of the *DOE*.⁴⁸

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>ealdian</i> , v.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 02 Aging, growing old: To grow old 02.01.04.03 02.01 Aging, growing old: To grow old/feeble with age 05.11 06.03 To grow old in, continue long
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	c.90
Connotations:	Decrepitude, Positive development

OE *ealdian* ‘to grow old’ is a class II weak verb, ultimately derived from PGmc **ald-* ‘old’ and cognate with OHG *altēn* ‘to grow old’.⁴⁹ Variants of *ealdian* occur approximately ninety times in the *DOEC*.⁵⁰ The verb, which is used for people, objects and abstractions, is frequently found in glosses and prose, but rarely in poetry.

Like the *TOE*, the *DOE* records that *ealdian* refers to the aging process both in a neutral sense, as well as with the additional sense of “to grow frail or wear out with age, decay, deteriorate”.⁵¹ This second sense is exemplified by the use of forms of *ealdian* in descriptions of aging and withering bodies, as in the following passage from an anonymous homily: “Se lichoma **ealdap** & his fægernes gewiteþ & on dust bið eft gecyrred” [The body **grows old** and its beauty passes away and it will afterwards be turned to dust] (HomS 17).

In addition to this negative connotation of ‘decrepitude’, the *DOE* notes a single occurrence of *ealdian* where the aging process is used in a positive sense. In this passage from the *Liber scintillarum* [The book of sparks] by Defensor, the aging process of wine is likened to the development of a friendship:

ne derelinquas amicum antiquum; nouus enim non erit similis illi; uinum nouum, amicus nouus ueterescet et cum suauitate bibes illud na forlæt þu freond ealdne niwe soþlice na byþ gelic him win niwe freond niwe **ealdap** & mid wynsumnysse þu drincst þæt. (LibSc)

⁴⁷ Based on searches for <aldh->, <ældh>, <ealdh->, <eldh-> and <oldh->. Searching for the forms of *eald* and *-hād* separately, similarly, yielded no useful results.

⁴⁸ On the difficulty of declaring something a ‘ghost word’ on the basis of its absence in the *DOEC*, see Fulk, ‘Morphology and Diachrony’, 18. This particular word is first found in William Somner, *Dictionarium Saxonico Latino Anglicum* (Oxford, 1659), b3r. I am indebted for this last reference to Kees Dekker (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen).

⁴⁹ Hogg and Fulk, *Grammar*, §6.130, note on the basis of cognate OHG *altēn* ‘to grow old’ that *ealdian* may originally have belonged to the third weak class, with PGmc *-ǣ-* as stem formative, rather than **-ō-* (i.e. OE *ealdian* < **aldjan* < PGmc **ald-ǣ-jan*).

⁵⁰ The *DOE* features *ealdian* and *gealdian* as two separate headwords with similar senses. I will treat them as the same lexeme *ealdian*.

⁵¹ *DOE*, s.v. *ealdian*, sense 2.

[Do not leave an old friend; truly, a new one will not be like him; like new wine, a new friend **grows old/mature** and you will drink it with rejoicing.]

Thus, the attestations of *ealdian* show that for the Anglo-Saxons there were two sides to the aging process: while the body might wither away with time, other aspects, such as friendship, might improve with age.⁵²

TOE lemma:	<i>ealdigende</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 01 Aging, growing old: Growing old
Frequency (DOEC):	see <i>ealdian</i>
Connotations:	see <i>ealdian</i>

Unlike the *TOE*, the *DOE* has no separate entry for *ealdigende* ‘growing old’ and treats it as the adjectival present participle form of *ealdian*.⁵³

TOE lemma:	<i>ealdlic</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.02 07.01 To grow, grow up: Mature 02.01.04.03 05.01 Aging, growing old: Old, venerable 05.11.07.03 07 Former times, days of old: Of early times, authoritative 05.11.07.03 08 Former times, days of old: Primitive, early (e.g. of church)
Frequency (DOEC):	10
Connotations:	Authority

Ealdlic ‘old’, a combination of *eald* and the derivational suffix *-lic*,⁵⁴ occurs ten times in the *DOEC* and is found in glosses and prose, referring to people, objects and abstractions. Whereas the *TOE* follows Bosworth-Toller and Clark Hall in assigning the sense ‘old, venerable’ to *ealdlic*, the sense ‘venerable’ is not included in the definition provided by the *DOE*, s.v. *ealdlic*, which lists:

1. old, ancient; advanced (in age / years)
2. old, mature
3. glossing *authentica veterum* perhaps with the intention of glossing the complete grammatical unit *authentica veterum auctoritate* ‘by the genuine authority of ancient writers’; if so, *ealdlic* could be understood as ‘authoritative’ or ‘authentic’.
4. glossing *serotinus* ‘late’

⁵² A similar admonition to keep your old friends close is found in the Old English *Dicts of Cato*: “Peah þe þin eald gefera abelge, ne forgit þu gif he þe æfre ær gecwemde” [Even if your old companion angers you, do not forget whether he has ever pleased you]. Cox, ‘Old English Dicts’, 13, no. 66.

⁵³ Hogg and Fulk, *Grammar*, §6.107, note that in West Saxon dialects of Old English in class II weak verbs “-ig- is normal before the ending -e(n), but -i- and -ig- vary freely before e in the inflected infinitive and pres.part.”. See also Hogg, *Grammar*, §7.76.

⁵⁴ Cf. Heidermanns, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *alda-līka-*; Faltings, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *alda-līka-*.

In none of the attestations of *ealdlic* in the *DOEC* does the term necessarily carry the sense ‘venerable’; hence, this sense is rightly rejected by the *DOE*, and the *TOE* should follow suit.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>ealdnes</i> , n.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 03 Aging, growing old: Old age
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	5
Connotations:	Decrepitude

Ealdnes, a combination of *eald* and the nominal suffix *-nes*,⁵⁵ occurs five times in the *DOEC*. It is used twice to gloss forms of Lat. *vetustas* ‘old age’ (ÆGram, BenRGl⁵⁶) and the other three occurrences are found in homilies by Ælfric. In these homilies, *ealdnes* is accompanied by the negative adjectives *forwerod* ‘old, worn-out’ and *deriendlic* ‘hurtful’:

seo endlyfte tid bið seo forwerode **ealdnyss** þam deaðe genealæcende. swa swa seo sunne setlunge genealæhð. on þæs dæges geendunge. (*ÆCHom II*, 5)

[the eleventh hour is worn-out **old age**, which approaches death, just as sunset approaches the end of the day.]

eornostlice þonne sume beoð gelædde on cildhade to godum ðeawum and rihtum life. sume on cnihtade. sume on geðungenum wæstme. sume on ylde. sume on forwerodre **ealdnysse**. (*ÆCHom II*, 5)

[honestly, then, some are induced in childhood to good deeds and a rightful life, some in youth, some in adulthood, some in old age and some in worn-out **old age**.]

we awurpon þa deriendlican **ealdnysse**: and we sind getealde betwux Godes bearnum þurh Cristes flæschlicnysse. (*ÆCHom I*, 13)

[we threw off the hurtful **old age** and we are reckoned among God’s children through Christ’s incarnation.]

The context of these three occurrences of *ealdnes* show an association of old age with decrepitude.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>ealdung</i> , n.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	5

⁵⁵ Cf. Faltings, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *alda-nassjō*.

⁵⁶ In BenRGl, the word *vetustas* is a scribal error for *vetustus* ‘old’, see *DOE*, s.v. *ealdnes*.

Connotations:	-
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Ealdung, derived from *ealdian* ‘to grow old’ through the deverbial suffix *-ung*,⁵⁷ has five occurrences in the *DOEC*. *Ealdung* is only used with reference to material objects, such as dress, walls, buildings and bones; hence, this lexeme falls outside the semantic field for human old age.

TOE lemma:	<i>ealdwīf</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.03.01.09 Old woman
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	-
Connotations:	-

Whereas the *TOE* lists *ealdwīf*, a compound of *eald* ‘old’ and *wīf* ‘woman’, as a lexeme, the *DOE* does not include *ealdwīf* in its list of headwords (see table 10.1 above). A search in the *DOEC* reveals that the form <*ealdwif*> occurs only once, as a personal name:

Her cyð þæt Ælfred lareow hæfeð gefreolsad vii men. An is Ædred webbe.
And oðer his sunu Eðered. And þridde his dohtor **Ealdwif**. (Rec 8.3.3
[Craster])

[Here it is made known that the teacher Ælfred has freed seven persons.
The first is Ædred, the weaver. And the second is his son Ethered, And the
third his daughter **Ealdwif**.]

In addition, there are six further attestations of *ealdwīf* in the *DOEC*, where the two elements are separated by a space:

Hit byð swyðe sceandlic, þæt **eald wif** sceole ceorles brucan. (ÆLet 5
[Sigefyrth])

[It is very shameful that an **old woman** should have sex with a man.]

anus eald wif (ÆGl) [**old woman**]

se deofol hine þa selfne gehiwode swylce he an **eald wif** wære. (LS 29
[Nicholas])

[the devil then transformed himself as if he were an **old woman**.]

Þa cwæð God to Abrahame: ‘Hwi hloh Sarra ðin wif & cwæð Sceal ic nu
eald wif cennan?’ (Gen)

⁵⁷ Hogg and Fulk, *Grammar*, §2.37, note that this form of the deverbial suffix (*-ung* rather than *-ing*) is typical of words derived from class II weak verbs, such as *ealdian*. Note: *-ung* can also form nouns with adjectives, see *hārun* below.

[then God said to Abraham: Why did Sarah, your wife, laugh and say ‘Must I now, **an old woman**, bring forth a child?’]

þe ic þæt mynster gesohte, wære sum **eald wif**, þære nama wæs Redempta.
(GDPref and 4 [C])

[when I visited that monastery, there was a certain **old woman**, whose name was Redempta.]

Anula vel uetula **eald wif** (AntGl 6 [Kindschi]) [**old woman**]

As noted with respect to the other compounds with *eald-*, the separation of the two elements by a space does not exclude the possibility that these are, in fact, compounds, rather than syntactic phrases. However, the test applied with the other *eald*-compounds above – to see whether the first element is uninflected for case – is inconclusive in all these cases, since the neuter nominative singular strong form of the adjective *eald* would here similarly lack an inflectional ending. Hence, there seems to be no way of confirming the status of *eald-wif* as either a compound or a syntactic phrase.

However, the latter is more likely; at least in the case of the penultimate example above, taken from the Old English translation of Gregory’s *Dialogi*. Further on in the same text, the old woman Redempta is mentioned again, but now the author clearly uses the accusative singular weak form of the adjective *eald*: “Þa sume nihte cigde heo þa ylcan Redemtan **þæt ealde wif**” [Then some night, she called the same Redempta, **the old woman**] (GDPref and 4 [C]).

In view of the above, the *DOE* is most likely correct in excluding *eald-wif* from its list of headwords. Consequently, this proposed lexeme ought to be struck from the *TOE* as well.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>forealdian</i> , v.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 02.01 Aging, growing old: To grow old/feeble with age 03.02.01.01 02 Decay, corruption, rottenness: To putrefy, rot, grow foul 03.02.01.02 03.01 Decay from age: (Of dead matter) to decay over time
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	c.45
Connotations:	Decrepitude

Forealdian is a combination of the verb *ealdian* ‘to grow old’ and the prefix *for-*. The prefix *for-* exhibits various meanings, of which three are applicable to the prefix *for-* in *forealdian*: an intensification of the verb (to grow very old), ‘too much, to excess’ (to grow too old) or a general pejorative meaning (to grow old in a bad way).⁵⁸ All three options are in accordance with the definitions for *forealdian* provided by the *DOE*,

⁵⁸ K. Sprengel, *A Study in Word-formation* (Tübingen, 1977), 48, notes two other possible meanings, ‘away’ and ‘closing, covering up’, neither of which seem applicable to *forealdian*. Cf. Koziol, *Handbuch*, §§221–2.

which notes that *forealdian* expresses both ‘growing (very) old’ and ‘becoming enfeebled or decayed through age’.

Forms of *forealdian* occur approximately forty-five times in the *DOEC* and are restricted to prose and glosses. The verb is used with reference to people, objects and abstractions. The lexeme is clearly connected to the concept of decrepitude, as is illustrated by the following example:

he bið swaþeah gehæled to ansundre hæle eft on Domesdæg, þonne he of deaþe arist, and syþðan ne swylt, ne seoc ne gewyrð, ne him hingrian ne mæg, ne him þurst ne derap, ne he ne **forealdað**, ac bið ece syþþan, on sawle and on lichaman, orsorgh deaþes. (ÆHom 2)

[However, he will be healed to sound health again on Doomsday, when he rises from death, and afterwards he will not die, nor will he become sick, nor will he be hungry, nor will thirst harm him, nor will he **decay from age**, but he will then be eternal, in soul and in body, free from care of death.]

On the whole, *forealdian* is yet another Old English lexeme that connects old age to something negative: physical decrepitude.

TOE lemma:	<i>forealdung</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 03 Aging, growing old: Old age
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	1
Connotations:	-

Forealdung, a nominal, abstract form of *forealdian*, formed with the deverbal suffix *-ung*,⁵⁹ occurs only once in the *DOEC*, as a lexical gloss for *senium* ‘advanced old age’ (SedGl 2.1).

TOE lemma:	<i>forildu</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 03.01 Aging, growing old: Great age
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	2
Connotations:	-

Forildu, a combination of the noun *ieldo* ‘old age’ and the intensifying prefix *for-* (see *forealdian* above), occurs twice in the *DOEC*. It glosses Lat. *senium* ‘advanced old age’ (PrudGl 1) and is used, as a collective noun, in combination with *geoguð* to mean ‘everyone’.

forðig þonne, butan ðam anum, ðe for heora leahtrum of heora endebyrðnysse uttor ascofene synd, oððe for haliges lifes geearnunga innor genumene, ælc oþer, **forylde** and iugoðe, healde his endebyrðnysse, swa swa he to mynstre com. (BenRWells)

⁵⁹ For this suffix, see p. 255, n. 57 above.

[Therefore, then, except for those, who because of their vices are removed from their rank, or because of the merits of a holy life are promoted, every one, **the very old** and the young, keeps his rank, just as he came to the minster.]

Forildu is lemmatised as *foryldu* in the *DOE*.

TOE lemma:	<i>forþgān</i> , v
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 06 Aging, growing old: To be advanced in years 05.11 04 A time, period of time: (Of time) to pass, elapse 05.12.05.07.01 To pass by 05.12.05.09 To go forward, proceed
Frequency <i>DOEC</i>):	2 ⁶⁰
Connotations:	-

Forþgān combines the adverb *forþ* ‘forward’ and the verb *gān* ‘to go’ and must originally have meant ‘to go forward, advance’. The sense ‘to be advanced in years’ is attested in neither Bosworth-Toller nor Clark Hall. The *DOE* does not mention this sense in its entry for *forþgān* either, but includes it, instead, for the phrase *forþ gān on (heora) dagum* in its entries for both *forþ* and *gān*, using two citations to illustrate this sense:

hig næfdon nan bearn, forðam ðe Elizabeth wæs unberende, & hy on heora dagum butu **forð eodon**. (Lk (WSCp))

[They did not have any children, because Elisabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years (lit.: had advanced in their days).]

ic eom nu eald & min wif on hyre dagum **forð eode**. (Lk (WSCp))

[I am now old and my wife is advanced in years (lit.: has advanced in her days).]

Since *forþgān* in isolation does not mean ‘to grow old, to be advanced in years’, the *DOE* data do not provide a basis for including *forþgān* in the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03|06 Aging, growing old: to be advanced in years”. Instead, it could be replaced with the phrase *forþ gān on (heora) dagum*.

TOE lemma:	<i>forweorennas</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 03.02 Aging, growing old: Extreme old age
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	2
Connotations:	-

⁶⁰ *DOE*, s.v. *forþgān* lists 29 occurrences. However, the *DOE* treats the collocation *forþ gān on dagum* ‘to be advanced in years’ as a phrase of *forþ* (senses A.2, A.3.b.iii, A.5.a.iii and A.6.a.ii) and of *gān* (senses VI.7, I.2.c and II.2.a.i).

*Forweorennas*⁶¹ is a combination of OE *forweren*, *forworen* ‘decrepit, enfeebled with age’ and the noun-forming abstract suffix *-nes*. The *DOE*, s.v. *forwerennes*, notes, however, that an alternative manuscript reading of one of the attestations of *forweorennas* is “forwerignes”, which could reflect an otherwise unattested form of **forwerig* ‘very weary’ and *-nes*.

Forms of *forweorennas* occur twice in the *DOEC*, in glosses to Ps. 70:18, where they translate Lat. *senium* ‘advanced old age’:

Et usque in senectam et senium; deus ne derelinquas me. donec annuntiem brachium tuum; generationi omni quę uentura est. potentiam tuam et & oð on ylde & **forwerennesse** ne forlæte þu me oð ic bodige earm þinne cneorisse ælcra þe toward is anweald þin. (PsG1H [Campbell])

On ylða & **forwerennisse** ne forlæte þu me oð ic bodige earm þinne cneorisse ælcra þe toward anweald þin *et usque in senecta et senium deus ne derelinquas me, donec adnuntiem brachium tuum generationi omni quę uentura est, potentiam tuam.* (PsG1D [Roeder])

[In old age and **advanced old age**: You, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your arm to each generation that is coming, your power.]

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>forwerod</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 04 Aging, growing old: (Of age) advanced, old 02.08.02 07.02 Disease, infirmity, sickness: Infirm, decrepit 03.02.01.02 02 Decay from age: Used, threadbare
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	23
Connotations:	Decrepitude

OE *forwered*, *forwerod* ‘old, decrepit’ is the past participle form of an otherwise unattested class I weak verb **forwerian* ‘to wither, to grow old’,⁶² a combination of the intensifying prefix *for-* (see *forealdian* above) and **werian* ‘to wither, fade’. Through a series of sound changes OE **werian* can be traced to the PGmc. root **was-*, which is related to the verbal stem **weis-* ‘to wither’ that gave rise to OE *forweren*, *forworen* ‘old, decayed’ (see below).⁶³

A search in the *DOEC* yields one possible occurrence of OE **forwerian*, where it glosses a form of Lat. *destruo* ‘to destroy, ruin’:

⁶¹ The spelling of the *TOE* lemma is remarkable in that this particular spelling is absent from the *DOE*, Bosworth-Toller and Clark Hall. Possibly, we are dealing here with a printing error for *forwerennes* in the *TOE*. Alternatively, the spelling “forweorennas” may have been derived from the form “forweorone”, found in *The Ruin*, l. 7. For a discussion of this form, see J. E. Cross, ‘On Sievers-Brunner’s Interpretation of “The Ruin”, line 7, “forweorone geleorone”’, *English and Germanic Studies* 6 (1957), 105, n. 6; Hogg and Fulk, *Grammar*, §6.29.

⁶² *DOE*, s.v. *forwered*, *forwerod*.

⁶³ The changes involved from PGmc. **was-* include: **was-j-an* > **waz-j-an* (under Verner’s Law, cf. **hazjan* > OE *herian*) > WGmc. **war-j-an* (Rhotacism) > **wær-j-an* (Anglo-Frisian Brightening) > **wer-j-an* (I-mutation) > OE **werian*.

forðon God <**forwerað**> þe on ende & up aluceþ ðe <&> afærð ðe of
getealde þinum & wyrtruman þinne of lande lyfigendra *propterea deus*
destruet te in finem euellet te et emigrabit te de tabernaculo et radicem
tuam de terra uiuentium. (PsGIF)⁶⁴

[Therefore God will destroy you in the end and take you away and remove
you from your tent and uproot you from the land of the living (Ps. 51:7).]

In the *DOE*, the form “forwerað” in this gloss is treated as a form of *forweorpan* ‘to throw forth, cast out, reject’. Possibly, this is because other manuscripts have forms of *toweorpan* ‘to cast down, break in pieces, destroy’.⁶⁵ *Forwerian* in the sense of ‘to ravage, lay waste, make decay’, however, seems an appropriate gloss for Latin *destruo*. Consequently, “forwerað” might be an attestation of the verb *forwerian* of which *forwerod* is the past participle. If so, *forwerian*, with this attestation, should be included in the *DOE*.

Forms of *forwerod* are found in prose and glosses and are mainly used with reference to material objects and people. The sense division provided by the *DOE* confirms the categorisation of the *TOE*: *forwerod* means both ‘old’ and ‘decrepit’. These two senses are exemplified by the following citations:

næs him cild gemæne: for þan ðe Elisabeð wæs untymende: & hi butu þa
forwerede wæron. (*ÆCHom I*, 25)

[they both had no children together: because Elisabeth was barren and they
both were **old and decrepit**.]

Hit byð swyþe sceandlic, þæt eald wif sceole ceorles brucan, þonne heo
forwerod byð and teames ætealdod, ungehealtsumlice, forðan ðe gesceafta
ne beoð for nanum oðran þinge astealde butan for bearnteame anum, swa
swa us secgað halige bec. (*ÆLet 5* [Sigefyrth])

[It is very shameful that an old woman should have sex with a man, when
she is **worn out with age** and too old for childbearing, unchastely, because
sexual relations are not meant for any other thing except for procreation
only, just as holy books tell us.]

Furthermore, the word glosses forms of *decrepitus* ‘decrepit’, *vetulus* ‘somewhat old’,
valde senex ‘very old’ and *inveteratus* ‘old’:

Decrepita .i. uetula forweren, **forweret** *ualde senex* (HIGI [Oliphant])

decrepita, .i. inueterata **forwered**, forworen, foreald (AldV 13.1 [Nap])

⁶⁴ In the manuscript, <-werað> has been erased. A. C. Kimmens, ‘The Stow Psalter’, unpublished PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 1969, 497.

⁶⁵ *DOE*, s.v. *forweorpan*, sense 4.

TOE lemma:	<i>forwerodnes</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 03.03 Aging, growing old: Old age, decrepitude
Frequency (DOEC):	2
Connotations:	-

Forwerodnes, a combination of *forwerod* and the noun-forming suffix *-nes*, is found as a gloss for Lat. *senium* ‘advanced old age’ in Ps. 70:18:

on ylde & **forwerednysse** god ne forlate þu me oð þæt ic bodige earm
þinne cynrynes ælcere ðe toweard is miht þin *Et usque in senectam et
senium deus ne derelinquas me donec adnuntiem brachium tuum
generationi omni quæ uentura est potentiam tuam.* (PsGlF [Kimmens])

on ylde & **forwerednesse** god na forlæt me oþ ic bodige earm þinne
cypnesse ealle þa towerde is anweald þin *Et usque in senectam et senium
deus ne derelinquas me, Donec adnuntiem brachium tuum generationi omni
quæ uentura est, Potentiam tuam.* (PsGlK [Sisam])

[in old age and **advanced old age**: God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim
your arm to each future generation, your power.]

TOE lemma:	<i>forworen</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 07 Aging, growing old: Worn out with age 03.02.01.02 01 Decay from age: Decrepit, decayed
Frequency (DOEC):	4
Connotations:	Decrepitude

OE *forweren*, *forworen* ‘worn out with age’ is the past participle of an otherwise unattested class V strong verb **forwe(o)san*.⁶⁶ **Forwe(o)san* has Germanic cognates in OHG *irweranī* ‘weakness of old age’ (derived from the past participle of the class V strong verb *irwesan*), German *verwesen* ‘to decay’ and ON *vissna* ‘to wither’,⁶⁷ which can all be traced back to PGmc. **weis-* ‘to wither’.⁶⁸

Forms of *forworen* occur three times in the *DOEC*, as glosses for Lat. *decrepitus* ‘decrepit’, *vetulus* ‘somewhat old’, *valde senex* ‘very old’, *veteranus* ‘old’ and *inveteratus* ‘old’:

⁶⁶ *DOE*, s.v. *for-weren*, *for-woren*. The form of the past participle is affected by Verner’s Law and rhotacism.

⁶⁷ R. Lühr, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Althochdeutschen. Bd. 5: iba – luzzilo* (Göttingen, 2014), s.v. *irweranī*; E. Seebold, *Kluge: Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, 25th ed. (Berlin, 2011), s.v. *verwesen*.

⁶⁸ E. Seebold, ‘Die ae. schwundstufigen Präsensien (Aoristpräsensien) der *Ei*-reihe’, *Anglia* 84 (1966), 6–10; F. A. Wood, ‘Indo-European Bases Derivable from Skt. *Áva* ‘Down’’, *SiP* 28 (1931), 536–7, traced *forweren*, *forworen* to PIE **awe-s*, *wes-*, *wā-s* ‘subside, diminish, wane: become or make empty, exhaust, lay waste’. On semantic grounds, the PGmc. stems **wesan- 1* ‘to be’ and **wesan- 2* ‘to consume, feast’ mentioned in Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary* are unlikely origins for **forwe(o)san*.

Decrepita .i. uetula **forweren**, forweret ualde senex (HiGl [Oliphant])

decrepita ueterana **forworen** foreald (AldV 1 [Goossens])

decrepita, .i. inueterata forwered, **forworen**, foreald (AldV 13.1 [Nap])

These glosses show that *forworen* must mean ‘old and decayed’ or ‘worn out with age’. This sense is also clear from its use in the Old English poem *The Ruin*, which describes a set of Roman ruins, decayed with age:

Eorð-grap hafað
waldend wyrhtan – **forweorone**, geleorene –
heard-gripe hrusan, op hund cnea
wer-þeoda gewitan.⁶⁹

[Earth-grip, the hard grip of the ground, will hold the mighty builders – **decayed** and lost – until a hundred generations have passed away.]

Forworen here refers to the state of the bodies of the long-dead builders: decayed and worn away by old age, like the Roman ruins that are described in the poem.

	<i>frameald</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	05.11.07.03.03 02 Old, not new: Ancient, of time long past
Frequency (DOEC):	-
Connotations:	-

Frameald is listed in Bosworth-Toller, Clark Hall and the *TOE*, but has no entry in the *DOE*. *Frameald* is a combination of *eald* ‘old’ and the prefix *fram-*, which in both Bosworth-Toller and Clark Hall is taken to be an intensifying prefix, as they provide the sense ‘very old’.⁷⁰ Bosworth-Toller illustrates this headword with the following citation from the Old English version of an Ely privilege: “Seo stow wæs gehalgod in framealdum dagum” [This place had been hallowed in very old times]. In the most recent edition of this text by John C. Pope, who attributes the text to Ælfric, the phrase “in framealdum dagum” occurs as “iu fram ealdum dagum”, with “iu”(> *geo* ‘before, since, earlier (adv.)’) rather than “in” and a space separating “fram” and “ealdum”.⁷¹ The elements “fram” and “ealdum” can be interpreted as parts of a syntactic phrase, i.e. the preposition *fram* ‘from, since’ and the adjective *eald* ‘old’, rendering the translation of the entire passage ‘this place had been hallowed before since old times’.

⁶⁹ *The Ruin*, ed. Bjork, *Shorter Poems*, ll. 6b–9a.

⁷⁰ Also listed by Amos, 99–100, n. 19.

⁷¹ J. C. Pope, ‘Ælfric and the Old English Version of the Ely Privilege’, in *England before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge, 1971), 89, l. 31. Note: Pope’s is also the text provided by the *DOEC*. In fact, in the edition referred to by Bosworth-Toller and Clark Hall, the elements “fram” and “ealdum” are also separated by a space: *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, ed. J. M. Kemble (London, 1839–1848), III, 60: “in fram ealdum dagum”.

The interpretation of “fram ealdum” as word forms of two separate lexemes rather than one compound is reinforced by the fact that Ælfric employed similar phrases in his other works. For example, he used the phrase “fram ealdum dagum” with the sense ‘since old times’ in various homilies:

Him gedafenode þæt hi ærest on crist gelyfdon. for ðan ðe hi heoldon þa ealdan.æ. and hæfdon cyððe to gode **fram ealdum dagum**. (*ÆCHom II*, 8)

[It befitted them that they first believed in Christ, because they observed the old law and had knowledge of God **since old times**.]

Ðær wæs gewurðod **fram ealdum dagum** sum hæðengild. þæt wæs gehaten Apollo. (*ÆCHom II*, 11)

[A certain idol, that was called Apollo, was worshipped **since old times**.]

Micel menigu geðeah gode of iudeiscre ðeode. **fram ealdum dagum** oð cristes tocyme. (*ÆCHom II*, 26)

[A great multitude thrived to the God of the Jewish people, **from old times** until Christ’s coming.]

The combination of “ealdum dagum” and “iu” also occurs more often in Ælfric’s works, where, in each case, the preposition “on” precedes “ealdum dagum”:

Iu on ealdum dagum wæs sum æðele mæden Cecilia gehaten. (*ELS* [Cecilia])

[**Earlier in old days**, there was a noble maiden called Cecilia.]

Iu on ealdum dagum, ær ðam þe Cristendom wære, menn worhton deofolgyld wide geond þas woruld. (*ÆHom* 19)

[**Earlier in old days**, before there was Christendom, men worshipped idols widely throughout the world.]

Iu on ealdum dagum wæs sum rice cyning namcuð on worulde, Asuerus gehaten. (*ÆHomM* 14 [Ass 8])

[**Earlier in old days**, there was a powerful king, well-known throughout the world, called Asuerus.]

The unique phrase “iu fram ealdum dagum” in the Ely privilege appears to be a construction similar to Ælfric’s “iu on ealdum dagum”.⁷² There is no reason, therefore, to assume that “framealdum” must necessarily be a compound. Hence, *frameald*

⁷² Cf. Pope, ‘Ælfric and the Old English Version’, 108, n. 31.

should be considered a ghost word and is justifiably excluded from the *DOE*; it should, therefore, also be struck from the *TOE*.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>frōd</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	05.11.07.03.03 Old, not new 06.01.05.02.01.01 01 Sagacity: Wise, clever, sagacious 11.04.02 16 Skill, skilfulness: Skilled in an art/pursuit/subject
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	85
Connotations:	Wisdom, Grief

Frōd ‘old, wise’ derives from PGmc **frōda*- ‘wise, experienced’.⁷³ The form goes back to the Indo-European roots **pero*-, **pere*- ‘press, press forward’ and subsequently ‘grasp, understand’.⁷⁴ Hence, the primary meaning of OE *frōd* is ‘wise’, as is confirmed by its Germanic cognates OF *frōd* ‘wise’, Goth. *frops* ‘wise’, OS *frōd* and Middle Dutch *vroed* ‘wise’.⁷⁵ ‘Old’ as an additional sense is found only in OE *frōd* and OHG *fruot* ‘old and wise’.⁷⁶

Forms of Old English *frōd* are mainly found in poetry and in a handful of glosses for Latin *profectus* ‘advanced’ and *grandaevus* ‘very old’.⁷⁷ In his article on *frōd*, Zwikstra has argued that the wisdom and experience referred to by *frōd* is ‘unambiguously presented in a positive light’.⁷⁸ In doing so, Zwikstra seems to have overlooked that *frōd* is occasionally connected to grief. In Cynewulf’s *Elene*, for example, Simon is described as a “guma gehðum frod” [a man, old (and wise) with griefs] and, in *Beowulf*, the aged Ongentheow is called “frod, felageomor” [old and wise, very sad].⁷⁹ In other words, gaining wisdom with age could be a sorrowful experience, as is also illustrated by the grieving speaker of *The Wanderer* (called “frod” in line 90) and the compound *gēomorfrōd* ‘old, wise and sad’ (to be discussed below).

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>gamol</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 05 Aging, growing old: (Of beings, etc.) old, of great age 05.11.07.03.03 02 Old, not new: Ancient, of time long past
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	29
Connotations:	Grief

The etymology of *gamol* ‘old, ancient’ is a matter of debate.⁸⁰ Ferdinand Holthausen suggested that the word *gamol* derives from Proto-Indo-European **gá-mal* ‘stained’ or

⁷³ S. Kroesch, ‘The Semasiological Development of Words for *perceive*, etc., in the Older Germanic Dialects’, *Modern Philology* 8 (1911), 478; Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary*, s.v. **frōda*-.

⁷⁴ F. A. Wood, ‘Etymological Notes’, *MLN* 29 (1914), 70.

⁷⁵ Kroonen, *Dictionary*, s.v. **frōda*-.

⁷⁶ A. L. Lloyd and R. Lühr, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Althochdeutschen. Bd. 3: fadum – fūstslag* (Göttingen, 2007), s.v. *fruot*.

⁷⁷ *DOE*, s.v. *frōd*.

⁷⁸ Zwikstra, ‘Wintrum frod’, 146.

⁷⁹ Cynewulf, *Elene*, ed. Gradon, l. 531a; *Beowulf*, l. 2950a.

⁸⁰ See Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary*, s.v. **gamala*-.

‘spotted’.⁸¹ This proposed origin is problematic, however, since, under Grimm’s Law, the Proto-Indo-European /g/ changes to /h/ in Germanic languages. Amos has proposed two alternative options for the origins of *gamol*: a combination of the prefix *ge-* and the noun *mǣl* ‘time’ or a derivation from the word *guma* ‘man’.⁸² Both of Amos’s alternatives, however, are questionable as well: it is hard to explain the phonological development that led the unstressed prefix **ga-mǣl* to become stressed and the relation between *guma* ‘man’ and *gamol* ‘old’ does not make semantic sense. For the Dutch cognate of *gamol*, *gammel* ‘old, rickety’, an alternative origin has been suggested: Indo-European **g^hiems* ‘winter’ which would have developed to PGmc **gim*, which is present in Old Dutch *aingimnis* ‘one-winter-old’ and *tuigimnis* ‘two-winters-old’.⁸³ In favour of the relationship between Proto-Indo-European **g^hiems* and Old English *gamol* is the clear link between old age and winter (see also *gewintred*, below); someone who is old has seen many winters, old age is linked to the last season of the year (winter) and Winter is often depicted as an old man. Still, this etymology, too, has its problems, since the phonological shift PGmc **gim* > *gam* is unlikely. In the end, the etymology of *gamol* remains uncertain.

In the *DOEC*, the adjective *gamol* occurs twenty-nine times, exclusively in poetry, and is predominantly applied to people (23 x), occasionally to swords (4 x) and twice to the Phoenix in the eponymous poem *The Phoenix*. *Gamol* is found in only one recurring collocational pattern, “gomel on gehðo” [old in grief], which occurs twice in *Beowulf* (ll. 2793, 3095).⁸⁴ This collocation of grief and old age suggests that, for the Anglo-Saxons, growing old was not necessarily a positive experience.

TOE lemma:	<i>gamolferhþ</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 05 Aging, growing old: (Of beings, etc.) old, of great age
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	1
Connotations:	-

Gamolferhþ, a combination of *gamol* ‘old’ and *ferhþ* ‘mind, intellect, soul, spirit, life, person’, is used only once, in the poem *Genesis*, with reference to Abraham:

Ongan þa his esolas bætan

gamol-ferhð goldes brytta, heht hine geonge twegen
men mid siðian.⁸⁵

[The **old** distributor of gold (Abraham) then began to saddle his asses, he asked two young men to travel with him.]

⁸¹ F. Holthausen, *Altenglisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1934), s.v. *gamol*.

⁸² Amos, 97, Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary*, s.v. **gamala-*, and *DOE*, s.v. *gamol*, favour **ge-mæl* as the origin.

⁸³ *Etymologisch Woordenboek van het Nederlands*, ed. M. Philippa et al. (Amsterdam, 2003–2009), s.v. *gammel*.

⁸⁴ In line 2793, the manuscript reads “gomel on giogoðe”, but for metrical reasons, the reading “giogoðe” [youth] is generally emended to “gιοhðe” [grief].

⁸⁵ *Genesis A*, ed. Doane, ll. 2867b–9a.

TOE lemma:	<i>gamolian</i> , v.
TOE categories:	05.11.07.03.03 05 Old not new: to grow old
Frequency (DOEC):	1
Connotations:	-

Gamolian ‘to grow old’ is a de-adjectival verb of *gamol* ‘old’. Erroneously, this lexeme was included in the TOE under two different spellings: *gamolian* (in category “05.11.07.03.03|05 Old not new: to grow old”) and *gomelian* (“02.01.04.03|02 Aging, growing old: to grow old”). In the DOE, this lexical item is listed as *gamelian* ‘to grow old’. The lexeme occurs only once, in the poem *Maxims I*: “ne **gomelað** he in gæste, ac he is gen swa he wæs” [He (God) does not **age** in spirit, but He is still as He was].⁸⁶

TOE lemma:	<i>geōmēowle</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.03.01.09 Old woman
Frequency (DOEC):	1
Connotations:	-

Geōmēowle is a compound of the adverb *geō* ‘formerly, of old’ and *mēowle* ‘maiden, woman’. The adverb *geō* is found in various compounds, such as *geō-abbod* ‘former abbot’, *geō-mann* ‘man of old’ and *geō-wine* ‘friend of old’, but only the compound *geō-mēowle* has been related to senectitude. The DOE, s.v. *geōmēowle*, assigns the following meaning: “woman of a former day, (old) woman of the past, alternatively interpreted as ‘one who was long ago a maiden’, i.e. ‘an old woman / wife’”. Pope, however, has argued against the last interpretation, since *mēowle* can refer to any woman, irrespective of their maidenhood. In addition, Pope has pointed out that in other compounds formed with *geō-* the compounds refer to people who have long since passed away, rather than to aged individuals.⁸⁷

Geōmēowle occurs only once in the DOE, in the poem *Beowulf*, where it refers to the wife of Ongentheow:⁸⁸

bryd ahredde
gomela[n] **iomeowlan** golde berofene
Onelan modor ond Ohtheres.⁸⁹

[he (Ongentheow) rescued his bride, the old **woman of a former day**, deprived of gold, mother of Onela and Ohthere.]

⁸⁶ *Maxims I*, ed. Shippey, l. 11.

⁸⁷ J. C. Pope, ‘*Beowulf* 3150–3151: Queen Hygd and the Word *geomeowle*’, *MLN* 70 (1955), 84–7.

⁸⁸ For some time, scholars have claimed that there is another occurrence in *Beowulf*, ll. 3150–2: “Swylce giomorgyd (s)io g(eomeowle) / (æfter Biowulfe b)undenheorde / (song) sorgcearig” [Likewise, the old woman with bound hair sorrowfully sang a death song for Beowulf]. The generally accepted reading of this passage, however is: “swylce giomorgyd (Ge)at(isc) meowle / æfter Biowulfe b)undenheorde / (sang) sorgcearig” [Likewise, a Geatish woman with bound hair sorrowfully sang a death song for Beowulf]. See *Beowulf*, 270; Pope, ‘*Beowulf* 3150–3151’; H. Bennett, ‘The Female Mourner at Beowulf’s Funeral: Filling in the Blanks / Hearing the Spaces’, *Exemplaria* 4 (1992), 35–50.

⁸⁹ *Beowulf*, ll. 2930b–2

Ongentheow's wife is certainly old, but this sense is conveyed by "gomela[n]" [old], rather than "iomeowlan", which, if we were to accept the sense 'old woman', would produce a tautology. In other words, both Pope's analysis of the *geō*-compounds and the direct context of the unique instance of *geōmēowle* in *Beowulf*, suggest that the sense 'old woman' for *geōmēowle* must be refuted. Therefore, the word is best struck from the TOE category "02.03.01.09 Old woman".

TOE lemma:	<i>gēomorfrōd</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 05.02 Aging, growing old: Very old
Frequency (DOEC):	1
Connotations:	Wisdom, Grief

Gēomorfrōd is a compound of *gēomor* 'grief, sadness' and *frōd* 'old and wise'. Whereas the TOE follows Clark Hall's attribution of the sense 'very old' to *gēomorfrōd*, there is no reason to assume that *gēomor*- here has an intensifying function. Rather, as in the compounds *gēomor-gydd* 'song of sorrow' and *gēomor-mōd* 'sad minded', the element *gēomor* in *gēomorfrōd* unproblematically means 'sad'; this yields the sense 'sad and wise in one's old age; sad, wise and old'.⁹⁰ *Gēomorfrōd* is thus a lexical precursor of the modern idiom 'sadder and wiser' and indicates that growing old also brings along a saddening experience.

In the DOEC, *gēomorfrōd* is attested only once, with reference to the aged Sarah:

nu ic eom orwena
 þæt unc se eðylstæf æfre weorðe
 gifeðe ætgædere. Ic eom **geomorfrōd**.⁹¹

[Now I am without hope that a successor will ever be given to us together. I am **old, wise and sad**.]

TOE lemma:	<i>gomelian</i> , v.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 02 Aging, growing old: To grow old
Frequency (DOEC):	1
Connotations:	-

See *gamolian* above.

TOE lemma:	<i>hār</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.04.04.03.02 04 Colour of Hair: Grey-haired, hoary 02.04.04.03.02 04.04 Colour of Hair: Grey-haired, hoary: Person 03.01.14.03 03.07.02 White/whiteness: Whitened with frost 05.11.07.03.03 Old, not new

⁹⁰ Cf. DOE, s.v. *gēomorfrōd*, where the sense 'wise' is not included.

⁹¹ *Genesis A*, ed. Doane, ll. 224b–6.

Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	c.155 ⁹²
Connotations:	Grey-haired

The origin of *hār* has been identified as Indo-European **kei-*, ‘surface growth, appearance’; in Old English, it is mainly used with the sense ‘grey’ and, by extension, ‘old’.⁹³ A similar sense development is found in OS *hēr* ‘noble, distinguished, aged’ and OHG *hēr* ‘old, revered, grey’.⁹⁴

Whenever forms of *hār* apply to humans, the term describes elderly people with reference to their grey or white hair. Based on a discussion of all the human referents of *hār* and its derivatives, Biggam concludes that in all cases these words “can be satisfactorily shown to concern elderly people or, in one case [...], someone becoming elderly”. Therefore, *hār* should also have been included in the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old”.

In addition to the link with grey hair, Biggam has suggested that the Anglo-Saxons may have associated *hār* with ‘fearsomeness’. Forms of this lexeme often refer to wolves, whose coats were grey and who were considered dangerous, and elderly warriors, who wore grey mail-coats and would have become more fearsome through experience of war.⁹⁵ This proposed association, however, is mostly based on conjecture. The elderly warriors to whom *hār* is applied certainly do not always strike one as outstanding, particularly fearsome warriors. Two cases in point are the elderly warrior-king Hrothgar in *Beowulf*, a “har hilderinc” who is described as too weak to protect his people,⁹⁶ and old King Constantine in *The Battle of Brunanburh*, another “har hilderinc”, who shamefully fled from the field of the battle he had lost.⁹⁷ Nothing suggests that these two warriors were all the more fearsome because of their old age and, therefore, it is safer to reject the connotation of ‘fearsomeness’ for *hār*. The notion of elderly warriors and kings is explored further in chapters 6 and 7.

Below, four derivations of *hār* are discussed individually.⁹⁸

<i>TOE</i> lemma	<i>hārung</i> , n.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.04.04.03.02 04.03 Colour of hair: Hoariness
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	3
Connotations:	Grey-haired

⁹² For a full discussion of all instances of *hār* and its derivatives, see Biggam, *Grey in Old English*, 100–271.

⁹³ For the origins and semantic development of *hār*, see *ibid.*, 216–7. Cf. D. H. Green, *The Carolingian Lord: Semantic Studies on Four Old High German Words: Balder, Frô, Truhtin, Hêrro* (Cambridge, 1965), 406.

⁹⁴ Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary*, **haira-*; Heidermanns, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *haira-*; A. L. Lloyd and R. Lühr, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Althochdeutschen. Bd. 4: gâba – hylare* (Göttingen, 2009), s.v. *hēr*.

⁹⁵ Biggam, *Grey in Old English*, 233–7.

⁹⁶ *Beowulf*, l. 1307a; see also chapter 7.

⁹⁷ *Battle of Brunanburh*, ed. Campbell, l. 39.

⁹⁸ Note: the derivations *hārnes* ‘grey-hairedness’ and *unhār* ‘very grey’ are left out of the discussion, because they cannot be shown to carry the sense ‘old’, despite their often describing aspects of elderly people. The words are discussed in detail by Biggam, *Grey in Old English*, 188, 197–202.

The noun *hārunġ* ‘hoariness, old age’ is a combination of *hār* and the noun-forming suffix *-ung*.⁹⁹ Forms of *hārunġ* occur three times in the *DOEC*, as glosses for Lat. *canities* ‘greyness’ and *senium* ‘advanced old age’, respectively:

canities **harung** (ÆGram)

floridam iuuentutem et lacteam caniciem ða blostmbæran iuguðe and þa meolchwitan **harunge** (ÆGram)

[the blossoming youth and the milk-white **old age**]

& oð ylde & **harunga** ne forlæt þu oþ þæt ic kyðe þinne earm ælcere mægðe þe þe is toweard þine mihte *Et usque in senectam et senium deus ne derelinquas me donec annuntiem brachium tuum generationi omni quae uentura est potentiam tuam.* (PsGII [Lindelöf])

[and until old age and **advanced old age**: You, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your arm to each future generation, your power.]

Given its use as a gloss for Lat. *senium*, *hārunġ* should be included in the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old”.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>hārwenġe</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.04.04.03.02 04 Colour of hair: Grey-haired, hoary
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	6
Connotations:	Grey-haired

Hārwenġe ‘grey-cheeked, i.e. having a grey beard’ is a zero-derived denominal adjective, derived from a compound noun of *hār* ‘grey, old’ and *wenġe* ‘cheek’.¹⁰⁰ Forms of *hārwenġe* occur six times in the *DOEC*, all in the works of Ælfric. As Biggam’s comparison with Ælfric’s source texts has revealed, Ælfric used *hārwenġe* to translate Lat. *canos* ‘grey-haired’, *senior* ‘older man’ and *senex* ‘old man’; in addition, “harwenġe and eald” [white bearded and old] translates “aetate provector” [advanced in age] and “ultimate aetatis senior fatigatus” [wearied by the weakness of extreme age].¹⁰¹ As a consequence, we can reasonably assume that *hārwenġe* was a term to denote elderly people and the lexeme should, therefore, be included in the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old”.

⁹⁹ *-ung* is typically a deverbal suffix, but here it apparently functions as a deadjectival suffix, since the verb **hārian* is not attested in Old English. Another example of *-ung* as a deadjectival suffix is OE *onlīcunġ* ‘similitude’ (< *onlīc* ‘similar (adj.)’ + *-ung*). Cf. Kastovsky, ‘Semantics and Vocabulary’, 388; Hogg and Fulk, *Grammar*, §2.37.

¹⁰⁰ The difference in vowels between *wenġe* and (*hār*)*wenġe* is due to i-mutation. Kastovsky, ‘Semantics and Vocabulary’, 395.

¹⁰¹ Biggam, *Grey in Old English*, 221, 265–6.

TOE lemma:	<i>hārwengnes</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.04.04.03.02 04.03 Colour of hair: Hoariness
Frequency (DOEC):	1
Connotations:	Grey-haired, Authority

Hārwengnes, a combination of *hārwenge* and the suffix *-nes*, means ‘grey-cheekedness, having a grey beard’. It occurs only once in the *DOEC*, glossing Lat. *canities* ‘greyness’, *gravitas* ‘authority, importance’ and *senectus* ‘old age’: “*Canities grauitas. senectus harwengnes*” (HIGl [Oliphant]). Consequently, *hārwengnes* should also be included in the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old”. In addition, the fact that *harwengnes* glosses *gravitas* reveals a connection between ‘authority’ and ‘old age’.

TOE lemma:	<i>hārwelle</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	05.11.07.03.03 01.01 Old, not new: Hoary
Frequency (DOEC):	1
Connotations:	-

Clark Hall assigns the meaning ‘hoary, grey-haired’ to *hārwelle*,¹⁰² which is compounded of *hār* ‘grey, old’ and the unidentified element *welle*. The latter is also found in *līfwelle* ‘living’, *rūmwelle* ‘spacious’ and *deadwelle* ‘barren, arid’ and has been connected to PGmc. **wallja* ‘welling, flowing’.¹⁰³ However, *-welle* is more likely related to OE *welig* ‘abounding, rich’, creating the sense ‘abundantly grey, hence: hoary’ for *hārwelle* and, similarly, *līfwelle*, *rūmwelle* and *deadwelle* can be interpreted as ‘abounding in life’, ‘abounding in space’ and ‘abounding in death’, respectively.

Only one form of *hārwelle* is attested in the *DOEC*, where it glosses Lat. *canescens* ‘whitening, covered in white, hoary’ in the phrase “*canescentem mundum* [...] *harwelle v[el] harne middengeard*” [the old or ancient world] (LiEpis [Skeat]); here, *hārwelle* can only mean ‘old’, since, as Biggam rightly notes, “the world is obviously not hairy, and not all white or grey”.¹⁰⁴

The context for the hapax *hārwelle* does not support the proposed sense ‘grey-haired’ in Clark Hall. In addition, since this lexeme is not used here in relation to people, it falls outside the semantic field of human old age.

TOE lemma:	<i>ieldo</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.01.04 Age 02.01.04.03 03 Aging, growing old: Old age 03.02.01.02 Decay from age 05.11.03 Period of time, era, epoch
Frequency (DOEC):	c.550 ¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Clark Hall, s.v. *hārwelle*.

¹⁰³ R. Jordan, *Eigentümlichkeiten des englischen Wortschatzes* (Heidelberg, 1906), 104–5.

¹⁰⁴ On the context of the use of the word, see Biggam, *Grey in Old English*, 222–3.

¹⁰⁵ Based on searches in the *DOEC* for <æld> (3 x), <ældes> (5 x), <ældo> (17 x), <ældu> (4 x), <ældum> (26 x), <eld> (6 x), <eldo> (19 x), <eldum> (12 x), <ielde> (6 x), <ieldo> (2 x), <ilde> (4 x), <iildo> (1 x), <yld> (109 x), <ylde> (301 x), <ylldo> (67 x), <ylldu> (4 x), <ylldum> (13 x).

Connotations:	Decrepitude, Authority
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The noun *ieldo* ‘age, period, old age’ is derived from the adjective *eald*.¹⁰⁶ Forms of this lexeme occur in poetry, prose and glosses. The sense ‘old age’ is illustrated by the fact that forms of this lexeme frequently occur alongside forms of its antonym *geoguð* ‘youth’:

God sceal wið yfele, geoguð sceal wið **yldo**,
lif sceal wið deaþe, leoht sceal wið þystrum.¹⁰⁷

[Good must be against evil, youth must be against **old age**, life must be against death, light must be against darkness.]

Þær byð ece gefea butan unrotnesse and geogop butan **ylde**. (HomS 6 [Ass 14])

[There (in Heaven) will be eternal joy without sadness and youth without **old age**.]

Occasionally, *ieldo* is used as a collective term for ‘old people, the aged’:

& þy we sceolon medmian & gesceadlice todælan **ylde** & geogope, welan & wædle, freot & þeowet, hæle & unhæle. (LawIICn)

[And therefore we must mete out and carefully distinguish between **the aged** and the youthful, the wealthy and the poor, freemen and slaves, the sound and the sick.]

Ieldo also carries the more neutral sense ‘age, period’, as in texts referring to the Ages of the World:

Seo forme **yld** wæs fram Adame. oð Noe; Seo oðer **yld** wæs fram noe. oð Abraham; Seo þridde **yld** wæs fram abrahame. oð Daud. (*ÆCHom II*, 4)

[The first **age** was from Adam to Noah; the second **age** was from Noah to Abraham; the third **age** was from Abraham to David.]

Searches for <eldu>, <ield>, <ieldes>, <ieldu>, <ild>, <ildes>, <ildu>, <ildum> and <ylde> yielded no results. There may be considerable overlap with forms for *eald* ‘old’ and *ieldan* ‘to delay’.

¹⁰⁶ The difference in stem vowels between *eald* and *ieldo* is due to i-mutation caused by the PGmc suffix **-īn-*, also reflected in OS *eldi*, OHG *eltī*, *eltīn*. Cf. Heidermanns, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *alda-īn-*; A. L. Lloyd, R. Lühr and O. Springer, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Althochdeutschen*. Bd. 2: *bī – ezzo* (Göttingen, 1998), s.v. *eltīn*. Through analogy, OE nouns such as *ieldo* fell together with the *ō*-stems, which were formed through the PGmc suffix **-ipō*. See Hogg and Fulk, *Grammar*, §§2.88–2.90.

¹⁰⁷ *Maxims II*, ed. Shippey, ll. 50–1.

In a similar vein, *ieldo* refers to a person's 'age, time of life', in which case the word is usually modified by adjectives such as *cnihtlic* 'boyish', *werlic* 'manly' and *cildlic* 'childish':

ne he mistlice <fugela> sangas ne wurpode, swa oft swa cnihtlicu **yldo** begæð. (LS 10.1 [Guth])

[He did not value the various songs of birds, as often as (those of a) boyish **age** do.]

Eft, þa þa ic to werlicere **ylde** becom, ic awearp and aidlode þa idelnyssa þe ic on cildlicre **ylde** beeode. (ÆHom 20)

[Afterwards, when I reached a manly **age**, I rejected and freed myself from the frivolities which I practiced during my childish **age**.]

In addition, *ieldo* is used in standard constructions to indicate a person's age, such as "Hæfde se bisceop þreo hund wintra on **yldo**" [The bishop was three hundred years of **age**] (Alex).

According to the *TOE*, *ieldo* can also mean '(decay from) old age'. This sense seems applicable to those passages in which *ieldo* occurs amidst other (bodily) ailments:

ac þær bið þeostru beþrycced and hungor and þurst and heto and **yldo** and unhælo and wanung and granung and toða grisbitung (HomS 42 [Baz-Cr])

[but there (in Hell) is oppressive darkness and hunger and thirst and heat and **old age** and unhealthiness and deprivation and groaning and gnashing of teeth.]

mid **ylde** gebiged, and tobryt mid seocnysse, mid unrotnysse fornumen, and geangsumod þurh cara. (ÆLS [Cecilia])

[bent with **old age**, and broken into pieces with sickness, consumed with sadness and afflicted through sorrow.]

Another indication of the apparent relation between decrepitude and old age is the collocation of *ieldo* with *ād* 'disease' in *The Seafarer*, *Maxims I*, *Riddle 43* and *Beowulf*.¹⁰⁸

Finally, like *eald*, *ieldo* can be used to refer to people of a higher rank. The term is used in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* to refer to the nobility of East Anglia, which was decimated by the Vikings in the year 1004: "Ðær wærð Eastengla folces seo **yld**

¹⁰⁸ *The Seafarer*, ed. Klinck, l. 70a: "adl opþe yldo"; *Maxims I*, ed. and trans. Shippey, l. 10a: "adl ne yldo"; *Riddle 43*, ed. Krapp and Dobbie, l. 4a: "yldo ne adle"; *Beowulf*, l. 1738a: "<adl> ne yldo".

ofslagen” [There the **nobility** of the people of the East-Anglians was killed] (ChronE [Irvine]).¹⁰⁹

TOE lemma:	<i>infrōd</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 05.02 Aging, growing old: Very old 06.01.05.02.01.01 01.04.01 Sagacity: Very old and very wise
Frequency (DOEC):	2 ¹¹⁰
Connotations:	Wisdom, Grief

Infrōd ‘very old and very wise’ is a combination of *frōd* ‘old and wise’ and the intensifying prefix *in-*.¹¹¹ Forms of this lexeme are attested twice, both in *Beowulf*, where they are preceded by a form of *eald* ‘old’. Hence, in these two cases it could simply convey the sense ‘very wise’:

Him wæs bega wen
ealdum **infrodum**, opres swiðor,
þæt h[i]e seoðða(n no) geseon moston.¹¹²

[he (Hrothgar), old and very wise, had two thoughts, the second stronger, that they afterwards would not be allowed to see (each other).]

ond he him helpe ne mæg
eald ond **infrod** ænige gefremman.¹¹³

[and he, old and **very wise**, is not able to give him any help.]

Here, *infrōd* does not necessarily have a positive connotation, as Zwikstra has suggested for the non-intensified form *frōd*,¹¹⁴ since in these two occurrences, the term is applied to old, grieving men: Hrothgar, who is sad to see Beowulf leave, and an old father who has lost his son and cannot avenge him.

TOE lemma:	<i>langfære</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 04 Aging, growing old: Long-lived 05.11.11 05 Continuity: Lasting, of long continuance
Frequency (DOEC):	7 ¹¹⁵
Connotations:	-

¹⁰⁹ Cf. “Ðar was Eastengla folces yld mycel ofslagan” (ChronF [Baker]); “ðær wearð Eastengla folces seo yld ofslagen” (ChronC [O’Brien O’Keeffe]); “Þær wearð Eastengla folces seo yldesta ofslægen” (ChronD [Cubbin]).

¹¹⁰ Based on searches for <infrod> and <in frod>.

¹¹¹ Ingersoll, *Modification*, 121–2.

¹¹² *Beowulf*, ll. 1873b–5.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, ll. 2448b–9

¹¹⁴ Cf. Zwikstra, ‘Wintrum frod’, 146.

¹¹⁵ Based on searches for <langfar> (0 x), <langfær> (4 x), <langfer> (3 x), <longfar> (0 x), <longfær> (1 x) and <longfer> (1 x). This includes one result for “langfernysse”.

Langfære ‘long-lived, long-lasting’, cognate to OHG *langfāri* ‘very old’, is a combination of *lang* ‘long’ and the element *fære*, an OE reflex of PGmc. **-fāri-*, an adjective derived from strong verb **fara-* ‘to move’.¹¹⁶ Forms of this lexeme gloss Lat. *diuturnus* ‘long lasting’, *longevus* ‘long-lived’ and, in a birth-prognostic, *posterus* ‘coming, upcoming, following’:

diuturna **langfære** (AldV 1 [Goossens]) [protacted, long lasting]

diuturna, .i. *longeua* **langfere**, *langsum* (AldV 13.1 [Nap]) [long-lasting, long-lived]

Puer natus feruidus, callidus, animosus; in postera etate melius agit cild acenned weallende, abereð, modful, on **langfære** ylde bet he deð. (ProgGl 2 [Först])¹¹⁷

[A child born (on this day will be) fervent, crafty, haughty; in the **following** age he does beter.]

Langfære is never used with reference to old people, as is illustrated by its usage in the *Old English Boethius* and works by Ælfric and Byrhtferth:

forðæm nanwuht <nis> **longfæres** on ðys andweardan life, þeah monnum ðynce þæt hit long sie. (Bo)

[because nothing is **long-lasting** in this present life, though to men it seems to be long.]

Swa eac treowa gif hi beoð on fullum monan geheawene hi beoð heardran & **langfærran** to getimbrunge & swiþost gif hi beoð unsæpige geworhte. (*ÆCHom I*, 6)

[Thus, likewise, trees, if they are felled during the full moon, are harder and **long(er) lasting** for building and especially if they are made sapless.]

Eac ða treowu þe beoð aheawene on fullum monan beoð heardran wið wýrmætan & **langfærran**, þonne ða þe beoð on niwum monan aheawene. (*ÆTemp*)

¹¹⁶ Heidermanns, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *-fāri-*; Lühr, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *langfāri*.

¹¹⁷ *Anglo-Saxon Prognostics. An Edition and Translation of Texts from London, British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius A. iii*, ed. and trans. R. M. Liuzza (Cambridge, 2011), 229, notes that the gloss here “misses the sense of the Latin” and that the same Latin prognostic is elsewhere glossed with the correct “æftewardan”.

Eac þa treowa þe beoð aheawen on fullum monan beoð heardran wið wyrmætan and **langferran** þonne þa þe beoð on niwum monan aheawene. (ByrM 1 [Baker/Lapidge])

[Likewise, the trees which are felled during the full moon are harder against an attack of worms and **long(er)-lasting** than those which are felled during the new moon.]

Finally, the deadjectival noun *langfærnes* occurs only once, glossing Lat. *longinquitas* ‘long duration’ in the *Liber Scintilarum* by Defensor:

Quattuor sunt qualitates affectionum quibus mens iusti salubriter compungitur hoc est memoria preteritorum facinorum consideratio peregrinationis suae in huius uitae longinquitate recordatio poenarum futurarum desiderium supernae patrię [...] feower synd gelicnyssa willena mid þam mod rihtwises halwendlice byð onbryrd þæt ys gemynd forðgewitenra mana besceawung elhðeodignysse his on þyses lifes **langfernysse** gemynd wita towerdra gewilnung upplices epeles. (LibSc)

[There are four qualities of love, with which the mind of the just will be healthily inspired, that is the memory of departed men, the consideration of his pilgrimage during the **long duration** of this life, the thought of future punishments <and> the desire for the heavenly land.]

Overall, the *TOE* categorisation of *langfære* under “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old: Long-lived” is correct, but since the word never refers to people, it falls outside the semantic field of human old age.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>langieldo</i> , n.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 03 Aging, growing old: Old age
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	-
Connotations:	-

Although *langieldo*, a compound of *lang* ‘long’ and *ieldo* ‘age, old age’, is listed as a headword in Clark Hall, with a reference to Sweet’s *Student’s Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon*,¹¹⁸ its inclusion in this dictionary and the *TOE* is unwarranted, since it cannot be established in the extant corpus of Old English. For one, potential word forms of *langieldo* do not appear without the interruption of a space in the *DOEC*.¹¹⁹ Moreover, wherever forms of *lang* and *ieldo* co-occur with a space, the sequence must be a syntactic phrase rather than a compound. There are four such co-occurrences and in

¹¹⁸ Clark Hall, s.v. *langieldo*; H. Sweet, *The Student’s Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1897), s.v. *langieldo*.

¹¹⁹ Based on searches in the *DOEC* for <langald->, <langæld->, <langeald->, <langeld->, <langild->, <langield->, <langyld->, <longald->, <longæld->, <longeald->, <longeld->, <longild->, <longield-> and <longyld->.

each the first element is inflected for case; hence, it cannot be interpreted as the first element of a compound. In the first example, the form “longre” is inflected for the dative case that goes with the preposition *æfter*:

And þa ymb þrage, cwæð Malchus, ‘and æfter **longre yldo**, þa ongan ic don hreowe mines siðfætes’. (LS 35 (VitPatr))

[And then after a time, said Malchus, ‘and after **a long period**, then I began to do penitence for my journey’.]

Two further collocations are found in the Old English translation of Gregory’s *Dialogi* and correspond to the Latin phrases “longum senium” and “longam aetatem:

Hujus autem venerabilis viri, cum ad exemplum vitae sequentium in **longum senium** vita traheretur.¹²⁰

Soðlice þyses arwyrþan weres lif in **langre ylde** wæs getogen to bysne þara æfterfylgendra. (GDPref and 3 [C])

[Truly the life of this honourable man was stretched to **a lengthy old age** as an example for followers.]

Hic ergo venerabilis presbyter cum **longam** vitae implesset **aetatem** ...¹²¹

Witodlice þes arwyrða mæssepreost þa þa he gefylde þa **langan ylde** his lifes ... (GDPref and 4 [C])

[Truly, this honourable masspriest, then when he felt the **lengthy duration** of his life ...]

The final collocation of *lang* and *ieldo* is found in the rendering of Ps. 29:6 “habitabo in domo Domini in longitudine dierum” [that I may live in the house of the Lord unto the length of days] in the Paris Psalter as “Þæt ic mæge wunian on þinum huse, swiþe lange tiid, oð **lange ylde**” (PPs [prose]); here, as with the other examples, the first element is inflected and the sequence can therefore only be interpreted as a phrase.

If Sweet based his headword *langieldo* ‘old age’ on one of the collocations discussed above, his conjecture should be refuted. In each of these cases, the first element is inflected and, therefore, should be interpreted as a word form of the adjective *lang* ‘long, lengthy’. Therefore, *langieldo* should be regarded a ghost word and ought to be struck from our dictionaries.

TOE lemma:	<i>langlīfe</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 05.03 Aging, growing old: Long-lived
Frequency (DOEC):	9 ¹²²

¹²⁰ Gregory, *Dialogues*, ed. de Vogüé, III.v.3.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, IV.xii.3.

Connotations:	Positive development
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Langlīfe, compounded of *lang* ‘long’ and *līf* ‘life’, occurs nine times in the *DOEC*. It appears mainly as a gloss for Lat. *longevus* ‘long-lived’ and can be interpreted as a calque or loan translation. *Langlīfe* is almost exclusively used to refer to people and only once refers to ‘peace’, in the *Durham Ritual*: “*longeva pace custodias longlif sibbe gihald ðv*” [may you keep long-lived peace] (DurRitGl 1 [Thomp-Lind]). In four cases, the word *langlīfe* occurs in Old English translations of Deuteronomy:

La Israhel; gehyr nu bebodu & domas ðe ic lære, & do ða, ðæt ðu sy **langlife** & fare inn & hæbbe ðæt land, ðæt Drihten, eower fædera God, eow syllan wile. (Deut)

[(Deut. 4:1) Lo Israel: hear now the precepts and the laws that I teach and do them, so that you will be **long-lived** and travel into the land and have it, which the Lord, the God of your fathers, wants to give you.]

Arwurða ðinne fæder & ðine modor, ðæt ðu sy **langlife** & ðæt ðu sy welig on ðam lande ðe God ðe syllan wile. (Deut)

[(Deut. 5:16) Honour your father and your mother, so that you will be **long-lived** and that you will be prosperous in the land that God wants to give you.]

*Dominus dicit in ęuuangelio honora patrem et matrem ut bene sit tibi et sis longeuus super terram drihten segð on godspelle arwurpa fæder & moder þæt wel sy þe & þu si **langlife** ofer eorþan.* (LibSc)

[The Lord says in the gospel: ‘honour your father and mother so that you will be well and that you will be **long-lived** on earth’ (reference to Deut. 5:16).]

*Honora patrem ut bene sit tibi et sis longeuus super terram arwurpa fæder þæt wel si þe & þu si **langlife** ofer eorþan.* (LibSc)

[Honour your father so that you will be well and that you will be **long-lived** on earth (reference to Deut. 5:16).]

In each of these occurrences, the state of being *langlīfe* is presented as something positive: a reward for good behaviour. A similar positive stance towards longevity is found in a passage from a nuptial blessing from the *Durham Ritual* and in a birth-prognostic revealing the fate of a male child born on the first day of the moon, respectively:

¹²² Based on searches for <langlif-> (7 x) and <longlif-> (2 x).

sit in ea iugum dilectionis et pacis fidelis et casta nubat in christo imitatrixque sanctorum permaneat feminarum sit amabilis ut rachel uiro sapiens ut rebecca longeua et fidelis ut sarra sie in ðær iwocc lufes & sibbes gitriwa & hygdego gimvngia in criste ðu sie giliced æc halgawara ðerhwnia vifmonna sie lufsvm svæ rah' vere snottor svæ rebec' **longlif** & gileaffvll svæ sar'. (DurRitGl 1 [Thomp-Lind])

[May in it (i.e. matrimony) be the yoke of love and peace, may you, faithful and chaste, marry in Christ and also remain an imitator of holy women, may you be as lovely to your husband as Rachel, as wise as Rebecca, as **long-lived** and faithful as Sarah.]

Luna prima; omnibus rebus agendis utilis est mona se forma; on eallum þingum dondum nytlic ys. *Puer natus erit illustris, astutus, sapiens, litteratus, in aqua periclitatus; si euaserit, longeuus erit* cild acenned bið mære, glæw, wis, gestæflæred, on wætere gedyrfed; gif he ætwint, **langlife** he bið. (ProgGl 2 [Först])

[On the first day of the moon, it is useful to undertake all things. A (male) child born will be famous, skilful, wise, learned, tested in the water; if he escapes (the water), he will be **long-lived**.]

To conclude, the context in which *langlīfe* appears suggests that, on occasion, the Anglo-Saxons considered growing old and living long as something desirable, a positive development.

TOE lemma:	<i>gelēfed</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 04 Aging, growing old: (Of age) advanced, old 02.08.02 07 Disease, infirmity, sickness: Sick, ill, diseased 02.08.04 03 Hurt, injury, damage: Injured 12.08.06.01.02 14 Lacking moral good: Corrupted
Frequency (DOEC):	6
Connotations:	-

Gelēfed is featured as a headword in the dictionaries of Bosworth-Toller, with the sense ‘Corrupted, injured, weakened, advanced [in age]’, and Clark Hall, with the sense ‘weak, sickly, aged’. *Gelēfed* can be interpreted as a combination of the adjective *lēf* ‘feeble, infirm, weak, injured’, the associative prefix *ge-* and the attributive suffix *-ed*.¹²³ OE *lēf* derives from PGmc. **lē2ba-* ‘weak, infirm’ and has Germanic cognates in OF and OS *lēf* ‘feeble, infirm’, but has also been linked to PGmc. **lē2pa-* ‘crooked, wicked’.¹²⁴ OE *lēf* is also related to OE *ā-lēfan*, *ā-lēfian*, *ā-lēwan* ‘to cripple, maim, injure’.¹²⁵ Despite the common association between old age

¹²³ Cf. Kastovsky, ‘Semantics and Vocabulary’, 380; Koziol, *Handbuch*, §§227, 439. See also *gewintred*, below.

¹²⁴ Heidermanns, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s.v. *lē2ba-*.

¹²⁵ DOE, s.v. *ā-lēfan*, *ā-lēfian*, *ā-lēwan*

and feebleness, an overview of the Indo-European cognates for *lēf* makes clear that the sense ‘old’ is only assigned to OE *gelēfed*:

[...] OE. *lēf* < **lōfi*- ‘infirm, diseased, ill’, *gelēfed* ‘weak, old’. With these compare Lith. *alpnas* ‘schwach, ohnmächtig,’ *alpstù* ‘pine away, faint’, Gk. *ἀλαπαδνός* ‘weakened, feeble’ [...] Skt. *alpa*, *alpaca* ‘small, weak’ [...] The primary meaning of this group was probably ‘flow, flow out; cause to flow out, empty, exhaust,’ whence ‘weaken, plunder, waste, destroy,’ etc.¹²⁶

However, as will be demonstrated below, there are no tracable attestations of OE *gelēfed* which allow for the additional sense ‘old’.

Finding occurrences of *gelēfed* in the *DOEC* is hampered by the fact that potential word forms, such as “gelefed”, are easily confused with the reflexes of the past participle forms of *libban* ‘to live’ and *līefan* ‘to allow, grant; to believe’. A search for <gelefed-> in the *DOEC* yields twenty results. Seventeen of these are Old English glosses, but none of these confirm the categorisation of the *TOE*: they are glosses for Lat. *licet* ‘it is allowed’ (13x), *credo* ‘to believe’ (2 x), *oportet* ‘it is allowed’ (1 x) and *dimissus* ‘sent off (as in: permitted to go)’ (1 x), suggesting that they are all past participle forms of *līefan* ‘to allow, grant; to believe’. Of the remaining three non-gloss forms of <gelefed->, the first also belongs to the verb *līefan*: the translator of the *Old English Bede* renders Latin “aestimabatur” [was estimated] as “wæs tald 7 gelefed” [was reckoned and believed].¹²⁷ The second form is found in the phrase “riht gelefed mann” (Notes 21 (Warn)), where, presumably, “riht gelefed” is a word form of *rihtgelyfed* ‘orthodox, catholic’. Only the third occurrence outside of the glosses appears to fit the *TOE* lemma and is used to refer to the ill state of the spleen:

Bið aþened se milte & aþunden mid geswelle & eac hat lyft & swolga bringað adle on ðam milte þonne se mon wyrð to swiþe forhæt. Swa bið eac on wintra for cyle & for þara <wedra> missenlicnesse þæt se milte wyrð **gelefed**. (Lch II (2))

[The spleen is extended and distended with swelling and also hot air and hot weather bring disease to the spleen when a man becomes too much heated. So it is also in the winter, because of the cold and because of the variability of the weathers, that the spleen becomes **corrupted/diseased**.]

Searching for alternative spellings of *gelēfed* yields little results. The form <lefed-> is attested four times in the *DOEC*: twice as a form of *libban*,¹²⁸ once as a translation for “devota” [devoted, believing] in the *Old English Bede*,¹²⁹ and once as part of a gloss for Latin *licet* ‘it is allowed’.¹³⁰ There are six occurrences for <gilefed->, all glosses

¹²⁶ F. A. Wood, ‘Etymological Notes’, *MLN* 15 (1900), 165.

¹²⁷ Bede, *HE*, IV.23; *Old English Bede*, ed. Miller, 336.

¹²⁸ “He **lefede** hundseofontig writen *xiiii* winter [...]. He **lefede** six hund winter” (HeptNotes).

¹²⁹ Bede, *HE*, II.2; *Old English Bede*, ed. Miller, 100.

¹³⁰ “non licet [...] nere lefed” (MkG1 [Li]).

for forms of *licet* (4 x), *credo* (1 x) and *legitima* ‘legitimate’ (1 x). Similarly, none of the occurrences for <gelefd-> (115 x) and <gilefd-> (50 x) are forms of the word which, according to the *TOE*, means ‘old, sick, injured, corrupted’.

The entry for *gelēfed* in Bosworth-Toller reveals two further possible spelling variants that should be taken into account: <gelewed-> and <gelyfed->. Forms of the first spelling variant, <gelewed->, occur five times in the *DOEC*.¹³¹ These occurrences all denote states of moral or physical corruption and, therefore, seem to belong to the lexical item *gelēfed* as found in Bosworth-Toller and Clark Hall:

Her syndan þurh synleawa, swa hit þincan mæg, sare **gelewede**¹³² to manege on earde. (WHom 20.3)

[Here, through injuries caused by sin, as it might appear, too many on earth are surely (**morally**) **corrupted**.]

Ðonne dyde Petrus þurh godes mihta betere þing, gehælde mistlice gebrocode men, blinde and deafe and dumbe and mistlice **gelewede**. (HomU 58 [Nap 16])

[Then Peter, through God’s might, did better things; he healed all kinds of physically challenged people, blind and deaf and dumb and otherwise **injured**.]

Gyf hwa befæste his nyxtan ænig nyten & hit bið dead oþþe **gelewed** oþþe ætbroden. (Exod)

[If anyone entrusts any cattle to his neighbour, and it dies or gets **injured** or stolen.]

Se þe æt his nextan hwæt to læne abit, gif hit **gelewed** bið oððe dead. (Exod)¹³³

[If he borrows anything from his neighbour, if it gets **injured** or dies.]

& swa do ælce dæge oð þæt se dæl þæs lichoman þe þær adeadod wæs & **gelewed** to þære ærran hælo becume. (Lch II [Fragment])

[and do so every day until that part of the body, which was paralysed and **injured**, returns to its former health.]

In none of these occurrences, however, can *gelēfed* possibly mean ‘old’.

¹³¹ For a similar alternation between “f” and “w”, see DOE, s.v. *ā-lēfan*, *ā-lēfian*, *ā-lēwan*.

¹³² Bosworth-Toller, s.v. *gelēfed*, quotes from Sweet’s *Anglo-Saxon Reader*: “gelefed”.

¹³³ In these two translations of Exod. 20:10 and 20:14, “gelewed” translates Latin “debilitatum” [hurt, afflicted].

The second spelling variant listed in Bosworth-Toller, <gelyfed>, is based on the *Old English Bede*, where the form “gelyfdre ylðo” translates Latin “provectionis aetatis” [advanced age].¹³⁴ Bosworth-Toller interpret the word form “gelyfdre” as a form of *gelēfed* and assigned it the sense ‘advanced [in age]’, which, in turn, may have spawned the sense ‘old’ in Clark Hall. A search through the *DOEC* – <gelyfd-> (451 x) and <gelyfed-> (115 x) – resulted in only one other instance of a form which can be interpreted as ‘advanced (in age)’: “gelyfdre eldo”, found, again, in the *Old English Bede* as a translation of “aetate provectionis” [advanced age].¹³⁵

The question now remains whether the two forms of <gelyfd-> in the *Old English Bede*, denoting ‘advanced [in age]’, belong to the same lexical item (*gelēfed*) as the forms of <gelewed-> and <gelefed->, discussed above, which denote moral and physical corruption. The answer is not necessarily affirmative. For one, the <gelyfd-> forms in the *Old English Bede* can be seen as spelling variants of the regular past participle form of *libban* ‘to live, experience, be, exist’: *gelifd*.¹³⁶ Thus, in the phrases “gelyfdre ylðo” and “gelyfdre eldo”, the first element must be interpreted as ‘experienced, having lived for a considerable time’, hence, ‘advanced in age’, without having to interpret the form “gelyfdre” as a form of *gelēfed*.

In view of the above, there is no reason to assign the sense ‘old’ or ‘advanced in age’ to the lexical item *gelēfed*. As a consequence, the lexeme should be struck from the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old” and the Old English dictionaries should be amended accordingly.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>līflīc</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01 02 Existence, life: Of/concerning life, vital 02.01.04.03 05.03 Aging, growing old: Long-lived 02.01.02.01 That lives, living 06.01.05.02 01 Intelligence: (Of mind) lively, quick 16.02.01.12 05.01 Spirituality: Spiritually vital
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	86 ¹³⁷
Connotations:	-

Līflīc, a combination of *līf* ‘life’ and the adjectival suffix *-lic*, has as its main sense ‘lively’ and, according to the *TOE*, can also mean ‘long-lived’. However, Stern, in the only word study devoted to *līflīc*,¹³⁸ does not provide the sense ‘long-lived’ and gives instead:

1. Possessed of life, living, animate. [...] 2. Of or pertaining to life; necessary to life, vital. [...] 3. Of an image, picture, etc.: Life-like,

¹³⁴ Bede, *HE*, IV.24; *Old English Bede*, ed. Miller, 342.

¹³⁵ Bede, *HE*, III.8; *Old English Bede*, ed. Miller, 174.

¹³⁶ Note: *gelifd* has a short vowel in the stem, unlike *gelēfed*, but vowel length is rarely indicated in manuscripts and cannot always be plausibly reconstructed in prose texts, such as the *Old English Bede*.

¹³⁷ Based on search in the *DOEC* for <līflīc->.

¹³⁸ See A. Cameron, A. Kingsmill, A. C. Amos, *Old English Word Studies: A Preliminary Author and Word Index* (Toronto, 1983).

animated, vivid. [...] 4. Of persons, their faculties and actions: vigorous, energetic, active, brisk. [...] 5. Of colour: vivid, brilliant, fresh.¹³⁹

The categorisation of *līflīc* in the *TOE* under “02.01.04.03|05.03 Aging, growing old: Long-lived”, is likely based on Bosworth-Toller, s.v. *līflīc*, which provides the sense and two supportive citations from birth lunaries: “II. long-lived: Se þe acenned bið, liflic (vitalis) he bið [...]. On anre nihte ealdne monan þæt cild þæt swa bið acenned, þæt bið liflic (lang lifes, v. l.)”. The sense ‘long-lived’ is thus based on two facts: (1) that *līflīc* occurs as a translation for Latin *vitalis* and (2) that a lunary concerning a child born on the first night of the old moon has come down in two versions: one with the word “liflic” and the other with the words “lang lifes”.

The interpretation of both of these facts, however, is problematic. First of all, Lat. *vitalis* does not commonly have the sense ‘long-lived’.¹⁴⁰ Secondly, the version of the birth lunary that supposedly replaces “lang lifes” with “liflic” does not do so consistently:¹⁴¹

Onre .i. nihte ealdne monan þæt cild þæt swa bið acenned, þæt bið **liflic**.
[...] On .iii. nihte aldne monan se leofað lange. [...] On .vi. nihte þæt bið
lang lifes gesælig. (CCCC, MS 391)

[On the first night of the old moon, that child that is born thus, he will be **lively**. (...) On the third night of the old moon, he lives for a long time. (...) On the sixth night that will be **long of life** (and) prosperous.]

Se ðe bið acenned on an nihtne mona se bið **lange lifes** 7 weleði. [...] Gif he bið acenned on .ooo. nihtne monan se leofað lange 7 hydig. [...] Se þe bið acenned on .vi. nihtne, se bið **lange lifes** 7 geselig. (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 115)

[He who is born on the first night of the moon he will be **long of life** and rich. (...) If he will be born on the third night of the moon, he lives for a long time and chastily. (...) He who is born on the sixth night, he will be **long of life** and prosperous.]

Līflīc, in other words, was not mutually exclusive or interchangeable with “lang lifes” in the Cambridge version of the lunary. It is not unlikely, therefore, that *līflīc* was used in the Cambridge version with the sense ‘lively’. Indeed, the two most recent editions of this birth lunary translate *līflīc* as ‘lively, full of life’, rather than ‘long-lived’.¹⁴²

Given the lack of conclusive evidence for the sense ‘long-lived’, as well as the testimonies by Stern and the two most recent editions of the birth lunary which is cited

¹³⁹ G. Stern, *Swift, Swiftly, and Their Synonyms: A Contribution to Semantic Analysis and Theory* (Göteborg, 1921), 160–4.

¹⁴⁰ J. F. Niermeyer and C. van de Kieft, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus*, rev. J. W. J. Burgers (Leiden, 2002), s.v. *vitalis*.

¹⁴¹ Citations taken from L.S. Chardonnens, *Anglo-Saxon Prognostics, 900–1100: Study and Texts* (Leiden, 2007), texts 9.2.2/1 and 9.2.2./4.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 427; *Anglo-Saxon Prognostics*, ed. and trans. Liuzza, 159, 265.

by Bosworth-Toller as evidence for the sense, it is safer to assume that *liflic* did not have the sense of ‘long-lived’. As such, it should be removed from the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old”.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>ofereald</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 05.02 Aging, growing old: Very old
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	2 ¹⁴³
Connotations:	-

Ofereald ‘very old’ is a combination of the intensifying prefix *ofer-* and the adjective *eald* ‘old’. Forms of *ofereald* occur twice in the *DOEC*, in two different manuscript versions of the same passage in the Old English translation of the Benedictine Rule. In both, *ofereald* denotes the category of people who are aged to such a degree that they would normally be shown mercy:

Ʒeah hit gecyndelic sy on menniscum gewunan, Ʒæt man mildheortnesse cyðe Ʒam **oferealdum** and Ʒam cildgeongum, Ʒeahhweðere ne scylen hy beon butan regole, Ʒæt is lifes rihtinge. (BenR)

Ʒeah hit gecundelic sy on mænniscum gewunan, Ʒæt man mildheortnesse cyðe Ʒam **oferealdan** & Ʒam geongum cilde, Ʒeahhweðere ne sculon hig beon butan reogele, Ʒæt is lifes rihtinge. (BenRW)

[Although it is natural in human custom to show mercy to the **very old** and the youthful, nevertheless they must not be without a rule, which is the rule of monastic life.]

Here, *ofereald* is used to translate Lat. *senex* ‘old man’.¹⁴⁴

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>ofergēare</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 05 Aging, growing old: (Of beings, etc.) old, of great age
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	1
Connotations:	-

Bosworth-Toller, s.v. *ofergēare* ‘old, superannuated’, provide one citation: “Gif wȳrm ete ða teƷ genim ofergeare hōlenrinde”, which appears in the *DOEC* as follows:

Gif wȳrm ete Ʒa teð genim **ofer geare** hōlenrinde & eforƷrotan moran, wel on swa hatum, hafa on muƷe swa hat swa Ʒu hatost mæge. (Lch II [1])¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Simple searches conducted for <ofereald-> (2 x), <oferald-> (0 x), <oferæld-> (0 x), <ofereld-> (0 x), <oferold-> (0 x), <oferaeld-> (0 x), <oferyld-> (6 x, but see *oferyldo* below).

¹⁴⁴ *Die Winteney-version der Regula s. Benedicti*, ed. A. Schröer (Halle, 1888); rpt. with appendix by M. Gretsch (Tübingen, 1978), 80: “Licet ipsa natura humana trahatur ad misericordiam in his etatibus, senum uidelicet et infantum, tamen et regule auctoritas eis prospiciat”.

[If a worm eats the teeth, take **old** holly bark and the root of the carline thistle, boil in so hot (water), have (it) in the mouth as hot as the hottest you are able (to have it).]

Bosworth-Toller points out that the construction *ofergeare* is similar to OE *þrigēare* ‘three years old’ and German *über-jährig* ‘superannuated, old’. An alternative translation of *ofergeare* is provided by Thomas O. Cockayne: “over a year old”.¹⁴⁶

The question whether *ofergeare* means ‘old, superannuated’ or ‘over a year old’ is difficult to solve, due to the lack of other attestations. In the *DOEC*, only one other possible instance of *ofergeare* is found, but in this case it certainly means ‘for over a year’ or ‘during the year’:

Sume preostas healdað þæt husl, þe bið on easterdæg gehalgod, ofer gear to seocum mannum. (ÆLet 1 [Wulfsgie X a])

[Some priests retain the host, which is consecrated at Easter, for over a year (or during the year) for sick people.]

Given the uncertainty regarding the meaning of *ofergeare* and the fact that it is never used with reference to a person, I will not treat this lexeme as part of the semantic field for human old age.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>oferylđu</i> , n.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 03.02 Aging, growing old: Extreme old age
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	6 ¹⁴⁷
Connotations:	Decrepitude

Oferylđu is a combination of the intensifying prefix *ofer-* and *ieldo* ‘old age, age’ and means ‘extreme or very old age’. Four of its occurrences are found in homilies and the stage of a person’s life directly preceding death, characterised by the decline of bodily functions:

Se ealda man him mæg gewislice witod witan, þæt him se deað genealæcð for ðære **oferylde**, þe him on sihð. (HomU 27 [Nap 30])

[The old man must certainly know that death approaches him because of his **extreme old age**, which descends upon him.]

Þonne is þære æfteran helle onlicnes genemned **oferylđo**, for þan him amolsniað þa eagan for ðære **oferylđo** ða þe wæron gleawe on gesyhðe, &

¹⁴⁵ The fact that *ofergeare* here appears as two words separated by a space, rather than one, is not remarkable, as this often happened in Old English manuscripts. See Kastovsky, ‘Semantics and Vocabulary’, 290.

¹⁴⁶ *Leechdoms*, ed. Cockayne, II, 51.

¹⁴⁷ Based on searches in the *DOEC* for <oferylđ-> (6 x). Searches for <oferild->, <oferield->, yielded no results. See also *ofereald*.

þa earan adimmiað ða ðe ær meahton gehyran fægere sangas. (HomS 4 [ScraggVerc 9])

[Then is the second prefiguration of Hell named ‘**extreme old age**’, because his eyes weaken because of old age, those that had been keen of sight, and his ears become dim, which had been able to hear beautiful songs.]

Þonne bið þære æfteran helle onlicnesse her on worulde **oferyldo** <nemned>, þonne him þa earan adeafiaþ þa ðe ær mehton geheran fægre sangas. (HomU 15.1 [Scragg])

[Then is the second prefiguration of Hell here on earth is named ‘**extreme old age**’, when his ears become deaf, which had been able to hear beautiful songs.]

Oferyldu is also found in combination with *geoguð* ‘youth’ to mean ‘everyone’ in two different manuscript versions of the same passage in the Old English translation of the Benedictine Rule:

Forði þonne, butan þam anum, þe for heora leahtrum of hyra endebyrdnesse utor ascofene synd, oðþe for haliges lifes geearnunge innor genumene, ælc oþer, **oferylde** and geogeþe, healde his endebyrdnesse. (BenR)

Forði þonne, buton þam anum, þe for heora leahtrum of hyre endebyrdnysse uttor ascofene syn, oððe for haliges lifes geearnunge innor beoð genumene, ælc oðer, **oferylde** & geogeðe, healde hyre endebyrdnesse. (BenRW)

[Therefore then, except for those, who because of their vices have been removed from their rank, or because of the merits of a blessed life are promoted to (a higher rank), every one, **extreme old age** and youth, keeps his rank.]

TOE lemma:	<i>onealdian</i> , v.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 02 Aging, growing old: To grow old 05.11.07.03.03 05 Old, not new: To grow old
Frequency (DOEC):	1
Connotations:	-

Onealdian, a combination of the prefix *on-* and *ealdian* ‘to grow old’,¹⁴⁸ occurs only once in the *DOEC*, as a gloss for a form of Lat. *invetero* ‘to grow old’ in Ps. 31:3:

¹⁴⁸ Clark Hall, s.v. *on-*, notes that the prefix is often meaningless, as seems to be the case here.

Forþam ic swigode onealdedon ban min þonne ic clypode ælce dæge.
Quoniam tacui inueterauerunt ossa mea dum clamarem tota die. (PsGlG
 [Rosier])

[Because I was silent, my bones grew old, while I cried out every day.]

Searches for possible spelling variants for *onealdian* in the *DOEC* yielded no further results, as all findings turned out to be variants of the word *onǣlan* ‘to set fire to, ignite, heat, inspire, incite, inflame, burn, consume’.¹⁴⁹

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>onsīgende</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 04.01 Aging, growing old: Decaying 05.12.05.02.01 02 To come upon, meet with: Coming upon, attacking
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	17 ¹⁵⁰
Connotations:	-

Onsīgende is the present participle form of the verb *onsīgan* ‘to sink, decline, descend, approach, impend, assail’, which, in turn, is a combination of the prefix *on-* and *sīgan* ‘to sink, descend’. *Onsīgende* is listed as a separate lexical item in the *TOE*, but does not appear as a headword in either Bosworth-Toller or Clark Hall.

The *TOE* categorisation of *onsīgende* is problematic, since none of its seventeen occurrences in the *DOEC* can plausibly be translated with ‘growing old, decaying’. The lexeme is applied to people as a collective, *here* ‘army’, as well as immaterial things, such as *ǣfen* ‘evening’, *cwealm* ‘ruin’ and *grama* ‘anger’. In most cases, the appropriate translation of *onsīgende* is ‘advancing, approaching’:

Swa oft swa we clypodon to Criste on gefeohte we wurdon sigefæste sona
 þurh his fultum, and we eac oferswiðdon þone **onsigendan** here. (*ÆLS*
 [Forty Soldiers])

[As often as we cried out to Christ during a fight, we immediately became
 victorious through his help, and we also vanquished the **advancing** army.]

Þes weoruldlice dæg þe us gewunelic is, bið iendod mid þan **onsigendum**
 æfne. (*ÆHomM* 2 [Irv 3])

[This worldly day, that is customary to us, is ended with the **advancing**
 evening.]

Gregorius ða ær his hadunge. þæt romanisce folc for ðam **onsigendum**
 cwealme. ðisum wordum to bereowsunge tihte. (*ÆCHom II*, 9)

¹⁴⁹ All results for <onæld-> (52 x), <oneald-> (1 x), <oneld-> (1 x), <onyld-> (1 x) turned out to be forms of *onǣlan* and searches for <onald->, <onold->, <onaeld-> and <onild-> yielded no results.

¹⁵⁰ Based on search for <onsigend-> in the *DOEC*. Possible variants <onsigand->, <onsigond->, <onsygend->, <onsygand-> and <onsygond-> yielded no results.

[Gregorius, then, before his ordination, persuaded the Roman people, because of the **impending** ruin, with these words to repentance.]

He ferde & bodade þæt him wæs godes grama **onsigende**. gif hi to gode bugan noldon. (*ÆCHom I*, 18)

[He travelled and proclaimed that God's anger was **approaching** them, if they did not wish to bow to God.]

Similarly, the Latin words which are glossed with *onsīgende* favour its inclusion under the *TOE* category “05.12.05.02.01|02 To come upon, meet with: Coming upon, attacking” rather than “02.01.04.03|04.01 Aging, growing old: Decaying”:

Vergente...vesperae – **onsigendum**... æfene (HyGI 2 [Milfull]) [advancing evening]

inruente fastidio – **onsigendre** earfoðnyse (LibSc) [approaching hardship]

ingruenti – **onsigendum** be (AldV 1 [Goossens]) [concerning those who are attacking]

Possibly, the *TOE* categorisation of *onsīgende* under ‘Aging, growing old: Decaying’ was based on Bosworth-Toller’s interpretation of the following passage:

Swa byð þæs mannes wite þe wyrðeð eall fornumen mid **onsigendre** ylde and se deað geendað þone ærran wite þonne ongitt þin sawl þæt þu sylf lufodest idel. (*ÆAdmon 1*)

In Bosworth-Toller, s.v. *onsīgan*, “mid onsigendre ylde” is translated as “with declining years”, i.e. years of decline. A more likely translation for the phrase, however, is “with advancing/approaching old age”. This translation is supported by the observation in Bosworth-Toller that *onsīgan* is typically used “of forces approaching to attack” and “of evil that falls upon one”, such as *here* ‘army’, *cwealm* ‘ruin’, *deað* ‘death’ and *grama* ‘anger’. “Ylde”, especially within the context of the passage above, seems to fit into the category of ‘evil that falls upon one’, which would favour the following translation and interpretation of the passage:

Thus is the beauty of a man, who becomes completely disfigured with **advancing** old age, and death ends the former beauty; then your soul understands that you yourself have loved vanity.

This interpretation can further be substantiated by a similar combination of a noun denoting old age and a form of the verb *onsīgan* in a homily by Wulfstan, where the verb cannot possibly mean ‘decline’:¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ For a similar construction, see *The Seafarer*, ed. Klinck, ll. 91-2a: “ylde him on fareð, onsyn blacað, / gomelfeax gnornað” [Old age advances upon him, his face grows pale, the greyhaired one

Se ealda man him mæg gewislice witod witan, þæt him se deað genealæcð
for ðære **oferylde, þe him on sihð**. (HomU 27 [Nap 30])

[The old man can certainly know that death approaches him because of
extreme age, which advances/descends upon him.]

In view of the above, *onsīgende* cannot be regarded as an Old English word relating to old age; therefore, it should be struck from the *TOE* category “02.01.04.03 Aging, growing old”.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>oreald</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	02.01.04.03 05.02 Aging, growing old: Very old
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	2 ¹⁵²
Connotations:	Decrepitude

Oreald ‘very old’ is a combination of the intensifying prefix *or-* and *eald* ‘old’. In the Old English translation of Gregory’s *Dialogi*, *oreald* renders Latin “aetatem decrepitam” [the age of decrepitude]:

Qui uidelicet Valerianus usque ad **aetatem decrepitam** leuis ac lubricus
exitit, modumque suis prauitatibus ponere contempsit.¹⁵³

Witodlice se Ualerianus wæs swiðe leas man & wræne aa, oð þæt he wæs
oreald, & forhogode, þæt he ænig gemet sette his wohdædum. (GDPref and
4 [C])

[Truly, this Valerianus was a very vain man and always lustful, until he was
very old, and he refused to set any moderation to his evil deeds.]

The only other occurrence of *oreald* is in the *Old English Boethius*. This passage, describing Charon has no known Latin equivalent:¹⁵⁴

ða wæs ðær eac swiðe egeslic geatweard, ðæs nama sceolde bion Caron; se
hæfde eac þrio heafdu, & <se> wæs swiðe **oreald**. (Bo)

[Then there was also a very terrible porter, whose name must be Caron; he
also had three heads and he was very **very old**.]

mourns]; cf. *DOE*, s.v. *faran*, sense I.C.4.a “figurative, of old age: to advance upon, assail (someone, on and dat.)”.

¹⁵² Simple searches conducted for <oreald-> (2 x), <orald-> (0), <oræld-> (0), <oreld-> (1 x, but see *oryldo* below), <orold-> (0), <oraeld-> (0), <oryld-> (1 x, but see *oryldo* below).

¹⁵³ Gregory, *Dialogues*, ed. de Vogüé, IV.liv.1.

¹⁵⁴ *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius’s De consolazione philosophiae*, ed. and trans., M. Godden and S. Irvine (Oxford, 2009) II, 419 (note to 35.219–224).

TOE lemma:	<i>oryldu</i> , n.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.03 03.02 Aging, growing old: Extreme old age
Frequency (DOEC):	2 ¹⁵⁵
Connotations:	-

Oryldu ‘very old age, great age’ is a combination of the intensifying prefix *or-* and the noun *ieldo* ‘old age’. In the Old English poetic verse translation of Ps. 70:17–8, *oryldu* is used to render the Latin phrase “senectutem et canos” [old age and grey hairs]:

A ic wundor þin weorþlic sægde,
and ic þæt wið oryldu awa fremme;
ne forlæt þu me, lifigende god!¹⁵⁶

[Always I have spoken of your worthy wonder, and I will do that continually until **very old age**; Do not leave me, living God!]

The second time *oryldu* is used is in the *Old English Boethius*, but, as with *oreald* above, there is no Latin equivalent for this passage:¹⁵⁷

æc hi hine magon mid goodum weorcum gelettan, þæt he þe lator cymð; ge
<furþum> oð **oreldo** hi hine hwilum gelettað. (Bo)

[but they are able to defer it (death) with good deeds, so that it comes the later; yes, even until **very old age** they sometimes defer it.]

TOE lemma:	<i>unorne</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	12.01.01.11 02.03 The common people: Of lowly rank
Frequency (DOEC):	1
Connotations:	-

Unorne is a *hapax legomenon*: it occurs only once in the *DOEC*, to describe Dunnere, one of the English warriors in *The Battle of Maldon*: “unorne ceorl”.¹⁵⁸ Bosworth-Toller and Clark Hall differ with respect to the senses they attribute to *unorne*: the former gives ‘simple, plain, poor, mean, humble’, the latter ‘old, worn out, decrepit’.¹⁵⁹ Clark Hall’s translation is based on a related *hapax*, *unornlic*, which is used in the phrase “unornlic scrud” to render Latin “ueteribus uestimentis” in the Old

¹⁵⁵ Simple searches conducted for <oreald-> (2 x, but see *oreald* above), <orald-> (0), <oræld-> (0), <oreld-> (1 x), <orold-> (0), <oraeld-> (0), <oryld-> (1 result).

¹⁵⁶ *The Paris Psalter*, ed. Krapp, Ps. 70, ll. 50–3. Ps. 70:17–8: “Deus docuisti ab adulescentia mea et usque nunc adnuntiabo mirabilia tua insuper et usque ad senectutem et canos Deus ne derelinquas me” [You have taught me, God, from my adolescence and until now I will proclaim Your wonderful works furthermore and until old age and grey hairs, God, do not leave me].

¹⁵⁷ *Old English Boethius*, ed. and trans. Godden and Irvine, II, 488 (note to 41.28–36).

¹⁵⁸ *Battle of Maldon*, l. 256a.

¹⁵⁹ Bosworth-Toller, s.v. *unorne*; Clark Hall, s.v. *unorne*, the supplement by Meritt gives ‘simple’ for *unorne*.

English translation of Josh. 9:4.¹⁶⁰ Even though this use of *unornlic* for Latin *uetus* ‘old’ speaks in favour of Clark Hall’s interpretation of *unorne* as ‘old’, the etymology of *unorne* and its Middle English attestations suggest that the sense provided by Bosworth-Toller, ‘plain, humble’, is correct. *Unorne* is a combination of the negative prefix *un-* and the adjective *or(e)ne* ‘excessive’, which fits with the sense ‘not excessive, therefore plain, humble’.¹⁶¹ Moreover, the sense ‘plain, simple’ is confirmed by the earliest attestations of the word *unorne* in Middle English, all of which appear unrelated to human old age and denote plain, lowly-ranked individuals and objects.¹⁶²

All things considered, then, Clark Hall’s translation ‘old’ for *unorne* in *The Battle of Maldon* should give way to the sense provided by Bosworth-Toller and the *TOE* ‘plain, humble, of lowly rank’. Consequently, *unorne* falls outside the semantic field of human old age.

<i>TOE</i> lemma:	<i>wintercearig</i> , adj.
<i>TOE</i> categories:	08.01.03 09.08 Bad feeling, sadness: Sad with years
Frequency (<i>DOEC</i>):	1
Connotations:	-

Wintercearig is a compound of the noun *winter* ‘winter’ and the adjective *cearig* ‘anxious, troubled’. This lexical item has been interpreted in two ways: ‘sad with years, sad due to old age’ and ‘sad from or like winter’.¹⁶³ The former interpretation relies on a metaphorical explanation of *winter* as ‘year’, as in *winter-gerīm* ‘number of years’ and *winter-getel* ‘number of years’, whereas the latter is based on a literal interpretation of the first element, as in *winter-ceald* ‘winter-cold’ and *winter-tīd* ‘winter-time’.

Wintercearig is a *hapax legomenon* and occurs in *The Wanderer*. The term is used to describe the speaker’s state of mind when, long ago, he had buried his lord and had departed from his homeland in search of a new leader:

sippan geara iu goldwine mine
 hrusan heolstre biwrah ond ic hean þonan
 wod wintercearig ofer wapema gebind,

¹⁶⁰ *Old English Version of the Heptateuch*, ed. Crawford, 391. The phrase is used to describe the old, ragged clothing that the Gabaonites use to deceive Joshua that they have returned from a long and arduous journey.

¹⁶¹ The etymology of *or(e)ne* itself is not entirely clear. Hesitantly, F. Holthausen, ‘Etymologische Forschungen’, in *Streitberg Festgabe* (Leipzig, 1924), 157, has suggested that *or(e)ne* was composed of the prefix *or-* and the adjective **(ge)hīene* ‘humble, mean’ and, so, must mean ‘not mean, therefore excessive’. While Holthausen’s etymology is accepted in *The Battle of Maldon*, ed. Gordon, 57, the editors of the *OED* (3rd. ed.), s.v. *orne*, consider the etymology “very unconvincing”, albeit without providing an alternative. Emerson, ‘Notes on Old English’, 207, suggests there may be a connection with Scandinavian *orna* ‘grow warm’, but this would require considerable semantic shifts to get to Old English *or(e)ne* ‘excessive’.

¹⁶² See the quotations provided in *MED*, s.v. *unorne*. See also Wyatt, *Anglo-Saxon Reader*, 282.

¹⁶³ Bosworth-Toller, s.v. *wintercearig*: “Sad from age or from the gloom of winter”; Clark Hall, s.v. *wintercearig*: “winter-sad, sad with years?”.

sohte seledreorig since bryttan.¹⁶⁴

[since years ago I cover my gold-friend with the darkness of earth and I, wretched and winter-sad, went from there over the binding of the waves, sad at the loss of a hall, sought a giver of treasure.]

While a connection with either old age or winter makes sense against the backdrop of the poem as a whole – the lament of an old man, which features several descriptions and references to cold weather – the direct context of *wintercearig* does not support either the sense ‘sad with old age’ nor ‘sad from winter’. Nothing suggests that the speaker departed from his homeland during winter, nor did the speaker bury his lord in his old age: the event took place years ago and other memories of “his goldwine” are later presented as having taken place “on geoguðe” [in youth] (l. 35). Eric G. Stanley has argued, therefore, that *wintercearig* is an example of the modern phrase ‘cold care’, an expression which associated misery with the cold.¹⁶⁵ Put differently, the desolation felt by the speaker is *like* that experienced in winter, not *due* to winter or a tally of years.

To conclude, the context for the hapax *wintercearig* does not support the sense ‘sad with years’ provided by the TOE. Consequently, that sense should be replaced by ‘winter-sad, troubled as in winter’ and *wintercearig* cannot be considered part of the semantic field for old age.

TOE lemma:	<i>gewintred</i> , adj.
TOE categories:	02.01.04.02 05 To grow, grow up: grown up, adult 02.01.04.03 05 Aging, growing old: (Of beings, etc.) old, of great age
Frequency (DOEC):	11 ¹⁶⁶
Connotations:	-

Gewintred ‘old, grown up’ is a combination of *winter* ‘winter, year’, the associative prefix *ge-* and the attributive suffix *-ed*, i.e. ‘having many years, hence: old’.¹⁶⁷ *Gewintred* is exclusively used for people; someone who is *gewintred* has experienced many winters and, hence, is ‘old, of great age’ or ‘grown up, adult’.

The sense ‘old, of great age’ is reflected in the use of *gewintred* as gloss for forms of Lat. *annosus* ‘very old’ and *senesco* ‘to grow old’:

¹⁶⁴ *The Wanderer*, ed. Klinck, ll. 22–5.

¹⁶⁵ E. G. Stanley, ‘Old English Poetic Diction and the Interpretation of *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer* and *The Penitent’s Prayer*’, *Anglia* 73 (1956), 436; Stanley follows L. Whitbread, ‘A Medieval English Metaphor’, *Philological Quarterly* 4 (1938), 365–70.

¹⁶⁶ Based on searches for <-winterad-> (0 x), <-wintered-> (0 x), <-winterod-> (0 x), <-wintrad-> (3 x), <-wintred-> (16 x) and <-wintrod-> (2 x). There is some overlap with *wintredde* ‘winepress’.

¹⁶⁷ *OED*, s.v. *wintered*. Similar examples of adjectives formed by *ge-*, a noun and the additional suffix *-ed/-od* include *geclāded* ‘clothed’, *geglōfed* ‘gloved’, *gesweordod* ‘having a sword’ and *gemōdod* ‘minded’. Kastovsky, ‘Semantics and Vocabulary’, 380; Koziol, *Handbuch*, §§227, 439; *OED*, s.v. – *ed*, suffix 2. Dutch *doorgewinterd* ‘experienced’ is a cognate of OE *gewintred*.

annosam **gewintrad**. (SedGl 2.1 [Meritt])

amen amen dico tibi cum esses iunior cingebas te et ambulabas ubi uolebas cum autem senueris extends manus tuas et alius te cinget et ducet quo non uis soð soðlice ic cweðo ðe miððy were gingra ðu walde gyrda ðec & ðu walde gonga hwider ðu walde miððy soðlice ðu bist <**giwintrad**> aðene honda ðine & oðer ðec gyrdeð & ðu lædes ðider ne ðu wylt. (JnGl [Ru])

[(John XXI. 18) Truth, truly, I say to you, when you were younger you wanted to clothe yourself and you wanted to go wherever you wanted, truly when you are **old**, you stretch out your hands and another clothes you and you (are) lead wherever you do not want to (go).]

In two versions of the *Nativity of Saint Mary*, *gewintred* is used to refer to Joseph, Mary's aged husband; in the *Old English Orosius*, it is used for the old Vetrano:

Joseph wæs ihaten sum **iwintred** mon & eode þider mid gungum monnum & his gerde þider bær. (LS 18.1 [NatMaryAss 10N])

Joseph wæs gehaten sum **gewintrod** man, eode þyder mid iungum mannum and his gyrde bær. (LS 18.2 [NatMaryAss 10J])

[A certain **old** man was called Joseph and he went there with young men and he carried his girdle thither.]

On þæm dagum Ilirice gesetton Ueteromonem þone mon to hiora anwealde, to þon þæt hie sibþan mehten winnan wið Magnentiuse; & hi hiene nieddon to leornunga, þeh he **gewintred** wære. (Or 6)

[In those days, the Illyrians appointed this man Vetrano to their government, so that they afterwards might fight against Magnentius; and they forced him to study, although he were **old**.]¹⁶⁸

The remaining six instances of *gewintred* cannot be translated with 'old, of great age', and must mean 'grown up, adult'. A clear example is one of the laws of King Ine of Wessex (d. 726), which discusses what should happen if a child loses its father:

Gif ceorl & his wif bearn hæbben gemæne, & fere se ceorl forð, hæbbe sio modor hire bearn & fede: agife hire mon VI scillinga to fostre, cu on sumera, oxan on wintra; healden þa mægas þone frumstol, oð ðæt hit **gewintred** sie. (LawIne)

¹⁶⁸ "Gewintred" here translates Latin "senex" [old]. *King Alfred's Orosius, Part One: Old English Text and Latin Original*, ed. H. Sweet, EETS os 79 (London, 1883), 284–5. Cf. *The Old English Orosius*, ed. J. M. Bately, EETS ss 6 (London, 1980), 149–50, which does not provide the Latin text.

[If a churl and his wife have a child together, and if the husband dies, the mother is to have the child and rear it: give her 6 shillings to foster [the child], a cow in summer, an ox in winter; the relatives shall keep the family home, until it [the child] has **grown up**.]

Similarly, in the law code of Alfred the Great (849–899), a distinction is made between women who are *ungewintred* ‘underaged’ and those who are *gewintred* ‘grown up, adult’:¹⁶⁹

Gif mon **ungewintrædne** wifmon to niedhæmde geðreatige, sie ðæt swa ðæs **gewintredan** monnes bot. (LawAf 1)

[If an **underaged** woman is forced to have sex, that is the same compensation as for an **adult**.]

In the Old English translation of Gregory’s *Regula Pastoralis*, too, *gewintred* is used with the sense ‘grown up, adult’ or ‘old enough’ rather than ‘old, of great age’:

Ðætte on oðre <wisan> sint to manianne ða ðe medomlice cunnon læran, & ðeah for <miclum> ege & for micelre eaðmodnesse forwandiað; & on oðre wisan ða ðe ðonne giet to ðæm **gewintrede** ne beoð ne geðiegene, & ðeah for hrædhdygnesse bioð to gegripene. (CP)

[That those who are capable of teaching in another way, and yet from great fear and humility refuse to do so, are to be admonished in one way; and in another way those who are not yet **old enough** or experienced enough for it, and yet because of hasty zeal undertake it.]¹⁷⁰

Finally, the discussion of the ‘three spiritual births’ in an anonymous homily shows that one was considered *gewintred* by the time he or she could partake in confession and communion. Again, the translation ‘grown up, adult’ is here to be preferred over ‘old, of great age’:¹⁷¹

Þæt is seo forme accennednyss <gastlicu> þonne we onfoð fullwihte æt ure mæssepreosta þenunge.

Þonne is seo æftre accennednyss gastlicu syððan se mann **gewintrod** bið and þæt geseald hafað þæt he andette his scifte ealle his synna syððan he bið godes þeowa geciged for þan ðe se soða anddetnyss æt frymðe eallra gastlicra læcedoma.

¹⁶⁹ For a different reading of this law code, see C. Hough, ‘A New Reading of Alfred, ch. 26’, *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 41 (1997), 1–12, who argues that “gewintredan mannes” here must refer to specifically to an old woman, since continental law codes occasionally group underaged women and old women together for purposes of compensation.

¹⁷⁰ Further on in the text, it becomes clear that the people referred to are unfit for teaching “oððe for gioguðe oððe for unwisdome” [either from youth or want of wisdom] (CP).

¹⁷¹ On the background of these three spiritual births (baptism, adult confession and adult communion), see *Rogationtide Homilies*, ed. Bazire and Cross, 68–9.

Þonne is seo þridde accennednyss æfter þam soðan andetnyssa syððan se mann **gewintrad** bið and he hine sylfne gemedmað þurh þa soðan anddetnyse and þurh his scriftes fultum þæt he bið andfenge drihtenes sylfes lichaman and his blode þonne he hafað fullice ealle þa hadas þe hine to þan ece life gelædað. (HomS 35 (Tristr 4))

[That is the first spiritual birth when we receive baptism by the service of our (mass) priest.

Then the second spiritual birth is when a man has **grown up** and has promised to confess to his confessor all his sins since he has been called to God's people because true confession (is) at the origin of all spiritual cures.

Then the third birth is after true confession, after a man has **grown up** and he humbles himself through true confession and through the support of his confessor that he is a receiver of the Lord's own body and his blood; then he fully has all the conditions, which will lead him to the eternal life.]