

## ***Ce* dans les incises en français médiéval (12<sup>e</sup> s. -16<sup>e</sup> s.)**

The use of *CE* in quotative frames in medieval French

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**Abstract:** This study explores the use of the item *CE* – translated variously in English by *this*, *that* or *it* – in medieval quotative frames. It investigates the gradual decrease in the attested occurrences of the item and proposes two hypothesis in order to explain it: i) *CE* may be considered a mark of orality contributing to the emphasis of the formal structures in medieval literary texts; ii) *CE* may be an empty form, residue of ancient constructions like those attested in sentences showing the same variation (*CE/ Ø*) during the medieval period – *i.e.* the complement clause, the sentential appositive relative clause, the adverbial clause. Thus, the study shows how an invariant term – *CE* – according to the different syntactic frames it applies, can be characterized by a « varying geometry ».

**Key words:** demonstrative pronouns, quotative frame, anaphor and anaphora, cataphor and anaphora, marks of orality.