

THE ORIGIN OF *ABANDON* AND *RANDOM*

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ABSTRACT

Modern English *ban* and related lexemes will be shown to have their origin in common with *abandon*, the latter of disputed etymology. This applies to a still greater extent to *random*, for the origin of which a plausible solution will be presented. A last paragraph is devoted to the etymology of Modern English *PLAN*.

1. Introduction

Both *abandon* and *random* pose considerable problems as to their origin. In order to propose a convincing hypothesis, we postulate a semantic closeness and, as a following step, a formal relationship between the lexical sets *ban n./v.*; *banish v.*; *band n.*; *abandon v.*, insofar as they go back to Germanic *\*ban(n)*, *\*banjan*, *\*band*, *\*bandwjan*, the voiced stop *d* being lost (in final position) in the subset *ban n./v.*; *banish v.*, etc.; see in particular the derivation of *band n.*; see also *ban n.* and *bandon n.*, the latter two denoting the jurisdiction of a lord or sovereign. Our claim will be illustrated and supported by the following material ending in *-an(-)* and by a second group ending in *-and(-)*. The case of Modern English *PLAN n.* illustrates the loss of *-t* after a nasal consonant.

2. Lexemes ending in *-an(-)*

*ban v.* ‘forbid, prohibit’ (c1378, *BDE*)

ME *banne(n)*, formed from OE *bannan* ‘to summon, proclaim’ (6th strong class) and AFr *banir*, *baner*; *banner*, *bannir* ‘to proclaim; to summon by ban, to raise (an army); to banish, exclude’ (*AND2: banir*), from Germanic

\**banjan*. Cf. ModFr *bannir* (*DEHF*: 66a, 1213 ‘to proclaim’, from Frankish \**bannjan*, Gothic \**bandwjan*, ultimately related to *bande* ‘troop’, influenced by *ban*) (*BDE*: 73b, s.v. *ban*1; *KDEE*: 96a, s.v. *ban*1; *ODEE*: 71a, s.v. *ban*2).

*ban n.* ‘edict, proclamation’ (c1300, *BDE*)

ME *ban(ne)*, earlier meaning ‘a troop of warriors summoned for proclamation’ (c1250); still earlier in the phrase *bane cruces* ‘crosses marking a boundary’ (1228), formed from OE (*ge*)*ban(n)* ‘summons, proclamation’ and AFr *ban*, *baan* ‘proclamation, edict; banishment; jurisdiction; (eccl.) marriage banns’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *ban*<sup>1</sup>), derived from the verb. Cf. ModFr *ban* (*DEHF*: 65a, ‘proclamation of a lord’ end 12<sup>th</sup> c., from Frankish \**ban*. Cf. ModG *Bann* (9<sup>th</sup> c., Kluge<sup>24</sup>) from Germanic \**banna-* ‘summons, proclamation, order’ (*BDE*: 74a, s.v. *ban*<sup>2</sup>; *KDEE*: 96a, s.v. *ban*<sup>1</sup>; *ODEE*: 71a, s.v. *ban*<sup>1</sup>).

*banish v.* (c1385, *BDE*; a1376, *KDEE*)

ME *banyse(n)*, *banysshe(n)* ‘to condemn, exile’, adapted from AFr *banir*, *baner*; *banner*, *bannir* ‘to proclaim; to summon by ban, to raise (an army); to banish, exclude’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *banir*), from Germanic \**banjan*. Cf. ModFr *bannir* (*DEHF*: 66a, 1213 ‘to proclaim’, from Frankish \**bannjan*, Gothic \**bandwjan*. Ultimately related to *bande* ‘troop’, influenced by *ban*) (*BDE*: 75a; *KDEE*: 97a; *ODEE*: 73a).

*banner n.* ‘flag, standard’ (a1200?, *BDE*)

EME *banere*, also *baner* ‘troops under a particular banner’ (a1300?), adapted from AFr *baner*, *banere*, *baneere*, *banier*, *baniere*, *banire*; *bannere*, *banniere* ‘banner’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *baner*<sup>1</sup>), from *ban*. Cf. ModFr *bannière* (*DEHF*: 66a, 12<sup>th</sup> c., derived from Frankish \**ban*, ultimately from Germanic \**band(w)-*, see Gothic *bandwa* ‘sign’). Cf. Italian *bandiera* ‘banner’ and Provençal *ban(d)iera* (*DEI*: 425a) and ModG *Banner* (12<sup>th</sup> c., Kluge<sup>24</sup>) from Old French *banniere* ‘flag, banner’ (*BDE*: 75b; *KDEE*: 97b; *ODEE*: 73b).

*banneret n.* (obs.) ‘knight entitled to bring vassals into the field under his own banner/ standard’ (c1300, *KDEE*)

ME *baneret* ‘knight’ (as defined above), adapted from OFr *baneret* (14<sup>th</sup> c.), derived from *baner(e)* + *-et* suffix, ultimately from Frankish \**ban*. Cf. ModFr *banneret* (*DEHF*: 65a, s.v. 1. *ban*, *baneret* 14<sup>th</sup> c., from Frankish \**ban*). See *T/L I*: 823, s.v. *banerez* ‘little flag’ and Godefroy I: 571a, s.v. *banerete* ‘small flag’ (*BDE*: ./. ; *KDEE*: 97b, s.v. *banneret*<sup>2</sup>; *ODEE*: 73b).

*banns* n. ‘notice of marriage’ (1549, *BDE*)

EModE *bannes*, plural of *banne*, influenced by MedL *bannum* ‘ban’, adapted from MFr *banns*. Cf. ModFr *bans* (*du mariage*) (*DEHF*: 65a, s.v. 1. *ban*, end 12<sup>th</sup> c., *les bans du mariage* ‘notice of marriage’, from Frankish \**ban*) (*BDE*: 75b; *KDEE*: 98a; *ODEE*: 73b).

### 3. Lexemes ending in *-and(-)*: The case OF *abandon*

Both *BDE* (2a, s.v. *abandon*) and *ODEE* (2a, s.v. *abandon*<sup>1</sup>) seem to follow the major French etymological dictionaries, e.g. Gamillscheg, *EWFS*<sup>2</sup>: 1b, s.v. *abandon* ‘the state of being utterly forsaken’, which quote *ban* as an etymological constituent of *abandon*. Gamillscheg, l.c., derives the lexeme from unattested OFr *a ban doner* ‘to put to someone’s disposal’, see also OFr *doner a bandon* of the same meaning; cf. LL *bannum* ‘proclamation of the lord imposing his authority’ (8<sup>th</sup> c.). Bloch and Wartburg<sup>6</sup>:1a, s.v. *abandon*, derive OFr *bandon* ‘power, authority, permission’ from OFr *ban* (< Frankish \**ban*), which also presupposes a phrase of the type *a ban doner*. The phrase (*mettre*) *a bandon* ‘to put to someone’s disposal, to hand over’ is supposed to have yielded *abandon* by agglutination in the course of the 12<sup>th</sup> c. (*TLF*: 38a, s.v. *abandon*). However, all reference works quoted keep silent about the origin of *bandon*. Thus, these phrases may have had at most a secondary bearing on the origin of the lexeme under scrutiny. Although OFr *ban*, its derivation *banon*, and Late Latin *bannum* ‘power, authority’ on the one hand, and OFr *bandon* on the other hand, derive from different roots, they have largely become synonymous in Old French. French etymological research assumes a blend of the roots *ban-* (Frankish \**bannjan*, yielding OFr *bannir*) and *band-* (Frankish \**bandjan* ‘to give a sign’). There is MedL *bandum/bannum*, i.e. ‘ban’ and *bandire/bannire*, i.e. ‘to proclaim’ (see *TLF*: 38a, s.v. *abandon*).

Unlike *random* and *randonner*, which remain restricted to the Gallo-Romania, *abandon* and *abandoner* are found further afield, e.g. It *abbandono* and *abbandonare* (*DEI* I: 4a), Sp *abandono* and *abandonar* (Corominas – Pascual I: 6b).

As with *random* (q.v.), there seems to be a kind of gap in the semantic development from *a bandon* ‘under one’s jurisdiction, at one’s mercy’ – see also *OED*<sup>2</sup>, s.v. *bandon/bandoun* n. (obs.) – to ME *abandonen* ‘to give up, surrender, leave’ which also holds for the source language. This change in meaning has remained unexplained by the editors of the current English and French etymological dictionaries. The assumption of *a-* as a negative prefix, which is to contrast *bandoun* ‘dominion, control’ and *abandoun* ‘abandonment; surrender’ may be mere speculation, since *bandoun* can be interpreted as an aphetic variant of

*abandon*. See ModG *verbannen* ‘to banish’: *The sovereign lord might as well banish/send into exile those under his jurisdiction*. If at all, the prefix *a-* may have intensified the meaning of the verb as in ME *risen* and *arisen* (< OE *rīsan* and *ārīsan*).

The semantic change under examination may have occurred both in the source language (French) and in the borrowing language (English) as will be demonstrated below. Although we assume the verbs *banduner*, *baundoner* and *abanduner*, *abaundoner* to have been derived from the nouns *bandun*, *baundon* and *abandun*, *abaundon* respectively (and not vice versa), the change in question can best be demonstrated with the verbs: (1) ‘to hand over, to place at the disposal/under the authority or power of’ (*bandun*, *baundon*); (2) refl. ‘to give oneself over, surrender, leave’ (+ indirect object); (3) ‘to forsake/banish, to leave someone to one’s fate/unprotected’ (+ direct object).

We postulate a formal and semantic relationship between the lexical sets BAN *n./v.* (see OE *bannan* ‘to summon, proclaim’); BANISH *v.*; BAND *n.*; ABANDON *v.*, insofar as they go back to Germanic *\*ban(n)*, *\*bannjan*, *\*band*, *\*bandwjan*, the voiced stop *d* being lost (in final position) in the subset BAN *n./v.*; BANISH *v.*; see in particular the derivation of BAND *n.*; both BAN *n.* and BANDON *n.* denoting the jurisdiction of a lord or sovereign. See *-and* ~ *-an* as in AFr *esandre*, etc., alternating with *espanir* (AND<sup>2</sup>: *espanir*), the former underlying ModE EXPAND *v.* and SPAWN *v.* respectively (see Diensberg 2008: 40-41).

*abandon v.* (1390, BDE)

ME *abandone(n)* ‘to give up or surrender’, adapted from AFr *abanduner*, *abando(u)ner*, *abaundoner*, *-uner* ‘to hand over, to place at the disposal of; to give oneself over, surrender, leave’ (AND<sup>2</sup>: *abanduner*), cf. OFr *abandoner* (T/L I: 38). There are also forms without the prefix *a-*: AFr *banduner*, *baundoner* ‘to submit to, give oneself over to’ (AND<sup>2</sup>: *banduner*). The verb may have been derived from the Old French phrase *a bandon* ‘under one’s jurisdiction, at one’s mercy’, derived from Germanic *\*band* ‘jurisdiction’ (DEHF: 1a), unrelated to *band* ‘fetter’, cf. ModG *Band* (8<sup>th</sup> c., Kluge<sup>24</sup>) and ModE *band* (OED<sup>2</sup>, s.v. BAND *n.*<sup>1</sup>), but related to the source of BAN *n.*<sup>2</sup> ‘edict’. Cf. ModFr *abandoner* (DEHF: 1a, s.v. *abandon*, 1080) (BDE: 2a; KDEE: 2a, s.v. *abandon*<sup>1</sup>; ODEE: 2a, s.v. *abandon*<sup>1</sup>).

*abandon n.* ‘freedom from restraint’ (1850, BDE; 1822, KDEE)

Already attested with the original meaning as ME *abandon* ‘control’ (a1400?/a1425), also *abaundon* (a1425?/a1500), adapted from AFr *abandon*,

*abandonn*, *abandoun*; *abaundun* ‘abandonment; surrender’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *abandon*), derived from the verb AFr *abanduner*, *abando(u)ner* ‘to hand over, etc.’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *abanduner*). Cf. ModFr *abandon* (*DEHF*: 1a, 1165; *TLF* 1: 38a) (*BDE*: 2a; *KDEE*: 2a, s.v. *abandon*<sup>2</sup>; *ODEE*: 2a, s.v. *abandon*<sup>1</sup>).

*band* n. ‘group of individuals acting together’ (1490, *BDE*)

ME *bande*, adapted from AFr *bande* ‘band, troop’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *bande*<sup>1</sup>) ultimately from Frankish *\*band(w)a* (see below). Cf. ModFr *bande* (*DEHF*: 65b, s.v. 2. *bande* ‘troop’ 1360), influenced by It *banda* (*DEI*: 424a, s.v. *banda*<sup>3</sup>), both lexemes ultimately going back to Germanic (Frankish) *\*banda*, see Gothic *bandwa* ‘flag, standard’, i.e. a group of followers/soldiers under the banner of a sovereign. See also cognate ModG *Bande*<sup>1</sup> (from French, 16<sup>th</sup> c., Kluge<sup>24</sup>) (*BDE*: 74a, s.v. *band*<sup>1</sup>; *KDEE*: 96b, s.v. *band*<sup>2</sup>; *ODEE*: 72a, s.v. *band*<sup>3</sup>).

*bandon* n. obs. (a1200?, *MED*)

EME *bandun* ‘power’, ME *bandon*, *bandoun* ‘jurisdiction, authority, control; power of disposal, full discretion, or authority to deal with’. Either aphetic variant of ABANDON n., or directly adapted from AFr *bandun*, *bandon*; *baundon*, *baundoun*, *baundun* n. sg. & pl. ‘jurisdiction, territory’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *bandun*), see OFr *bandon* ‘control’ (*T/L* I: 821) and *bandon* ‘control’ : *randon* ‘impetuosity’ in rhyme (*T/L* I: 822).

*bandon* v. obs. (a1400/a1325, *MED*)

ME *bandun(en) refl.* ‘to give oneself up’ (hap.leg.); ‘to have under control, subdue; to give oneself up; to forsake; to banish’ (*OED*<sup>2</sup>). Either aphetic variant of ABANDON v., or directly adapted from AFr *banduner*, *baundoner* v. refl. ‘to submit to, give oneself over to’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *banduner*), ultimately derived from Germanic *ban(d)(w)-*; see BAN n., etc. & *Remarks* (NB).

*expand* v. (1422, *BDE*)

ME *espaunde(n)*, *expande(n)* ‘to spread out’, adapted from AFr *espandre*, *espander*, *espandier*, *expandir*; *espaunder*, *espaundre*, *esspaundre* ‘to shed; to spill; to pour down; (fig.) to pour; to scatter, spread; to disperse, scatter; to spread out, extend’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *espandre*); see MFr *espandre* (Greimas – Keane: 258a). See also AFr *espanir*, etc. ‘to extend, etc.’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *espanir*) had no influence whatsoever on the English verb. Cf. ModFr *épandre* (*DEHF*: 259a, *espaudre*, 1080). See also related SPAWN n./v.; for the change *-and* > *-an*, see Diensberg (2008: 40-41) (*BDE*: 356a; *KDEE*: 464b; *ODEE*: 336b).

4. Lexemes ending in *-and(-)*: The case OF *random*

Modern English meaning of *random* arose through the gradual loss of the features SPEED, IMPETUOSITY; cf. AFr *a randun, al randun, de randun* ‘at speed, in haste’ and ‘in rapid succession one after another’ (*AND*<sup>1</sup>: *randun*), meanings and usages still common before c1650, which in due course were replaced by HAPHAZARDNESS/CHANCE during the 16<sup>th</sup> century (see *OED*<sup>3</sup>, s.v.3.a: 1565 in the phrase *at random*). There is no indication of a gradual transition: this semantic change seems to have occurred spontaneously, the features SPEED, IMPETUOSITY going out and HAPHAZARDNESS/CHANCE coming in.

*OED*<sup>3</sup>: RANDOM, *n.*, *adv.*, and *adj.* PHRASES

P2. ‘at random, without direction or purpose, haphazardly’

Originally with suggestion of great speed or lack of consideration, care, or control (from Phrases 1); later without implication of speed or violence. a. ‘haphazardly, without aim, purpose, or fixed principle; heedlessly, carelessly; (also) erratically, indiscriminately, unsystematically’. Cf. sense C. 1a. In early use with verbs of action, as moving, striking, throwing, talking, etc., esp. in *to run at random* (very common before c1650); later also with verbs of occurrence.

All major English etymological dictionaries propose a so-called Frankish root *\*rant* which is related to ModG *rennen* ‘to run’, *rannte* p.t. ‘ran’, from West Germanic *\*rannjan*, from Germanic *\*rann-eja* (see Kluge<sup>24</sup>, s.v. *rennen*) as the origin of the root *\*rand-/\*rant-* which underlies OFr *random* ‘violent movement’ and *randonner* ‘to run, hasten’, cognate with *randir* ‘to run fast’. There is *\*rant* ‘a running’ (corresponding to a modern dialectal/Northern Bavaria *rant* ‘a running’) and *\*rand* ‘a running’ (*FEW* 16: 661a). ModG *Brand* ‘a fire’ (MHG *brant*), from Germanic *\*branda-*, may be quoted as a useful parallel since it goes back to *brennen* ‘to burn’, from Germanic *\*brenn-a-* (Kluge<sup>24</sup>, s.v. *Brand & brennen*; cf. *EWFS*<sup>2</sup>: 748b, s.v. *random*).

On semantic grounds we reject Gamillscheg, *EWFS*<sup>2</sup>: 748a, s.v. *random* ‘impetuous movement’, who suggests Frankish (West Germanic) *\*rando* ‘edge (as of a shield)’, related to OE *rand* ‘shield’, ModE *rand* ‘border, brink’ (*OED*<sup>3</sup>, s.v. *rand n.*<sup>1</sup>) as the most probable etymon.

Apart from formal similarity, both *abandon*, *bandon* and *random* show the root *\*-and*, *\*-aund* and the *-on* ~ *-om* alternation (see late ME *bandom* ‘power, control’), there is a semantic overlap as evidenced by AFr *bandun/bandoun adv.* ‘unrestrainedly; completely; in abundance; vigorously; violently’ (*AND*<sup>2</sup>: *bandun*); the two lexemes may well have influenced each other. Furthermore, ABANDON, BANDON are related to BAN, BANNER and BAND which amply testify to the alternation *-an(n)* ~ *-and*. Thus, original *\*ran(n)-* may well

generate analogical *\*rand-* or even *\*rant-*.

*random n., adj. & adv.* ‘by chance and with no plan’ (*adj.* 1655, *BDE*)

EME *randun* ‘impetuosity, speed, force, violence’ (c1300), late ME *random* (a1470), from AFr *randun, randon, raundoun; raundun, raundoun* ‘speed’; *a, al randun* ‘in haste’; *de randun* ‘at speed, in rapid succession, one after the other’; *a, en un(e) randun* ‘in rapid succession, one after another’ (*AND*<sup>1</sup>: *randun*) and the verb *randuner, randoner; raunduner; rendoner* ‘to move swiftly’ (*AND*<sup>1</sup>: *randuner*), see OFr *randon* ‘haste’ (*T/L VIII*: 272) and *randoner* ‘to hasten’ (*T/L VIII*: 278). Cf. ModFr *randonnée* ‘swift course’ (*DEHF*: 647a, 1131, derived from the verb *randonner*) & *randonner* ‘to move quickly’ (*DEHF*: 647a, s.v. *randonnée*, 1155; *TLF* 14: 345a, s.v. *randonner* ‘to run, hasten’). Romance *\*randon* was derived from the West Germanic/Frankish roots *\*rand* and *\*rant* ‘a running’, related to ModG *rennen*, from West Germanic *\*rannjan*, from Germanic *\*ranjan*. See *OED*<sup>3</sup>, s.v. *RANDOM n.*, etc.: (a. OF. *randon, rendon*, etc.), from *randir* ‘to run fast, gallop’ (*T/L VIII*: 271). For the *-n ~ -m* alternation in weakly-stressed syllables, see also late ME *bandom* and *ransom* (*OED*<sup>3</sup>, s.v. *RANDOM n.*, etc.); see also *random adj./adv.* and *ransom n./v.*; *transom n.*; *venom(ous) n.(adj.)*. The change of final *-n* to *-m* is independent from the very rare Old French form *random* (*BDE*: 884b; *KDEE*: 1149b; *ODEE*: 738b).

*OED*<sup>3</sup>: *RANDOM*, *v.* rare (1508)

Forms: 16 *randome*, 16 *randon*, 18- *random*; also Sc. pre-17 *randon* < *RANDOM n.*

With sense 1 perhaps compare Anglo-Norman and Middle French *randoner, randuner*, etc., ‘to move swiftly’ (a1174 in Old French; French *randonner*, now apparently only in senses ‘(of an animal in hunting) to make a circuit around the area where it has been released’ (1875), ‘to go for a hike’ (1896); < *randon* *RANDOM n.*). Compare Old Occitan *randonar* ‘to dash forward’. 1) intr. Perh.: ‘to flow swiftly’ (1508). Obs.; 2) intr. a. ‘To stray, wander aimlessly; (also) to charge unheedingly, to rush headlong’. Also fig. (1561); b. ‘To fly at random. Obs. (1602?); c. colloq. To do something at random’ (1921); 3) intr. Eng. regional (Yorks.). ‘To run parallel or in a straight line’. Cf. *RANDOM n.* 1. Obs. (1824).

5. The case of Modern English *PLAN n.*, loss of *-t* after a nasal consonant

*plan n.* ‘a design, a proposal’ (1635, *OED*<sup>3</sup>)

Originally attested in Middle French as *plant* (1545) and *plan* (1547), denoting a drawing made by projection on a horizontal plane showing the layout of a

building, city, etc., attested in English as *plant* (1538) and *plan* (1563), denoting a drawing guiding the establishment of a building, city, etc., modelled on Italian *pianta* ‘design of a building/town, etc.’ (16th c., *DEI*: 2894b, s.v. *pianta*<sup>3</sup>, derived from *pianta*<sup>2</sup> ‘sole of the foot’, corresponding to PLANT *n.2* (q.v.). In fact, MFr *plant* ‘design’ goes back to figurative use of *plante* (*du pied*) ‘sole of the foot’, which in turn was influenced by the Italian lexeme. The loss or rather assimilation of final *t* occurs quite frequently in the source language (see Diensberg 2008: 42-47). It is also attested in Early Modern English as evidenced by the spellings *plant* (1538) and *plan* (1563). Any influence of homonymous French *plan n.2* ‘flat surface’ (*TLF* 13: 485b, from L *plānum*), see ModFr *plan n.3*, is at most secondary. In France, spellings such as *plant* co-occurring with *plan*, are attested for the 15th-17th centuries (*TLF* 13: 487b, s.v. *plan n.3*). In fact, a derivation from *plante* (*du pied*) ‘sole of the foot’ (*DEHF* 287b, s.v. 1. *plante*, 1190, from L *planta*) and ultimately from the verb *planter* (see *DEHF* 288a, 12th c., from L *plantāre*) has much to recommend itself, while influence from Italian *pianta* should not be excluded.

Thus, the current etymological dictionaries miss an important stage in the development of the English lexeme by exclusively focussing on MFr *plan* ‘plane surface, ground plan, map’. The etymological section of *plan n.* (*OED*<sup>3</sup>) could be supplemented by establishing a link between PLAN *n.* and PLANT *n.2*. Cf. ModFr *plan* (*DEHF*: 587a, s.v. 2. *plan*, 1545, earlier spelling *plant* end 15<sup>th</sup> c.; to postulate influence of *plan* ‘flat surface’ (*DEHF*: 587a, s.v. 1. *plan*, 1553, is not absolutely necessary; thus *TLF* 13: 489a); cf. ModFr *plante* (*du pied*) (*DEHF*: 587b, s.v. 1. *plante*, 1190; *TLF* 13: 503b, s.v. *plante*<sup>1</sup>). Alternatively, ModFr *plant* ‘young shoot’, masculine noun (*TLF* 13: 502), derived from the verb *planter* (*TLF* 13: 505a), used figuratively, may be at the origin of MFr *plant* (see above). A French syntagma of the type *un plant de ville* ‘a plan of a city’ may have triggered the loss of final *t*, ultimately due to sentence phonetics with ensuing assimilation (*BDE*: 801b; *KDEE*: 1075b; *ODEE*: 868a).

## 6. Conclusion

We hope to have shown that, in the course of their development, the lexical sets *ban v.*, *banish v.* and *band n.* on the one hand, and *bandon v.* (now obsolete) and *abandon v.* on the other hand, influenced each other both formally and semantically. *Abandon v.*, of notoriously difficult etymology, is best accounted for as originating from the phrase *a bandon* ‘at one’s mercy/at one’s disposal’. As a verb, derived from *a bandon*, it developed from the original meaning ‘be/have under control/at one’s disposal’ to ‘betake oneself under the authority/control’ to ‘give oneself/someone up’ (indirect object) to ‘forsake, banish;

leave someone to one's fate' (direct object), thus making up the sememes of ModE *abandon*.

As to the semantic aspect, ModE *abandon* 'to leave, give up' (*NODE*) has shed all sememes denoting control or authority (see ME *abandonen* & *bandonen*), as well as yielding or submitting to an authority. There is still a related sememe 'to indulge in (desire or impulse)', which closely corresponds to earlier 'to yield without restraint (to vice)' (c1390, *MED*).

The Germanic root *\*band(w)-*, as found in *band n.* 'a group', received a Gallo-Romance suffix *-ōne(m)*, whence OF *abandoner*, the *a*-prefix reinforcing the meaning of the simplex *bandoner*. This aspect of the origin of *abandon* is not dealt with by the editors of the major etymological and historical reference works. Not infrequent loss of *-d* in final position, i.e. *\*band-* > *\*ban-*, would have brought about formal identity of the words derived from both roots.

The adverb *random*, another notorious case of difficult etymology, is best derived from a Germanic root *\*ran-* (as found in Germanic *\*ranneja* to run), which, apart from ModG *rannte* p.t. of *rennen* 'to run', is attested in dialectal *rant* 'a running', from which an unattested variant *\*rand-* may be postulated. As in the case OFr *abandon*, a Gallo-Romance suffix *-ōne(m)* was attached to the stem. Thus, *\*rand-ōn-* yielded OFr *randoner* and ultimately deverbal *randon*, leading to modern English *abandon*.

The current etymological dictionaries miss an important stage in the development of Modern English *plan n.* by exclusively focussing on MFr *plan* 'plane surface, ground plan, map'. Thus, the etymological section of *plan n.* (*OED3*) could be supplemented by introducing a link between PLAN *n.* and PLANT *n.2*.

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