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## How did the English change their names from Saxon to continental style just after the Norman Conquest?

Hirokazu Tsurusnima

In the previous paper ('On the Norman Settlement and Anglo-Saxon Knights', *the Studies in Western History*, vol. 123, 1981, pp. 33ff), the present author suggested that when we probed deeply into the actual circumstances of the Norman settlement in rural society in England, one of the chief obstacles was the fact that after the Norman Conquest, a lot of English people changed their names from the Saxon to the Norman style. Mr. M.T. Clanchy, in his recent work (*England and its Rulers 1066-1272*, Oxford, 1983), also maintained that "One reason why it was difficult to decide who was Norman and who was English by Fitz Nigel's time was that most freemen by then used non-English personal names like 'Richard' and 'Robert' (pp. 56f)."

It is, however, also difficult to decide how they had changed their own names. Nobody has given a precise answer to this simple question. So the purpose of this paper is to unravel some of the hidden processes of the Saxon's changing names. For this purpose I used Textus Roffensis as a main source and therefore set geographical and time limits for this study within Kent c. 1086-1120, in order to avoid generalizing the results. It, however, goes without saying that they cannot be merely disposed as one exception.

The research into Textus Roffensis leads me to the following conclusions. First, (1) Some Saxons, especially local figures in villages had changed their names after the continental style such as Robert in order to form close connection with Norman settlers; *Rodberto Latimi, et Ælfuino frater ejus praeposito de Chetham* (Textus Roffensis fo. 212r). In the second place, (2) Under this condition, some used French names as common or additional name: *quidam Uulfuardus, cognomine henricus de Hou* (Textus Roffensis, fo. 183r). As time went on, a common name seemed to become a real name and an aboriginal one seemed to disappear. Thirdly, (3) the parents gave continental names to most of their children, although some of them were named in the Saxon style.

"Evidently each new generation gave a larger proportion of its children foreign names, as Norman rule and French fashions became more normal, until by 1200 the great majority of freemen in southern England at least had ceased to bear English names (Clanchy, *op. cit.*, p. 57).