**Defining the Fifteenth-Century English Gentry**

Defining the boundaries and function of the gentry in late-medieval society has sparked intense interest amongst historians since the mid-1980s in particular.[[1]](#footnote-1) Despite this interest, the inherent difficulty of providing such a definition remains a recurring theme within the historiography.[[2]](#footnote-2) The gentry often lacked the more rigorous

At least in some small part, this stems from the ongoing link between the social boundaries of the gentry, and their precise role.

It might be tempting to assume that the existence of several points of agreement within the historiography when defining the gentry is

**Introduction**

* Difficult to define – link to one another, can’t define the roles unless you know the boundaries and vice versa
* Might be tempting to think that the fact that there are several points of agreement within the historiography
* This thesis aims to further this debate by examining the role of the gentry during the minority of Henry VI and, consequently, it is in need of definition

Whilst the difficulties in defining the

**Paragraph 1**

1. Raluca Radulescu and Alison Truelove, “Editors’ Introduction,” in *Gentry Culture in Late Medieval England*, eds. Raluca Radulescu and Alison Truelove, 1, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Peter Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2; Philippa Maddern, “Gentility,” in *Gentry Culture in Late Medieval England*, eds. Raluca Radulescu and Alison Truelove, 18; 22, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); Malcolm Mercer, *The Medieval Gentry: Power, Leadership and Choice during the Wars of the Roses*, (London: Continuum, 2010), 7; 9-10; Christine Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)