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THE PROLOGUE OF WYNNERE AND WASTOURE

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(i)

Sir Israel Gollancz approached his edition of *Wynnere and Wastoure* with the entirely unjustified view that "there is perhaps no more corrupt Middle-English manuscript than this".¹ In the thirty opening lines of the poem he introduced no fewer than twelve emendations, one of which was to move an entire line. Here are the lines as they stand in the Thornton manuscript, BL Addit. 31,042:

Sythen that Bretayne was biggede and Bruyttus it aughte
Thurgh the takynge of Troye with tresone with jnn
There hathe selcouthes bene sene in seere kynges tymes
Bot neuer so many as nowe by the nyne dele
For nowe alle es witt and wyles that we with delyn 5
Wyse wordes and slee and icheon wryeth othere
Dare neuer no westren wy while this werlde lasteth
Send his sone southewarde to see ne to here
that he ne schall holden by hynde when he hore eldes
For thi sayde was a sawe of Salomon the wyse 10
It hyeghte harde appone honde hope I no noþer
When waxes waxen schall wilde and walles bene down
And hares appon herthe stones schall hurcle in hire fourme
And eke boyes of blode with boste and with pryde
Schall wedde ladyes in londe and lede hir at will 15
Thene dredfull domesdaye it draweth neghe aftir
Bot who so sadly will see and the sothe telle
Say it newly will neghe or es neghe here
Whylome were lordes in londe þat loued in thaire hertis
To here makers of myrthes þat matirs couthe fynde 20
And now es no frenchipe in fere bot fayntnesse of hert
Wyse wordes with jnn þat wroghte were neuer
Ne redde in no Romance þat euer renke herde
Bot now a childe appon chere with owttten chyn wedys
þat neuer wroghte thurgh witt thies wordes to gedire 25
Fro he can jangle als a jaye and japes telle
he schall be leuede and louede and lett of a while
Wele more þan þe man that made it hym seluen
Bot neuer þe lattere at the laste when ledys bene knawen
Werke wittnesse will bere who wirche kane beste 30

A conservative editor would not need to introduce any

emendation at all into this passage, though there are three of Gollancz's emendations that seem to me probably right: (a) In l.14, *boyes of [no] blode* makes easier sense, but the addition of *no* is not entirely essential. MED s.v. *blod* n.(1), 4(b) offers "? a murderous churl or ruffian" as a rather implausible gloss of the manuscript reading, but the phrase might instead be taken as parallel to "*bolde sqwyeres of blode*" (l.194), with the meaning "low fellows in lineage". This is MED *blod* n.(1), 6a. (b) In l.15, *hir* at involves an abrupt change of number that is perhaps idiomatic, but emendation to *at hir* is straightforward. An alternative though perhaps unnecessarily complex explanation is that Thornton, a northern copyist, misunderstood his exemplar's *him* "them" as masc. sg. and made a false correction to fem. sg. *hir*. (c) In l.25, the reference of *thies* is puzzling. Possibly it refers to the words of the poem that follow, which the child of l.24 never put together, since he is a mere reciter and not a bard.² Emendation to *three* produces smoother sense and an idiomatic half-line.

(ii)

"There is nothing quite like this prologue in mediaeval English poetry", Gollancz³ maintained. In some respects this is the opposite of the truth, since the passage is structured as a series of linked commonplaces. This was widely recommended as a way of beginning a work by rhetoricians such as Matthew of Vendôme, who advised the writer to start with a "proverb, that is to say a common maxim, which usage invests with authority".⁴ Proverbs and wise saws may be chosen from a variety of sources, particularly classical and biblical; Bernold of Kaisersheim, writing in 1312, provided a selection of "proverbs taken from the Books of Solomon" for the elegant *exordium*.⁵ The advice is followed by the author of *Wynnere and Wastoure*, who includes "a sawe of Salomon the wyse" (10), though it is not one that the author of the Book of Wisdom would have claimed as his own. This and other commonplaces of contemporary vernacular poetry are assembled and shaped so as to serve as an introduction to the poem as a whole.

The lines focus upon the effects of hypocrisy and treachery in contemporary society. The poet complains that there is no longer faith between men and that the allegiance that is expressed turns out to be worthless. Words are a cover for the truth, and even poetry, the treasury of wisdom, has degenerated into foolish entertainment. The closest parallel to this form of the argument is to be found in *Piers Plowman*. It has been claimed that Langland is indebted to *Wynnere and Wastoure* in his handling of the theme of winning and wasting and perhaps also in his use of the spring-introduction,⁶ but the more significant similarity between *Piers Plowman* A.XI.1-37⁷ and the prologue to *Wynnere and Wastoure* has not, as far as I know, been noted.

Dame Study attacks the abuse of wit and wisdom. She sarcastically commends Wit for attempting to instruct a fool like the Dreamer with "wise wordis" (l.8; cf. *W and W* 6). Such people would rather have lordship and riches "*panne alle þe soþe sawis þat*

Salamon seide euere" (1.16; cf. *W and W* 10). Nowadays wisdom and wit are held of no account unless they are useful for covetous and deceitful ends. One who speaks the word of God is little regarded - "litel is he loid or lete by" (1.29; cf. *W and W* 27). Great lords - king, knight and canon - are much more willing to reward a tale of "harlotrie":

Menstralsie & merpe among men is noupe
Leccherie & losengerie & loselis talis;
Glotonye & grete opis, þise arn games nowadayes. (35-7)

When the minstrels have stopped, the diners chatter ignorantly and presumptuously of divine mysteries. The B version of Dame Study's attack remains substantially the same, though more emphasis is placed on the lords' misuse of wealth and there is a more detailed picture of "iaperis and iogelours and iangleris of gestes" (B.X.31; cf. *W and W* 26). The passage is considerably altered in the C text.

Langland here brings together two ideas to which he returns repeatedly, the degeneracy of minstrelsy⁸ and the wickedness of hypocrisy.⁹ False words are rewarded, wit and wisdom are misused for material gain. Elsewhere the corruption of Wit and Wisdom is most strikingly exhibited when the two associate themselves with Mede in an attempt to buy off Peace in his suit against Wrong:

Wisdom and Wit were aboute faste
To ouercomen þe kyng wip catel if þei my3te. (B.IV.81-2)

In the C text the attack on false advisors is sharper and clearer, for the malefactors are "Wyles and Wyt" (IV.77), coupled as in *W and W* 5, where the poet expresses the same concern for the misuse of intelligence and wisdom for selfish ends.

Both *Wynnere and Wastoure* and *Piers Plowman* draw upon a common fund of complaint about the deceptiveness of outward show. For comparison with *Wynnere and Wastoure* this is most interestingly illustrated by a text which begins with a line that summarises one side of the argument of the alliterative poem, "Wast bryngyth a kyngdome in nede". The title given in the manuscript (Cambridge Univ. Lib. Ff.II.38) is "De prouerbys of Salamone", and both title and first line demonstrate the association of the poem with the type of literary material upon which the poet of *Wynnere and Wastoure* is drawing. It is, therefore, significant that a somewhat abbreviated and reordered version of the poem is in the same Thornton manuscript as *Wynnere and Wastoure*, where it is called "A louely song of wysdome".¹⁰ "Wast bryngyth", as I shall call it, consists of a loosely linked series of commonplaces similar in structure and outlook to the biblical Wisdom books, but without much correspondence of detail.

It would be too grand to talk of the "theme" of this poem, but certainly a constantly reiterated complaint is that works do not match words. To discover "where mannys herte lys" it is necessary to examine his actions and see whether "worde and werke contrare

be" (vv.3, 7). In the end "hys werkys bere wytnesse" (v.8; cf. *W and W* 30). The concept of "wise" words that are deceitful appears in this poem as in *Piers Plowman* and *Wynnere and Wastoure*:

In wordys men weren neuer so wyce
As now to chyppe at wordys of resone,
In werke þey weren neuer so nyce . . .
Be styлле, troupe now ys not in sesone. (v.12)

This writer, however, feels none of the respect for the truth of poetry that is expressed in *Piers Plowman* and *Wynnere and Wastoure*. For him poetry is sophistry, cleverness that is used to deceive the ignorant. The word that is clear and honest remains within the heart unspoken; the spoken word is mistily misleading:

In wordys of dowble entendement,
In poisie, in sopheme resone hydes;
Then mysty wordys owtward wente,
The bryght wordys in þe breste abydes;
Therby lewde men ofte ben schente. (v.13)

This idea of the unexpressed words of the heart as a silent contrast to the words that are spoken runs through "Wast bryngyth". What a man says cannot be trusted, for though there are "wythowte fayre wordys", they do not represent feelings, because "withynne ys hate" (v.16). So degenerate is the age that true love has been replaced by lechery and

Frenschyp and good fay
Is turned now to trechery. (v.49; cf. *W and W* 21)

"Wast bryngyth" has particular parallels with the prologue of *Wynnere and Wastoure*, but it is worth observing that the poem also puts forward several of the arguments used by Winner and Waster in their debate. The young man who sells off his corn will find poor pasturage in his old age (v.6; cf. Winner's argument, ll.396-401, and Waster's ll.449-51). Extravagance impoverishes a kingdom so that the poor starve (vv.1, 10, 54; cf. Winner ll.242-3, Waster ll.256-8). The struggle involved in winning wealth leads to hell:

Many men wynnen faste in þys world here
With thoght and trauell and moche woo;
How long þey schulle leue ys sett no 3eere,
The more sorow þey han ta parte þerfroo.
He holdyth nedeles in hoorde so dere,
In helle he fyndyþ hyt ys hys moost foo. (v.73; cf.
Waster ll.248-62, 439-44)

The value of "Wast bryngyth" in this comparison is that it uses in their simplest form traditional arguments out of which the prologue and also some of the central themes of *Wynnere and Wastoure* are developed.

(iii)

The prologue of *Wynnere and Wastoure* falls into three roughly equal sections. The first nine lines remark on the strange events since the siege of Troy that have culminated in the troubles of today. The second group of nine lines gives details of the signs of Doomsday which is surely fast approaching. The last section describes how true poets are now rejected in favour of young jesters and buffoons. In each section the time-scale switches from the past age to an uncertain future. "The takyng of Troye with tresone" and the strange events of the British past (ll.1-3) have been followed by the duplicity and treacherousness of the present (ll.4-8) with grave consequences for the future (l.9). The wisdom of Solomon foretold the signs that would herald the end of the world (ll.10-16) which is in fact not as far in the future as one might hope (ll.17-18). True poets favoured by the lords of the past (ll.19-20) have been displaced in this new age of faithlessness by chattering children who tell idle tales (ll.21-8), but in the end true values will be revealed (ll.29-30). In between past and future, the emphasis is firmly on the present: *nowe* (l.4); *nowe* (l.5); *appone honde* (l.11); *neghe here* (l.18); *now* (l.21); *bot now* (l.24).

The opening reference to the siege of Troy, proper to a national chronicle, is used notably in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* where its function is to establish the "historical" framework for an Arthurian adventure and also to introduce the notion of treachery that is so important to the poem. The function in *Wynnere and Wastoure* is much the same. It is an appropriate beginning for a poem that concerns itself with the consequences of individual behaviour for national affairs. Britain was founded as a consequence of "tresone withinn", which may thus be an inherent national characteristic, but even so the current prevalence of hypocrisy and treachery is disturbing.¹¹ Now everything we are involved with is wit (in Langland's "bad" sense) and wiles, words that are wise and clever (both in the "bad" sense), and each person denounces the other. (*Wryeth*, l.6, is not from OE *wrigian* "turn", hence "? pervert", as Gollancz supposed, but from OE *wrēgan* "accuse".)¹² The effect of this bad faith is felt not only as a general national malaise but also - and more painfully - by the individual, the "westren wy" who, because there is no-one he can trust, dare not send his son to join the exodus to the south¹³ to make his name and fortune, for fear that he himself will be worse off (*holden by hynde*, l.9; see MED *holden* v.(1), 24(a)) in his old age, without a son to support him in a world of deceit and trickery.

The second section lists the Signs of Doom, all of which are standard items in popular prophecy. The first pair, the sea rising and the buildings falling (l.12), feature regularly among the Fifteen Signs of Judgement, as in *The Chester Plays* and *The Pricke of Conscience*.¹⁴ The second two, hares crouching on hearthstones and ladies marrying beneath them (ll.13-15), are found together in *Ercyloun's Prophecy*:

Hwan hares kendleth in hertth-stanes,
Hwan laddes weuddeth levedis.¹⁵

These items are so well established in prophetic utterance that the "hare - hearthstone" collocation is satirised in a burlesque poem as "De hare & harpeston hurtuld to-geydur".¹⁶ It may seem that the parodic vein is not far beneath the surface of *Wynnere and Wastoure*, but the poet's point is ostensibly a serious one, that the warnings of imminent doom are all too evident around him. Following the devastating outbreak of the plague, these observations seemed particularly pertinent. People viewed events in the light of such traditional signs, so that the author of the *Brut* noted that a consequence of the second epidemic of 1361-2 was that widows "coupled & married hem with hem þat were of lowe degre & litel reputacion".¹⁷ There was in the mid-fourteenth century an understandable resurgence of prophetic literature and warnings of impending Doom.¹⁸

The passage that causes most difficulty is the third section of the prologue (ll.19-30).¹⁹ It has sometimes been taken as a glancing allusion to the oral composition of alliterative verse, but this belief rests upon a misinterpretation of ll.22-3 which is a consequence of Gollancz's rewriting of the text. Instead we shall see that the poet is concerned to develop further the related ideas of the signs of moral degeneracy and the deceptiveness of words, whether in the form of empty promises or frivolous versifying.

The complaint at the neglect of true poets, with which this section begins, is ancient and perennial,²⁰ and there are particular parallels to guide an interpretation of *Wynnere and Wastoure*. The *Chandos Herald* begins his *Vie du Prince Noir* in very similar vein, recalling the time when writers of "beaux ditz" were highly regarded, and regretting that now the court despises them and prefers chatterers, jugglers and grimacing jesters:

Car combien qe homme n'en face compte
Et qe homme tiendroit plus grant acompte
D'un jangelour ou d'un faux menteur
D'un jogelour ou d'un bourdeur
Qui voudroit faire une grimache
Ou contreferoit le lymache
Dount homme purroit faire un risée
Qe homme ne ferroit sanz demoerée
D'un autre qui saveroit bien dire!²¹

A Welsh prophecy claims that the neglect of bards and minstrels while churls prosper is one of the omens of disaster.²² As an introduction to *Wynnere and Wastoure* the complaint carries the self-flattering implication that this poem at least has something true and important to say.

In the former age, according to the author, lords loved to listen to their poets; now there is no friendship between people but only faintheartedness (l.21). *Fayntnesse* seems to carry something of the sense of *fayntise* "deceit". A sense of *frenchipe* that is relevant here is "the good will or favor of a superior" (MED

frendship (e n., 2). *In fere*, which has the general sense "in company, together", may contextually mean "in noble company". With this interpretation, the line states that patronage, the material expression of a lord's love, has given way to a cowardly feebleness of heart.

The line that follows this (l.22) has rightly been seen as the most problematic of all. *Wyse wordes* is, in context, disturbingly ambiguous. The reader is faced with the same question that troubles the poet - how may true wisdom be distinguished from false? The repetition of the phrase from l.6, where the words are clever rather than genuinely wise, makes it impossible to put faith in them now.

Withinn is difficult. It might be taken to refer back to *hert* (l.21), once the seat of love (l.19), but now occupied by *fayntnesse*. Some support for this interpretation is provided by the passage in "Wast bryngyth" quoted earlier, where the bright words remain in the breast. But the image of falsely wise words residing in the heart is certainly clumsy, and better sense comes from taking *withinn* to refer to *in fere*. Nowadays, says the poet, the wise words spoken in noble society are empty and false. It is a view shared by the author of *Ywain and Gawain*, who also introduces his poem with an attack on the modern vice of hypocrisy, contrasting the faithlessness now current in society with the honesty at the court of King Arthur, where words were true:

Dai tald of more trewth þam bitwene
 Ðan now amang men here es sene,
 For trewth and luf es al bylaft;
 Men uses now anoper craft.
 With worde men makes it trew and stabil,
 Bot in þair faith es noght bot fabil;
 With þe mowth men makes it hale,
 Bot trew trowth es nane in þe tale.²³

The "wise" words of present-day society, says the alliterative poet, were never *wroghte* - not "put into action" as we might naturally interpret it, but either "composed" as in l.25, or more probably the related sense "uttered". This sense is cited by *OED*, s.v. *work* v., 4b, in two other texts of the mid-fourteenth century, in both cases in collocation with *word*:

Philip Valays wordes wroght
 And said he suld þaire enmys sla.²⁴

And:

Ðai ditted þaire eris for þai suld noght
 Here þir wurdes þat þus war wroght.²⁵

Such false words "were never uttered or read in any romance that anyone ever heard" (ll.22-3). The *romance* is the record of noble deeds, both the reflection of the true values of courtly society and also the courtesy book compiled by the *makers of myrthes*

in order to impart these values to the noble company. The Chandos Herald observes that these "beaux ditz" are no longer appreciated, and Langland joins in lamenting the passing of the unsullied "menstralsie & merþe" of a former age.

Poets imparting real wisdom are never heard nowadays, for the child-entertainer of contemporary fashion has no genuine talent or calling; he has never used his intelligence to compose poetry (l.25). The boy is a mere performer telling japes, and he is appreciated (*lett of*, see MED *leten* v., 15(c) and 17(a)) more than the man who *made it* ("composed his own poem") himself.

Treason, trickery, cunning and faintheartedness carry all before them in the present age, for truth is not in season. Time, however, will distinguish the genuine from the false, for when men are known for what they are, work will bear witness to the one who can best work (ll.29-30). Here the poet introduces a final play on "work" (noun and verb). In phrases of this sort it generally means "act" as distinct from "word", as in "Wast bryngyth", but here works are words, for the poet's work is his poem, the "wordes wroghte" of l.25. The poem itself, *Wynnere and Wastoure*, will demonstrate the value of words that are truly wise, and hence the author will in the end be justified.

IV

We may finally consider how the prologue serves as an introduction to *Wynnere and Wastoure*. Firstly, it establishes the character of the poet. At the centre of any dream-vision is the dreamer. Always the reader is made aware that the experience is that of the narrator, who may be more or less fitted for his vision and more or less intimately concerned with the issues that it raises. So the prologue of a dream-vision naturally begins by identifying and defining the "I" of the poem: "I have gret wonder be this lyght"; "Al this mene I by love"; "I dewyne, fordolked of luf-daungere"; "I shop me into a shroud as I a shep were". It is therefore striking that the assurance that we are going to hear of the narrator's own experience is delayed until the first line after the prologue:

Bot I schall tell þow a tale þat me bytyde ones. (31)

Nevertheless, we have already learnt of the narrator's occupation and his preoccupation, his view of the world and his position in it, even though he is only inferentially identified in the prologue.²⁶ He does not say that he is the "westren wy" who fears to send his son southwards, but we may infer that his point of view is the same; he is only by implication "þe man that made it hym-seluen" who has been replaced by the chinweedless child. We are in no doubt that he is the one who perceives the sad state of the world and who will use poetry to express the truth about it; he is the prophet, inheritor of the wisdom of Solomon, who has the visionary experience recounted in his dream-poem.

The second point to be established by the prologue is the

Wynnere and Wastoure

nature of the audience. Traditional poetry may begin by defining its listeners and their relationship with the reciting poet: "Yee þat lengen in londe, lordes and ooper . . . Tend yee tytely to mee".²⁷ In *Wynnere and Wastoure* we are presented with a non-audience; the "lordes in londe" no longer listen and true poetry is disregarded. As a result of this aversion to the truth, the world is in a degenerate state. The message of the poem is to be communicated ultimately to the King, but in the light of contemporary fashion there seems little prospect that he or any other great lords will heed it. This pays us, the actual audience, the compliment of exclusiveness, but it also places on us the burden of responsibility; we are the only ones serious enough to listen to the poet's message and to transmit it where we can.

Thirdly, the prologue stresses the urgent importance of the matter of the debate that follows. The argument is concerned with the consequences of personal morality for the economic health of the nation: because Winner hoards the poor starve; because Waster is extravagant the poor starve. From the very outset of the poem we learn in broad terms how far society has degenerated in consequence of the decline in moral values. When wit and wisdom are turned to deceit, when the social order is so topsy-turvy that low-bred rogues marry ladies and lords reward undeserving children, there can be no surprise that the signs of Doomsday are all around.

NOTES

- 1 A *Good Short Debate Between Winner and Waster*, ed. Sir I. Gollancz (2nd ed., London, 1930) preface (unpaginated).
- 2 The MS reading is defended by A.C. Spearing, *Medieval Dream-Poetry* (Cambridge, 1976) p.130.
- 3 See the preface to his edition, the section headed "The Prologue and the Refrain".
- 4 "Proverbium, id est communis sententia, cui consuetudo fidem attribuit": *Ars Versificatoria*, para. 16, in *Les Arts Poétiques du XII^e et du XIII^e Siècle*, ed. E. Faral (Paris, 1923). For discussion and further examples see J.J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1974) pp.233-5, who notes a collection of Latin and English proverbs in a rhetorical handbook in Rylands Lat. MS. 394.
- 5 "Prouerbia extracta de libris Salomonis": *Briefsteller und Formelbücher*, ed. L. Rockinger (Munich, 1863-4) II, p.854.
- 6 See S.S. Hussey, "Langland's Reading of Alliterative Poetry", *MLR* 60 (1965) pp.163-70; J.A.W. Bennett (ed.), *Langland: Piers Plowman* (Oxford, 1972) pp.79, 152, 215. For reasons that cannot be explored here, I believe that *Wynnere and Wastoure* is c.1352, and certainly earlier than any version of *Piers Plowman*, despite the arguments of E. Salter, "The Timeliness of *Wynnere and Wastoure*", *Medium Ævum* 47 (1978) pp.40-65.
- 7 Quotations are from the following editions: *Piers Plowman: The A Version*, ed. G. Kane (London, 1960); *Piers Plowman: The B Version*, ed. G. Kane and E.T. Donaldson (London, 1975); *Piers Plowman: An Edition of the C Text*, ed. D. Pearsall (London, 1978).
- 8 See E.T. Donaldson, *Piers Plowman: The C-Text and Its Poet* (New Haven, 1949) pp.136-53, which includes an illuminating discussion of Dame Study's speech.
- 9 See J.A. Burrow, "Words, Works and Will: Theme and Structure in *Piers Plowman*", in *Piers Plowman: Critical Approaches*, ed. S.S. Hussey (London, 1969) pp.111-24.
- 10 These two versions are edited by K. Brunner, "Spätme. Lehrgedichte", *Archiv* 161 (1932) pp.191-5; 164 (1933) 178-99.
- 11 Other complaints about the duplicity of the modern age are cited by T.H. Bestul, *Satire and Allegory in Wynnere and Wastoure* (Lincoln, Neb., 1974) pp.55-7.
- 12 See OED *wray* v.¹, and cf. "everich biwreied other of here wrecchede werkes", *The Simonie*, l.36, in *The Political Songs of England*, ed. T. Wright (London, 1839) p.325.
- 13 Many from the north-west midlands found careers in London and on military service, especially after the Black Prince was created Earl of Chester in 1333 and Henry of Grosmont became Duke of Lancaster in 1351. See M.J. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism* (Cambridge, 1983).

- ¹⁴ *The Chester Mystery Cycle*, ed. R.M. Lumiansky and D. Mills, EETS SS 3 (1974) XXII, 261-332; *The Pricke of Conscience*, ed. R. Morris (Berlin, 1863) ll.4738-817. See W.W. Heist, *The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* (East Lansing, 1952).
- ¹⁵ In *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*, ed. T. Wright and J.O. Halliwell (London, 1841) I, p.30. Another version, from MS. Harley 2253, is in *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, ed. R.H. Robbins (New York, 1959) p.29. For more examples see *Collection of Ancient Scottish Prophecies*, Bannatyne Club (Edinburgh, 1833) pp.38, 39.
- ¹⁶ Printed in *Manuscripts and Readers in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. D. Pearsall (Cambridge, 1983) pp.137-8.
- ¹⁷ *The Brut*, ed. F.W.D. Brie, EETS 136 (1908) ii, 314. Other complaints about lads wedding ladies are assembled in *Thomas of Erceidoune*, ed. J.A.H. Murray, EETS 61 (1875) p.xxxix.
- ¹⁸ See M.W. Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman as a Fourteenth-century Apocalypse* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1961) pp.92-4; M. Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1969).
- ¹⁹ It is interestingly discussed by N. Jacobs, "The Typology of Debate and the Interpretation of *Wynnere and Wastoure*", *RES* n.s. 36 (1985) pp.498-500. He concludes that there is a lacuna after l.21.
- ²⁰ For references see Bestul, *op.cit.*, pp.58-9.
- ²¹ *La Vie du Prince Noir*, ed. D.B. Tyson (Tübingen, 1975), ll.15-23. The parallel is noted by Salter, *art.cit.*, pp.59-60.
- ²² See M.E. Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh* (Cardiff, 1937) pp.103, 184-5.
- ²³ *Ywain and Gawain*, ed. A.B. Friedman and N.T. Harrington, EETS 254 (1964), ll.33-40. Significantly, in the source of this, Chrétien's *Yvain*, the complaint concerns the debasement of true love. See T. Hunt, "The Rhetorical Background to the Arthurian Prologue", in *Arthurian Romance: Seven Essays*, ed. D.D.R. Owen (Edinburgh and London, 1970) pp.1-23.
- ²⁴ *The Poems of Laurence Minot*, ed. J. Hall (3rd edn., Oxford, 1914) no. I, ll.45-6.
- ²⁵ *Northern Homilies*, ed. C. Horstmann, *Altenglische Legenden: Neue Folge* (Heilbronn, 1881) p.30, ll.147-8.
- ²⁶ Bestul, *op.cit.*, p.66, notes that the prologue is "'nonpersonal' first-person narration", but nevertheless concludes that "the autobiographical element is not so well developed . . . as in Chaucer's dream visions" (p.26).
- ²⁷ *Alexander A*, ll.1, 7, ed. W.W. Skeat, in *The Romance of William of Palerne*, EETS ES 1 (1867).