THE POETRY OF ROBERT HENRYSON: A
STUDY OF THE USE OF SOURCE MATERIAL

by

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Most of Henryson's poetry retells tales already told many times before; all of it is written within the context of accepted genres and forms. Henryson's audience would have known these stories and genres, and even today readers approaching his works will know the stories of certain of the fables, and of Orpheus and Eurydice. What is of importance then is the particular way in which the stories are told, the particular emphasis given, the particular themes stressed. While it is of course true that we realize something of this without knowing previous versions, we cannot today obtain a true perspective on Henryson as artist and moralist unless we attempt to discover his debt to tradition; this done we can assess his own creative talent.

There is a second reason why the study of the traditions within which the poet is writing is necessary. It is impossible to understand the full meaning of the poetry unless one is acquainted with the function of medieval iconographic imagery and form. Often Henryson has reoriented traditional forms by placing them in a new context; by altering details. Unless this is realized, and the original form understood one misses not only Henryson's essential creativity but also part of the meaning and unity of the works in which they are used.

Certain conclusions have become obvious from studying the poetry in connection with related material. Firstly, Henryson is very much a literary artist, not a rustic, a folk poet or an observer of nature. Almost every detail in his poetry can be
traced to some literary source known to medieval Europe - for Henryson is not a Scottish nationalist despite the efforts of certain modern critics to make him so. But - and this is the second conclusion - though details, forms, stories can be traced to their origin we are not left with a conglomeration of borrowings. Henryson has welded his material creatively into a sophisticated and satisfying artistic and thematic whole. Thus Henryson appears not as the genial schoolmaster charmed with animal behaviour normally portrayed but as a gifted and sophisticated artist interested in form as a means of conveying a serious moral theme, the transitoriness and instability of material pleasures in this fleeting world.

Two comments should be made about the title. Firstly, I have interpreted the term 'source material' very widely to include not only definite sources but also genre material and formal criteria. We cannot be certain that Henryson knew the particular examples of these forms I have chosen, but that is of no importance. Secondly, the thesis is concerned almost exclusively with The Fabillie and the shorter poems, The Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Eurydice being mentioned merely as exemplary material and in a brief appendix. To include them would have been to put a large enough work beyond reasonable limits; besides, the type of study I have adopted for The Fabillie has been attempted successfully for the other two long poems by Dr. S.J. Earle.

As a text of The Fabillie I have adopted, with occasional emendations, that of the Bannatyne Manuscript as edited by
W. Tod Ritchie. Reasons for the superiority of this manuscript are given by Professor John MacQueen in his article on the text of Henryson. I have adopted the titles of the poems given in the Bannatyne text and also something of the order (starting of course with The Prolog) which has more affinity with the order of the Romulus tradition used by Henryson than have the other early versions, Bassandyne and Harleian. Three fables do not exist in the Bannatyne Manuscript - for these (and for the text of the other poems) I have used Wood's edition.

Editorial policy: In Middle Scots texts and a few Middle English texts I have reduced 'p', 'q' and superscript 't' to 'th', 'y' and 'cht'. In all edited texts I have expanded ampersands to 'and' without comment; but in manuscripts I have transcribed myself I have indicated expansion of abbreviations in the normal fashion. My policy of underlining rhetorical parallelism and alliteration is explained on p. 69 n. 1.

All references to Chaucer's work are to The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N. Robinson, 2nd edn. (London, 1957). I have not thought it necessary to give page references to this volume in my footnotes. In general any particular poem is cited once only in the footnotes in each chapter. Thus, a reference to Gualterus Anglicus' version of The Cox and the Jewell for instance will be footnoted only on its first occurrence in the chapter dealing with that poem.

I have many acknowledgements to make: to the typist, Miss A. Turner, for wading through innumerable pages in numerous unintelligible languages; to the Librarians of the Universities
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But my deepest thanks must go to Professor John MacIuen whose ever present help, encouragement and kindness have made
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Abbreviations:

Archiv: Archiv für das Studium der Neueren Sprachen und Literaturen

B.M.: British Museum

B.N.: Bibliothèque Nationale


E.E.T.S.O.S.: Early English Text Society Original Series

E.S.: Extra Series

J.E.G.P.: Journal of English and Germanic Philology

M.L.N.: Modern Language Notes

M.L.Q.: Modern Language Quarterly

M.L.R.: Modern Language Review


P.Q.: Philological Quarterly

R.E.S.: Review of English Studies

S.A.T.F.: Société des Anciens Textes Français

S.P.: Studies in Philology
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PART II: THE KORALL FABILLIS

Surely the most pressing problem connected with Henryson is an exhaustive study of the relationship of "Aesop", the Isopets and the beast epic to the Pables. Only the most casual attempts have been made to approach the subject... It demands a full-scale hunt through French and Latin literature... Almost nothing can be done in assessing Henryson until we know this literary context.

Francis Lee Utley, L.L.Q., xii (1951), 494.
A: Argument

Henryson makes explicit his intentions in writing his Fabillis:

Thir nutis schellis thocht thai be hard and tuich
They hold the curnall suiet and delectable
So lyis their a doctryne wyse anewch
And full of fruct vndir a fenyet fable (Prolog, 15-18)
Rycht as the mynoure In his mynorall
Ffaire gold with fyre may fra the lede wele wyn
Rycht as vnder a fable figurall
A sa sentence may seke and asfter fyn
As daylie does thir doctouris of dywyn
Apertly be ours leving can applye
And preue thare preching be a poeaye (The Fox tryed before
the lyone, 268-94.)

But he has rarely been taken at his word. Commentators have
concentrated on one, or both, of two aspects. Some have been
attracted by the charm of the popular, naive rustic, a poet of
delightful and humorous animal tales, a poet with 'an innocent
delight in the world of the senses.'¹

Henryson is a countryman; and his philosophy
is as firmly rooted in rustic folk wisdom as
in religious faith. This gives his poise and
the sturdy independence of the peasant who does
his work but is too stiff to bow. In the fable -
essentially democratic in its appeal - this
independence finds an appropriate means of
expression.²

One can of course neglect the moral preoccupations of such a man;
ye are too boring;³ or 'too ingenious for modern taste'.⁴ Indeed,
to take this point of view to its logical conclusion, the poet has
failed in what he has set out to do:

1. Kurt Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature (Edinburgh
and London, 1958), p. 44.
2. Ibid. p. 51.
3. H. Harvey Wood writes '... the moralizing, which is admittedly
dull, is confined to the postscript.' The Poems and Fables
His fables usually have a twofold moral: one - highly humanitarian and sociological - implicit in the tale; the other, the conventional moralitas, at the end. The latter sometimes comes as a surprise: in "The Tale of the Cock and the Jewel", we sympathize with the cock to whom the jewel, swept carelessly on to the hidden by wanton damsels, is of no interest - corn or chaff would be more useful. Yet in the moralitas the cock is represented as a fool scorning science, the jewel as the love of learning, now lost because men are satisfied with riches and have no patience to seek it. It seems almost as if the poet has allowed his own colourful fable to run away with him, and is now returning to his duty. 1

Henryson's moral preoccupation does not so much as might be expected interfere with his humorous observation. In the Two Mice, for example, it provides little more than shrewd marginal comment... 2

Others have attempted to see The Fables as merely poetry of political protest, a reflection of contemporary social conditions. 3 Often allied with this view is an incipient Scottish nationalism which finds his humour, or his settings, or his understates or other aspects of his work specifically Scottish. 4

Now I do not deny that there is humour in Henryson's poetry, though usually it is much more sardonic than has been claimed, 5 but I do wish to claim that it is at all times subject to the moral purpose. Nor do I wish to deny that there are contemporary references in the work - largely making traditional complaints on the nature of man local as a means of persuasion to moral improvement;

5. The essentially bitter nature of Chaucer's humour has often been similarly overlooked.
but I shall attempt to prove that Henryson's point of view is neither specifically Scottish nor solely political - that it is basically moral and religious rather than political, that it is basically that of any well-educated European. For, it seems to me, it can be claimed that Henryson is a rustic or an entertaining popular poet only if one is ignorant of the medieval traditions which lie behind his work: philosophical and religious traditions, traditions of verse forms, genres, rhetorical techniques, topoi.\(^1\) To neglect these is to neglect one of the main features of the poetry, its sophisticated and conscious use of conventions, its revivifying of old forms through combination into a new whole.\(^2\) For Henryson has taken the fable form - before collections of much shorter and less sophisticated poems studying unrelated ethical problems - and by expansion through forms, through detail\(^3\) made his fables as a group a study of man's essential animality, his desire for the passing pleasures of this world. Much later medieval poetry is a study of the same human motivation. Of course such a statement does not imply adverse criticism for, in essence, poetry is an image of well-worn ideas. In the image we see the idea anew; it becomes of added significance, new relevance.\(^4\)

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1. For topoi see Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, tr. Willard R. Trask (Bollingen Series XXVI, New York, 1953); the concept is defined on p. 70. In many ways the whole of this thesis will serve as further evidence for the central argument of Curtius' invaluable book.

2. To prove my argument I shall constantly be forced to quote, sometimes at length, from previous uses.

3. Many critics have commented on Henryson's addition of detail; it has not invariably been stressed however that the added detail usually helps our understanding of the moral issues under discussion.

4. The stress on the image (the figure) is Henryson's own; see Denton Fox, 'Henryson's Fables', *E.L.H.*, xxix (1962), 341 and note. It will be noticed that my attitude to Henryson's poetry is very similar to that expounded by Professor Fox in his article.
We cannot of course see how Henryson has treated the fable form until we discover just what he has taken from fables written before him. This entails a hunt for sources and analogues through the whole corpus of medieval Latin and vernacular fable literatures. The question of Henryson's sources has been examined by three scholars before me. The first, A.R. Diebler, was certainly the most thorough. He noted many of the important texts and several errors in source ascription would have been avoided if his work had always been examined. Gregory Smith's work showed little advance but is generally accurate as far as it goes. It has been the only discussion of Henryson's source material generally available.

1. My method is rather similar to that of B.J. Harth, Convention and Creation in the Poetry of Robert Henryson, A Study of The Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Furvulc, an unpublished dissertation for the University of Chicago (1957).

2. Apart from the three general discussions to be mentioned the following should also be noted: Janet W. Smith, The French Background of Middle Scots Literature (Edinburgh and London, 1934), pp. 70-91 - a brief discussion of the relationship of the fox tales to Le Roman de Renart; Charles Elliott, Robert Henryson: Poems (Oxford, 1963), pp. 129-30 - a very brief account of the relationship of the Fabel.ijl to the medieval animal tale traditions; several discussions of the sources of The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadder - see my discussion of that fable; R. Fessel, Geschichte der Fabeldichtung in England bis zu John Gay, 1726 (Palaestra: Untersuchungen und Texte aus der deutschen und englischen Philologie hg. A. Brandl, Gustav Rothe und E. Schmidt, Bd. LII, Berlin, 1906), pp. xliv-xlvi - a brief account, based largely on Diebler, stressing, however, Henryson's supposed debt to Lydgate; Mary E. Lonergan, A Study of the Poetry of Robert Henryson and of the Significance of its Medieval and Scottish Setting, an unpublished M.A. thesis for the University of Cork (1957) - Miss Lonergan sets out with much the same aim as my own but her knowledge of the medieval fable tradition is so limited (she does not seem to know anything of the Latin tradition) that her work cannot be said to add to our knowledge of Henryson's sources or methods.


4. See my discussion of the sources of The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadder, pp. 239-40.

Richard Bauman has recently argued that Henryson was indebted to folk tale traditions. Evidence of the nature of folk tales in medieval times is, however, notoriously unreliable - there can be little certainty that any given tale existed in folk tradition then, that it has not entered the tradition from an originally written source. Bauman provides but two examples of folk tale parallels which he claims to be closer to Henryson than written sources. However, for both these fables - The Fox tried before the Lyone and The Fox, the Wolf and the Caddger - he has overlooked or underestimated the importance of significant literary analogues.

I shall discuss the problems in considerably more detail later.

Now while Diebler and Smith have found many of the more obvious parallels for Henryson's fables there are still important analogues to be pointed out. Besides, they have not examined in detail just what the poet has taken from his sources. As a result the extent and nature of additions made have not been fully understood and the character of the poetry has tended to be distorted. We must discuss the work poem by poem but first it is essential that we examine the medieval fable tradition in order to see The Fabillis, and their sources, in context.


2. Cf. the argument over the sources - folk-tale or learned - of Le Roman de Renard; see p. 21 n. 2.
B: The Medieval Animal Tale Collections

(1) Fable Collections

The place of origin of the fable form — whether in the East or in Greece — does not concern us here; nor do the nature and forms of the original collections. Our interest begins with the translation by Phaedrus, in the first part of the first century A.D., of a Greek collection of 'Esop' into Latin verse. The collection seems to have been almost completely unknown for several

1. A large amount of this chapter is necessarily based directly on the work of other scholars, particularly that of Léopold Hervieux, Gaston Paris, Julia Bastin, R. Bossuat and J.Th. Welter.


3. ed. Léopold Hervieux, Les Fabulistes Latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du royen Airj Phédrus et Les Anciens Imitateurs Directs et Indirects, 2nd edn., 2 vols. (Paris, 1893-4), hereafter cited as Hervieux i and ii — ii, 5-81; a useful text is that of J.P. Postgate, Phaedri Fabulae Aesopina cum Nicolai Perotti Prologo et Decem Novis Fabulis (Scriptorum Classiciarum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis, Oxford, n.d.); C. Zander, Phaedrus Solum vel Phaedri Fabulae Novae XXX (Acta Societatis Humaniorum Litterarum Lundensis, 3, Lund, 1921), attempts, as others had done before him, to argue back to the original metrical Phaedrian text of thirty fables now missing in their original form but existing in later prose recensions. For an English translation see T. Riley, The Comedies of Terence and the Fables of Phaedrus literally translated into English prose (London, 1853); a bilingual text in the Loeb Classical Library is promised by Ben E. Perry (Aesopica, i [Urbana, 1952], xiii). For manuscript details and history see Hervieux, i, 5-239. I make no apology for the constant use of Hervieux' work in this thesis. Its deficiencies are many and serious; see Gaston Paris, review articles, Journal des Gayants, 1881, pp. 670-86; 1885, pp. 57-51; 1899, pp. 207-20; and E. Mall, 'Zur Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Fabelliteratur und insbesondere des Esop der Marie de France', Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie, ix (1885), 161-203. Nevertheless Hervieux' volumes remain the only available text of several medieval fable collections and his discussion of the history of the genre also contains much of value despite its facile solutions to the many problems of the filiations of the Romulus derivations. It is to be hoped that this will be superseded by the fourth volume of Ben E. Perry's Aesopica which he indicated would be 'an essay on the history of the various traditions' (loc. cit., p. vii).
centuries during the Middle Ages until rescued from oblivion by the French scholar Pierre Pithou in the sixteenth century. But imitations were of immense importance. The closest, now called the Adémar Asop, is a prose version found in an early eleventh century manuscript copied by Adémar of Chabannes. Another imitation, the Asopus ad Rufum, now lost, seems to have formed the basis for a collection known as the Wissenbourg Asop, found in a tenth century manuscript, and which is of far greater importance - for the original Romulus collection from which derived, directly or indirectly, partially or completely, all the well-known medieval fable collections. The prologue to the original Romulus, and its direct derivations, is in the form of an epistle from a certain Romulus to his son Tiberinus. Romulus claims to be sending his son from Athens a collection of Asop's fables which he has translated from Greek. Some later fabulists, for instance Marie de France, thought of him as a Roman emperor but there can be no certainty of his identity, or even of his

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1. Ninth century manuscripts are known (Hervieux, i, 80ff); in the fifteenth century, Niccolò Perotti, Archbishop of Capua, copied a more complete collection than that of the ninth century MSS.

2. Phaedri Aug. Liberti... Fabularum Asopiarum Libri V (1596).


4. But see Hervieux, i, 314-27 and Gaston Paris, Journal des Savants, 1884, pp. 676-85 for discussion of its contents. The name of the collection is taken from the dedication to a certain Rufus - the dedication is copied in one of the derivatives, the Wissenbourg Asop and adapted in the epilogues of several other collections.


existence. All that is known is that the adaptation was made in
the tenth century or before (the earliest existing manuscript of
a derivation is of the tenth century) and that it is in essence
merely a prose reworking of Phaedrus' original\(^1\) — perhaps at two
removes.

The relationships between the direct and indirect derivations
of the original Romulus have never been satisfactorily determined
and much work still need be done in this field. The following
discussion is thus very tentative in its assumptions of filiations
but should be adequate for the needs of this thesis.

### a. Prose Derivations of Romulus

Of the prose derivations there are three main groups: the
full-scale derivations and expansions, the abridgements, and those
versions which contain certain Romulus variants together with fables
from other sources.

The most widely known of the full-scale derivations is the
so-called vulgate Romulus,\(^2\) a prose compilation of eighty-three
fables existing in six manuscripts ranging in date from the tenth
to the sixteenth centuries.\(^3\) It seems that the first edition was
published in Ulm, about 1475, by Dr. Heinricus Steinböwel;\(^4\) it was
reprinted several times in the next twenty-five years.\(^5\) The edition

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1. Hervieux, 1, 305-14.
2. In his first edition (Paris, 1884), 1, 266ff, Hervieux discussed
this collection assuming it to be the original Romulus, - hence
its name. Gaston Paris, *Journal des Savants*, 1884, pp. 660-1,
showed that Hervieux' assumption was untenable. This the
latter himself admitted in his second edition, 1, 350-1.
3. See Hervieux, 1, 334-60; ed. Hervieux, 11, 195-233 and Thiele,
*Der Lateinische Aesop des Romulus*, op. cit.
Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart*, CXVII, Tübingen, 1873).
5. See Hervieux, 1, 360ff and George C. Keidel, *A Manual of
Aesopic Fable Literature*, a first book of reference for the period ending
A.D. 1500, 1st fascicule (Romance and Other Studies No. 2,
Baltimore, 1896); Keidel lists twenty-six editions before 1500.
comprises not only the fables from the vulgate Romulus - together with the verse recension by Qualterus and a German translation - but also fables from other sources. Book IV - there are four books of about twenty fables each in the manuscripts - ends; Finis quarti libri Esopi viri ingeniosi, nec plurae eis libri inveniuntur. Multa tamen eius fabule reperte sunt, quarum plurima sequuntur, ut in processu videbitur. Book V is entitled Extravagantes Esopi Antiquae Sequuntur; Book VI, Sequuntur Aliaque Esopi Fabule Nove Translationis Remicii; Book VII, Aviani Fabulo Sequuntur; Book VIII, Ex Adelfonso et Poggii. Avianus\(^1\) (fl. c.400 A.D.), a Roman fabulist, wrote forty-two fables in elegiacs based on the Greek fables of Babrius;\(^2\) the collection was known throughout the Middle Ages but did not attain the popularity of the Romulus derivations. The Italian humanist Ramutio d'Aresso, named here Remicius, translated fables from the Greek \textit{Æsop} in the mid fifteenth century.\(^3\) The apostolic secretary Poggio Bracciolini (1381-1459) collected tales which Jacob delightfully describes thus: 'They are mostly tales of a kind which we do not tell or print nowadays; or which, to speak more frankly, we only tell when we are young and only print privately in limited editions of 1000 copies.'\(^4\) But the

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3. Hervieux, i, 295-6.
books of interest to us, containing versions of fables used by Henryson, are those comprising fables of Petrus Alphonsus and the **Fabulae Extravagantes**. Petrus Alphonsus, a converted Jew living in Spain in the early twelfth century, translated into Latin certain fabliaux and fables from the East, among them a version of *The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman*. The work, the *Disciplina Clericalis*, achieved a wide popularity in later centuries.¹ The **Fabulae Extravagantes** contain many parallels to Marie de France’s collection and to the Roman de Renard cycle both of which will be discussed later. But for the particular fable in which we are interested — *The Wolf and the Wedder* — there are but two parallels to Steinhövel’s version: an incomplete variant in a British Museum manuscript² and Baldo’s reworking (c.1300) of Jean de Capoue’s translation from an Eastern story.³ As I have already mentioned Steinhövel’s collection became widely known. Julien Macho translated it into French before 1480 and from that version Caxton translated his *Book of the subtyl historyes and fables of Esop* (*Westymynstre*, 1484).⁴ I shall attempt to prove Henryson’s indebtedness to Caxton in my discussion of the two fables mentioned above.

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2. Additional 8166ff. 41b-42b. The manuscript is of the twelfth century.


A second full-scale prose derivation is the Vienna-Berlin Romulus contained in three related fourteenth century manuscripts. The Florence Romulus, also in a fourteenth century manuscript, is probably also a derivation of the original Romulus.

The three derivations so far mentioned are in many ways very close indeed. I shall illustrate this, and also something of the undeveloped character of the fables contained in them, by quotation from each of a typical fable, also contained in Henryson, The Wolf and the Lamb. Vulgate Romulus:

Aesopus de innocente et reprobo

talem retulit fabulam

Agnus et lupus sitientes ad rium e diverso

venerunt. Superius bibebat lupus, longeque

inferius agnus. Lupus ut agnum uidit,

sic ait: Turbasti mihi aquam bibenti?

agnus patiens dixit: Quomodo aquam turbau

ibi que a te ad me decurrat. Lupus non

crubuit uestitati. Male dicis mihi, inquit.

Agnus ait: Non mealedixi, Lupus dixit:

Ergo pater tuus fuit ante sex menses; et ita

fecit mihi. Hunc idque ego natus fui? Sic

Lupus improba furore dixit: Et adeo loquor,

latro? Et statim se in eum iniecit, et

innocenti uitam eripuit.

Nec in illis dicta est fabula qui

hominibus calumniatur.

The Vienna-Berlin Romulus:

De innocente et reprobo

Agnus et Lupus sitientes ad quandam e diverso

venerunt rium. Superius bibebat Lupus,

Agnus autem inferius de rium bibebat. Lupus,

ut Agnus (sic) vidit, sic ait: Cur turbasti

mihi aquam bibenti? Agnus paciens ait:

Quomodo aquam turbau tibi, que a te ad me

decurrat? Lupus non erubuit mandacium preferre

veritat. Male dicis (dicit), inquit mihi.

Agnus ait: Non maledico verum dicens. Lupus

dixit: Ergo et pater tuus fuit hic, qui ante

1. Two of the MSS. are edited by Hervieux, ii, 417-73; one by Thiele, Der "lateinische Aesop des Romulus, op. cit.

2. ed. Hervieux, ii, 474-512; for details see Hervieux, i, 699-707.

3. Hervieux, ii, 195.
sex mensae (qui) mihi pari modo fecerat.
Agnus ait: Nunquam ego natus fui tunc?
Siique Lupus improba facie dixit: Et adhuc
loqueris, latro? Et statim insiluit in cum
ac innocenti vitam abstulit.
Hec de illis dicta fabula est qui non
iuste calumniabantur homines. 1

The Florence Romulus:

Esopus de innocent
Agnus et Lupus sittentes ad unum rium e diverso
uincrunt. Sursum bibebe lupus longoque
inferior agnus. Lupus ut agnum uidit, sic ait:
Turbasti mihi aquam bibenti. Agnus patiener
dixit: Quomodo aquam tibi turbasti, que a te ad
decurrit? Lupus non erubuit uritat dienens:
Maledicis mihi, inquit. Agnus ait: Vere non
maledixi. Cui Lupus: Ergo et pater tuus fuit
ante sex mensae hic, et ita fecit mihi. Agnus
aet: Nunquam ego natus fui? Lupus improba
uoce dixits: Et adhuc loqueris, latro. Et statim
se in cum dirixit et innocenti uitam eripuit.
Hec in illo[a] dicta est fabula qui
hominibus calumniabantur. Et qui de
salute alterius mala cogitant non effugient
penas. 2

The fourth full-scale derivation, the Romulus of Nilant, 3
existing in manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,
is of a somewhat more expanded character as can be seen from its
version of The Wolf and the Lamb.

Esopus de innocent et reprobo tales retulit
fabulas.
Quodam tempore Agnus et Lupus ad unum rium e
diverso, causa potendi, venerunt; sed Lupus
superior ad illam partem, unde flumen currotat,
bibebe; Agnus vero inferior. Lupus, ut Agnum
vidit, sic dixisse furtur: Quare michi perturbas
aquam bibenti et lutulentam em efficis? Cui
Agnus patiener respondit: Quomodo aquam
pertubares tibi que a te ad se decurrit? Lupus
non erubescens veritat: Maledicis mihi, inquit.
Ad hoc Agnus respondens: Non maledixi, ait.
At contra Lupus ait: Equaliter mihi pater tuus

2. Hervieux, ii, 475.
3. ed. Hervieux, ii, 513-48; for details see Hervieux, i, 708-18.
The name of the collection is taken from that of its first
editor, the early eighteenth century scholar, Nilant.
Two verse recensions were made of the Romulus of Nilant. Two verse recensions were made of the Romulus of Nilant.2 Hervieux and Warnke have shown that the Anglo-Latin Romulus also derives partially from it.3 I shall discuss this collection when describing the versions of mixed origin.

Three abridgements exist - whether they derive from the original Romulus or from one of its derivations is a problem not yet solved satisfactorily. In the mid-thirteenth century the Dominican Vincent of Beauvais compiled his four encyclopedia: Speculum Historiale, Speculum Naturale, Speculum Morale and Speculum Doctrinale. In the first and fourth of these he included twenty-nine fables based closely on Romulus.4 The works achieved widespread popularity,5 the first, with its fables, being translated into French in the early fourteenth century by Jean de Vignay.6

The forty-five fables in a fourteenth century manuscript in the library of Corpus Christi College Oxford7 are considerably shortened

1. Hervieux, 11, 514.
2. ed. Hervieux, 11, 653-757; for details see Hervieux, 1, 601-15.
5. Hervieux, 1, 436ff.
7. ed. Hervieux, 11, 246-61; for details see Hervieux, 1, 461-3.
from their original. As an example one may cite *The Wolf and the Lamb*, the original of which must have been very close to both the Vulgate Romulus and the Vienna-Berlin Romulus to judge from their similarities:

\[\text{Quod innocens se iungere non debet improbo.}\]
\[\text{Agnus et Lupus sitientes ad riuum e diverso venerunt.}\]
\[\text{Sursum bibebat Lupus, longeque inferior Agnus. Lupus uero, fingens sibi ab Agno aquam fusisse turbatam, nullamque inde rationem suspiciens, seque iam pridem a patre suo tali sustinuisse affirmans, irruit in eum et occidet. Sioque innocenti vitam cripuit.}\]

The Berne Romulus, found in a fifteenth century manuscript, contains only thirteen fables none greatly developed from the original; but there are some interesting and unique variants which will be discussed when relevant to individual fables.

Of the versions of mixed source there are two of considerable importance, three of less. The Anglo-Latin Romulus is no longer in existence but something of its nature can be deduced. Marie de France, writing of her translation, tells how le cunte Willame ...

\[\text{M'entremis de cest livre faire}\]
\[\text{E de l'engleis en romans treire.}\]
\[\text{Esop' apel'um cest livre,}\]
\[\text{Qu'il translata e fist escrire,}\]
\[\text{Del gru en latin le turna;}\]
\[\text{Li reis Alvres, que mut l'ama,}\]
\[\text{Le translata puis en engleis}\]
\[\text{E jeo l'ai rime en franciais.}\]

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1. Hervieux, 1, 246.
2. ed. Hervieux, 11, 758-62; for details see Hervieux, 1, 816-8.
Marie's complete fables (102 in all) have been edited by B. de Roquefort, *Poesies de Marie de France*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1832), 11, 59-402 and K. Warnke *Die Fabeln der Marie de France* (Bibliotheca Normannica, Denkmäler Normannischer Literatur und Sprache hg. Hermann Buchier, VI, Halle, 1898). It is generally agreed that Marie was wrong in attributing the English translation to Alfred; a few MSS. read Henri and Hervieux (1, 720-1), surprisingly, attributes the work to Henry I.
From this English version too, as Gaston Paris has shown, has come the Latin translation known as the LBG derivation or the Göttingen fragments. The fables are in a form considerably extended from the original Romulus. Thus:


Loralitas. Sic tyranni faciunt: cum innocentum res vel mortem cupiunt, sive iuste sive iniuste eos spoliant et opprimunt.3

From Marie’s collection and the Göttingen fragments we have evidence of the nature of the English version and thus probably of the Anglo-Latin Romulus which formed its source. The collection, certainly composed before the last decade of the twelfth century when Marie’s

2. Manuscripts, of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, are found in London, Brussels and Göttingen – also in Trèves; the first edition was taken from one of the Göttingen MS. (H. Osterley, Romulus die paraphrasen des Phaedrus und die Asopische fabel im mittelalter (Berlin, 1870), ed. Hervieux, 11, 564-649; for details see Hervieux, 1, 775-93.
translation was made, contained more than 130 tales, some from
the Romulus of Nilant, some related to the fox tale and fabliaux
traditions; there were also a few from other parts of the Romulus
tradition not found in the Romulus of Nilant. Of the Anglo-Latin
Romulus a more fragment, the Romulus of Robert, 1 twenty-two fables
in all, remains. Before we leave the Anglo-Latin Romulus and its
derivatives it should be mentioned that Lydgate’s Isopos Fabules, 2
a fifteenth century collection comprising a prologue and seven
fables in rhyme royal, is also attached to this tradition.

With the work of Odo of Cheriton, 3 an English priest writing
about 1320, we begin to move away from the direct fable tradition
into two other genres which we shall discuss later: the exempla
collections and the Roman de Renard cycle. Many of Odo’s fables
contain moralitates giving specifically Christian teaching; and
of the seventy-five or so fables making up the collection only
about fifteen can be directly related to the Romulus tradition;
most are moralized incidents from the Roman de Renard or bestiary
stories. The collection achieved widespread popularity. 4

The mixed Romulus of Berne, 5 existing in a thirteenth century
manuscript, contains shortened versions of fables from the original

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1. so called after its first editor A.C.M. Robert, Fables inédites
des XIIe, XIIIe et XIVe siècles et Fables de La Fontaine,
2 vols. (Paris, 1825), i, 547-62; also ed. Hervieux, ii,
549-63; for details see Hervieux, i, 763-75 and Gaston Paris,
Journal des Sçavans, 1885, pp. 41-3.
2. ed. H.W. MacCranken, The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ii,
3. L. Hervieux, Les Fabulistes Latins depuis le siècle d’Auguste
jusqu’à la fin du moyen âge: Études de Cheriton et ses Dérivés
(Paris, 1895) - hereafter cited as Hervieux, iv.
4. Hervieux, iv, 46-77 mentions twenty-six manuscripts from
libraries throughout Europe.
5. ed. Hervieux, ii, 302-15; for details see Hervieux, i, 468-71.
Romulus or one of its close derivatives, and other fables which have parallels in the Anglo-Latin Romulus and Odo. The collection of John of Sheppey, Bishop of Rochester (1352-60), is partially based on that of Odo though there are important differences between fables existing in both, and other sources have been used, amongst them a Romulus collection. The Munich Romulus, from a fifteenth century manuscript, comprises forty fables, twenty-five copied from the vulgate Romulus; fifteen, more fully developed, paralleled by fables in the Fabulae Extravagantes.

b. Verse derivations of Romulus

The collection known as the Romulus of Gualterus Anglicus, perhaps written in the latter half of the twelfth century, is in elegiacs and comprises a prologue (original to the collection) and sixty-two fables taken almost entirely from the first three books of the prose Romulus. It became the most widely used of Latin

1. ed. Hervieux, iv, 417-50; for details see Hervieux, iv, 161-70.


4. Again I shall not discuss the particular version of Romulus from which the derivations were made. Hervieux (i, 472-5 and 673-4) attributes both to the vulgate Romulus apart from the few fables not occurring there but his evidence seems very flimsy and needs further substantiation.

5. ed. U. Foerster, Lyonet-Yeopet (Altfranzösische Bibliothek, V, Heilbronn, 1882); Hervieux, ii, 316-82; K. MacKenzie and W.A. Oldfather, Yeopet-Avionnet: the Latin and French Texts (University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature Vol. V No. 4, Urbana, 1919); Julia Bastin, Registre Général des Yeopets, 2 vols. (B.A.T.F., 1929-30) - hereafter cited as Bastin i and ii - ii, 7-66. I have used Bastin's text of Gualterus throughout. For details see Bastin, ii, II-VIII. The collection was for long known as the anonymous collection of Nevelet for it was first edited by I.K. Neveletus in his Mythologiae Europica (Frankfurt, 1610). Hervieux (see i, 475-95) found a few manuscripts attributing it to one Gualterus Anglicus; he linked the name with Gualterus Anglicus, chaplain of Henry II of England, tutor of William II of Sicily, later Archbishop of Palermo. Gaston Paris disputed the attribution (Journal des Savants, 1835, p. 39) and many scholars have agreed with him; but the collection has become generally known as the Romulus of Gualterus Anglicus.
fable collections in medieval times; Hervieux records more than
a hundred manuscripts containing the fables,¹ and from 1473, when
the collection was first published, up to and including 1500 there
were, according to Keidel,² fifty-nine editions. Henryson
certainly made use of it as I shall prove later. Two French
versions of Gualterus were made, one of which at least is of great
importance to us. The Isopet de Lyon, written in the dialect of
Franche-Comté, exists in one manuscript only, of the thirteenth
century.³ There are a prologue and sixty fables, some of which
are considerably developed, or changed in emphasis, from Gualterus'
version. In several places the Isopet seems nearer to Henryson
than any other text though it is difficult to imagine how the Scot
could have known it - the lack of manuscripts suggests it was not
widely dispersed. Isopet I,⁴ a compilation of the mid-fourteenth
century, appears to have been much more widely known. A prose
recension, known as Isopet III,⁵ exists in a fifteenth century
manuscript.

Alexander Neckam’s Novus Aeonia,⁶ another version in elegiacs
of Romulus, also gave rise to French translations, Isopet II de

1. 1, 503-602.
2. A Manual of Aeonic Fable Literature, op. cit.,
   for details see Bastin, ii, XVI-XXV.
4. ed. Mackenzie and Oldfather, Yeonet-Avionnet, op. cit.;
   Bastin, ii, 199-348; for details see Bastin, ii, XXVI-XXXVIII.
   The collection also contains a French translation of Avienus'
   fables, the Avionnet.
   494-546; Bastin, ii, 385-420; for details see Bastin, ii,
   XXXIX-XXX.
6. ed. Hervieux, ii, 392-416; Bastin, i, 1-30; for details
   see Bastin, i, LX-XII.
Paris,¹ and Isopot de Chartres,² both probably made towards the end of the thirteenth century.

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1. ed. Bastin, i, 31-111; for details see Bastin, i, XIII-XX.
2. ed. Bastin, i, 115-81; for details see Bastin, i, XXI-XXVII.
(11) Le Roman de Renard

Le Roman de Renard, a vernacular cycle by various authors, appeared in France towards the end of the twelfth century and was continued into the mid-thirteenth century (approximate dates 1175-1250). Its occurrence provides further evidence of the interest in animal stories at this period - we have already discussed the versions of Guillaume de Normandie, Vincent of Beauvais, Marie de France and Odo of Cheriton and the Icones. The sources, apart from the Romulus, and Petrus Alphonsus' Disciplina Clericalis, seem to have been the Ebbaea Captivi, a tenth or eleventh century poem recounting, under the guise of an animal story, the attempt of a monk, uncertain of his vocation, to leave his monastery; and the Ysenorimius, a long Latin poem of the mid-twelfth century which shows the wolf engaged in many of the adventures also described in Le Roman de Renard. The

1. A useful summary of what is known of the cycle is to be found in R. Bossaut, Le Roman de Renard (Connaissance des Lettres, 49, Paris, 1957).
2. Cf. L. Foulet, Le Roman de Renard (Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Sciences Historiques et Philologiques, fasc. 211, Paris 1914). Foulet successfullycombats the arguments of J. Grimm, Reinhart Fuchs (Berlin, 1834), and L. Sudre, Les Sources du Roman de Renart (Paris, 1892) who attempted to find the origin of the cycle in folk tale analogies.
4. Ed. Ernst Voigt (Halle, 1884).
collection as we have it comprises twenty-six branches - about 30,000 lines in all - telling varying adventures (sometimes varying versions of the same adventure) of the Fox as he tries to outwit all the other animals, particularly the wolf Isengrin. It exists in three manuscript traditions distinguished by the number and order of branches contained and by the way in which these are linked.

Later works in the Renard tradition often comprised retellings of the earlier stories though usually in a much more strongly satirical context. The most important were Rutebuef's *Renard le Beastourné,* (c. 1265), the anonymous *Le Couronnement de Renard* (after 1251), Jacquemard Gicléeb *Renart le Nouvel* (c. 1288), and the anonymous *Renard le Contrefait.*

Two separate English stories seem taken from *Le Roman* an anonymous thirteenth century poem of the Fox and of the Wolf and Chaucer's *Klonee Presseus Tale.* A version of branche I (the

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1. *A*, the smallest, was edited by Ernst Martin, 3 vols. (Strasbourg, 1882-7); *B*, of twenty-one or twenty-two branches, was being edited until his death by Mario Roques (Classiques Français du Moyen Age, 78, 79, 81, 85, 86, 90, Paris, 1948-63); *C*, the most complete edition, was edited by M. D. H. Mouon, 4 vols. (Paris 1826) - vol. iv contains *Le Couronnement de Renard* and *Renart le Nouvel.* For more details see the editions of Martin and Roques; also Bossuat, *Le Roman de Renard,* op. cit., pp. 177-9. Except in special circumstances, discussed when they occur, I have used Roques' edition throughout.


attempts to bring the Fox to trial) was made in Middle Dutch before 1272. Called *Von den Vos Reinerde*, it was later enlarged and continued, with reference to other branches of the original, as *Reinerta Historia*. A prose redaction of this work, published at Gouda by Gerard Lecu in 1479, was translated - and published in 1481 - by Caxton. Henryson may have known his version. We noticed the European-wide interest in animal tales in the latter part of the fifteenth century evidenced by the large numbers of editions of *Steinhövel's Aesop* and Gualterus Anglicus' fables published; something of the same interest can be seen in the publication of various versions (though not the original *Roman*) of fox tales.

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(iii) The exempla tradition

Animal tales are also to be found in many of the collections
of sermon exempla made in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth
centuries. The use of exempla to any marked degree in sermons
first becomes noticeable with the growth of popular preaching in
the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a growth to be associated,
at least to some extent, with the preaching of the Crusades and the
aims of the newly founded orders of friars - the Dominicans especi-
ally had much to do with the spread of exempla collections.

It is probably of profit to quote typical examples of the
reasons given for the use of exempla: Henryson himself compares
his work to that of a preacher finding 'under a fable figurall ...
and sentence' (The Fox tried before the Lyon, 290-1); and, in
the Dannatyne Manuscript, The Fox and the Wolf ends with the
postscript: Explicit exemplum veritatis et falsitatis. Johannes
Gobi writes:

... Cum enim, reverendis pater, impossible sit
nobis superius superclarae divinum radium nisi sub
velamine similitudinis et figure, ut testatur
in angelica hierarchia, hinc est quod mentis

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1. See J. Th. Welter, L'Exemplum dans la littérature religieuse
et didactique du moyen âge (Bibliothèque d'Histoire
Acolastique de France, Paris and Toulouse, 1927) -
hereafter cited as Welter;
T. F. Crane's introduction to his edition of The Exempla
or Illustrative Stories from the Germanes Vulgares of
Jacques de Vitry (Publications of the Folk-Lore Society,
XXVI, London, 1890) - hereafter cited as Crane. Also
A. Lecoy de la Marche, La Chaire française au moyen âge,
2nd edn. (Paris, 1885) and J. A. Kosher, The Exemplum in
the Early Religious and Didactic Literature of England
(Columbia University Studies in English, New York, 1911).
R. Bauman, 'The Folk Tale and Oral Tradition in The Fables of
Robert Henryson', op. cit., also seeks to relate Henryson's
work to this tradition though he neglects the fact that
Henryson would very probably read as well as hear exempla;
several of the collections were printed early and manuscript
copies of many were numerous.
noster ratio in tam excellenti luce non figitur nisi cum accipiat per similitudines et exempla.
Unde unigenitum Dei verbum ut sedentes in tenbris et in umbra mortis ad celestia elevaret, in exemplis et parabolis loquebatur eo quod forcius moveant auidius audiantur firmius retinecantur et a terrena mentem erigant ad eterna, ut Augustinus deestatur ...

Similarly Johannes Herolt:

... Nam exempla facilius intellectu capiuntur et firmius memoriae impressur et a multis libentius audientur. Legimus enim patrem nostrum dominicum ordinis predicatorem fundamentum hoc fecisse. De eo quidem scribitur quod ubiqueque conversabatur edificatoris effluens sermonibus; abundabat exemplis quibus ad mores Christi seculo tempore contemptum audientium animas provocabat. 2

My interest is largely with exempla collections but there are two preachers I should like to mention. Jacques de Vitry (c. 1180-c. 1230), an ardent preacher of the Crusades (both against the Albigensians and against the infidels in the Holy Land) became

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1. *Scalae Celii* (Lubeck, 1476); also quoted by Welser p. 321, n. 75.
2. *Homiliae Discipuli de sanctis cum praxmptuico exemplorum et miraculis beate Marie virginis* (Lugdunensis, 1502), prologus in praeceptorium exemplorum, col. 14; also quoted by Welser, p. 400, n. 9. Cf. also the prologue to Humbertus de Romaniis, *De dono timoris* (printed by J. Zainer, Ulm, 1480? as Liber de Abundantia exemplorum magistri Alberti magni Ratisba episcopi ad omnem materiam). An Alphabet of Tales, ed. W. A. Banks, 2 vols. - a projected third did not appear - (E.E.T.S.O.S. 126-7, 1904-5) recounts the story (CCCXV, p. 217) of St. Aidan's success through exempla where his predecessor (who 'said so mekull soteltie and strange saying' in his sermons) had failed: the story stems from an apparent misreading of Bede but was widely repeated in exempla collections.
Cardinal of Tusculum. His sermons contain many animal stories, usually but scantily developed, usually with specifically Christian moralizations rather than the generalized ethical lessons of the fables in fable collections. Many later collectors drew heavily on his work and his exempla were at times extracted from the sermons and circulated separately. Also popular, to judge from the many printings of the work, were the sermons of Johannes Hérolt, a Dominican of Basle writing in the first half of the fifteenth century. To the collection, the *Sermones Discipuli*, was attached a promptuarium exemplorum, listing the exempla used: the work thus served the double purpose of sermon manual and exempla source.

Of the exempla collections there are two groups which are of importance: those compiled for the aid of preachers, moralized and unmoralized, sometimes with linking theological commentary:

1. For life see Crane, pp. xxii–xxxiv.
2. The exempla from the *Sermones Vulgares* are extracted by Crane; selections from these sermons are to be found in J. Pitra, *Analecta Novissima Epiclerii Colosmannis Altera continuatio* Tom II (Paris, 1888), pp. 344–461. Cf. also O. Pranken, *Die Exempla von Jacob von Vitry* (Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters, Bd. 5, Hft. 1, München 1914), and J. Groben, *Die Exempla aus den Sermones Pariales et Communes des Jakob von Vitry* (Sammung Mittel- lateinischer Texte hg. Arno Milka, 9, Heidelberg, 1911). For details see Crane, pp. xxxiv–lxxvii; and Welter, pp. 116–124.
4. I shall not, of course, attempt to describe all the collections, but limit myself to what seem the most important: those illustrating general trends and, especially, those containing numerous animal tales of which I make use later.
and those which are general moral treatises using exempla to reinforce their lessons. In some ways the most important of the first type is that of Stephanus de Borbone: his vast *Tractatus de diversa materiae predicabilibus*, 1 unfinished, contains nearly 3,000 exempla. This collection inspired another important work, *Liber de Dono Timorien*, 2 (c. 1270) by another Dominican, Humbertus de Romans. Other interesting collections of the late thirteenth century include the *Durham Liber Exemplorum*, 3 *Tabula Exemplorum secundum ordinem alphabeticum*, 4 and the *Speculum Iucorum*. 5 In the early fourteenth century Arnold of Liège, another Dominican, wrote his *Alphabetum Hieracionicum*. 6 Of particular interest to us is John Bronyard's *Summa Predicantium*, 7 a preaching manual containing over 1,200 exempla including many animal stories. Gobi's *Fascia Celi* 8 (c. 1350) also contains fables.


2. See p. 25 n. 2. above; for details Welter, pp. 224-8.

3. ed. A.C. Little, *Liber Exemplorum ad usum predicantium* (British Society of Franciscan Studies, 1, Aberdeen, 1908); see Welter, pp. 290-4.


7. I have used the Antwerp edition of 1614. See Welter, pp. 326-34. The collection was certainly made by an English Dominican in the fourteenth century but his identity has not so far been established with any finality; see W.A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1955), p. 147, n. 2.

8. op. cit.; for details see Welter, pp. 319-25.
Of the second type of exempla collection there are three works of particular interest for us: Nicole Bozon's *Les Contes Moralisés* 1, an Anglo-Norman text composed by an English Franciscan about 1320; Hayno de Mayneri's *Dialogue Creaturarum* 2 (after 1326), 122 dialogues, usually between animal and man or animal and animal - each dialogue usually contains exempla to illustrate further the central theme and many of these are also animal tales; and the anonymous *Speculum Sapienciae*, 3 a fifteenth century book of moral teaching which also contains a few animal stories. Here too we should probably mention the medieval encyclopedias of science (sometimes moralized), well represented by Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum*. 4 But Henryson seems to have used little of the lore of such works. Nor, in his moralizations, is it generally necessary to ascribe to him knowledge of the traditional allegorizations of animals as found in, for instance, the *Gregorianus* of Garnierus of St. Victor, 5 or Rabanus Maurus' *Allegoriones in Universae Sacram Scripturae*. 6


3. *Die Bieden Altesten Latinischen Fabelbücher des Mittelalters*, op. cit.; again Grässle's ascription of authorship has been questioned; see Walter, p. 433, n. 16. For details see Walter, p. 433-5.

4. I have used John of Trevisa's translation in the London edition of 1555.


I hope this discussion to have served two purposes. Firstly, to have reminded that Henryson's *Fabillis* belongs to a long literary tradition, European-wide in its occurrence; more particularly perhaps the work can be related to the widespread interest in animal literature in the second half of the fifteenth century illustrated by the number of such texts printed; some of these texts almost certainly provided Henryson with certain of his sources. Secondly, I hope this discussion will have placed in some sort of context those works which I shall proceed to examine as sources and analogues.

Now, Henryson calls his work 'a manner of translation' (Prolog 32). But the *Fabillis* are far more than a translation; rather they are an expansion, a reinvigoration of the tradition. Thus to discover the exact source is at times almost impossible. There is also the possibility that variants Henryson has used have been lost - the analogues found for some of the fables may suggest this. The sources and analogues of each fable thus require the closest analysis. Thus rather than write a general source study to begin and then examine the individual fables in relation to the discovered sources, as might be expected, I have decided to discuss the sources of each individual fable separately. The method will have another advantage: for each fable we shall be able to see just what existed in the tradition before - and thus Henryson's own contribution will become more obvious.

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2. If a general statement is required at this point I can but refer to the tabulation - with which I largely agree - of Professor John Macqueen, 'The Text of Henryson's *Korall Fabillis*', *The Inner Hebrides Review*, xiv (1965), 4.
C: The Individual Works

(1) The Prolog

The Prolog is based ultimately on that of Gualterus Anglicus.¹ An examination of the changes of emphasis and the extensions the poet has made to his original will show the different theory of literature which Henryson used and also stress the philosophical and theological elements underlying The Fabillis, elements which earlier collections, in which the fables deal with unrelated ethical problems, do not develop.²

Gualterus' Prologue reads

Ut juvet et prosit, conatur pagina presens:
Dulcius arrient seria mixta jocis.
Hortulus ists parit fructum cum flore, favorem.
Flos et fructus emunt; hic nitet, ists supit.
Si fructus plus flore placet, fructum lege; si flos
Plus fructu, flore; si duo, carpe duo.
Ne mihi torpentem sopiret inertia sensum,
In quo pervigilet, mens mea movit opus.
Ut messis pretium de vili surgat agello,
Verbula sicca, Deus, isplus rore tuo.
Moralitas.
Verborum levitas morum fint pondus honestum,
Ut nucleus celat arida testa bonum.

1. Bastin, ii, 7-8. Most of the material Henryson adopts could also have been taken from the prologues to the Isopet de Lyon or Isopet I which are based closely on Gualterus' version. However it can be proved that Henryson used Gualterus' prologue directly (1. 28 is a direct quotation of 1. 2 of that work) and there is no need thus to postulate the influence of the other versions. Two interesting parallels — they are, I think, no more than analogues — between Henryson and these versions I shall discuss later.

2. I assume that the poet intended his Prolog to apply to the complete group of fables. Henryson's work is drawn from varying sources and his plan may have changed considerably during its composition (after the appearance of Caxton's Fablus, for instance — cf. David K. Crowne, 'A Date for the Composition of Henryson's Fablus', J.E.L.G.P., lx (1962), 585-90) but his theory of the nature of the fable form set out in the Prolog seems to me applicable to every fable in the collection. But cf. the discussion of this point, and related textual matters, in John Macqueen, 'The Text of Henryson's Corall Fabillis', op. cit., pp. 3-4.
Henryson adapts the image of 11. 2-5 markedly to express a very different literary theory.

In lyk maner as throw a bunteois..erd
So it be lawborit with grit diligence
Springis the flouris and the cornis brend
haileum and gad to manis custeneence
So springis thair a morall sueit sentence
Out of the scitell dyt of poetre
To gud purpofis quha culd it rycht aplay (8-14)

In the original the pleasure to be gained is represented by the flowers, the wisdom by the fruit. One can choose to gather one or the other or both, they are seemingly of equal value. Henryson characterizes the earth as the poetry - merely that from which the valuable is tilled - both flowers (the beautiful) and fruit (the nourishing) as 'morall sueit sentence' gained through hard work. There is no choice offered, the priorities obvious. A second image, taken more directly from Gualterus, conveys similar implications:

Thir nutis shelling thocht thai be harrt and tuich
They hold the cirinell sueit and delectable
So lyis thair a doctryne wyse anewch
and full of fruct wndir a faneyt fable (15-18). ¹

The poetry is merely the cloak, penetrated with difficulty (the shell

¹. There is a common medieval fable concerning a foolish ape (usually interpreted as a worldly fool) which when it finds the rind (penance) bitter does not bite through to the sweetness of the nut (eternal life). So, for instance, Jacques de Vitry, Crane cxxvii, p. 58; B.M. MS. Arundel 506, fol 42b; B.W. Additional MS. 18347, fol 1264; Odo of Cheriton, Herleux iv, 218; Speculum Erasorum, B.W. Additional MS. 11284, fol 10; Liber Exemplorum Sacrorum Orlinea Alphabetis, B.W. Additional Ms. 18351, fol 46; Dialogus Creosturerus, ed. J.C. Th. Grasse, op. cit., dialogue 11, p. 169; An Alphabet of Tales, ed. W.W. Banks, op. cit., cccxv, p. 217; The Early English Version of the Gesta Romanorum, ed. E.J.H. Marlowe (B.E.T.E.S., 33, 1879), livi, p. 372. The image of rind and kernel was commonly used to describe Scriptural expedias, the rind being the literal level, the kernel the various 'higher' levels of meaning, topological, allegorical and analogical. It also became widely used to describe the methods to be used in reading certain allegorical literary works. See D.W. Robertson Jr., Some Medieval Literary Terminology with Special Reference to Chrétien de Troyes, M.P., xlvi (1951), 689-92.
is 'hard' and 'tuich'), covering the 'doctryne' which provides both nourishment ('fruct', stressed by the alliterating f) and pleasure ('sueit' - cf. l. 12)

Ll. 19-28 are probably developed from the first two lines of Gualterus prologue. The development in the prologue to the Isopet de Lyon is also of interest, likewise invoking authority.

1. Henryson's frequent use of alliteration has been noted by several critics, for instance Diebler, [Henriсон's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., pp. 24-7]: Spiers, The Scots Literary Tradition, op. cit., p. 49; Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature, op. cit., p. 35. It has been discussed at most length by Pauline E. Knight, The Alliterative Tradition in Medieval Scottish Poetry, an unpublished M.A. thesis for the University of Manchester (1952), pp. 55-77 and 156-61. In her analysis of the heavy alliterative pattern of the parliament of the gods in The Testament of Cresseid Miss Knight described the function of the device in Henryson's work:

It may be argued that the latter [the use of alliterative verse for close description] is a merely decorative use, but it should be noted that the vocabulary and the heavier verse rhythm introduced by alliteration bring about a significant enrichment in the texture of the verse ... (p. 66). The reiteration of a key letter adds force and intensity to the sense, so that the employment of alliteration is not merely ornamental device, but a true recognition of its proper virtue (p. 69).

There is no need to give examples here for many alliterative patterns will be analysed throughout this thesis showing how emphasis is given to the meaning by their use.

The use of alliteration in "Chaucerian" metres is as old as Chaucer himself (for instances, The Knynches Tale, I(A) 260ff.) but Henryson's use of the device seems much more extensive. I make this statement with some reservation for it is a personal impression only; intensive study of fifteenth century poetry with this point in mind would be needed to substantiate it. If the impression is correct it provides a further example of Henryson's creative method - the combination of separate traditions in an effort to create a new image for well-known, but still important, ideas.


3. The fact that fables both entertain and teach is mentioned throughout the tradition. Thus Phaedrus, Prologue, Hervieux, II, 5; the vulgate Romulus, Steinhówele Anon, op. cit., p. 78, for instance.

Henryson's development of the idea is, at least at first, far less emphatically didactic. We have noticed that he has stressed, in the two images discussed, the sweetness of the moral content, the pleasure it can give. Here too 'mirrincs' (in 1. 26 emphasized through alliterating m) receives the initial stress. This 'mirrincs' is probably not the sweetness of the moral but sheer delight in poetry (ll. 3-4), delight which is of course only a means to an end: Dulcius arrident seria picta locis.

Henryson's handling of the three stanzas discussed so far (the material taken from his original) shows great skill in rhetorical persuasion. He has made them part of a defence of the fable form, answering two criticisms: on the one hand, that the form is dull, on the other that because it is 'grundit' upon fiction it cannot be of value. The latter criticism (the subject is not discussed in the original Qualterus but is an addition) is answered largely in the first stanza though the answer is also implied in the two images.

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1. In ll. 3-4 Henryson tells us that what pleases in poetry is 'poleit termes of sucit retory.' The mirrincs, one may perhaps assume, arose from a skilled hearer's delight in poetic craft (the 'scitell dyt', 'the gay matir facound and purperat') rather than from 'the wealth of personal observation; simple pathos and lively humour' (Wood, Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. xv) which delight the modern connoisseur of charm.
discussed above — the adaptation of these images is at least partially explained by this purpose. There is an interesting parallel to Henryson's defence in the epilogue to Isopet I:¹

Car l'en y trouve verité
Combien que fable recité
L'ait; ce n'est pas a merveillier:
Qui en logique veult veillier,
Il trouvera que de premières
Pauvres, ensemble bien assises
S'an suit vraie conclusion (49-55)

But his defence is of course very different from that of Isopet I — the 'fegour' is of central importance.²

Having disarmed criticism of the fable form in general, the poet proceeds to disarm that directed against his particular collection, professing knowledge of his own inadequacies, maintaining that the task of translation was undertaken at the insistence of a lord. As has been pointed out several times we do not know — and there is little likelihood that we shall know — the lord whose 'request and prayeris' (34) caused Henryson to 'mak a maner of translatioun' (32). Indeed it is open to question whether there were such a lord: the explanation³ may be merely part of the humility topos expanded upon, in thoroughly conventional terms, in the sixth stanza. The topos, of classical origin, was often used

³. Assertions that a poet has been commanded to write by a nobleman are not uncommon — in the fable tradition Marie de France's Prologue contains such a statement (ll. 30-7; Evert and Johnston, op. cit., pp. 1-2). Cf. also E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, op. cit., pp. 86-7.
in later medieval poetry. I quote but one parallel, from the prologue to Lydgate's *Isopos Fabulis*, to illustrate Henryson's debt to the convention:

And, though I haue no rethoryk awete, 
Haue me excucyd: I was born in Lydgate ... (31-2)
... And yef I fall bycause or ignoraunce ...
... I me subyt to theyr correccion
Of hen; that haue more clere inspection
In satyrs that touche poetry ... (43-8)

The critic cannot castigate the faults of the form or those of Henryson's verse; he has no excuse for not attending to the 'doctryne' presented.

The poet proceeds to expound the central 'fegour' of the work. The traditional apology for telling of animal fables is well illustrated from the vulgate Romulus:

Verum et vitam hominum et mores ostenderet, 
inducit aves, arbores, bestias et pecora 
loquentes, pro vana cuiuslibet fabula, ut 
noverint homines, fabularum cur sit inventum 
genus, operte et breviter narravit. 

But, as far as I have been able to discover, Henryson seems the first to import explicitly into the literary fable form what was a theological commonplace


how mony men in operatioun
ar lyk to beistis in their conditioun (48-9)

The idea has Biblical authority: II Peter ii, 9 ff.

Novit Dominus pios de tentatione eripere,
iniquos vero in diem judicii reservare
cruciantos. Magis autem eos qui post carmem
in concupiscencia immunditiae ambulant,
dominationeque contemnut, audaces, sibi
placentes, sectas non metuunt introducere,
blasphemantes ... Hi vero, velut irrationabilia
pecora, naturaliter in captiorem et in
perniciem, in his quae ignorant blasphemantes,
in corruptione sua peribunt,1

The idea was also to be found in Boethius' De Consolatione Philosophiae:

And yif thou wilt leden thi lif in delycia,
every wyght schal despyssen the and forlesten
the, as thow that art thral to thyng that is
right foul and brutyl (that is to seyn,
serausant to thi body).2

... yif he be lyght and unstedfast of corage
and chaungith ny his studies, he is likened to
brides; and if he be ploungid in fowlc and
uncleane luxuris, he is witholden in the foule
delices of the fowle sowe. Than folweth it
that he that forletoth bounte and prowess, he
forletith to ben a man; syn he may nat passe into
the condicion of God, he is torned into a bestae.3

Innumerable later medieval examples could be quoted. I shall
content my self with two which help to place our passage (indeed
much of Henryson's work) in its theological and philosophical
context. The Cloud of Unknowing:

1. I have taken all Biblical quotations to be used in this thesis
from the Latin Vulgate in an attempt to provide a text which
is probably close to that which Henryson would have known.
2. Book III, Prosa 8. I quote from Chaucer's translation,
Robinson, p. 247.
Before er man aynnid was the sensuulyte
so obedient unto the wille - unto the whiche
it is as it were servaunt - that it ministrd
neuer unto it any vnordeinde likyng or groching
in any bodely creature, or any goostly feynyng
of likyng or mislykyng mada by any goostly
enyme in the bodely wittes. Bot now it is not
so; for bot ylf it be reulyd by grace in the
wille, for to suffre weekly and in mesure the
pyne of the original synne - the whiche it
falith in absence of needful likyng and in
presence of speedful groching - and therto
also for to strayne it fro luste in presence
of needful lykyng, and fro lusty pleasance in
absence of speedful groching, elles wil it
wrochtly and wantounly wolte, as a swyne in
the myro, in the welthes of this worlde and
the foule flesche so mouch, that alle our
deyng schal be more beoptyly and fleschly than
outher manly or goostly.

St. Vincent Ferrer preaches that those

qui viuunt idbi secundum rationem sunt homines,
qui viuunt secundum sensualitatem sunt bestiae.
Superbi sunt leones. suari uulpes. luxuriosi
porci. inyidi sunt canes. gulosi sunt lupi
iracondi. serpentes sive vipre.

2. Germiones de Tempore (Cologne, 1487). Dominica ii adventu
domini, Sermo 1. col. 3. Cf. also Humbertus de Romanis,
De Deo Timoríus, op. cit., para sexta de timore peccati;
Malachy, Libellus rentem peccatorum mortaliun venena
eorumque remedia describért (Paris, 1518), fol. 12; for
Malachy, an Irian Franciscan of the beginning of the
fourteenth century, and his work, see Welter, p. 173;
Bartholomus Anglicus, De Proprietatibus Rerum, tr. John
of Trevisa, op. cit., Liber XVIII, fol. 131; T. Wright,
Latin Stories, op. cit., no. 63, pp. 57-8; W. Hilton,
Scala Perfectionis, bk. ii, ch. 14, B.M. MS. Harl. 6579;
fol. 75ff; J. Hoccleve, The Regiment of Princes, ed.
P.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S.O.B. 72, 1897), 11. 1302-3;
W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons Edited from British
Museum MS. Royal 16 B. xxiii (E.E.T.S.O.B. 207, 1940),
p. 275; Garton's The Game and Playe of Chess, ed.
D.W. Robertson Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, op. cit., pp. 27-8
and 150 ff., also figures.
Three points in Henryson's exposition of the idea (ll. 43-56) should be noted. Firstly, the poet will show the animals 'A syllogysm propone and eik exclu'd' (46) - worldly men seem learned: we must remember this when we are introduced to technical terms in theFabillis, for instance the legal terms of The Fox tried before the Lyne. Secondly, we must not be misled by phrases such as 'carnall fowll dolyte' (51), 'lust and appetyt' (54) into thinking that theFabillis will deal primarily with crimes of violence or passion. The basic sin (the consideration of which forms the central preoccupation of the Fabillis, thus linking the work to the large body of medieval literature) is that of worldliness, the placing of one's trust in this world's false values. The vicious sins are but a consequence of the misplacing of values as Henryson shows us in The dog, the Schedip and the Wolff, and The Wolff and the Lamb for instance. Thirdly, emphasis is given to the way in which sin becomes a habit - we shall be shown this again, especially in The Swallow and Othir Birds.1

The Prolog then illustrates Henryson's nature as an artist (construction, through combination, often of conventional forms and ideas, of sophisticated argument, thus reinvigorating the form and providing a new image for an idea which had preoccupied many artists in the preceding medieval centuries) and establishes the critical criteria which must be observed to follow the author's intentions: we shall gain pleasure from his skill as an artist but we must seek (a task which will require effort) for a fuller understanding of the moral purpose (which will give spiritual nourishment and its own pleasure) illustrated in the central figure of the cycle - man as animal.

There are two major points in determining Henryson's sources for this fable.

As Gregory Smith pointed out, 'Henryson's use of the word "Jasp" in the title is an important clue'.¹ The LBG Romulus begins with the tale entitled 'De Gallo et Inapide';² in the tale itself, however, the jewel is found to be a pearl (Gallus ... invent margaritam) which is the form of precious stone commonly described in the Latin versions of the fable. Cualterus Anglicus' version also begins with the fable 'De Gallo et Inapide';³ here the term is kept in the text itself. The Isopet de Lyon uses the form 'Jaspo' throughout.⁴ In a note to the section on sources in his introduction, Smith states: 'There can be no suggestion of borrowing from Fr. jaspo (as in the Bestiaries) or from earlier Southern examples (as noted in the N.E.D.), in some of which the effect of direct translation is clear.'⁵ He gives no reason for this statement and, to my mind, there appears to be none: Henryson's 'jasp' seems as likely to derive from the French 'Jaspo' as from the Latin 'Inapio/Inapidis.'

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1. Poems, op. cit., i, xxxii.
2. Hervieux, ii, 564-5.
5. Poems, op. cit., i, xxxiii. n. 4.
The second clue to the source is the nature of the moralitas.
A survey of the applications found throughout the tradition will
be of interest. Lydgate is alone in praising the cock;¹ it knows
its correct station in society he explains:

The cock delyd, to hym hit was more dew
Small simple grayne, then stones of hygh renoun,
Of all treceur chief possessioun
Suche as God sent, eche man tak at gre
Nat prowde with ryche nor grose with poverta (213-7)

All other versions are condemnatory. Bromyard’s² refers to
the preacher’s congregation:

Patet ergo, quod nulli predictorum sufficientem
exercitationem habent, quare non debeant Dei verba
audire, sed predictas singunt causas, vel
propter causas factas .... Vel quia Dei verbi,
et virtutum et poenitentiae et bonorum operum
ignorans preciositatem. Et est de eis, sicut
dicitur secundum fabulas de gallo, qui in famo
lapide precioso invento, ait, libentius invenisset
unum granum, quia non tu utilis nisi es, nec ego
tibi. Habentes enim stomachum occupatum aliis,
in istin non inveniunt saporem, sed dicunt, quam
bonus cibus esset, si quis haberet appetitum,
loc. 22. Locutus sum ad te in abundantia tua,
et dixisti, non audieras, vel quia diabolus aures
obturat ...

Nicole Bozon interprets similarly³ under the heading 'Quod caritudo
mundi multum placet et verbum Dei dissplicet'. Now neither of
these texts in any way influences Henryson but two points at least
are interesting. Firstly a specifically religious application is

given to the fable; we shall see this to some extent in this fable of Henryson, and, even further, in others. Secondly, Biblical passages are quoted to support the argument; this too is a characteristic of Henryson's method both in this fable and elsewhere.

Another class of moralitas refers solely to those who do not understand the fables. This interpretation stems from the original moral in Phadrus: 'Hoc illis narre, qui me non intellegunt'.

This becomes, in later redactions, 'Hoc Esopus illis narrat, qui ipsum legunt et non intellegunt'. Marie de France condemns more generally:

Autresi est de meinte gent:
Si tut [ne] veit a lur talent
Cuxe del cox o de la gexe -
Veit l'auvre de huma et de femme -
Bien e honur nient ne present;
Le pis perrant, le neus despisent (17-22)

We come closer to Henryson, however, when we examine those fables which interpret the Cock as a fool: thus the version in the Corpus Christi Oxford Romulus headed 'Quod quiesque insipiens bona quique ac preciosa quasi vilia contemptur'. The version in hexameters derived from the Romulus of Milant moralizes:

1. Hervieux, ii, 35.
2. Vulgate Romulus: Steinhövels Aesop, ed. Österley, op. cit., p. 80. Also Wissensbourg Aesop, Hervieux, ii, 190; Munich Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 262; Florence Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 474-5. A variant in the Vienna-Berlin Romulus (Hervieux, ii, 418) introduces the concept of foolishness which we shall find important: 'Nec illis Esopus narrat qui sum minus intellegunt. Quid prodest atulo divicias habere, cum non possit sapienciam emere'.
5. Hervieux, ii, 654.
Penniger insipiens ut spreuit regia dona
Sic stolidi bruti contempnunt optima quaque

The LBO Romulus concludes with the moralitas: 'Sic stultos arguit
Esopus, qui sapienciam invenire non curant, quia eum aibi
necessarium forte non cognoscunt.' Here too, we find the jasp
interpreted as wisdom; a similar interpretation is found in
Henrycon’s fable. This interpretation is also found, without
mention of foolishness, in the Romulus of Nilant: 'Esopus hanc
primum fabulas dixit de his qui despicieunt sapiencia; ut
quodcumque bonum inventiunt'.

But it is the combination of the
two interpretations we seek. And it is to be found in Gualterus
Anglicus and the French versions stemming from him, as well as in
the LBO Romulus:

Gualterus:

Tu Gallo stolidum, tu Jaespide dona sophia,
Pulchra notae; stolido nil capit ists
sages (9-10)

the Isopet de Lyon:

La riche Jaspe, c’est Savoir,
Que li fous Fous ne peut avoir
Bons est done la comparaison
Dou Foul a Foul qu’est sans raison.
Sapience qu’est espandue
Entre Fous, c’est chose perdue (25-30)

Isopet I²:

Icaste pierre senefie
Sagesse, et le Cock la folie (17-18)

Interestingly, for it is basically derived from the Romulus version
which has no mention of this interpretation, Caxton’s Esop⁴ reads

And thys fable sayde Esope to them that rede
this book for by the cok is to understand the
fool which retcheth not of sapynce no of
wyssedore as the cok retcheth and sotteth not
by the precious stone. And by the stone is
to understand this fayre and playsaunt book.

2. Bastin, ii, 204-5.
An examination of these two 'clues' leads then to the conclusion that Henryson was influenced by the LBG Romulus or by Gualterus Anglicus' versification of Romulus or by the Isopet de Lyon - we can exclude the Isopet I and Caxton's Epope as they do not mention a 'jasp' and contain nothing occurring only in themselves and in Henryson. I shall examine the three relevant texts more closely in relation to Henryson's fable. The LBG Romulus can be eliminated immediately. Line 112 in Henryson's version (Thow ganis not for me nor I for the) can be closely paralleled to Gualterus but not to the LBG Romulus. Gualterus writes:

Nec tibi convenio, nec tu mihi; nec tibi prosum
Nec mihi tu prodes; plus amo cara minus (7-8)

This type of phrase was the common ending for the fable from the time of Phaedrus: 'Nec tibi prodesse, nec mihi quicquam potes' (7). The LBG Romulus, however, concludes: 'Ego vero qui te invent, pocius escam quam te quesivi, nec tibi honorem faciam, quia te michi non video necessarium'. Besides, there is no point at which the LBG Romulus and Henryson coincide which is not to be found in Gualterus. Gualterus' version may now be examined alone. A further point at which Henryson's fable is close to it may be found in the opening lines of the cock's address to the jasp:

Gualterus: Res vili pretiosa loco natique decoris
Nec in sordie factis, nil mihi messis habes (3-4)

Henryson: O gentill gea o riche and noble thing
Thocht I the fynd thow ganis nocht for me ...
... It war pety thow suld in this midding
be burit thus among thus muk and mwd (79-83)
In the Isopet de Lyon there is a greater emphasis than in Gualterus on the cock's desire for food, an emphasis which, as will be seen later, Henryson strengthens. In Phædrus the phrase is: 'potior cui quanto est cibus' which forms the original for many similar phrases in later versions; Gualterus' phrase is: 'nil mihi messis habes' (4). In the Isopet de Lyon the cock says:

... En toî ne truis point de pasture,
   Eues ains grains de fromant ou d'orge
Quar miez ne font ovrir la gorge (20-2)

Henryson: the cock says that he would rather
   ... luc my lyvis fule
   as corne or drafe small worme or naillis
   or ony neit wuld do my stomak gude ... (93-5)

Of course Henryson could have developed this argument himself; he certainly extended it. A point of greater certainty is the Isopet's interpretation of the jasp as knowledge: 'La riche Jaspe, c'est Savoir' (25). This is the only text which I have been able to find which has any equivalent for Henryson's 'science'. It should be noted, however, that there is no parallel in the Isopet de Lyon for line 112 and that there is material in the Isopet which cannot be found in Henryson:

Ensic quier un proverbes fin
Es autres fables en la fin
Et pense bien dou retenir
Quar grant profit t'en pust venir (31-4)

There is a further parallel which can be made between Henryson's fable and another version. Henryson writes that the cock: 'Flew furth at a downhill sone be day' (66). Lydgate describes at length:

Whylos thys foule in a glad mornying
Rejoyyd hym syne the son[ne] shene
With all hym flok to walke upon a grene.

(16)

He was furst busie for to breke hym faste,
   With hym wyves about hym everychone,
On a small donghyll to fynie a good repaste ... (103-8)
Lydgate's setting seems to me a reminiscence of the scene in Chaucer's *Nonnes Priestes Tale* where the cock strides forth among his paramours at this very time of day. Henryson may have read Lydgate and, remembering him, set his tale at the same time of day for none of the direct sources mention this detail. However I see no necessity to claim this: the setting seems to me, as I shall explain later, rather a use of another convention to emphasize the poem's theme.

From this study of previous tellings of the tale of the *Cock and the Jewell* we have almost certainly isolated Henryson's sources: there seems to me one detail at least ('savoir' as the interpretation of 'jaspe') that he could have taken only from the Isopet de Lyon. That text, however, does not contain all the details Henryson drew from the tradition. These details can be found in Gualterus' version. It could perhaps be argued that he used the Isopet and some other text, providing the necessary parallel for l. 112, which did not necessarily either use the word 'jasp' or contain a moralitas similar to his own. However we have already seen that Henryson used Gualterus in the prologue and there is thus no need to posit any other source. From these sources Henryson took the bare outlines of the story and of the moralitas: the cock finding a 'jasp' on a dunghill; his address to the jasp telling of its beauty, of its fallen state, of its uselessness to him; perhaps a stress on the cock's desire for food; and the skeleton of the moralitas: a fool dismissing wisdom and 'Savoir'. But to this bare outline Henryson has added a great deal and emphasized many details; these changes must be examined at length.
Henryson does not merely state, as all tellings of the story except Lydgate's had done before him, that a cock searching for his food on a dungheap finds a precious stone. He adds firstly a portrait of the cock:

A Cock sumtyme with fethreame fresch and gay
rycht cant and croues suppois he was bot pure
Flew furth at a downhill sone be day
To get his denner sett was all his cure (64-7)

The poet has portrayed a self-confident being caring for nothing but its material comforts: it seems smart ('fethreame fresch and gay'); it is confident and proud (the emphatic adverb 'rycht') despite its poverty; 'all his cure' is upon material comfort - its first thought in the morning is of food. Perhaps in the time in which the action is set we may see an echo of the chanson d'aventure convention in which the narrators or others go forth at morning, usually in search of worldly pleasure, at a time when the world seems fresh and gay. The narrators in Henryson's own Lyon and the Louse and in Chaucer's Legend of Good Women might be instanced. The cock finds the jasp not because he is seeking it but 'be aventure' (68). It might be objected to this analysis that I am reading values back from the moralitas: several readers have told me that their picture of the cock at this point was favourable and, on first reading the fable, my reactions were similar.  

This raises the question of how Henryson intended the

1. B.W. reads 'gray' which is scarcely intelligible. I have adopted 'gay', the reading of all other MSS. and early prints.
poem to be read. There are three possibilities. Firstly, I think it possible that the poet may have expected his readers to know the fable and its probable moralitas: their interest would be in the way he was to tell it, in the particular slant he was to give the story. There is a great deal of evidence in the fable itself, which I shall examine as we proceed, condemning the cock; if one were expecting condemnation from the beginning one could perhaps find it even at the first encounter. Secondly the poet, although supposing his audience to be unaware of the fable, might expect them to be sensitive enough to his devices to be able to pick up criticism at the first encounter. Thirdly — and this would be an extraordinarily sophisticated device — he might have expected his audience to be shocked by the moralitas (either on first encounter with the fable or having come across Lydgate's radically different interpretation) so that they thought or read back over the fable itself and discovered how they too had been duped, how they were foolish like the cock. We shall encounter these three possibilities again in examining *The Fox tried before the Lyon* and *The Wolf and the Wedder*. The third possibility is certainly the way the poem works today, at least to judge from my reaction and that of other readers I have asked. Whether the poem brought about a similar reaction when it was first heard or read I find it impossible to be certain. The question does not occur to Stearns for he judges the cock to be "a poor

person of character and integrity'; he takes no account of the moralitas nor of the condemnatory material in the story and I consider his reading of this fable to lack any kind of rapport with the work itself. He writes of The Cook and the Jasp in his chapter 'The Poet as Humanitarian' and has been mislead by his preconceptions. I defend my analysis of the first four lines then because I consider this to be certainly the way in which they were finally meant to be read, whether after a preliminary "false" reading or not does not matter.

Now just as Henryson has added to his poem a description of the cock not found in his sources so he adds a description of the jewel: it is a 'Ioly Jasp rycht pretious' (69). Henryson uses what are, we shall find, common devices in his poetry - two adjectives qualifying a noun, an intensifying adverb, alliteration - to stress the beauty and value of the jewel. The jewel is lost ('tynt', 75) and not sought but thrown out among the sweepings; the most valuable thing in this world (... science, for him nodit no mair, 154) is lost through the carelessness of those who neglecting it care rather for pleasure:

... madynis wantoun and insolent
That fane wald play and on the streit be sene (71-2)

The episode is perhaps presented in contrast with the parable told in St. Luke xv, 8-10:

Aut quae mulier habens drachmas decem, si perdit drachmas unam, nonne accendit lucernam, et everrit domum, et quasit diligenter, donec inveniat? Et cum

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invenerit convocat amicas et vicinas, dicens:
Congratulemini mihi quia inveni drachma quam perdidam.

This woman knew the value of what she had lost and, seeking it, swept her home carefully, not carelessly with no concern at her loss. Extra meaning is given to the comparison by the normal exposition of the passage:

Qui signatur est per pastorem, [the good shepherd of the previous parable] ipse et per mulierem. Ipso enim Deus, ipso et Dei sapientia. Et quia imago exprimitur in drachma, mulier drachmam perdidit, quando homo, qui conditus ad imaginem Dei fuerat, peccando a similitudine sui Conditoris necessit. Sed accendit mulier lucernam, quia sapientia Dei apparuit in humanitate. Lucerna quippe lumen intesta est ...

I am not of course suggesting that Henryson is writing an allegory, of Man's loss of his soul, which is not explained in the Moralitas and which he expects his readers to work out. But the comparison with this Biblical passage, and its widely known exposition, shows both the importance of the jewel and the foolishness of the cock and the careless women. We shall find Henryson often using Biblical stories and quotations, on many occasions obliquely here, to emphasize his argument. Such a practice is, of course, not original to him: it is a common sermon device (we have already noted its use in sermon manuals) and it was used by many other poets.² So when Cualterus Anglicus (and all other versions of the fable are very similar) has merely stated:


Dum rigido fudit ore fimum, dum quaeritat essam
Dum atupet inventa jaspeo Gallus, ait: (1-2)

Henryson has sketched the character of the cock and the value of the jewel.

As I pointed out earlier, Henryson took the outline of the cock's speech from his sources, but he has expanded it considerably, placing his own emphases. There are two points to be noted particularly: the first is the way in which Henryson uses rhetoric to present the cock as a fool. The poet develops the address to the jasp into a full apostrophe: 'o gentill genes riches and noble thing ...' (79). This device (exclamation) was used for subjects of great importance: Faral\textsuperscript{2} quotes Cornificius' \textit{Rhetorica ad Herennium}, IV, 15 which states that it is used: 'cum roi magnitudo postulare videbitur'. Geoffroi de Vinsauf\textsuperscript{3} states that the effect occasioned by its use is:

\begin{quote}
... signum sollemne. Diutius aures
Pascimus ex varia et ditius, his cibus curi
Quando venit aspidus et odorifer et pretiosus (269-71)
\end{quote}

Geoffroi also states that the device can be used for ridiculous effect.\textsuperscript{4} In the poem we are presented with a farmyard cock addressing in full rhetorical style something it has dug up from the dungheap while scratching for food, something which it considers may be used decoratively by royalty which is in reality of little importance. The final two stanzas of the cock's speech reinforce the impression gained from the first few lines: the cock quotes a

\textsuperscript{1} See Geoffroi de Vinsauf, \textit{Documentum de Arte Vorsificandi}, II, 11, 25, ed. E. Faral, \textit{Les Artes Poetiques du XII\textsuperscript{e} et du XIII\textsuperscript{e} Si\textecirc{c}cle, Recherches et Documents sur la technique litteraire du moyen \textecirc{c}ge} (Biblioth\`{e}que de l'\'{E}cole des Hautes "{E}tudes: Sciences Historiques et Philologiques, fasc. 230, Paris, 1924), p. 276.

\textsuperscript{2} E. Faral, \textit{Les Artes Poetiques}, op. cit., p. 71.


\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Ibid.}, 11, 431 ff.
51.

proverb to prove its point (102), a common rhetorical device, and continues with involved parallelism:

quhair said thou mak thi tributatioun
quhair said thou dwell bot in a ryall tour
quhair said thou sit bot on a kingis croun (106-8)

The rhetorical structure - and through it the author's indirect criticism of the cock - becomes obvious.¹ The address ends with the cock's ridiculous declamation (not found in the sources):

rya gentill Inaspis of all stonis the flour
Out of this as and pas quhair thow suld be (110-1)

The second point to be noted about the cock's speech is the way in which Henryson emphasizes that the cock is solely concerned with material things. It seems to realize the value of the stone:

it states:

O gentill ge= o riche and noble thing (79)
... and thow so daier and worth so mekle gude (81)
... thy grit vertew nor yit thy cullor cleir (86)
... gentill Inaspis of all stonis the flour (110)

and it constantly emphasizes the stone's right to royal ownership (81; 107-8). This is a change from the sources: Gualterus reads:

Si tibi nunc esset qui debuit esse repertor,
Quem limus sepelit, viveret arte nitor (5-6)

But there is dramatic irony here; the cock is speaking the truth, even from the point of view of the moralitas, but does not recognize its full implications. The jasp, it says, is for others: its desire is to fill its stomach, to enjoy material comforts. Throughout the speech there is a constant emphasis on its own desires:

... Thocht I the fynd thow ganis nocht for me (80)
... And thow to me ns nak bot littill chuir (88)

The cock speaks continually of food and its stomach's needs:

... I laufe fer better thing of lea availl
    as cafe or corne to fill my tore entrell (90-1)

It wants food: 'do my stomach guade' (95), colour 'is nocht annwh
my vyme to feid' (101). Similar phrases abound: 'corne or draf
small worze or naillis / or ony meit' (94-5); 'Thow hes no corne'
(99); 'I wald sum meit haif' (103); 'had I dry breaif' (105). It
does not remember that 'Non in solo pane vivit homo'. The condem-
nation of the cock implicit in this speech - it is made to appear
foolish, self-satisfied and materialistic - accords ill with Stearns' statement: 'it is impossible not to sense the poet's amused
sympathy with the poverty-stricken Cock's airy dismissal of the
jewel and his sturdily independent advocacy of the simple way of
life.' 1 Again we see then that Henryson has taken the bare outlines
of his story and built it into a considerably more complex - and
I believe more convincing - work of art.

Whereas the previous versions of the fable usually finish
with the line represented by 112, Henryson further emphasizes the
cock's foolishness; it leaves the jewel (full law vpone the ground,
113) and goes away thinking only of his stomach: 'To seik sum meit
this cok his wayis went' (114). To end this section of his poem
Henryson adds the humility formula, and a further emphasis on the
fact that he is taking everything from his 'awtour' (117-8), topoi

which were discussed in connection with the prologue. He is not pretentious, using high-flown rhetoric like the cock; he follows his 'autour' and writes in 'rude and hazely dyt' (119); the cock's words were not to be trusted - his are.

The moralitas shows Henryson's creative talents in much the same way as the fable itself. Thus, for three stanzas, the poet expands upon the virtues of the jasp. I have not been able to find the particular significance of the 'propertie sovin' (120), indeed it is impossible to isolate them; however, seven is a perfect number and this fact may have some relevance for the stone allegorized is a charm (a further addition by the poet). Henryson's interpretation of the jasp must be discussed at length. Of the sources, Gualterus interprets as 'Sophia' (9); the Isopet de Lyon as both 'Savoir' (25) and 'Sapience' (29). Henryson's terms are 'prudens' (128), 'cunnyng' (128 and 148), 'deidie of vertew' (129), 'science' (137, 143, 148, 154, 158). These terms seem to translate, and to extend, the 'savoir' and 'Sapience' of the Isopet de Lyon. 'Prudens' implies some measure of wisdom in The Lyon and the House asop's fables are described as 'full of pröwdena and moralite' (61). God's judgement, understanding is his 'prudens' (Ane Prayer for

1. Cf. E.R. Curtius, European Literature in the Latin Middle Ages, cit., Excursus XVI: Numerical Apothegeus, pp. 510–14. Professor Denton Fox tells me that he feels this stanza was probably an original sketch which Henryson intended to leave aside. He intends to omit it in his forthcoming edition of the Fabillia.
Wisdom, or judgement (discretion) would then seem an apt translation for the term. 'Cunnyng' usually implies knowledge, skill or ability to carry out some desire; in The Fox and the Cock Henryson writes of 'brutale beatis':

So different thay bene in propertie,
Unknowin unto man, and infrinite
In kynd halfeand so fele diuersities
Wy connyng it excedia for to dyte (8-11)

Run Practysis of Medecyne:

Because I ken your cunnyng in to cure
Is clowtit and clampit and nooch weill cleird (14-15)

'Science' is derived from the Latin 'Scientia', and as far as I have been able to discover always conveys the meaning "knowledge". It is not always a praiseworthy thing in Henryson; thus, in The Fox and the Wolf: 'ffroir wolf waitskath, in science wondrous ale' (54). All earlier and contemporary examples in the N.E.D. contain this idea of knowledge. One is particularly interesting: the prologue to The Romans of Partenay:

Who wyl know and enquire in what maner wyse
By so and land merulous aventures
Which came unto sondry creatures
For to conne it is an excellent thyng
And cause of many mannys preferring

As rose is abowe al flouris most fine
So is science most digna of worthynessee
Ho noght no can, noght wirth is to desine; (101-8)²

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1. The Want of Wyse Men, 1. 38 reads 'prudence and policy ar banyst our al brinkis'. However, I prefer not to use this as evidence because, as will be seen later, it is very doubtful whether the poem be Henryson's.

So Henryson's ideal seems to be the attainment of knowledge, but not of knowledge alone, but of judgement and virtue as well. A comprehensive term would perhaps be wisdom. This knowledge will last for eternity, the poet states in a paraphrase (11. 138-40) of Matthew vi, 19-20:

'Holite thesaurize vobis thesauros in terra, ubi aerugo, et tines demolitur et ubi fures effodiunt et furantur. Thesaurizate autem vobis thesauros in caelo, ubi neque aerugo, neque tines demolitur, et ubi fures non effodiunt, nec furantur.

The Book of Proverbs is of particular interest in examining the properties of the hasps ii, 10-12:

Si intraverit sapientia cor tuum, et scientia animae tuae placuerit, consilium custodiet te, et prudencia servabit te; ut eruras a via mala, et ab homine qui persevera loquitur.

We compare:

prudens and cunning ... makes men ...
Happy and stark to halfe the victory
Off all vicio end spirituall enemy (128-33)

With these lines and with the stanza following, it is interesting to compare Proverbs viii, 12-16:

Ego sapientia ... Meum est consilium, et aequitas; mea est prudencia, mea est fortitudo. Per me reges regnant et legum conditores justa decernunt; per me principos imperant, et potentes decernunt justitiam.

Again xxviii, 2:

Propter peccata terrae multi principes ejus; et propter hominis sapientiam, et horum scientiam quae dicuntur, vita ducis longior erat.
Again iii, 13 ff.:  


The fact that wisdom cannot be bought with material wealth (cf. 1. 151) is also stated in Job xxviii. The poet has thus emphasized, and extended the reference of 'Savoir' and 'Sapience' of his sources by direct scriptural quotation and by passages which at least recall Biblical parallels. He has also done so in his so-called 'rude and homely dyt'; alliteration in 'gently Iesop ... betakinis perfft prudens and cunnyng' (127-8); intensifying adverbs in 'mony deidis of vertew' (129); 'off all vicis' (133). There is also rhetorical paralleling:

\[\text{quha may be rycht hardy and gratious}\
\[\text{quha can enschew perrell and aventure}
\[\text{quha can govern citie and burchgus}
\[\text{without science ...} \] (134-7)

The portrait of the fool is similarly extended. It should be noted that the comparison of the wise and the knowledgeable man with the fool is one of the most repeated contrasts in the Book of Proverbs. The following phrases seem of especial importance for our poem: 1, 7: 'Sapientiam atque doctrinam stulti despiciunt;' 1, 22: 'Usquequo, parisci, diligitis infantiam, et stulti ea quae aibi sunt noxia cupient, et imprudentes odibunt scientiam?' xviii, 2: 'Non recipit stultus verba prudentia'.... In lines 146-7 Henryson paraphrases directly part of Matthew vii, 6:
Nolite dare sanctum canibus, neque mittatis
margaritas vestras ante porcos, ne forte
conculcent eas pedibus suis, et conversi
dirumpant vos.

Once again it must be emphasized that Henryson is using these
scriptural passages obliquely: it is his own interpretation that
'protius stonias' are arguments, not that of traditional commentary.
But the use of the passage serves two functions: it is used like
a proverb, a well-known phrase reinforcing the argument, a common
medieval rhetorical device, and it also gains from the importance
of the Biblical context - the foolishness of the cock appears far
more culpable, far more serious. While dealing with scriptural
reference we should remember too the parable of the man who cared
solely for earthly things: St. Luke, xii, 16-21:

"Hominis cujusdam diuites uberes fructus
ager attulit; et cogitabat intra se, dicens:
Quid faciam, quia non habeo quo congregem
fructus meos? Et dixit: Hoc faciam:
dentrum horres mea et majora faciam; et
illuc congregabo omnia quae nata sunt mihi,
et bona mea. Et dicam animae meae: Anima,
habeas multa bona posita in annos plurimos;
requiesce, comedo, bibo, opulare. Dixit
autem illi Deus: Stulte, hae nocte animam
tuam repetunt a te; quae autem parasiti,
cujus erant? Sic est qui sibi thessurizat,
et non est in Deum dives'.

Henryson ends his fable with an added topos: he bemoans the
state of the world now (in implied comparison perhaps with the
garden of Eden). He uses the device several times in his own
poetry: in The Lyon and the Hulse:

"Now in this world me think ryght few or nane,
till godis word that hes devotioun (71-2)

The Dog, the Scheep and the Wolff:

"Now few or none will execute justices
In salt of quHOME the pure man is ou'r thaw (157-8)
This device is a common one in medieval poetry; the idea it expresses is even more widespread.

I have tried to show how Henryson, largely by the addition of old devices to an old story, (the chanson d’aventure setting, rhetorical formulæ, scriptural quotations, the humility formula, the laudator temporis acti) has made something new. As we have seen, his ideas are not new: we noted the ‘Savoir’ and ‘Sapience’ of his source and the parallels in Biblical passages; and the following passage from a poem in the Liber Pluscardensis has considerable relevance:

Quha weld be ryche, have co til honour ay;
For riches folowis honour euer mair.
Til honour wisdum is the nercst way
And wisdum to vertu is the verray air;
And vertu cummis of science and of lair,
And science cummis only of Godis grace
Conqueste throw gude life, Treuale and besinas.

But in this new context the idea takes a new form: a new image has been provided for it, just as Shakespeare provides a new image for commonplace in his history plays.

1. See my work on the minor poems.


3. I must leave aside the problem of the influence of Italian humanism on Henryson’s work. It will be dealt with by Professor John Macqueen in his forthcoming study of Henryson. The more general effect of Italian Humanism on the poet has been suggested by S.J. Harth, Convention and Creation in the Poetry of Robert Henryson, op. cit.

(iii) The Hound and the Paddock

There seem definite indications of the source of the Hound and the Paddock. The traditional moralitas to the fable is the following, which I quote from the Vulgate Romulus: 'qui de salute alterius adversa cogitat, non effugiet malum'. A large group, made up almost exclusively of versions in the exempla collections, allegorize the relationship of the animals as that between prelates or priests and their charges. Others liken the Frog to the World: 'Mundi similia est Rana, quo blandiendo Muri proximit ...'. The mention of flattery here is interesting; we shall discuss it later. But there is little evidence of these three common interpretations in Henryson's moralitas. There we are given two particular emphases: a criticism of those who deceive with 'honied words'; and an allegorization of the animals' struggle as that between body and soul. For this latter I have been able to find no specific parallel and I believe it could be Henryson's own.

There is, however, one moralitas approaching Henryson's interpretation;

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2. Jacques de Vitry, Cermo I ad prelatos, Analecta Novissima 2 Sicilicii Policemensia, op. cit., ii, 355 (a more extensive version is given here than Crane, III, p. 1); Odo of Charmion, Hervieux, iv, 195; Stephanus de Borbone, B.M. MS. Additional 28682, fol. 260; B.M. MS. Harley 268, fol. 33b; B.N. MS. Harley 2851, fol. 117v; Broymayr, Summa Pradicantium, op. cit., P. xiii (Praelatio), 37.
it is found in the Berne Romulus,¹ and it states, after the
merest sketch of the story: 'Sic maiores et minores inter se
disceptantes. Sic etiam dyabolus animam et corpus dissipat.'
There is no other manuscript extant of this version, a fact which
scarcely suggests that it was widely known. Also, Henryson has
discussed elsewhere, as we shall see, the conflicting natures in
man - his interpretation here could well have been suggested by
that treatment rather than by the version I have quoted. Even
if Henryson has taken a part of his interpretation from such a
version, he has developed it considerably.

Again, there is no specific parallel in any other moralitas
for the first part of Henryson's interpretation. But there are
several parallels to be found within various versions. We noticed
'blandiendo' in the version, based on Odo of Cheriton, which
allegorizes the Frog as the world. In Gualterus Anglicus² we
find:

Omne genus pestis superat mens disconsa verbis,
Obsontes animos florida linguæ polit (3-4)
The Isopet de Lyon:³

Langue vaut pis que nul raige
Qui ne s'acorde a son coraigé
Les paroles qui de fuers oignent
Celent les maus qui lo cuer poignent (17-20)

Isopet I:⁴

Pour ces est ce trop grans peris
quant la bouche au cuer ne s'acorde;
Tels a pensée vis et orde
qui mout a douce la parole (8-11)

1. Hervieux, ii, 758.
Henryson has taken an idea expressed in his sources within the fable itself and made it part of his moralitas.

In the fable itself we have an even more specific parallel between Henryson's fable and the Gualterus tradition: Henryson:

Than fute for fute they lap baith in the brine
Bot in their mynd they were rycht different (99-100)

Gualterus:

Pec coit ergo pedi, sed Mens a monte recodit (7)\(^1\)

Isopet de Lyon:

Pié a pié se sunt ajosteeus,
Mai desjointes sont les punesse (25-6)

Isopet I:

Or sont les piés liés onsembale
Mèn les cuers divers, ce me semble (15-16)

Another point of interest is the fact that, except in the Gualterus tradition, the House asks for help to cross the river; in the Gualterus tradition, and in Henryson, the Frog offers its help.

We may also parallel parts of the speech of the Frog:

q scho sister lat be your heavy cheir
Do my counsall and I sall fynd the way (24-5)

Isopet de Lyon:

Hout estes lesse
Bale suer, soiez confortes!
Je vors motrai a savetey (9-11)

Thus we see again Henryson's reliance on the Gualterus tradition.

From his sources Henryson obtained the basic story - a House, wishing to cross a river, is offered aid by a deceiving Frog.

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1. The parallel was first noted by A.R. Diebler, *Henryson's Fabeldichtungen*, op. cit., p. 83.
They tie their legs together. In the middle of the stream the Frog submerges, attempting to pull the Mouse to its death. A Kite sees their struggle and devours both. Henryson has also obtained the idea for at least part of his moralitas, and also certain expressions in his text from his sources. We are now in a position to see what he made of them.

I shall discuss separately the two sections of the moralitas - we have already noted that there are additions themselves - and show how additions in the fable contribute to the exemplification in these sections. The first three stanzas, emphasizing the danger of believing honied words, are, as we have already seen, an expansion by the poet of lines found in the sources in the fable itself (though to this he adds advice not to be 'macht with a wicket narrow' [141] which is not to be found in any of the sources but which is of course traditional). The problem is also discussed in other parts of Henryson's work and once again we can note verbal parallels between passages of similar theme.

Agnis Heiety Credence of Titliarist:

It is the grund of stryt and all distance
moir perrellus than ony pestilence
Ane lord in flatterreris to half plesance
Or to gif lyaris hostoly credence (29-32)

The following extracts from our poem show close similarities:

It pass far alkynd of pestilens
A wicket rynd with wirdis fair and she (136-7)
Grit folly is thairfoir to gife credence
Our zone to all that speikis fair to the (144-5)

1. There is a possibility that Henryson's preoccupation with this problem reflects contemporary events. Consideration of this, I leave over till dealing with The Fox and the Cock.
Again with: 'Ane bludy tung, undir a fair pretence' (Aranis Hainety Credence, 54) we compare, from our poem: 'A fals intent undir a fare pretence' (142). Very similar thought and expression is found in the moralitas to The Fox and the Cock:

This feynit fox may wele be figurate
To flatteraris with pleasand wirdis quhite
With fals mening and mouth mellifluate
To loife and les qik settis their doylete
All worthy folk at sic suld hafe dispyte
Ffor quhair is noir perilous pestilence
Than giff to liaries haistelye credence (204-10)

The common occurrence of this advice in medieval poetry, and also in Scripture, I shall show in my analysis of Aranis Hainety Credence of Titteries. We should also note advice against being 'machit with ane wickit mairrow' in Nicole Boson:

128 De mala societate fugienda
Aristotil dit en con livere qu si
poleyno [en juvente] seint del let
de aane norri, qe cely quant vendra
en age guerpina sa nature demaigne,
e par la noriaunsee del let le aane
qe en juvente ad recell, se joyndra al aane.
Auxint meyn homne par fol companye en
juvente est hony en age, si com avent a
Roboam. Pur cso dit le seint Raprit:
"Si vos recieves en compaignye [homme]
de estranoge nation, il bestornera
vostre manere e vos amenera hors de la
droit voie." Si admittas alienisem,
subvertet te et alienabit te a vies
proprias. Prover xi.

Boson then recounts the fable of the buckets, this time using the fox and the sheep as his protagonists. He concludes:

1. Les Contes Moralises, op. cit., pp. 150-1; cf. also Dialogus Creaturarum, op. cit., dial. 49, pp. 192-3; Chaucer, Person's Tale, 638 ff.; Robinson p. 248; Jean Tennessax, Le Livre de Haistre Bernard et de Dace Perquant, de Feine, (Paris, 1550), chapters v-vii - Tennessax' work is a prose version of Renart le Nouvel with moral lessons drawn from the stories told.
Pur ceo dit BALAMON Prov 10: "Si lui mauvais honne te prie de aver ta compagnie, veilez qe vous ne assentes eye." Si te inctaverint peccatores, ne adquieasses illis; si dixerinti veni nobisciun, etc.

In formal matters too comparisons are interesting. We compare the rhetorical device: 'Grit folly is ...' (144) with that used in The Swallow and Othir Bird: 'Grite frule is he ...' (239, 41, 43). The three stanzas of this part of the moralitas use the Monk's Tale stanza form: it is used, as I hope to show in my study of the shorter poems, in many of the overtly didactic poems of the fifteenth century; an eight-line stanza, rhyming a b a b c b c with the last line a refrain (it is used also in the moralitas of The Two Wyis). Again then Henryson has used traditional forms in expressing a traditional concept - but both form and concept are new in this environment.

Many of the additions made by the poet in his fable serve to stress the theme of flattery, even if indirectly. The reason for the House's wish to cross the river is new to this version; in the branch of the fable represented by the ISG Romulus, by Marie de France and by Lydgate, the House has been invited to the Frog's home for a meal; in the Isopet de Lyon the House has been out seeking food and finds her way home blocked by water. But the House in our fable has different reasons:

Seis thow q echo of corne yone loly flat of ryp aitie of heir of peis and quheit I am hungry and fame wald be thair at ...

... And on this ayd I get no thing till eit Bot hard mutis qubilk with my teith I boir War I beyond my feist wald be the moir (15-21)
She is not content with her own lot and, being completely unable to cross by herself, (as emphasized by the rhetorical paralleling and alliteration of ll. 3-4) is predisposed towards taking any kind of help offered ("Let be preaching q the hungry moues" 75). We remember and compare the state of the mice in The Twy Eys who also put themselves in great danger by discontent with 'Widdrit peis and nutis' (61).

All three parts of the debate (for the argument between Frog and House is in debate form, as we shall see) are innovations by Henryson: the question of how the Frog can swim; the dispute on physiognomy; the dispute on liberty. The second is of particular interest.

The mows beheld onto hir fronsyt face
hir runclit bisk and hir lyppis syd
hir byngand browis and hir voce so hase
hir logrand leggis and hir harsky hyd. (43-6)

The House's knowledge of 'fysanomy' (68) seems accurate according to contemporary text books. She maintains its value (50-6).

And clerkis do say

That Phisnomye is a necessarie science to knowe the Kanons of men - Capitulum IVm.
... But for - als - moche as stronge is to fynye
and knowe conycones and good vertuus and maneris
of Popil wythout longe Prowe, hit is a ful
counsambilo and profitabill thyngye to euery
Prince, that he cane the science of Phisomy,
by wycho he may knowe by syght every man of wych
maneris and thewis he aboles be by kynde.

In comparing the passage in Henryson with appropriate passages in the text of 'fysomy', I realize that they are not always exactly

parallel. All comparisons made do, however, have points of interest. From the appearance of the Frog, the Mouse concludes that she has: 'Sum pairte of frowd and ole invy' (49). Face:

As from thy Enemy fle his presence
Which a-compysched in membrys Organychall
In not and noote this sentence,
Pfor avyll of thy excellence Royal:
Pfrom hym that is looke thou ffal,
Markyd in visage for lerne this Conclusyoun he is discyeyvable by disposicioun.¹

A sign of a bitter man: he has: '... a lene visage and frounset'.²

The eyebrows:

And whoos hear thykke doth bere
On the browys is a shrewd spokere
... Browys large to templys ech strechychung,³
Signe of hym that falancase wyl myntynes.

Nose:

Pferthere take heed to my doctryne
large nose in myddys which doth vp ryse
Of a lyere and great spekyng is signe
As old philosoffres clery doth devise;⁴

Voice: 'No that haue a grete voice and orible and not ful hay,
done gladly wronges, and bene likenyd to assis.'⁵

'Groat voys signe of hastynesse
Great wanyng Envious and Angry
ffair and hyn of wyldenesse and ffooly.'⁶

Legs: 'Kcho hath grete feet vntrewthe wyl myntyne';⁷ 'The tokenys of ille complescioun ... the vje longe legges'.⁸

¹ Lydgate and Burgh's Decrees of old Philisoffres (a version of the Secrecy Secretorum) ed. R. Steele (E.D.T.U.E.S. 66, 1894) 11. 2542-8.
² The Gouernansce of Prynce, op. cit., p. 224.
³ Decrees of old Philisoffres, op. cit., 11. 2610-1, 2614-5.
⁴ Ibid. 11. 2626-9.
⁵ The Gouernansce of Prynce, op. cit., p. 231.
⁶ Decrees of old Philisoffres, op. cit., 11. 2651-3.
⁷ Ibid. 1. 2678.
⁸ The Gouernansce of Prynce, op. cit., p. 222.
The poet puts into the animal's mouth the typical methods of argument of the debate form: the citing of the authority of the wise ('For clerks say is...'), of proverbs (55-6), of Scripture: 'I fynd in scritpor in a place (62). The reference seems to be to John vii, 24 'Nolite judicare secundum faciem, sed justum judicium judicate'. The Frog seems completely convincing: her Scriptural quotation refutes the House's physiognomical and proverbial lore; her arguments appear thoroughly reasonable and orthodox:

This differens in forms and qualite
Almyghty god has causit dame nature
To prent and cet in every creature (68-70)

People are not to be judged by their external appearance:

Off sum the face may be rycht flurisand
With silkin tong and their most amorus
With mynd inconstant fals and variand
Ffull of discait and menye cautelus (71-4)

The Frog has described herself: true, she has not a face: 'rycht flurisani, ... and leur most axoruse' but she has: 'a silkin tong ... with mynd inconstant.' Ironically the House's physiognomical lore turns out to be more accurate than the Scripture and reason which the skilled deceiver has put to her own use. Similarly, in The Fox and the Wolf, the Fox's astrological prediction (a sign of his folly and superstition) turns out ironically to be true, though not because of the power of the stars but because of his own folly.


Sature, the vicarise of the almyghty Lord,
That hot, cold, heav, lyght, moyst and dreye,
Hath knyt by evene noumbres of acord...
In the third part of the debate the House at first objects ('To pref that play it wer our perellous' 84) — an addition by the poet — to being bound with 'double twynnit threed', (80), with knots fast (81) — (the moralitas warns against being 'machtit with a wickit marrow' [157], of being bound 'fast quhair thow was frank and fre' [151]). But the false will even swear an oath (another addition). The fact that the Frog swears to Jupiter is probably of importance: earlier she referred to 'Scriptor' (62), quoted an example from it ('lofy absalone' 66), and spoke of Almighty God (69); now her oath is to: 'Jupiter of natur god and King' (93). The false Fox in The Fox, the Wolf and the Cabbage also swears 'be Juppiter' (76). The additions then have emphasized the point to be made in the moralitas: they have shown how plausible a person can be. At the end, the emphasis (brought by heavy alliteration) shows the dangers of believing such. The kite slew the animals 'but pety' (126):

\[\text{Ayne bowellit thame that bowchir with his bill and belly flawcht full setly he thame flaid.} \]

(126-8)

The second portion of the moralitas is of a very different type from the first. Whereas the first had the character of an exemplum, with its moral lessons obvious from the fable itself, the second is an 'allegorization': we might perhaps compare the tropological and allegorical levels in Biblical interpretation. In this section the stanza form is again the rhyme royal.\(^1\) The Paddock is man's body:

\(1. \text{Cf. Harvey Wood, Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 251, note to 1. 2910; he implies that the complete moralitas is in this form.}\)
Now he now law quhyle plungit vp and doun
Ay in to perrell and redy for to droun

Now dolorous now blith as bire on breir
Now in fredome now wardit in distres
Now haill now sound now deid now brocht on beir
Now cowneis gay now brattis to labras
Now full as rynche now hungary as a hound
Now on the quhelle now wappit to the ground (165-71)

It would be idle to illustrate how common this conception of Fortune's power is in medieval writing. But Henryson has given it new life in introducing it to this Fable. And I think it valuable to note Henryson's use of this particular rhetorical device: Smith calls it a common Henrysonian device, and so it is; but interestingly the poet uses it, or a variant on it, in those passages where he wishes to emphasise the idea of the vulnerability of man to Fortune. Thus, in the Twa Hyis, the Country House is tortured by the cat:

quhyle vp quhyle doun Als tait as ony kid
quhyle wald scho lat hir ryn vndir the stra
quhyle wald scho wynk and play with hir bukhid (170-2)

Orpheus and Eurydice: man's

grit solicitud
quhyle vp quhyle doun to win this worldis gud (515-6)

The Lyon and the Mouse: the lion in the net of Fortune:

Volumi about with hiddous rowmissing
quyle to quhyle fro gif he mycht succor get (204-5)

1. At this stage in the thesis I underline rhetorical paralleling (in black) and alliterative patterns (in red - alternating single and double underlining to differentiate patterns). Later, once the devices I am pointing out have been recognized, this will not be necessary.

2. Poems, 22, cit., 1, 24, note to 1. 1517.
The 'litill mous' - I discussed earlier the reference in the tale itself to the smallness, the helplessness of the Mouse - in the soul. In other poems Henryson has shown the dire effect of carnality: in The Swallow and Othir Birds the poet described how: 'carnall lust growis ful grene and gay' (286). The Fox and the Wolf:

Sum bene also throw consuetude and ryte Vincuot with carnal sensualitie (169-70)

The image of the sea or water, in its constant changeableness, representing the world was common in all types of medieval writing.

In sermons:

By the see in scripture is understand the world: "Hoc mare, magnum et spacious manibus", in Psalmos. Now to speke goontely, the see is not els but redines to aynne. And that every man and woman ... was borne aftur Adam. But sum were raveshed of this floode and borne downe lowe in to the depehes of the watur. Tho be thise that lyven aftur the lustes of her fleash. And sum were swmyng aboven the watur and sonses not as John Baptiste and many other ... For schip flotes on the flode  
And hali kirk wit costes gods,  
Flotes abouen this werides se  
Flouand wit sin and caltifte.

In literature we may instance its use in Chaucer's Man of Law's Tale. But once again we must note that Henryson has been the first to

1. A.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 266.
2. Ibid., p. 327.
introduce this interpretation of the stream into this fable.

A struggle between body and soul seems also an innovation, though, as we saw, one rare version has an undeveloped hint of this interpretation. Again, the idea of such a struggle was common: mankind's three greatest enemies, it was repeated endlessly, were the world, the flesh and the devil; and the struggle between Reason and Sensuality is, in many ways, another expression of the same idea, though usually these are identified, as in Henryson's own Orpheus and Eurydice (cf. lines 427-434), as two parts of the soul. Some interesting parallels between that poem and our fable may, however, be shown:

The perfyte wit and eik the fervent luve
We suld half allway to the hevin abuve
Not selldin thair our appete is fundin
It is so fast within the body bundin
Thairfoir dounwart we cast our myndis E
Blindit with lust and may not upwartis fle
Coud our desyre be soucht vp in the sphieris
Quhen it is tederit in thir worldly braeris
Quhyle on the flesch quhyle on this worldis wrak ... (449-57)

1. See Galatians, v. 17; W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., pp. 95 and 111; Chaucer, Parson's Tale:

As for to spoken of heele of body, certes it passeth ful lightly, and eek it is ful ofte encheasoun of the aiknesse of our soule.
For, God woot, the flesch is a ful great enemy to the soule; and therfore, the moore that the body is hool, the moore be we in peril to fall. Eke for to pride hym in his strengthe of body, it is an heigh folly.
For certes, the flesch coveiteth agayn the spirit; and aye the moore strong that the flesch is, the sorier may the soule be. And over al this, strengthe of body and worldly hardynesse causeth ful ofte many a man to peril and meschaunce (457-9; Robinson p. 241)

Cf. also Sydney J. Harth, Convention and Creation in the Poetry of Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 101-2 and the references there cited.

But in the fable there is no sign of condemnation of the House in this way: the soul is necessarily bound to the body till death (174-5).

The Kite is Death - the nearness, the all-conquering nature of death we see in other fables. I have shown in my analysis of the shorter poems the prevalence of this concept in medieval literature.

There remains the question of the relationship between the fable and this part of the moralitas. I think this to be another example of the type of fable represented by The Fox tried before the Lyon where there is a general exemplum (there it is to be drawn out by the readers/hearers) and an 'allegorization' interpreting one part of the fable only. ¹ I do not see that the first part of our fable - the reason for crossing the river, the argument between the animals - is relevant to the 'allegorization': Henryson certainly had no Platonic notion of the pre-existence of the Soul; and one would scarcely attribute to him the idea of the soul being slain by death. The part of the fable with particular reference to the second part of the moralitas, emphasizes the bond between the two creatures and the struggle:

The dreid of deid hir strenthia gart incres
and fundit hir defend with mony mane
the row upwart the paddok down can pres
Cuhile to cuhile fra cuhile dowk cuhile up agane
This silly mous this plungit in grit pane
can fecht als lang as brith was in hir breist (113-8)

As in many others of his works Henryson concludes his fable with a prayer: a common device in medieval poetry as I have shown

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elsewhere. As always it has reference to the particular fable:

> Now chryst for ws that deit on the rud
> of saule and lyf as thow art Saluiour
> grant ws to pas in till a blissit hour (197-9)

So once again we have seen Henryson creating of his original
something completely new: adding details, adding forms (the
debate, the prayer ending, the Monk's Tale stanza), adding
moralitates stressing ideas which, although not new in themselves,
are now in this context.
(iv) The Twa Wyis

There seem to me five points particularly relevant in a discussion of the sources for this fable. I shall deal with the more straightforward first.

The Country House replies to her sister's criticism of her food:

Ye sall it haif with blyth and heartly cheir
That suld mak the moiss that ar rude
among freindis rycht tendir sueit and gude (68-70)

Three other versions of the fable contain similar thoughts:

Gualterus' version:¹

In mossa tenui satis est immensa voluntas;
Robilitat viles froms generosa dapes (3-4)

The French derivatives of Gualterus follow and expand their source:

the Isopot de Lyon:²

La povretcy saizler richesce
Fait de la chiere la licese (13-14)

It continues with the advice that all men, rich or poor, should be treated well, advice which is not to be found in Henryson.

Isopet I³ reads:

Car mengier no pust estre vila
qui est donnés a belle chiere (14-15)

It is perhaps possible to distinguish still further. The moralitas to the Isopot de Lyon begins:

qui de trop haut choir dote l'onte
Saiges est, se trop haut ne monte (89-90)

Henryson:

So inter cellit is aduersitie
With orldy loy so that no stait is fro
Without truble or sum vexatioun
And namely thay that clymias vp most he (207-10)

The Isopet is the only version to introduce this concept, a
concept of which, as we shall see, Henryson makes much.

The Country House continues:

quhah plesans is in feistia delicat
The quhilk ar gevin with a glowmand brow
a gentill hairst is bettir recreat
With blyth visage than fecho to him a cow (71-4)

There is no equivalent for this in the French tradition, but in
Lydgate's The Tale of the Frogge end the Mouse¹ we find, in the
Mouse's speech inviting the Frog to dine,

Salomon wryteth, howe hit ys bet by halfe
A lospe of brede with rejoyynge
Then at festis to haue a rosted calfe
With heuy chere, frownyng or grogyng (428-31)

Gregory Smith states² that this in a reference to Proverbs vii, 1:
'Melior est buccella sicca cum gaudio quam domus plena victimis
cum jurgio'. But similarities with Proverbs xv, 17 should also
be noted. I quote verse 16 as well: 'Melius est parum cum timore
Domini, quam thesauri magni et insatiabiles. Melius est vocari
ad olera cum charitate, quam ad vitulum saginatum cum odio'. In
one place at least Henryson seems closer to Lydgate than to the
Vulgate: 'odio, jurgio; heuy chere frownyng or grogyng; glowmand
brow'; and we must at least presuppose some linkage from the fact
that the two passages are found in similar settings only in these

¹. The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ii, op. cit., 578-84.
². Poems, op. cit., i, xxxviii n. 3.
two poems: Proverbs xvii, 1 is quoted by both John of Sheppey and Bromyard but in their moralitates without the similarities of setting. Further evidence for the linking of the two poems (though of course in many places the story told is very different) has been found by Gregory Smith: 'The "burden" throughout the Moralitas recalls the last line of Lydgate's tenth stanza:

"Nor more asswet, to syn oppynioum,
Than glad pouert with smal possessioun".2

The phrase is also used in l. 346:

As men deserue, they receue theyr guerdon.
Onrepentaunt the tyraunt goth to hell.
The pore man with smal possession
Vertusly doth in the erthe dwell,
Content with lytell doth trewly by and soill
And of hoole hert can love God and drede
When he goth hens hathe heuen to his made (344-50)

I shall deal with the name Cyb, which is given to the cat in Lydgate and Henryson only, at a later stage.

None of the texts discussed so far make mention of the wretched condition of the Country House's dwelling,3 a fact which Henryson stresses (11. 36-42). The vulgate Romulus text4 calls it a 'brevi casella'; translating, Caxton5 describes a 'poure cauerne or hole', the Romulus of Rilant6 'despotes et vili castella' and

2. Poems, op. cit., i, xxxvii-xxxviii.
3. The House, in Lydgate's poem, makes the comparison:
   Ther ys no lordes, no castelles hath to kepe
   Then I haue hernes and hooles in to crepe (447-8)
   but this offers no parallel to our poem.
5. Jacob, op. cit., 11, 17-18.
the LBO Romulus1 'parvo foramine in arboris radice'. Bromyard2 tells of 'fossa seu foramen terrae'. This is one of the several points, which occur throughout the Fabillie, about which it is impossible to decide whether Henryson borrowed the idea or whether it was his own invention to emphasize his theme: if he borrowed it he certainly adapted it and extended it. But in view of the unsatisfactory nature of the evidence for the sources of this fable this point must be kept in mind hinting as it does either at Henryson's use of several sources or at his use of an undiscovered source. A similar point — one which Henryson could have developed himself but which does occur elsewhere in the tradition — is the Town House's statement that 'this rude dyet and I can nocht accord' (58). This is not stated directly in the Qualterus tradition — it is indirectly stated in the Isopet de Lyon ('Tu moinnes cy mort povre vie', 39) and merely implied by Qualterus himself. But in the LBO Romulus we find:

Contigit autem ut ipse uno die de foraminis angustia querulosus fieret, et cibaria illa minus saprosa fierent, et hoc esse dicent.

And in Marie de France:3

Quant ele ot piece iluec este
A sa cumpainé a parlé
Dist que sis estres est mauveis,
E que el ne volt demurer mais; (15-18)

The fourth point in this discussion of sources concerns Henryson's use of the cat: in Gualterus and his followers there is no mention of a cat: the steward's arrival suffices to warn the Country Mouse of the dangers of town life. And this is the case with all other tellings of the tale except those of Odo of Cheriton and his follower John of Sheppey. Leaving aside these two versions for the moment we must note that, except in the Gualterus tradition, the Romulus tradition, while describing the first incident only, contains the following warning given by the Country Mouse to its host (illustrated here from the Vulgate Romulus):

At tibi omnis sollicitudo et nulla est securitas, a tensa teneris muscipula, a catto captus comaderis, ac infestus ab omnibus exosus haberis.

The LBG Romulus expands: 'catti quoque precipue cavendi sunt insidie, quia ve vobis, si in manus catti incideritis'. In Lydgate's *The Frogge and the Mouse*, the Mouse boasts:

As I haue appetyte, I dyne late or sone For Cyb, the catte, hathe here nothyng to done (405-6)

Henryson's Town Mouse makes a similar boast (90): and his cat is 'gib huntar our loly cat' (165). The poet may have developed his second episode from these hints. But there is other evidence to be considered. In Odo of Cheriton's version\(^2\) of the fable there is also one incident only. The Country Mouse goes to the home of the Town Mouse; there

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1. Similarly the Oxford Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 248-9; Vienna-Berlin Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 422; Florence Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 478-9; Romulus of Nilant. Marie de France also warns "de chaz" (48).
2. Hervieux, iv, 190-1.

This is the only warning the Town Mouse needs to persuade it to return home. The setting here is entirely different from Henryson's which is based on the Romulus tradition: the cellar; the steward; the Mouse escaping (it had been caught; in Odo: 'vix evasit') by climbing a wall. But the version of Odo is the only one (apart from that of John of Shoppey, which follows it almost verbatim) in which the cat actually appears. Henryson certainly knew more than the Gualterus tradition, but we find ourselves still uncertain of the versions he did use.

The fifth point at first sight complicates the issue still further. In Henryson's text the two mice are sisters: the town sister sets out to visit her country relative. In all the usual versions the mice are in no way related - in several they are male as well. The Town Mouse is lost going from one city to another¹ or no explanation is given for her appearance at the Country Mouse's dwelling.² But in Bromyard we read:

"Iturus eis respondere poterunt, sicut in eisdem fabulis legitur murem siluestrear
respondisse muri villano sorori suae.
Villanus namque fingitur visitasse, et quasiiusse . . ."

The question arises as to whether Henryson knew Bromyard's version.

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¹. Cf. Romulus of Nilant; the LSO Romulus; Marie de France.
². Cf. Gualterus Anglicus.
or whether he knew his source (in ... fabulis legitur) or some derivation of it. In attempting to answer this question we must first note the similarity between Bromyard and Odo.

Odo:


Bromyard:

... Villamu namque fingitur visitasse, et quaseiuisse a campestri, quid comoderet et biberet, et ubi cubaret, qui respondit, quod fabae et huiusmodi dura, eius erant cibus, et aqua potus et fossa seu foramen torrae lectus, et haec ei ostendit. Alius vero dixit, cibum suum esse panem albissimum et optima quaeque ...

The setting is the same: the Town House has not been offered food (as in the Romulus tradition) but asks the Country House what she eats. Phrases are identical: 'querebat a campestri, quid comoderet', 'quaseiuisse a campestri quid comoderet ...'; 'Cue respondit: Duras fabas,' 'qui respondit, quod fabae et huiusmodi dura ...'; 'album panem', 'panem albissimum'. But equally interesting are the differences between the two texts:

Odo does not mention the relationship between the mice; and while, as we have seen, Odo describes an adventure with the cat, the crisis in Bromyard's version is normal: '... contingit dispensatores sepius intrare, ad cuius introitum timore magno perterritit foramina petebant'. There is one other important similarity between the two texts: they both quote (or their source quotes) from Gualterus. Odo repeats line 23 of Gualterus: 'Rodere malo fabam quam eura
perpete rodi’. Bromyard’s quotation is more extensive: the Country House says, 'Rodere malo fabam quam culpa perpete rodi. Fellitunque metu non puto dulce bonum'; the second sentence here is line 20 of Gualterus’ version. Now if their source was Gualterus’ poem they have differed widely from it; we would have to assume that Bromyard used both Odo and Gualterus. If they had a common source it seems certain that its setting is very different from that in the traditional telling: no meal is spread out but questions are asked of the Country Mouse concerning her food. Henryson’s tale is based on the traditional setting: the meal is spread and the Town Mouse objects to the food.

So, unless we are to assume some unknown source from which Henryson has copied, our study of the sources has shown us not only what the poet took from the traditional telling of the story, but also part of his originality: on to the traditional telling (which he probably knew from the Isopet de Lyon and Gualterus Anglicus and supplemented by Lydgate) he has grafted events from other versions: the relationship between the mice, and the adventure with the cat - this latter he has either developed from a mere hint or considerably changed; and he has made it a second episode to frighten the Country Mouse, whereas in all other versions one such episode suffices. The effects created by these graftings will be discussed in context. From the traditional version Henryson has taken: the Town Mouse’s disgust at the poorness of the meal set before her, in spite of her sister’s insistence that she should have it ‘with blyth and hartyly chair’ (68); the Town Mouse’s suggestion that her sister come to stay with her; the
initial joy and feasting; the scare at the steward's entry; an escape on the wall; the Country Mouse's dismissal of her sister's wealth (here we might compare, though the link is tenuous, Gualterus' 'Latet hoc in melle venenum' [19] - paraphrased by the Isopet de Lyon - with Henryson 11. 183-5); and at least the basis of the moralitas. We are now in a position to see what Henryson has made of his tale, what he has added, how he has expanded, for his version is much longer than any previous telling (as is the case with almost everyone of his fables), and what he has stressed.

We shall find three major types of additions: structural changes, addition of detail and addition of rhetoric (formal rhetoric, proverbs, Biblical quotations, forms). I think it best to discuss these as they occur in the poem, rather than to attempt to separate them under these headings, since they often overlap. The poet's originality is evident from the first lines: I have stated already that it is to be seen in his grafting of the close relationship of the two sisters ('sisteris deip', 2) onto the traditional setting. Throughout the poem he will stress the differences between the two sisters, differences which are made more significant by the original equality of the mice: they had lain: 'baith within hir [i.e. their mother's] wame' (53); but from her original state the Town Mouse had climbed 'vp most he' (210). The addition is of considerable thematic importance as we shall see. The poet proceeds to establish the differences between the mice by rhetorical paralleling. One was respectable (living in 'a borrowis toun', 3), the other lived as if an outlaw (7) though I am sure we are to presume it was not - it is a question
of class distinction, the successful sister wishing to disown her class and thinking of it as criminal; one lived in company and the other alone:

\[\text{rycht solitar sehyle vndir busk and breir sehyle in the corne ...} \quad (5-6)\]

One suffered immensely (sfit distres 9), the other was very comfortable; the use of conjunctions in the following passage is most noteworthy, conveying as it does the sense of enormous prosperity; the 'quhair euer' and 'alwa' create the same effect:

\[\ldots \text{was gilt bruther and said one fre burge } \\
\text{Tole fre alwa but custome maer and les } \\
\text{and freedome had to ga quhair euer echo list} \\
\text{Amang the cheie and meill in ark and kist. (11-14)}\]

The fact that the Town House is a 'gilt bruther' is again an addition by Henryson; it serves to increase our knowledge of the Town House's respectability and wealth. But it also, I feel, served another purpose: it helped to fix the story in the poet's own day and thus make it more immediately relevant and thus more likely to be applied to the reader's own experience. Of course I am not suggesting that Henryson was implying that country dwellers

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1. The growing importance of the merchant class in later fifteenth century Scotland is examined by Professor W. Croft Dickinson, Scotland from the earliest times to 1603 (A New History of Scotland, 1, London etc., 1961), pp. 233-8. To state however, as Stearns does (Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 34 ff.) that differences between town and country life as shown in Henryson's poems provide us with an accurate guide to social conditions of the time, seems to me to be misleading; similar contrasts (even in the details of food) had been made as long as the fable had been written and these contrasts were as applicable to thirteenth century France, for instance, as to fifteenth century Scotland.
were by nature more upright, pure and honest than town dwellers: his story uses the two animals and their differing homes as symbols for two opposing moral states (it would of course be possible to have an avaricious Country House and an unseeking Town House). So, as we saw in the Cok and the Jewel, Henryson, even before the story has begun, has added material which describes his characters showing the emphases he is to make in the tale.

The difficulty of the journey is an extension by the poet: the fact that it was long, that the Town House became tired and lost had been mentioned in other accounts but the ruggedness of the terrain had not been stressed at such length before: the stress serves to emphasize how far the Town House had 'climbed' above her sister - she had become unaccustomed to her former environment; the 'sweetest life' had become unattractive to her.

Once again the stress is gained through accumulations ('baith ... and; throw ... throwcht ... throwcht; fra ... to ... fra ... to') and alliterative emphasis

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baith our daill and doun.
Throw many wilsum wayis outh acho Walk
Throwcht sure and goe throwcht banck bukk and brayre
Fra fur to fur cryand fra baik to baik (21-4)
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The greeting is also added - it serves to emphasize the close relationship of the two mice which had been disturbed by the Town House's climb. It is interesting to find in an English version of the Gesta Romanorum, in the tale of a cat and a mouse, the following: 'The Cate come beside, and herde the mouse Criein the barne pepe; pepe! for she myght not come outh.'

Although one

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cannot assume Henryson's knowledge of this work (and the circumstances of the stories are very different) the similarity of expression perhaps provides additional evidence for the view that one must question seriously any attempt to describe Henryson as an observer of animal life; he is rather dependent on literary inspiration.

So:

ffor quhyle thai luche and quhyle for Ioy thay gret quhyle kisit sueit and quhyle in armis plet (32-3)

I have mentioned how Henryson may have taken the idea of the poor conditions of the Country House's dwelling from other versions of the fable; however, his description is much more detailed than the others which usually tell of merely a hole in the ground. This addition of detail is a very important factor in Henryson's art: as we shall see, in almost all the fables he worked from the most generalized sources and almost all the detail is his own.

In his The Scottish Tradition in Literature Kurt Wittig writes:

Usually, the animal disguise is rather threadbare, a mere allegory. But Henryson's peculiarity is the close observation of both the human and the animal detail ... The difference can perhaps best be summed up as follows: in most fables the animals are simply human beings in disguise, but Henryson's animals are closely observed, and they are real animals ... Henryson's details are so accurate that they give us a real picture of contemporary social conditions.¹

I shall have more to say about the so-called 'personal observation' - which in many cases is literary in origin, in later chapters. The critics have noticed the detail but have neglected its most important

¹ op. cit., pp. 39-41.
purpose, which is not only — if at all — to make a better story, to give the listener/reader more emotional satisfaction from a good story well told,¹ but to give added meaning to the moralitas. We should note Robertson's explanation of verisimilitude in The Canterbury Tales, an explanation which, I feel, applies equally well to The Fabillig:

The function of verisimilitude is, first of all, to attract attention, and, ultimately, to show the validity of the underlying abstractions as they manifest themselves in the life of the times.²

The details make the account more "vivid" certainly, but more "vivid" here, in order to make the contrast between Town and Country House greater, to reinforce the moral outlook of the work. We are shown a poor house which contrasts greatly with the respectability of the sister's dwelling — for the Country House, the poet reemphasizes, does not seem respectable: "sic pykeris luvis not licht" (42).

Henryson's use of the relationship between the two mice allows him another addition: when the Town House, "prynigit ful of pryd" (47), criticized her sister's food, the Country Mouse reminded her that they had come from the same origins and that it was she herself who lived as her parents had done; the Town House was living out of character:

I keip the ryt and custome of my deme
and of my ser Levand in pouertie
For landis haif we none of propirtie (54-6)

This addition is of particular importance as background for the special emphasis of the moralitas (lines 206-211 especially). In

². Ibid., p. 247.
the sources the advice that friendship and good cheer make the poorest meal seem 'suet and gude' was spoken by the narrator. Here it is put into the mouth of the Country Mouse who rebukes her sister: she does so in the words of the Bible which give authority - the authority of oft-quoted wisdom, the authority of the Word of God - to her position. But this has no effect upon the worldly mouse. Here I must protest at one of Stearns' misreadings. He states, concerning lines 78-9:

For the first time, the town Mouse is a bit shaken by the moral conviction of her younger sister and sits sadly but quietly at the table, with 'littill will to sing'.

The Town Mouse shows no sign of being shaken by moral conviction. Despite all her sister's 'merry exhortation' (78) she will not rejoice for the food is too much for her; again she shows pride: the food say 'suffys for sic a rurall beist' (84) but it is not good enough for her despite the fact that, as has been emphasized before, she is but a 'rurall beist' herself by origin. She is proud; her religion means nothing to her in her pursuit of worldly goods - her statement that her 'gud fryday is better nor your pase' (87) scarcely suggests devotion, and indeed we are informed that her god is her stomach (220-1); and she is self-reliant and self-assured, ironically so, as we shall find later:

I half hous anew of grit defens of cat na fall nor trap I half no draid (89-90)

Once again we must note that the two latter characteristics I have isolated are additions by the poet and that even the first, pride,

is merely implied in the sources. But the additions are not meant to produce a 'well-rounded' character - either human or animal - but to portray the characteristics of the man who has placed his trust in the things of this world\(^1\) - pride, irreligion and blind, fatal self-reliance. Cresseid exhibits these features in The Testament.

The mice arrive in the town 'in a morning or the leverok sang' (97). The only other versions mentioning the time of day are Horace's (set in the midst of the night)\(^2\) and the LSO Romulus:

'Summo igitur diliculō viam aggressi sunt, et in meridie ad villam venerunt'. Henryson's setting is different from both and is obviously an innovation by the poet. As in the Cok and the Jewell the poet has used the convention in which poems are set in the morning (the time when the false world seems promising) to emphasise the foolishness of his characters: here, the initial foolishness of the Town Mouse, and the foolishness of the Country Mouse in letting herself be guided (94-5) by her sister. In the town they come to a 'worthy wane' (99) - not the 'semele wane' (36) of the Country House - where the food is in abundance. We saw Henryson earlier in the poem using conjunctions to emphasise by accumulation; similar constructions are used to stress the amount of food available: 'bayth ... and, with ... and; and';

bayth chels and butter upon skelffig he
with fishe and flesche ennuche baith fresch and salt
and sekkis ful of grotitis baith meili and malt (103-5)

\(^1\) Cf. D.W. Robertson Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, op. cit., pp. 241 ff. on medieval 'characterization'.

Alliteration also intensifies adding to the sense of quantity; similarly 'full of'. The poet continues to emphasize the seeming prosperity: the mice had 'all curis' (108):

Notorne and beif strikin in telyes greit (109)
Till eik the chire the surharg furth scho brocht
A plait of groitis and a dish of meill
Threafe cakis I trow scho sperit nocht

The Town House thinks this will last forever 'and langir to' (118); for she is blind to the realities of this world, has forgotten where true values lie, has made a god of her stomach (1. 221). So 'Withottin grace thay weache and went to meit' (107).

But this is not real, they pretend to be what they are not: 'a lording fair thus can thay counterfeit' (110). And at the height of their joy the poet reminds us of their danger and thus of their folly (129-30); this is an addition to his sources, but an addition which is traditional both in thought and expression: we are introduced to the Boethian world of instability. At the height of Troilus' happiness Chaucer similarly warns:

But al to litel, weylawey the whyle,
Lasteth swich joie, ythonked be Fortune,
That semeth trewest when she wol bygyle,
And Kan to fooles so hire song entune,
That she hem hent and blent, traitour commune! (IV, 1-5)

Those who have put themselves in Fortune's power, by placing their trust in the things of this world, are sure to suffer. Henryson emphasizes the Country House's suffering:

... This rurall sous lay flatlingia on the ground
... This rurall mous lay flatlingia on the ground
For till hir haert striak mony wofull stound
As in a fewer tryslit fute and hand (148-151)
It is perhaps not too far-fetched to recall at this point Troilus' condition when Fortune strikes him.\(^1\)

Henryson has not only added detail to the fable, thus widening its theme, he has radically altered its structure. As we saw before, in no other extant version of the fable is there more than one episode; here there are two. The attractions of the feast of this world - and its inherent dangers - are made to seem even greater by this addition. And the poet has made the second episode much more terrifying than, say, Odo's version where the Country Mouse 'vix evasit'. Here the mouse is caught and played with: its misery is described in terms recalling, as is certainly relevant, Fortune's wheel ('Fra ... to ... to and fra; quhyle ...');

Fra fute to fute scho kest hir to and fra quhyle vp quhyle doun Als tait as ony kid quhyle wald scho lat hir ryn vndir the stra quhyle wald scho wynk and play with hir bukhid (169-72)

An interesting comparison - reminding us once again to be careful when speaking of 'personal observation' in Henryson's poetry - is with an exemplum in a fourteenth century collection in the British Museum:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Diabolus dicitur simil murele gqui cum mure cepirit multociens ludit dimitendo \text{e}am aliquantulum et postea comedit illam.}
\text{Ita facit diabolus de peccatore et tandem in fine decortat ipsum}^2
\end{align*}
\]

The misery of the creature suffering from Fortune, the creature who has placed its trust in the things of this world, is thus stressed.

1. Troilus and Criseyde, V, 217 ff.
2. B.M. MS. Harley 268, fol. 33b.
The Country Mouse has learned her lesson:

Tho country has learned her lesson
Thy gast is myngit all with cair
Thy gas is gud thy gansall crow as gail
The sachngis of thy seruice is bot gair (183-5)

Once again Henryson has added a proverb\(^1\) with its accumulated wisdom.

The last stanza of the fable is also an addition by the poet. We should note the introduction of the narrator here; he is similarly introduced in the final stanza of the story in *The Cock and the Jewell, The Fox, Wolf and Husbandmen* and *The Mouse and the Paddock*; in other fables the narrator plays an even more integral part in the action and theme - *The Lyon and the Mouse* and *The Swallow and Other Birds* for instance. The introduction provides a further example of the use of conventional forms in combination (the narrator had played an important rôle in Chaucer's poetry, for instance) for thematic purposes; in the present fable it serves to vouch for accuracy of the fable and thus of the moralitas. The narrator 'hard say' that the Country Mouse lived:

As warne as vow supposeis it wes nocht greit
Full beynly stutf bayth but and ban
Off peis and nutis benis ry and quheit
Quhen evir echo list echo had ennuche til eit (198-201)

One should again note the 'bayth ... and ... and ... and' form and the emphasizing adverb (full).

I hope it has become obvious that Henryson has used his additions - the different types of which were enumerated at the beginning of our discussion - to emphasize the danger of putting oneself in the power

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1. See Ferguson's *Scottish Proverbs*, ed. Erakine Beveridge (S.T.S., New Series 13, 1924) no. 145, p. 16 'A good goose indeed, but she has an ill gansell.
of Fortune by attempting to climb, to seek worldly goods (in this example, food) which, though seemingly abundant and attractive, are fatal. The Town House had climbed from her original state and put herself into mortal danger: danger she did not, in her blindness realize, danger into which she attempted to draw her sister who was similarly blinded, danger which, it is implied, will eventually prove fatal to her.

In discussing the moralitas we should first note the change of form: to the eight-lined stanza which as I mentioned in my chapter on The House and the Paddock, is used primarily in fifteenth century poetry for overtly didactic work; this form commonly has a refrain. Again we see Henryson adding a traditional form to the original story. The poet stresses his theme:

So intremelit is adversitie
With erdly Joy so that no stait is fre
Without truble or sum vexatioun
And nameely thay that clymis vp most he
And nocht content or small possessioun (207-11)

The Town House had climbed 'vp most he' leaving her original state (she was not content with 'small possessioun'; she had put her trust in 'erdly joy'). And, in Boethian terms, when one has put one's trust in the things of this world one has voluntarily placed oneself in the power of Fortune; if one's trust is in eternal things one cannot be disappointed for they are stable (Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, V, 1845-6); but if one puts trust in worldly

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things one is sure to be disappointed for, by nature, they are transitory - Chaucer's Troilus, The Testament of Cresseid. The Town House, like the foolish Cok in The Cok and the Jewell, has misplaced her values: thus she suffered from 'blind prosperito' (216) just as Chaucer's Troilus suffered from 'blynde lust' (Troilus and Criseyde, V 1824). We remember Cresseid:

Thy lufe, thy lustie and thy gentilnes
I countit small in my prosperitie
Sa elevait I was in wantones
And clam upon the fickill quhcill se his (547-50)

Other important passages are to be found in the Orpheus:

Bot worldly men sumtyme ar cassin ho
upone the quhcill, in gret prosperitie,
And with a quhirlo, onwardly, or thai wait
ar thawin doun to pure and law estait (485-8)

... Schawand to us quhat perell on ilk ayd
That thai incur quhaye will treat or confyld
Into this worldis vane prosperitie
quhilk hes thir sory propertie thre,
That is to say, gottin with grit labour,
Keipit with dreid, and tynt with grit dolour (547-52)

The Lyon and the Mouse:

Quha wait how sone a lord of greit renoun
rolland in worldly lust and vane plesaundis
May be ourthrowin distroyit or put doun
Throw fals fortoun, quhilk of all varians
Is hail maistres and leder of the dans (281-5)

The Abbey Walk:

Thy kindome and thy grit empyre,
Thy ryaltie nor riche array,
Sall nocht endure at thy desyre,
Bot as the wind will wend away;
Thy gold and all thy gudis gay,
quhen fortoun list will fra the fall (9-14)

We shall find much of Henryson's poetry to be concerned with this subject. Of course, it must be emphasized, this does not necessarily reflect a personal problem on his part; one can say that, almost
without exception medieval poets did not write about individual problems but about the problems of mankind; Henryson is but one of many writers who dealt with the same problem. His importance is in the way he deals with it, and this I have been attempting to describe in my analysis of the poem.

Now of course not only the rich are subject to the whims of Fortune: 'no stait is fre' (208). But those who have put their trust in this world and its riches suffer from these whims.

Blissit be symple lyfe withoutin draid
Blissit be sobir feist in quiste
quha hes ennuche of no noor hes he noid (212-4)

We may compare with Chaucer's Balade de bon Conseyl

Plee fro the press and dwelle with soothfastnesse
Suffyce unto thy good, though it be smal;
For hord hath hate, and climbing tickelnesse,
Prees hath envye, and wele blent overal (1-4)

We have already seen Lydgate's lines 'Nor more assward ... Than glad pouert with smal possessionun'. In another of his poems, Consulo Quiquius Eris:

Be pald with litel, content with suffisaunce,
Glyab not to hih, thus biddeth Socrates;
Glad pouert is of treours most substaunce,
And Catoun seith is noon so great encre,
Off wordly treours, as for to live in poes, ... (65-9)

Henryson's own The Abbey Walk:

In welth be meik, heich nocht thy self,
be glaid in wilful pouertie;
Thy power and thy warldis pelf
Is nocht bot verrr vanitie (49-52)

Dunbar's Of Content was later to echo the same idea. It is interesting to find in Gregor's notes to the poem many classical parallels for this concept. Biblical parallels can be found in Proverbs xvi, 8 and xxiii, 4-5. I Timothy vi is also relevant as we shall see.

The Town House's values have been misplaced: her god is her stomach. Lines 220 ff. paraphrase Philippians iii, 19. I quote verse 18 also for context:

\[\text{Multi enim ambulent, quos ausepe dicebam vobis, nunca autem et filios dico, inimicos crucis Christi: quorum finis interitus, quorum dens venter est; et gloria in confusione ipsorum, qui terrena assimunt.}\]

The Town House loved worldly things, made her stomach her god, and, it is implied, her end will be destruction. It seems to me that in this context the cat of line 224 refers not only to Fortune but also to Death:

\[\text{The cat cumis and to the mous hewis E Cuan th dois awail thy feist and ryelte With droid full hairt and tribulatioun (223-5)}\]

Verses 6-10 of I Timothy vi are particularly relevant here:

\[\text{Et autem quae estus magnus pictas cum sufficientia. Nihil enim intulimus in hunc mundum, haud dubium quid nec suferre quid possumus. Habentes autem alimento et quibus tegamus, hic contenti sumus. Nam qui volunt divites fieri incident in tentationem, et in laqueum diaboli, et desideria multa inutilia et nociva, quas mergunt homines in interitum et perditionem. Redix enim omnes malorum est cupiditas; quae quidam appetentes erraverunt a fide, et inseruerunt se doloribus multis.}\]

2. ibid., iii, 312-3.
Henryson's warning is expanded in *The Swallow and Other Birds*. So, in view of the danger of seeking worldly pleasures, dangers both in this world and the next, the 'best thing in ord', the best 'under the heavin', the best 'ordly joy' is 'small possessioun'. For 'possessioun' does not matter. What does matter:

the riches that evir call indure
Qwhilk motht nor must may nocht rust nor kot
And to mani eaul it is eternall reit
(The Cok and the Jewell 138-40)

Henryson's poem has religious implications. And here we find the basic difference between his fable and all other literary versions, except Odo of Cheriton's where the moralitas, though religious, has a very different purpose: an attack on simoniaical clergy. Even the telling in the *Isopet de Lyon*, though hinting at the concept of Fortune, is not specifically religious; Henryson's is in essence religious as are some of the example versions:

Jacques de Vitry:

Expedit igitur ut exact homo a Babilone et periculosae habitationes maxime, ubi fortior debiliorum consuevit opprimere

Bromyard:

Sic omnino, quando fideles simplices vident peccatores, et abundantes in seculo obterinere et factare divitias, et victus, et vestitus, delitias et donorum et equorum nobilitatem, que omnia vel ex magna parte ex mala habent acquisitiones, cum animarum periculo, et conscientiarum timore, quibus melius esset fabam comedere et aquam bibere cum conscientia letitia et securitate; dicant in cordibus cum suae campestri, malo mema rurales paupertatem, cum securitate et laetitia quam splendidas opulas illas et vestes cum remorsu conscientie, et cum tot

1. Crane, CLVII, p. 69.
The Two Lyres thus forms one of a group of poems which are variations on a theme, the vanity of the world and the stability of the heavenly kingdom, the general theme of the entire Fabllas.
(v) The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff

There can be no doubt concerning the source of The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff. In all the traditional accounts the fable is an attack on false witnesses: the judge (who is usually unnamed) asks the dog if he has witnesses; sometimes he produces three (usually the fox, the kite and the hawk), sometimes two to testify for him, and the judge is mislead by these. There are two accounts in the traditional manner which give some blame to the judge. In Jacques de Vitry's exemplum,¹ where the rabbit is the judge, we find:

Canibus autem, milua et coruia pro lupo et uolpe testimonium ferentibus dixit
cuniculus - id est rapax prolatus -: Cum agnus solvere nequest quod promisit, ego peleza, id est exteriorem substantiam, pro pignore retinebo: lupus autem et volpec inter se carnes diuidant ...

In Isopet I,² where the judge is not named, we find:

Le Juge qui vera le plus fort
Se tient, soit a droit, soit a tort,
A rendre le pain li commande (14-17)

However in both these accounts the remainder of the fable is traditional.

The Isopet de Lyon³ has diverged markedly from this traditional telling and, as will become obvious, Henryson has followed it:

En cel plait est juges li Lous:
Cils juges est sout perillous. (3-4)

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'a frawd full [wolf] was luge' (5). The dog had 'bons consoi lions (5) - advocates, not witnesses; so in Henryson's fable (31-2). They were 'Lo Nieble et lo Voutour' (7) - Henryson's 'gled' and 'grip' (30). These are too corrupt: the Isopet: 'Si li uns tost, li autres amble' (8). Henryson: they:

wer considerit a streit in to ane band
Agane the scheip to procure the sentens
Thocht it wer fale they half no conscience. (33-5)

But the sheep was without counsel:

Consoil ne avoit ne hale
La Berbiz; s'etoit esthale (9-10)
but aduocat abasitly can stand (86)

The remainder of the story is parallel: the dog accuses the sheep of keeping his brand; the corrupt court convicts:

Li Louis es comoillours acordes,
Quar tuit tirent a une corde
Et il sont gens sens conscience
Que de rapine font chevance (23-6)

Henryson likewise emphasizes the court's guilt. There are points where Henryson differs slightly from the Isopet: his dog does not mention that the sheep agreed: 'Non paix une foiz, mais sovant' (16); nor does his sheep die of cold - cf. 'muert de froit contre la bise (34) (Henryson makes use of the winter scene in a much more original way, as we shall see). But there can be no doubt that the Isopet provides his source.

Now we are in a position to see what the Scottish poet made of the fable in expanding it (from 40 to 175 lines). There are two major additions to the story itself. The first is the addition

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1. The Bannatyne line is faulty: another syllable is necessary for the metre. All other early versions read 'wolf' which is, in any case, obvious in this context.
of detail to the court scene, the description of an ecclesiastical court. So the wolf sends out a 'strait summoun' (7):

I ar wolf paiartles of frawd or cyle
Vndir the panis of suspentioum
and gret cursing and interdictioun
Sr Scheip I charge the straitly to compair ... (10-13)

The detail has the same effect as that in the Two Lyis: it serves to localize the scene and thus to make it more applicable to the society for which the poet was writing. Besides — and the same reason applies to the introduction of technical terms in The Fox tried before the Lyon — by their introduction the poet reminds us that he is dealing, in essence, not with animals but with human beings in their bestial state (cf. Prolog 11. 145 ff.). We should note too that, in this addition, the poet has taken every opportunity to emphasize the court's corruption; in context the wolf's denial of 'frawd or cyle' (10) increases suspicion; and our knowledge of the hopelessness of the sheep's position is also increased by recognition of the wolf's learning (a master). His prey is a 'silly scheip'. Further court detail also serves both purposes: the raven who is 'peritour' (15) 'pyxot has full nony schepis E' (16):

The Fox was clerk And notar in that caus
The gled the grip vp at the bar couth stand
As advocatis expert in to the lawis (29-31)
... Lawrence the actis and the proces wrait (94)

Other fables, as the poet himself reminds us in line 134, have told of the treachery, hypocrisy and enmity of the fox towards the sheep.

1. For explanation of these technical terms, and evidence that this is an ecclesiastical court, see Smith, Poems, op. cit., 1, 20-1, notes to 11. 1448-9.
The second major addition to the story is the sheep’s protest against the court’s animosity to her, and the resultant tribunal:

... thou aor wolf has *ay* bene odius
To me with thyne tuskis revenus
has alene *full mony kynnis men of myne* ...

... And shortly of this court the members all
*payth* accessoris clereke and aduocat
To me and myne ar enemesis mortall
and *ay* has bene as *mony* scheipbird walt (46-53)

Besides, the very time at which the court is held is unlawful
('ferial' [54] - another technical term). We note that it begins at sundown: it will be held then in the dark. Considering Henryson’s other uses of the dark/light symbol² I think one can accept this as another sight of the court’s falseness. Even the appeal judges are false; they *seen* virtuous:

... held a *lang quhyle disputatioun
Seikand *full mony* decretalis of the law
and glosis *nil* the veritie to know

Off *sewall mony* volum thay rewoll
The *codys end degetis new end aid* (68-72)

But in Henryson, in denying their duplicity, affirms it:

For pryse nor prayer trow ye thay wald fald (75)
as trew lugeis I shrow thame that leis (77)

Henryson’s additions to the fable have set it in a particular contemporary setting - the ecclesiastical courts - thus making the tale more relevant to his readers/hearers; and they have reinforced the corruptness of the court. So:

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1. Bannatyne reads ‘immortall’ which gives an unnecessary syllable. The sense seems to demand ‘mortall’, which is, in fact, the reading of the other early versions.

2. Cf. the opening of The Fox and the Wolf; The Swallow and Othir Birds, 11. 15-21; The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, 1. 64. The concept is used ironically in The Two Hysis: ‘For commonly sic pykeris luvis not licht’ (42). The Country Mouse does not seem respectable; in fact she is much more so than her sister.
This court corrupt all for meid
Agane gud Fyth gud law and conscience
For this fals dog pronunciit the sentence (96-8)

But this is only the beginning of the poet's originality. The
moralitas in the Isopot version is merely:

Tost se consent a fausetey
Hons de mavaise povretay;
Tost porte une mavais tezoignaige
For un poul de son avantage.
For mavastié sovante fois
Est mise au dosseoz bone fois (35-40)

But the moralitas of Henryson's fable is far more extensive.
Although he does not show how the poet accomplishes his task, nor
indeed, fully understand its nature (the use of the word 'personal'
for instance comes, as we shall see, from a misunderstanding of the
text) Stearns is certainly correct when he says: 'it is clear that
Henryson is building in the course of the fable towards his personal
coccent in the moralitas'.

Now, as all the commentators have pointed out, the court present in the fable itself is a church
court while the interpretation placed on it in the moralitas suggests
a civil court. Lord Hailes:

... It is remarkable that the whole satire
of the fable is aimed at the ecclesiastical
judge whereas the application is to the
civil. Henryson probably stood more in awe
of the court spiritual than of the temporal.

Surprisingly, this explanation is accepted by both Smith and Wood.

However, Stearns is surely right in stating:

2. Ancient Scottish Poems published from the MS. of George Bannatyne
   1568 (Edinburgh 1770) p. 282, note to st. 18, l. 1.
3. Poems, op. cit., i, 22, note to l. 1257.
This inference seems unjustified. The action would have obtained law in either court and Henryson appears to be taking the opportunity to criticize both.  

So Judge in Church Court and Sheriff in Justice Ayres are both like the Wolf in the fable; the apparitor and coroner are both like the raven; the characteristics of the court in the fable are those of both church and civil courts: The sheriff:

hes with him a cursit assyis about and dytis all the pure men vp of land and fre the crowner lay on thame his wand Supposed he be als trew as was sanct Iohine Slane sall thay be or with the Iugo compon.
The revin I likin till a fale crowner ...
... Bot luke gife he be of a trew intent To skraip out Iohine and wryt in will or wate and so a bud at bayth the pairteis skat (120-33)

This is a 'cursit assyis' just as the church court was a 'cursit court' (96); they are both 'corruptit all for maid' (96 cf. 133); as the dog was 'fale' (98) so is the coroner (127) and the fox (134).

So in the first part of the moralitas the poet has widened his criticism (again using detail to reinforce his argument) to include falseness in the civil as well as the ecclesiastical courts; falseness, that is, in the whole system of justice. He has also in this section to some extent foreshadowed the second widening in promising hell to all types of 'tirrane men' - not only those who take the case to court but:

... tirrane men that setitis all their cure with fale menys to mak a wrang conquist In howp this present lyfe sall evir lest Bot all begyld thay will in schort tymen end And after deid to crewall paine wend (115-9)

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 31 n.
This warning should be compared with that in *The Swallow and Other Birds*, ll. 304 ff.

The second widening of the theme comes from the poet's encounter with the sheep. The chance hearing of the sheep's complaint\(^1\) by the narrator passing by is a variation on the conventional opening for poems of the pastoral type where a wanderer in spring hears a love song or complaint by chance.\(^2\)

Here the poet's variation on the form implies a contrast between the harshness of the real world and the idyllic nature of that spring setting; the passer by, by chance, hears a complaint in winter, a winter to which the sheep has been made particularly vulnerable by the cruelty of others. In describing this setting Henryson, for the first time in this poem on an extended scale, uses a typical means of emphasis - intensive alliteration - to stress the sheep's suffering.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Allace q he this cursit}\(^3\)\textit{consiatory}
\textit{In middis now of winter it is maid}
\textit{quhen bores with blastis bitterly}
\textit{with frawart frostis the flowris doun can faid}
\textit{on bankis hair now may I mak no haed}
\textit{and with that wurd in till a coif he grap}
\textit{fra hair wedder and froistis him to hap}
\textit{Quakand for gald and murnyngis soir among (141-8)}
\end{quote}

\(^1\) It should be noted that there seems to be no justification for the punctuation in Smith's edition (and he is followed by Harvey Wood and Charles Elliott) that ends the sheep's speech at l. 153 and makes the remainder of the poem the poet's own comment. It seems to me that the whole passage (l. 150 to the end) is spoken by the sheep. Stearns too, probably from his use of Wood's edition, makes this mistake (hence his 'personal'). Laing, however, \((The Poems and Fables of Robert Henryson, now first collected [Edinburgh, 1865])\) edits correctly.

\(^2\) Cf. my comments on *The Reasoning Betwixt Aige and Yowth*, pp. 344-5; also Helen E. Sandison, *The "Chanson d'Aventure" in Middle English* (Bryn Mawr College Monographs, Monograph Series, XII, Bryn Mawr Pennsylvania, 1913).

\(^3\) This is the third time this word 'cursit' has been applied to the courts; these men too are quite literally cursed (cf. ll. 118-9).
In the typical spring setting of this convention it is often implied that this state will follow: just as the flowers fade Fortune will change.\(^1\) And Fortune has changed for the sheep, previously protected, now exposed to a fierce winter. The sheep cries:

... o lord quyby alypis thow so lang
walk and deserne my caus groundit in richt
luk how I am be frawd maistry and olycht
pelit full bair and so is mony one (149-52)

As Gregory Smith points out\(^2\) this is an echo of Psalm xliiv, 23 (Vulgate Psalm xliii, 23).\(^3\) The context of the quotation is most interesting: the psalmist recalls the nation's righteousness; yet they have been slaughtered like sheep. From verse 22 to the end of the psalm we read:

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1. Again see my discussion of The Reasoning Betwixt Aire and Youth, PP. 344-5.
3. Wood, ignoring Smith's note, quotes this as

... one of the distinguishing features that mark out the Scotsman in any company today ... he is more than disposed to address his Maker in an admonitory and chastening tone ... this peremptory note, reminiscent of the north-country pulpit (Poems and Fables, op. cit., pp. xvii-xviii).

Stearns, without acknowledgement, adopts this suggestion; he says that the passage 'has the force and flavour of a sermon by an old Scots preacher' (Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 126). See also Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature, op. cit., p. 50. In the context - especially ll. 159 ff. - it seems scarcely 'admonitory and chastening'. And a glance at the commentaries confirms this: cf. Cassiodorus, Expositio in Psalterium, P.L. lxx, cols. 316-7; Bede (the ascription is questionable), In Psalmorum Librum Exegesis, P.L. xciii, col. 713.
... Quoniam propter te mortificamur tota
die; aestimati sumus sicut oves occisionis.
Exsurge; quare obdormis Domine? exsurge
et ne repellas in finem. Quare faciem tuam
overtis; obluitceris inopiae nostrae et
tribulationis nostrae? Quoniam humiliata est
in puluere anima nostra: conglutinatus est
in terra venter noster. Exsurge Domine,
ajuda nos; et redime nos propter nomen tuum.

The sheep continues in the conventional lament form:

So how the gursit syn of quvatys
exylit hes bayth lufe lauty and law
In falt of quhome the pure man is ourthrow (155-8)
... So thow nocht lord this world our turnit is
As quha wald change gud gold in leid or tyn
The pure is pelit the lord may do no mis
Now symony is haldin for no syn
Now is he blyth with okir can most wyn
gentreis is alane and pety is ago
allace lord god quhy tholis thow it so (162-8)

The image of the world upside down is common in medieval poetry, especially in this conventional lament form (the laudator temporis acti); other characteristics are the repeated 'now', implying contrast with a former time, and the use of 'exylit'. The poet is looking back to the Golden Age, the Garden of Eden - before men selfishly followed their lusts seeking worldly goods - as he also does, for instance, in The Lyon and the Mous and The Cok and the Jewell. For the complaints he makes, though they are of course applicable to fifteenth century Scotland, (and were certainly meant to relate to it) are not restricted to it: the same type of complaint has been made throughout medieval literature. The poet uses universal images to expound a truth not restricted to any one

country or period but relevant to mankind in general; he complains of exploitation, but he complains also of something more universal. His realization is that of St. Paul (I Timothy vi, 9-10):

Nee qui volunt divites fieri incidunt in tentationem, et in laqueum diaboli et desideria multa inutilia et nocia, quae emergunt homines in interitum, et portionem.
Radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas; quan quidam appetentes errauerunt in fido,
et inscuerunt se doloribus multis.

This evil has infected all levels of society: clerics (165) and lay (164) just as we saw it before infecting ecclesiastical and secular courts.

The sheep answers its own question (of lines 150-168):
Thow tholde this bot for our grit offens
Thow sendis us truble and plaigis nofr
As hungir derth wer and pestilens
bot few exendis their lyre now thair foir (169-72).

This is the reason for all evil, not only human but natural: 'plaigis ... hungir, derth, wer, ... pestilens'. The same idea is expressed in An Prayer for the Pest where the pest realizes (as we shall see in studying this poem it was traditional to do) that plague is a punishment for sin:

Thow dois na wrang to puneise our Offens (6)
... bot all or punisit for thair Innobedien (62)

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1. We should compare with the following passage in The Braine of Air:

False is this world, and full of variance;
Besought with syn and other sytis mo;
Truth is all tynt, gyle has the governance;
Wretchednes has wroht all welthis wele to wo;
Predone is tynt, and flemty the lordis fro;
And covatise is all the cause of this; (9-14).
The Biblical commentaries are also helpful. The Glossa Ordinaria, commenting on the passage from Psalm xliii I quoted above, states:

Obdormis. Negligere videris, Quare eti
nasciamus, tu scis quare: vel pro culpa,
vel pro utilitate. -Quod si pro culpa,
utinam abesset; si pro utilitate, utinam
abesset. Quondam repellis, quis faciat,
id est, cognitionem tum, ab eis subtrabitis:
obdormis quibusdam qui genunt de malis.¹

Petrus Lombardus uses this passage in his Commentarium in Psalm.²

Henryson uses a conventional ending, a prayer:³ he ends The
Fox tried before the Lyon and The Lyon and the Paddock, for instance, similarly. So beginning with an exemplum - which provides one instance of seemingly unmerited punishment - Henryson has expanded his theme firstly to include unmerited suffering imposed by any court, then to all suffering, whether caused by man or natural. And he has provided an answer to the question of why such evil is allowed (it is caused by human sin [169], human desire for the passing pleasures of this world [116-9]), and a solution to the problem (175-7). This expansion he has brought about largely by use of conventional form - the chanson d'aventure, the complaint, the prayer ending - in a new context. And by this original use he has made a fable of limited import into a discussion of a universal problem.

3. It may be mere coincidence that these lines recall to me St. Matthew, v, 31: Bæti pauperes spiritu (those who do not desire the things of this world) quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum.
(vi) The Wolf and the Lamb

The few indications we have concerning source for The Wolf and the Lamb indicate once again the Guaiterus tradition, particularly the Isopet de Lyon. There are perhaps three distinguishing points. Firstly 11. 8-10 of our poem:

Thus drang thay baith bot nocht of one intent
The wolfis thoacht wes all in wicketnes
The silly lame meik and Innocent ...

There is a somewhat similar passage in the Isopet de Lyon:¹

Au dessus boit de la fontaigne
Li Louis, de panse mal sainne;
Li Aignaix de simple cornige
Bevoit au desoz dou rivaige (5-8)

Henryson's passage reminds us, of course, of his own lines from The Hound and the Paddock:

Than fute for fute thay lap baith in the brime
Bot in thair mynd thay wer rycht different
The mowe thoacht na thing bot to fleit and swyme
The padok for to slay act hir intent (99-102)

Secondly, the Wolf accuses the Lamb: 'To hurt my drink and this fair watter spill' (21). In the Isopet the Lamb exonerates itself thus:

Auvec ce l'aigue est douce et clere,
Ne n'est toble ne n'est amere (19-20)

Even closer here is Guaiterus' own version² where a similar twofold complaint is made by the Wolf: 'Rupiasti potumque mihi, rivoque decorum' (5). The Guaiterus tradition is the only section of the versions of this fable with this twofold complaint, others, merely

containing the Wolf's claim that its drink was ruined. Thirdly, the Lamb's plea that it should not be blamed for its father's sins. In all other versions except the Isopet de Lyon, the Lamb's reply is merely that it was not born when the alleged crime took place. But the Isopet expands:

'Sire, fait il, certainement,
Cuor a moi n'avait non de pere,
- M'estoie encore nez de zoro -
Cils qui vos fist si grant injure
Pour çou m'en escue droiture
Comant doit comparer pechie
Cil qui n'an puert estre entoichie?
Dou mal ne doit poine sentir
Cils qui no s'i puert consentir
Ainçoles que fusse nez en vie
Ne poie consentir en folio.
Or ne me dois tuer ne batre;
N'a pas encore III mois ou quatre
Que commansçai simplement vivre.
Ignocence a droit ne delivre (34-48)

There are obvious differences between this passage and Henryson's (50-5) - in the latter the Lamb bases its plea on Scripture; but the idea is very similar and the Isopet is the only other text I have been able to find with such an idea expressed at this place in the argument. As for the moralitas, I hope to show later the very common nature of Henryson's plea both in previous fables and in other types of writing. But it is interesting that the Isopet develops at some length the emphasis on extortion and plundering which Henryson will likewise develop: the Gualterus original does not do so.

I have shown then what Henryson has obtained from his specific sources and mentioned his general debt in the moralitas. Points in the fable which the poet could have taken from any source are as follows: the two animals, the Wolf above and the Lamb below,
drinking at a stream; the Wolf's first three accusations: that
the Lamb spoils the water, that the Lamb threatens him:

\[\ldots\text{ so your father before
held me at bait ale with bost and schoir (41-2)};\]

we compare Gualterus: 'Nihi damn na minaric?'; whereas the Vulgate
Romulus reads: 'Male dicie mihi?') and that the Lamb's father had
likewise offended him; the Lamb's reply: the stream cannot flow
backwards; and the Lamb's death. We are now in a position to
discover what Henryson has done with his material.

The contrast between the two creatures is emphasized from the
beginning: the Wolf is 'crewall ... revenus and fell' (1); he
will destroy a 'silly lane' (5). The Wolf approached 'with girand
teith and angry austro luke' (15), addressing the Lamb as a 'catyve
wrechit thing' (16). A detail which is not to be found in other
versions is the Wolf's complaint of the Lamb's 'fowll slauering',
(18) and 'stinkand lippis' (20). In the Isopet the complaint is
merely:

\[\text{Vos m'avez corrodies sans dote}
L'aigue m'avez troblee tote (13-14)\]

Henryson's addition here allows the addition of a further argument
to emphasize the Lamb's purity and innocence:

\[\text{Also my lippis sen that I was a lame}
Tschit no thing that was contagius
Bot sowkit mylk fra pawpis of my dame
rycht naturall suet and delicious (36-9)\]

Each additional argument in which the Wolf is obviously bettered
illustrates further the flimsiness of his case - and his lack of

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reason. We note too the line: 'felyein fra trewth and contrair till reasoun' (28); later (l. 78) the Wolf will openly reject reason. 'Ergo' (l. 35) - a term of learned debate - also illustrates the convincing, the reasonable nature of the Lamb's argument, as opposed to the irrationality of the cruel.

There are also differences and additions in the second accusation and reply. The Wolf does not complain that six months before (nine months in a few versions) the Lamb's father had troubled him, as he does in all other versions which record this incident, but that when he had been troubled he had threatened to be revenged 'within a yeir' (44) on the father 'or on his bairns' (45). The Lamb does not complain that he was not born when the alleged crime took place - as he does in all other versions recording this incident - but quotes Scripture ('Dytit with the mouth of god almycht' [51]): Ezekiel xviii, 19-20:

Et dicitis: quare non portavit filius iniquitatem patris? Videlicet quia filius judicium et justitiam operatus est, omnia praecipua mea custodivit, et fecit illam vivit vita. Anima quae pecceverit, ipsa mortietur; filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, et pater non portabit iniquitatem filii; justitia justi super eum erit, et impietas impii erit super eum.

We see also in The Yowe and the Paddock - there ironically for the Paddock uses it to confuse the Mouse - Henryson placing Scripture in the months of his characters as their support in a debate (and this dispute between Wolf and Lamb should also perhaps be considered

1. Neckam (Bastin, 1, 9-10) and his French derivative.
as a debate, a debate in which the Wolf refuses to accept 'ressoun'). 
Against the laws of 'god almycht' the Wolf sets his own will:

I latt ye wit quhen the fader offendis
(1) will cheris none of his successoroun (57-8)

The third argument of the Lamb - an adversary should not take 
the law into his own hands but have his cause tried before a 
lawful court - is not to be found in any other version I have been 
able to discover. We note the emphasis on the necessity for a 
just judge and judgement - 'leill Iustys' (72), 'unsuspect assys' 
(74) - and remember The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff. But the 
Wolf will have nothing to do with reason (78).

The effect of these additions then has been to stress the 
cruelty, the irreligiousness, the lawlessness and irrationality 
and in many ways the foolishness (his arguments are all bettered; 
in the end he has to neglect reason) of the Wolf; and, in comparison, 
the complete innocence and reasonableness of the Lamb. The 
magnitude of the Wolf's crime is thus increased. The fable ends 
with a common device - a narrator's pity for his characters:

Off trio aurtbor quhat sail I say allace  
Was this no rewth was this nocht grit pote 
To heir this silly lame but gilt thus de (89-91)

In his moralitas Henryson criticizes all types - 'violens', 
'craft', 'sutelte' - of oppression of the poor (who try to 'wyn 
with lawty leving as effeiris', 95.). His fable has provided 
a general exemplum (details do not correspond with the instances 
cited later) of this type of behaviour; and he goes into the detail

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1. Bannatyne seems inadequate hero - in sense though not in 
metre.
of such exploitation. Firstly, false lawyers (99-105, 120-6) are criticized. There has been a misplacement of a stanza in the Bannatyne Manuscript. In the other texts, in discussion of each of the three types of extortioners we find first a stanza (or stanzas - the third type) describing the particular crime, then an apostrophe: 'O man of law'; 'O man but mercy'; 'O thou great lord'. Bannatyne's fifth stanza - the apostrophe: 'O man of law', (11. 120-6) - obviously refers to the type of 'wolf' described in 11. 99-105; it is out of place where it stands. The first type to be criticized obviously does not directly stem from the fable; there the wolf neglects the laws, succeeds by rapine; Henryson criticizes here those who achieve their grasping ends by pretence of justice, 'by sutele';

Quhilk wondir tomes falsel myngis
Loitand that all war gospell that thay chawis
Bot for a bud the trew man he ourthrawis
Gmorand the ryt garand the wrang proceid (101-4)
sutele
With nye lympis and frawdis interkat (120-1)

We are reminded of the bribery of the court in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff and the scene in the same fable where the bear and the badger, after pretence of consultation of the law, dismiss the Sheep's appeal. We note too the religious element of Henryson's work (again similar to that of The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff 11. 116-9) not present in most of the other versions of the fable, and not in his apparent source except as a hint (1. 10)

Off sic wolffis hell fyre sal be their meid (105)
... think that god of his diuinie
The wrang the rycht of all thy werkis wate. (122-3)

The second type of wolf is the oppressing rich;
Thor lies ennob the pure husband hec nocht
bot cote and cruse vpon a glout of land
for godia aw how dar thow tak on hand.
and thow in berne and byre so bene and pig
To put him fra his tak and gar him thig (115-8)

Again the poet reminds us of the religious implications of the
rich man's actions: 'for godia aw' (117). Thirdly, lords who
despoil their tenants: their land is 'be godia lane' (128) - in
trust; yet they extort more than their due,\(^1\) force their tenants
to work for them without a wage.

Thor culd be raif for rychtous godis blame
For it cryis vengeance to the hovin so he (145-6);

for nothing in this world may 'perpetually inuare':

For till oppreßa thow call half als grit pane
As thow the pure anis with thy hand had aillane (153-4)

I think it important to establish that Henryson's fable is a part
of a tradition of social protest, that he is one of many voices
raised on behalf of the poor,\(^2\) that he is not describing specifically
Scottish problems, though of course he does refer to the problem
under the guise of contemporary reference (using technical terms
for instance) to make his points more relevant to his immediate
audience.\(^3\) Thus it will be valuable to survey the moral interpretation

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1. Bannatyne's version of l. 150 (For prayer pyrece and the gersun
tane) seems to have been influenced by l. 124 (For prayer pyrece
for he no law estait). Other early versions read 'And for ane
atyne Greasome pysit and tane; a more satisfactory reading.


3. For instance, for the lack of security of tenure peculiar to
the Scottish economy see I.P. Grant, The Social and Economic
Development of Scotland before 1603 (Edinburgh, 1930),
pp. 244-45; Annie I. Dunlop, The Life and Times of James
Kennedy, Bishop of St. Andrews (Edinburgh and London, 1950),
p. 338 ff.
given to our fable at varying times; and also to cite certain relevant sermon material. We shall then see exactly what is Henryson's contribution to the tradition in his moralitas.

Firstly then, I shall examine the fable tradition. Now I am not suggesting that Henryson knew all, or even many of the instances I shall quote but the traditional nature of the moralitas will become apparent. In first century Rome, Phadrus complained:¹

Nec propter illos scripta est homines fabula qui fictis causis innocentia oppressit.

And this moral was echoed and copied² throughout the following centuries. The Berne Romulus³: ... 'Sic damnosi et oppressores sine causa innocentias oppressit'. The L80 Romulus⁴: ... 'Sic tyranni faciunt: cum innocentium res vel mortem cupiunt, sive iuste sive iniuste eos spoliante et oppressit'. Marie de France⁵:

Issi fuit li riche seignur
Li vescunte et li jugeur
De cesus qu'il unt en lour justice;
Fausse scheisuna par coveitise
Trepovent asez pur eus confundre:
Suuent les fust a pleit somandre,
La char lur tolet e la pel
Si cum li lus fust a l'aignel (31-8)

The mention of both rich lord and judge here is interesting - Henryson too mentions both. Jacques de Vitry⁶:

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1. Hervieux, ii, 5-6.
3. Hervieux, ii, 758.
6. Crane no. CIXXV, p. 61.
This version is also interesting as it introduces - as Henryson does - the relevance of religion to man's actions. However, there is no need to assume influence: the religious element is ever-present in Henryson's work. Odo of Cheriton's fable¹ is headed: 'De Lupo et Agno Bibentibus Contra Opprimentes pauperes' and his moralitas reads: Its divites pro nulla causa, qualitercumque respondient pauperes, ipsos deorant. The Isopet de Lyon:

As I have stated earlier this was in all likelihood the source from which Henryson developed his moralitas. The version of the fable in the Speculum Leicorum² also blames the rich who 'devour' the poor.

In the fourteenth century the same plea continued: John of Sheppey directed his fable: 1 'Contra calumpniosos causam nocendi querentes; eiusmodi sunt potentess contra pauperes'. Bromyard: 2

Alii vero domini non solum permittunt tales iniusta facere, sed aperte eis praecipiant; quod sit iniicus talis et nocet eis ubicunque poterit. Tales donini sunt aspides. Aspis enim dicitur ab aspergendo, quia venenum ore spargit. Sic tales spargunt venenum ab subditos et ministros et duodenam facientes iudicare et attaxare et crudeler tractare vel incarcerated eos, qui nolunt eorum in omnibus facere voluntatem de venditione terrae vel domus quae desiderant, vel in ali quocunque negocio . . . Pingentes causas sicut lupus contra agnum . . .

The fifteenth century: Johannes Gutach: 3

Sic reuera hodie multi lupis rapacibus . . . qui pauperes uidas et aduenas ledunt et eorum bona surripunt et violenter sine iustitia possident.

Lydgate: 4

The wolfe is lykenyd to folkys rauenous
The sely lambs resembleth the porayle (337-8)

So the same condemnation was made throughout the centuries, in Rome, in France, in Germany, in England, in Scotland. We must therefore

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1. Hervieux, iv, 417.
2. Summa Pradigantum, A xii (Acquisitio) 45.
3. Quatrevingtse (Ulm, 1475), feria tertia sermo, fol. xlii C (in the B.M. version, a later ink numbering, p. 356). A. Murith, Jean et Conrad Ortsch de Bale (Fribourg, 1940), ascribes to Conrad Ortsch the authorship of the sermons generally attributed to Joanna Ortsch.
be careful of identifying too closely with contemporary social conditions what Henryson has to say: it is part of a rhetorical tradition.

Secondly I shall examine sermon material. Many of the following references I owe to G.R. Ows; they seem to me to be so relevant that I shall quote them at length from the original, Brozvard's *Summa Prædicantium*.

Ex intimis ergo cordis sollicito cogitandum est, et à corde proprio querendum ubi sunt mali mundi amatores, qui parum ante nos fuerunt? ubi sunt mali mundi principes, reges, comites, et aliis terrarum domini, qui cum superbia, et magno apparatu, et aequitatu vixerunt, qui canes multos et multam et malam familiar nutriebant, qui magna palatia et praedia multa et terras latus, cum multis redditiibus possidebant et corpora sua in delitiis et voluptatibus gulae, et luxuriae nutriebant, qui subditos pro praedictis nutriendis dure, et crudeler regebant et excoribant, ubi insuper sunt falsi mundi insipientes, iudices, assessores, advocati et juratores, atque per iuri patris ad infernum ductores, qui pro muneribus Deum et regnum caelorum vendebant, et in infernum esemabant ... habebit anima loco palacii et aulae vel camerae, profundum inferni locum cum his, qui descendent in profundum laci (Isa. 14:2)

Et nudaeiter querimoniam suas coram Deo deponere poterunt, et iustitiam patere, dicentes cum iudice Christo, singuli nocumentum recitantem, in quo ei specialiter nocuerunt. Quorum aliqui dicere possunt, sicut subditis malorum domitorum. Esuriuimus, sed domini nostro illi ibi stantes hoc

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2. O ii (Gloria) 41-2.
ecerunt; quia labores nostras et bona nostra abstulerunt. Alii, esuriumus et fame mortui sumus, et illi bona nobis debita detinuerunt. Alii, situimus et nudi fuimus, quia illi ibi stantes ex adverso quilibet modo suo nos exercuerunt, quod potum, vel vestes emere non potuimus. Alii, infirmi fuimus, illi hoc fecerunt, qui nos verberauerunt et plagis affecerunt.

Alii, sine hospitio eramus, sed illi hoc fecerunt, de domo, et terra nostra nos expellendo, diues vix dimittit sine cupiditate terram pauperis iuxta suam positam vt suam ampliaret, vel quia nos non receperunt in hospitio suis ... Alii in carcere eramus, sed illi hoc fecerunt per falsas causas non indicando, et, in compendibus ponendo ... Iusto iudex fac nobis iustitiam de illis, quia omnia praedicta mala nobis intulerunt, et labores nostros et bona modis suis abstulerunt, vt cupiditatem suam satiarent, nos fame, et laboribus affecerunt, ut ipsi delicate de laboribus nostris et bonis viuerent. Non laboruimus, et duram vitam duximus, in tantum quod in dimidia anno vix bonas habuimus satiatae nisi vix panam, et pulmentum et aquam, immo (quod potius est) fame mortui fuimus. Et illis de bonis nostris, quae scilicet à nobis in modo suo acceperunt vel quae nobis in necessitate nostra negauerunt, de tribus vel quatuor ferculis ministratum fuit ...

Juste Deus; iudex fortis, ludus non fuit bene partibus inter illos et non. Illorum satietas, nostra fames fuit, illorum laetitia, nostra miseria, illorum hastiludia et tormenta nostra fuerunt tormenta, quia nostri aequa et expansis illa fecerunt, illorum copiae nostrae fuerunt inopie, illorum festa, delictationes, pompae, vanitates et exessus et superfluitates, nobis fuerunt iselunia paenilitates, defectus, calamitates, et spoliationes ...

1. P viii (Furtum) 11-2. With this passage Owst (p. 301 n) compares certain lines (The ryche make mery/Sed vulgus collachrisatur) in a Poem on the Times (1388) ed. T. Wright, Political Poems and Songs, 2 vols. (Rerum Britannicarum Maior Anglorum Scriptores, XCV, London, 1859), I, 272. See also J.B. Blench, Preaching in England in the Late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, op. cit., pp. 228 ff. Blench stresses that the themes of complaint are conventional (he provides examples and compares with Owst) with almost no specifically contemporary reference. See also pp. 321 ff., where he parallels these themes in contemporary literature.
We find the same complaints in other literature: Chaucer's

**Person's Tale**

> Of Covetise coven thise harde lordishipes, thurgh whiche men been distreynd by taylages, custumes and cariages, more than hire duetee or resoun is. And eek taken they of hire bonde-men amerciments, whiche myghten moore resonably ben cleped extorcions than amerciments ... Wherfore I saye that thilke lordes that ben lyk wolves, that devoure the possesioniouns or the catel of povre folk wrongfully, withouten mercy or mesure, they shul receyven, by the same mesure that they han mesured to povre folk, the mercy of Jhesu Crist, but if it be amended (751-2 and 774-5 Robinson pp. 252-3)¹

Henryson's complaints then are by no means original. In this literary fable context, however, the extent of the detailed criticism is new, as is the religious dimension of which we are reminded by the prayer ending (a further example of the addition of a conventional form).

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¹ Cf. also Hoole's *Regement of Princes*, op. cit., st. 403-5.
(vii) The Lyon and the Mous

Although I do not think it possible to isolate the actual source of _The Lyon and the Mous_ - the poet combined several versions of the fable or used some source I have been unable to discover or, and this is most probable, expanded to suit his own argument from a source which we may have but whose distinguishing characteristics do not appear in Henryson's version - I think we shall be able to see what is traditional to the fable and what has been added by Henryson. Of course, the basic story is always the same: the Lion lying asleep in a forest is disturbed by a Mouse (or mice) which he captures; after argument (or the Lion's consideration of the issues involved) the Mouse is freed; later, when the Lion is trapped, the Mouse arranges its release. But there are certain points at which Henryson can be shown to be closer to some parts of the tradition than to others. I shall deal with the more distinctive first.

It is more common for the Lion to have doubts concerning the worthiness of his prey than for the Mouse to arouse such doubts in him as in Henryson. So Qualterus:¹

_Hace tamen ante movens animo: _"Quid flere perempto_ 
_Laudis erit? summos vincere parva pudet ... (5-6)

However there is a group of fables similar to Henryson. Neckham:²

_Ille gemens tali voce rogat veniam_ 
_'Parce, precor, misero, fortissime; non ego tantis_ 
_Praeda tuae videor viribus apta rapi ... (8-10)

¹ Bastin, 11, 20-1.  
² Bastin, 1, 29-30.
The Isopet de Chartres follows Neckham closely. The story in the versions of Jacques de Vitry, Nicole Bozon and Johannes Gobi is similar.

Secondly, in the traditional version the Mouse rescues the Lion unaided; however, in Henryson’s version the Mouse calls his companions to help him. There are parallels for this too: the Romulus of Nilant: [the Mouse]

Cognuit terram fod[i]endam esse et humo replere lacun; ad hunc laborem cohortes sociorum suorum advocavit. Tunc Leo et mures communem subiaceere laborem, dentibus et ungibus rodantes terram, et laxantes ingenia artis illius...

Marie de France:

Grates la tero a vostre pê
Tant que afermer vus i pusses,
E puis Amunt bien vus sachie
Que si pusses ça hors essair;
E jeo fersi od mei venir
Autres suris pur mei aider
As cordes, que si sunt, (de) trencher
E as rosels ki sunt tendus
Ne aeroz mie(si) retenuz (32-40)

Nicole Bozon:

Et assembla ses compagnons, e rongerent les cordes de la reye dofit la fosse fust covert, e lui enseignerent coment devoit romper la corde e eschaper.

2. Crane, CXIV, p. 65.
4. Scala Celt. op. cit., fol. 56b.
It will be noted that these three tellings have a different setting from Henryson’s: the Lion has fallen into a pit; the escape is effected not merely by gnawing through the ropes. And the addition is quite likely to be Henryson’s own innovation: he discusses the Commons as a whole and the group is thus more satisfactory than a single mouse for his moralitas.

The contents of the House’s speech may also help to distinguish sources. He states: ‘Unhelsum neit is of a sary mous’ (173). I have been able to find only one parallel to this, in the *Scala Celis*: ‘non decet ut nutriasmini tam vili et tam parvo cibo’.

Again, in the House’s argument pleading his weakness in comparison with the Lion’s strength, we read:

> Also ye knew the honor triumphall
> Off all victor vpone the strentth dependis (155-6)

Gualterus:

> De pretio victi pendet victoria; victor Tantus erit, victi gloria quanta fuit (13-14)

In the Gualterus text too the House promises to return the favour (15-16) as he does in Henryson (177 ff.), a promise which is made in only a few other texts.¹

I wish to examine three major additions in the fable itself, the purpose of which will become apparent when the moralitas is discussed later: the first is the post’s emphasis on the licence the mice took with the king’s person; they

---

... to and fra attour him tike their trais
tirlyt at the campis of his berrd
sparit nocht to claw him on the fairs
lyrry and glad thus dansit thy a spais (93-6)

The second major addition is the dialogue between Lion and Mouse. In earlier versions there had been merely a statement by the Mouse,\(^1\) or a plea by the Mouse followed by the Lion's debate with himself.\(^2\) In Henryson's poem we are given a fully developed dialogue, the Mouse advancing four reasons: one of these at least (the Mouse's plea that she thought the Lion to be dead) seems new to the tradition. The matter of major importance to be discussed here is the immense care the poet has taken to emphasize the contrast between the miserable Mouse and the kingly Lion: in other versions little had been made of the Lion's traditional place as king of beasts, as ruler; the contrast between the creatures had been almost exclusively shown by indicating their relative sizes and strengths. The Lion speaks:

\begin{quote}
Thow catyve wrecho and wyle unworthy thing
Our salspert and our presumpteous
Thow was to mak our me thyne tripping
Knew thow nocht weill I was baith lord and king
Of all besies (107-11)
\end{quote}

The 'wrecho', the 'thing' is compared with the 'lord', the 'king': rhetorical balance ('bur ... our'; 'baith ... and') rhyme ('thing' and 'king' are significantly rhymed), double adjectives ('wyle unworthy') emphasize the contrast. We see it again in the Mouse's plea:

\begin{quote}
Lord I besek thy kingly welte ...
... Considdir first my peple pouerte
and syny thy michty he magnificent (113-6)
\end{quote}

1. Cf., for example, Nechham's version.
2. Cf., for example, Gualterus Anglicus' version.
The adjectives, particularly kingly, may seem redundant; but they form an important part of the contrast we are examining. Again the poet has used rhyme, this time to emphasize contrasting phrases: 'thy kingly ryalte ... my seple poucyrte'. Even if he had been slain and stuffed, the Lion maintains the Mouse should have knelt before him (129-33); there is no excuse: 'My noble person thus to vilipend' (135). In the following quotations - which must be long to give some idea of the emphasis the poet gives to the contrast - I shall underline once those words and phrases emphasizing the greatness, the royalty of the Lion, and twice those emphasizing the vileness of the Mouse and the vileness the Lion would take upon himself if he killed the Mouse:

A mercy lord at thy genticte I as
as thou art king of beaute coronat ... (141-2)
... I grant offens is done to thyne getait
Thairfor I wyrty am to suffer deid
Bot gife thy kingly mercy reik resemid (145-7)

There is, of course, some description of the differences in strength of the two creatures; but even here this is not the only difference:

A thousand mys to keill and eik devoir
Is littill manbeid untill a strong ly cyan
Ffull littill wirsechey half ye won thairfoir
To quhols strength is no comparacion
It will depreid sum part of your renoun
Till slay a mous quhilk may mak no defen
Bot askand mercy at your excellens

Also it seems to your celaitud
quhilk was daylie meitid delicius
To yyle your teath or lippis with my blude
quhilk to your stomak is contayng
Vn helegyn molt is of a gayr mous
and namely till a noble strong ly cyan
want to be fed with gentil venysoun

My lyfe is littill and my deid far leg
Yit and I leif I may peraentour
Supple your hienes beand in diusons (162-78)
Henryson has stressed the contrast by characteristic means: we have noted earlier his use of double and emphatic adjectives (here, for instance, 'noble, strong'); also interesting are his use of emphatic adverbs ('and erie: full littill; far los') and the use of oblique means, as well as direct statement, to emphasize the Lion's gentility ('daylie' he eats delicious foods; he is 'wont to be fed' with the best meat).

The third major addition is the Lion's lament: he 'mourned maid his none' (210) just as others in Henryson's poems who had made themselves subject to Fortune, and suffered the results, made theirs: Cresseid: '... weeping, echo maid her none' (The Testament of Cresseid, 406); Orpheus: 'maid his none' (Orpheus and Eurydice, 133). The Lion's complaint shows many of the formal devices of other complaints: a heavy and emphatic alliterative pattern; the 'ubi sunt' motif; the rhetorical devices ('but ... or ... but ... or'). And here, as in all the complaints, there is expression of utter hopelessness:

O lamit lyoun liggand heir so law
quhair is the mycht of thy magnificent
off quhose all brutell beist in ord stud aw
and drem to luke unto thy grit excellens
But hopp or help but succour or defens
In bonds strong heir none I hyd allace
Till I be slane I se none uthir grace.

Thair is no Ioy that will my harms wraik
Nor creatur do gonefort to my goun
Quhay saill no put fra pane of this presoun (211-20)

Again then we see the poet using traditional forms in a new context.

These additions to the story itself are of great importance in the understanding of the different - and wider - emphasis Henryson
has given to the moralitas. The usual application of the fable may be illustrated from Guilerus Anglicus:

Tu qui summa potes, ne despisce parva potentes,
Nam prodesse potest, si quis obesse nequit (23-4)

The first addition to this is the criticism of the Lion not carrying out his functions as a ruler: he seemed to be dead (125). We can understand now the stress on the royalty of the Lion in the story itself. The criticism is of course not only of the king but of all rulers:

... a prince or emprior
A potestat or yet a king with crown (254-5)

They have not governed well because they have been too concerned with worldly pleasures (259-66; 281 ff.). Previous additions in the poem have prepared for this, particularly the setting. Of course all previous versions had mentioned a forest setting; but in none had thematic use been made of it. I think it is implied that the fable takes place in exactly the same type of setting as the Prologue; the dream convention itself — where the narrator's external circumstances often form part of his dream — implies this. Besides, the mice say they rejoice for 'The sueti sessoun prowokit ws to dans' (122); in the first line of the prologue we are told that it is a 'sueti sessoun'. The Lion lies in the sun, in a 'fair forest' (83); the setting of the prologue was also in a forest (7, 10, 23). The moralitas interprets the forest of line 83 thus:

The fair forest with levis loun and le
With joyuis song and flouris ferly sucit (260-1);

and the prologue lays great emphasis on the birds and flowers (6-9, 15-21). The fact that this is a conventional setting, and
opening, in medieval poetry scarcely needs mentioning. However, as I try to show in my discussion of the shorter poems, particularly *The Reasoning Betwixt Age and Youth,* this setting almost always serves a purpose emphasizing the poem's theme. As in other uses of this setting Henryson employs heavy alliteration, and other characteristic devices (all the land, ryght delicious, all plesans) to stress the apparent beauty:

In myddis of June that Ioly mesait sessoun  
Quhen that fair phebus with his basi pryght  
Had dryvit up the dew fra daill and doun  
And all the land maid with his lemys lycht ... (1-4)

... Susit was the smell of floris quaynt and roid  
The noyis of birdis ryght delicius  
The bevis bred blumyt abone my heid  
The grund growand with grez gratius  
Off all plesans that place was plentcus  
With susit odour and birdis airony  
The merying myld my thirth was mair forthy  
The rois red arraycit rone and rye  
The frousos and the surpoure viola  
To heir it was a poynt of paradys  
Sic myrth the makins and the merle couth ma  
The blosumnis blyt brak up on banx and bra  
The smell of herbis and of fowlis cry  
Contending quha said half the victory (8-21)

The elements of this description are, of course, standard: if we compare with a similar description in *The Fox tried before the Lyon* we find Phebus (reminding us of pagan gods; for this is essentially a pagan, a worldly setting); the sun drinking up the moisture; the alliteration on 'gr' with 'grea'; the sweetness of the birds singing. In Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* Prologue we also find the flowers 'whyte and redo' (P. 42), the emphasis on the word sweet (used three times in our passage, three times in 11. 118-20

1. pp. 344-5.
of text F of *The Legend* and on the 'odour' and the singing of the birds. Henryson's passage is scarcely one of 'personal observation'; it is conventional, yet it is of utmost importance to the theme of the poem; we note the way in which the scene is described: it is of supreme beauty: 'loly,' 'suet' (used three times), 'fair', 'brycht', 'lycht', 'delicius', 'gratius', 'plenteus', 'myld' - it is indeed a 'poynt of paradyse'; it seems like heaven, and it actually takes the place of heaven in worldly minds. But, as we know by implication from this convention, and as the author explicitly states, these joys are transitory, false:

... Rycht as the roe with frost and winter weit saidis so dois the world and thame dissavis quhilk in their lust confidens havis (264-6)

The Lion is deceived by the world - he enjoys its passing pleasures. So he:

_Bekand his breiat and belly at the son
Vndir a tre lay in the fair forest* (87-8)

We are reminded of the Fox who, utterly blind to reality, having deceived himself:

_Vndir a buax quhair that the sone couth beit
To beik his breiat and bellye he thocht best. (The Fox and the Wolf, 115-4)*

So the setting reminds us of the Lion's subjection to the world's values. Perhaps too much should not be made of the fact that the House succeeds in his plea by methods (belittling himself, praising the greatness of his King) very similar to those used by the Fox to deceive Freir Wof' Waitakath, though worldly creatures are subject to flattery and there may be some irony intended. It is interesting to find too that many of the phrases applied to the Lion in *The Fox tried before the Lyon* - where he represents the
world – are applied to him here: in both they are lords of 'all brutall beist' (The Lyon and the Mous, 213; The Fox tryed before the Lyon, 60 and 62). The Prolog (43-56) has already informed us of the connotations of 'brutall beist' in the Fabbillia, representing those who have subjected themselves to this world. In both we find mentioned their 'celnitud' (The Lyon and the Mous, 169; The Trial, 64 and 141), and 'hie magnificence' (The Lyon and the Mous, 116, The Trial, 64). And in both the greatest possible contrast is made between powerful king and base subjects. The Lion's complaint also reminds of his subjection to Fortune; likewise the Net – but that I shall discuss further when dealing with The Swallow and Othir Birdis. The Lion has fallen because it has placed its trust in passing pleasures; Fortune has thus power over him: a lord (or any man):

rolland in worldly lust and vane plesandis
Wey be ourthrowin distroiyit or put doun
Throw fals fortoun qhillk of all varians
Is haill maistres and ledor of the dane
Till lusty men and bindis thame no soir
That they no porrell can provyd befoir (282-7)

The second widening is the interpretation of the game of the mice: they are: 'wantoun unwys without correctioun' (268). I think there is no question here of Henryson championing the poor, as Stearne suggests:¹ they too are blinded by this world's delights (120-6); the phrase 'merry and glad' (95) is interesting; the poet used it of the Fox in The Fox and the Wolf; he was, 'merry and glad that cunning was the nycht' (14), night in which he could do

more evil. Stearns provides a parallel between the fable and a contemporary event: the capture of James III by Sir Alexander Boyd in 1466. However, the commons did not lose the king on this occasion; and surely Stearns misunderstands the conventions within which Henryson was writing. He states:

Henryson is emphatic on the subject of treason, exhorting the lords to keep faith with their King, and it may be added that treason among the nobles was particularly frequent during the reign of James III. The poet's mysterious statement that he will not explain any more at the time, but the king and lords may well know what he means since examples have been seen heretofore (ll. 1612-4) reinforces the impression that Henryson is alluding to contemporary events. And, finally, it should be noted that in this fable alone Henryson goes to extravagant lengths to keep himself in the background: not only is the vehicle for this criticism a dream vision from which the poet wakes at the conclusion of the moralitas, but also criticism itself is placed in the mouth of Aesop. In view of the despotic power of the feudal lords, Henryson's precautions may have been quite necessary.

Now the rebellion Henryson complains of is not that of the lords - he complains of their worldliness - but that of the commons. Besides, it is debatable whether disturbances were more rife under James III than at any other time. Stearns takes no account of the fact that such complaints were part of a long tradition: rebellion was similarly criticized in thirteenth and fourteenth century poems. The poet's 'mysterious statement' is a rhetorical convention for implying that there was a great deal more wrong.

2. Ibid., pp. 17-18.
And Stearns has misunderstood here as elsewhere the rôle of the narrator in medieval poetry: for he, as far as I can see, is seldom meant to represent the author alone, but mankind in general (I shall discuss the narrator's rôle in this poem a little later). The dream convention is not a means of putting the author in the background but a means of extending the theme of the poem. Besides, I fail to see that Henryson need hide himself for fear - he criticizes openly in other poems. Now I am not denying that there is probably some criticism of contemporary Scotland; but I do deny that the action refers to any particular event - or at least to any particular event that Stearns has pointed out - and I think the poem has a far wider reference than to one particular fifteenth century society. For the poet is referring to all lands; the Lion does not merely represent James III (even if it does represent him) but all rulers who are worldly:

... a prince or empriour
A potestat or yet a king with crown (254-5)

The one way for the country (Scotland? the world?) to be returned to order - the order it has lost since the Fall in fact, for this, it seems to me, is that this tradition of complaint often implies - is for rulers to turn their backs on worldliness (that is why the 'kirkmen' are urged to pray constantly [296], for this is a religious matter: as we saw in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff sin is the cause of all misrule) and lead their people righteously; we should parallel 11. 267 ff. with Ane Prayer for the Pest 11. 57-9:

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But wald the heiddismen that scould keip the law
Pueneiss the peple for their transgressioun
Thair wald na deid the peple than owrthrow

All are worldly. And Asop complains of all — in conventional constructions ('Now ...'; 'rycht few or nane') certainly,¹ but providing thus another example of Henryson's creative use of conventional forms —

Now in this world we think rycht few or nane
Till godis word that hes deuotioun
The eir is deiff the hairt is hard as stone
Now oppin syn without correctioun
The E inclyynand to the erd sy doun
Cua rowetit is the world with canker blak ... (71-6)

We should compare with Ane Prayer for the Post line 52: 'for oppin syn thair is set no remeid' (this whole fable deals with uncorrected sin — 'without correctioun') and Orpheus and Eurydice l. 453: 'Thair foir downwart we cast our myndis E'. Asop is complaining of the world as a whole and in this connection we must examine the rôle of narrator.

But before doing this I shall examine briefly the third addition the poet makes in his moralitas. He states:

oft tyme is sane a Man of small degre
hes quytt a commoun baith for rude or ill
as lordis has done rigour or grace him till (278-80)

Not only do the seemingly unimportant repay good, but evil. In the Fable, Henryson showed us how the Lion 'sleu baith tame and wyld' (192), making in the land 'a grit dirray' (193) until the people found the means of capturing him (194-5). The people, the poet interprets:

1. Cf. my work on The Want of Myne Men, pp. 786-8 ; The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolfl.
Waitit alway amendis for till get
For hurte men wrytis in the marble stone (290-1)

Men repay evil — which is constantly remembered — with evil, good
with good. There are other fables carrying similar ideas: that
of the old Lion being attacked by those he had attacked¹ and that
of the Mouse rescuing the Lion who had helped her but neglecting
the Fox who had refused to do so.²

The largest single addition to the poem is, of course, the
Prologue. We have already seen the ways in which two of its
parts (the setting and Asop’s complaint) have helped to express
the theme of the poem; we must now examine the remaining parts:
the narrator and the portrayal of Asop. At the beginning of the
poem the narrator is shown as overcome by this world’s delights;
and he is as slothful as the Lion: he rises late (at least that
is what I take ‘in a mornyng betwix midday and nycht’ [5] to mean)
from ‘slewhth and sleip’ and goes out into the forest where, under
a tree, like the Lion, he falls asleep. He too seems worldly and
subject to Fortune (just as the narrator in many of Henryson’s
poems appears in the same plight as the central character) and the
dream setting emphasizes and extends this. Chaucer, following
Macrobius,³ writes of dreams:

The very huntere, slepynge in his bed,
To wode sayyn his mynde goth anon;
The jugs dreemeth how his plees been sped;

¹. Vincent or Beauvais, Hervieus, ii, 237; vulgate Romulus, i,
16, Steinbövels A sop, ed. Osterley, op. cit., p. 99; Jacques
de Vitré CLXXXIV, pp. 77-8; Dialogus Creaturum, ed. Graesse,
op. cit., dial. 110, p. 263; Bromyard, Summa Predicantium,
op. cit., H iv (Honor) 8.
². Speculum Gspicienae, i, 18, ed. Graesse, op. cit., pp. 24-5.
³. Cf. Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, tr. with introduction
and notes w. H. Stahl (Records of Civilization, Sources and
The cartere dremeth how his cartes gon;
The riches, of gold; the knyght fyght with his fon;
The ayke met he drynketh od the tonne;
The lover met he hath his lady wonne.

Can I not seyn if that the cause were,
For I hadde red of Afrikan byforn
That made me to nette that he stod there; 1

The dream is of subjects previously occupying the dreamers' minds
(so the narrator in The Book of the Duchess dreams of what he has been reading; but what he has been reading concerns his own affairs: love; it has been implied that he cannot sleep for love). In our poem the narrator - who, I think we are to presume, has already told some of Aesop's fables - dreams of Aesop; but the dream concerns his life also - his slothfulness, his trust in the pleasures of this world. So the indictment of worldliness and sinfulness applies not only to those within the fable but to all men without: to us in fact.

The portrait of Aesop is both interesting in itself and interesting in connection with the theme of the poem. It recalls the description of Mercury, the god of rhetoric, in The Testament of Cresseid as Gregory Smith was the first to point out. 2 But the resemblances are perhaps only superficial. In the Testament Mercury comes 'with bulk in hand' (239), 'with pen and ink to report al redde' (242). Here, of Aesop.

A roll of paper in his hand he bair
A swannis pen stickand undir his cir
Ane ynkhorn with a pretty gilt pennair (36-8)

Both are dressed in academic robes: but Mercury has a scarlet gown with a red hood which he is wearing over his head, it seems: 'lyke to ane Poet of the auld fassoun' (245). Herbert Norris writes:

A hood ... was used from this time [i.e. the reign of Edward II onwards] as a mark of distinction for university graduates. Originally they were always worn on the head, but later, after the fifteenth century, they were worn on shoulders and hanging down the back.

It is to the earlier style that Henryson seems to refer when he speaks of 'the auld fassoun' in his description of Mercury; he portrays Asop, however, wearing his hood back '... In hekke wys untill his girdill doun' (32). And it is the bonnet (conceivably the pileus) which is of 'the auld fassoun' (33). Asop wore white gown, purple brown chimere and scarlet hood, differing thus from Mercury. C.A.H. Franklyn writes:

'... from a comparatively early period several types of over gown, cloak or habit appear to have been worn viz. the capa clausa (closed cloak or cape); the pallium, a dignified cloak, probably sleeveless; the chimerea (chimere), a long sleeveless gown with a side slit for each arm and cassock sleeve to come through; the capa manicata, a cape with sleeves ...; and the tabard or tabard, which could be sleeved or sleeveless. The ceremonial dress of Doctor was the capa clausa or pallium but by 1463, as the unique manuscript of New College shows (that of Thomas Chauncelor prepared 1461-5) it is clear that the favourite academic dress of Doctors ... was the chimere, doubtless a sleeveless tabard, with two side slits for the arms, the round bell-shaped academic cape and hood and short liripipe, and the tight round skull-cap type of pileus.'

So Asop is portrayed, it seems, as a learned man, as a near contemporary, appealing to fifteenth-century society to reform; his fables are relevant to all times. The actual degree ascribed to Asop is more difficult to determine. It could be that of Doctor of Divinity: at Oxford at any rate, Doctors of Divinity wore at this time, scarlet hoods and were thus distinguished from doctors of other faculties; however, colours differed from university to university: doctors of all superior faculties at Paris wore red, for instance. If the degree be that of Divinity emphasis is given to the essentially religious nature of the fable. The narrator in his dream envisages Asop as having something to say directly to his own condition: as Laing has shown the portrait of Asop is not traditional: it is a creation of the dreamer's imagination, bearing on his own circumstances.

So Henryson has taken a fable of limited significance—illustrating how an unimportant man can repay a powerful man for his mercy—and, by original use of conventional material (the spring setting, the dream vision, the complaint against the abuses

3. The Poems and Fables of Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 292-3. In the words of Caxton's versions of the Fables, and as represented in the woodcut, Asop was "deformed and evil shapen, for he had a great head, large visage, long jaws, sharp eyes, a short neck, surb-backed, great belly, great legs and large feet — and yet that which was worse, he was dumb and could not speak."
of the age, a dialogue, the complaint against Fortune) has made its restricted theme more universal: a plea for good government which can only be achieved when rulers and people see human life in its proper perspective and purpose and desire the general good in forgetting the passing pleasures and temptations of the world; pleasures and temptations which lead to disappointment and destruction both personal and national.

The six fables we have studied so far form a group in the Bannatyne Manuscript. And I think it is possible to see them as a study of one theme, that of the dangers of worldliness. In the first three fables this was examined at a personal level: the examples being gluttony, avarice in The Cock and the Jewell and the Two Kygs, the perhaps fatal struggle in man between sensuality (worldliness) and spiritual values in The Hogs and the Paddock. The dangers both in this world and the next are portrayed and the remedy shown. In the second group of tales the danger of worldliness on a national scale are shown - when men forget that this world's pleasures are passing, put their trust in them, then they use oppressive and illegal means to obtain them. This leads to suffering amongst the poor and the breakdown of civil order. For all disruption is the result of sin, of misplaced values. But those whose greed leads to national disaster will find that their trust in this world's transitory pleasures has been vain: they will bear the consequences in this world (The Lyon and the Hous, 231-7) or the next (The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolf, 115-9; The Wolf and the Lamb, 105, 148-54).
(viii) The Swallow and Other Birds

As in the previous fable discussed, so in The Swallow and Other Birds, Henryson has taken a fable of limited significance

(Qui ne prant lo consoil dou saige
Lo fol croit, si l'en vient domage)

and by additions (the introduction; chanson d'dventure setting; expansion of the tale itself by 'realistic detail' and in the speeches; a much wider interpretation in the moralitas; the prayer to end), many of them conventional in form and thought, many used elsewhere by Henryson himself, made of his original a fable of much wider application: it portrays, as do most of Henryson's other poems, the folly of trusting this world's pleasures, of blindly neglecting eternal values.

So must see first what the poet has taken from his sources, then discuss his additions. The tale in most of the previous tellings is very similar: a swallow warns the other birds (usually twice - once when they see the seed being sown; again when it is ripening) of the danger to come. They laugh at her but are eventually caught in snares made from the flax. As with several of the other fables I do not think it will be possible to isolate the exact source; but there are two interesting points. Firstly, the nature of the reply to the Swallow's admonitions; in Henryson's poem the Lark speaks on behalf of all the birds (l. 120; 141). In all previous tellings of the tale, except Isopet I, the reply

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1. Isopet de Lyon, ll. 21-2; Bastin, ii, 116-9. Unfortunately a large portion of the beginning of this version is missing making discussion of sources of our poem somewhat tentative.
had been made by all the birds: so Gualterus: ¹

Turba fugit sanos monitus, vanonque timores
arguit
... Rurusus Hirundo nonet instare pericula; rident
Rurusus Araea

But in Isopet I² we read:

Dame Arondelle, dit d’Aloe
Il n’est pas mout saiges qui loe
A faire dommaige au predomme; (19-21)

Now Isopet I, if it can be a source, cannot be the only version

Henryson knew: there is but one warning to the birds, for instance; other versions, like Henryson’s, have more. Besides, the argument advanced by the Lark cannot be paralleled in Henryson:

Aler en convindroit a Roma
O’il en vouloit estre absoulus,
Le villain, pour draps en son dos
Faire, a sence la semance
Non pas pour nous faire grevance (22-6)

But the second part of the moralité of the Isopet does remind us of Henryson’s emphasis on foresight:

Cils qui se vuelt bien gouverner,
Le temps present doit discernier,
Du preterit avoir memoire,
Ne soit bobancier de grand gloire,
Et doit le temps a avenir
Pourveoir, conseil retenir (45-50)

The second point concerning detailed sources is the nature of the ending. In all versions of the fable preceding Henryson’s the Swallow, finding that the birds will not listen to her, goes to live with the man. Thus Isopet I:

“... Chéés le villain m’en yrai orees,
Aveques lui demoureré
Et de mon chant le douiré” (32-4)

---

Even Bromyard's version,\(^1\) which is closest to Henryson's in interpreting the snares as the nets of the Devil, contains this detail:

\[
\text{Exemplo hirundinum que secundum fabulas societatem avium dismisserunt, nidificando et cum hominibus et in domibus conuerando, quia illarum consilio noluerunt linum in flore destruere, antequam ex eo fierent laquei ad aues capiendum. Ita nolentes uti consilio ad cuitationem laqueorum diaboli, derelinquant.}
\]

However Henryson, consistently, for one would hardly imagine him wishing to show the preacher living with the Devil, omits this incident and provides another: his Swallow gives a third warning, just before the birds fly to the corn laid in the traps thinking that the 'churl' had 'pietie' (234) on them. The scene is very like that in another version of the fable which is to be found in the Vulgate Romulus\(^2\) and in some of the versions deriving from it.\(^3\)

I quote from the LBG Romulus:

\[
\text{Congregacio magna Avium facta est in campo uno et conceiserunt universae. Quo viso, Auceps recia sua aptavit, ut eam caperet. Visuque est Avibus, quod ille homo pro eis faceret eisque visas pararet. Dixerunt quoque inter se: Tam plum et misericordem hominem numquam plus vidimus. Ecce, quantum compat[it]ur nos nostra miseria, visas nobis preparat, et, cum nos respicit, de pietate lacrimatur. Erat enim ille lupus (sic pro lippus) et lacrimosus habuit oculos; inde putabant eum habere plias lacrimas. Tunc una, multis periculis instructa, sepe enim laqueos et recia evaserat, tali voce}
\]

3. Vienna-Berlin Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 44,8; Florence Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 506; Romulus of Nîant, Hervieux, ii, 542; LBG Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 620.
ceteras increpiuit: Misere et minus provide,
cantus hominis quos diligenter auscultatis,
iam super nos recia ducent, et nisi cicius
recedatis, iam in sacrum trudomini.

We must now examine the additions made by the poet: the first is
the long introduction (ll. 1-91) the purpose of which is to show
man and the world in their true perspective as ignorant in
comparison with God's foresight and complete knowledge, a perspective
which man in his blindness, often neglects; the Fable will show
us such neglect and its consequences. The poem begins with a
statement of the nature of God; the means of emphasis are typically
Henrysonian:

The he prudence and wirking mervellus
The profound wit of god omnipotent
is so perryt and so ingenis
Excelland fer all hannis argument (1-4)\(^1\)

Almost from the beginning, the contrast is made between man and
God: 'all' man's argument is 'ten' less than God's. This contrast
is maintained - is widened and emphasised - throughout the next few
stanzas. To God everything is present (this concept was examined
at length by Boethius\(^2\)). We can see (the eycht, 7) everything
clearly: this concept of seeing (and its opposite, blindness -
ignorance as opposed to knowledge and foresight) is the central
thematisic contrast of the poem. But we cannot see or understand
Him for He is pure spirit, our souls are tainted by our bodies:

---

1. In Orpheus and Eurydice (l. 55) Henryson again uses the phrase
'profound wit' - it is one of the gifts Talia gives to man.
I mention this reference as a minor example of what we shall
find about many phrases and images in the poem, that they are
part of Henryson's common stock of vocabulary and imagery.

translation Robinson, pp. 381-4.
We may nocht clairlye undirstand nor see
God as he is a thing celestiale
Our mirk and deidlyc cors materiale
Blindis the spirittuall operation
Lyke as men war bundin in presoun (10-14)

The poet stresses his point by his rhyme (corporale [9] ..., celestiale ... materiale), by a typically repetitive statement 'undirstand nor see (ignorance and blindness); 'mirk' again refers us to the blindness of our natural state; 'deidlyc' - we shall see this literally in the fable itself. These statements and images are of course conventional; Boethius:¹

and if that in sensible bodies, as I have said, our coraghe nis nat ytaught or empriente by passioun to knowe thise things, but demeth and knoseth of his owne strengthe the passioun or suffrance subject to the body zoche more than the things that ben absolut and quit fro alle talents or affecconus of bodyes (as God or his sunnolus) ne folwen nat in discernynge thynges object fro withoute - forth, but thaie accomplissen and speden the deede of hir thought.

The concept of the soul as prisoner was common; it is found elsewhere in Henrison, in The Bludy Serk. The concept is seemingly Platonic in origin; Biblical commentators often interpreted Biblical passages mentioning prisoners with the idea in min, though often referring rather to sin as the captor (as in The Bludy Serk) than specifically to the flesh; the following extract from Cassiodorus interprets it thus and is also interesting in referring to the concept of man as blind which we shall discuss next. He coments on Psalma cxlv, 7-8 ('... Dominus soluit compositos: Dominus illuminat caecos):

¹ Book V, Prosa V; Robinson, p. 380.
St. Augustine, however, speaks of the body as a prison: commenting on Psalm cxli, 8 ("Edua de carcer - some texts read 'custodia' - animam meam ad confitendum nomini tuo") he writes: 'Aliquii eutem dixerunt carcerem istum et speluncan corpus hoc esse'. Man as naturally blind was also a common medieval image: Henryson's own use of it in The Fox and the Wolf and, especially, in Orpheus and Eurydice I shall discuss further a little later; Boethius makes much of the blindness, of the worldly; Chaucer speaks of 'the blynde lust ...'; and, of course it is another Biblical image: Rupertus, writing on St. John ix, 1 (Et praeteriens Issus vidit hominem caecum a nativitate), comments: 'earum utique sollicit Gentium, coccitatem originalum, homo iste a nativitate caecus significat'. The attitude towards the flesh is of course Platonic; but it is also Biblical and was common in medieval theology: in

1. Expositio in Psalterium, Psalm cxlvi; P.L. lxx, col. 1032.
2. Expositio in Psalmorum clxii; Sermo ad Populum, P.L. xxxvii, col. 1843.
4. Troilus and Criseyde V, 1824.
In mystical writing, in the concept of the world, the flesh and the devil as mankind's greatest enemies.

The third stanza continues the emphasis on the darkness of our state — our ignorance. The paraphrase of Aristotle:

That man saule is lyke one bakkis ee quhilk lurkis still as lang as lycht of day is And in the gloomng cumis furth to flee (16-18)

reminds us of the Fox's actions in The Fox and the Wolf: he

... durst no more with miching Intermeill
Als lang as leme and lycht was of the day
But bydand nycht full still lurkand he lay (5-7)

Further similarities of vocabulary and idea between the second and third stanzas of our poem and other of Henryson's poems must be noted. Orpheus ('the pairte intellelyte') is:

... separat fra sensualitie
Buridices is our effectiouin
Be fancy ey oft movit up and doun (450-2)

Orpheus 'blindit was with grit effectioun' (368); the mind governed with sensuality is 'blindit with lust and may nocht vpwartis fle' (454). In The Fox and the Wolf, the poet speaks of those 'Vincust with carnall sensaulitie' (170). In The Fox tryed before the Lyone we find:

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., pp. 73, 267.

quae admodum enim vespertilionem oculi ad lumen diem se habent; ita et intellectus animae nostrae ad ea que manifestissima omnium sunt (p. 15a)

There is of course no religious connotation here; Henryson has expanded the image.
This wolf I likkin unto sensualitee
As quhen like brutall bestis we accord
Our mine all to this worldis vanitee
Liking to tak and louse him as our lord (309-12)

These references help us to see the unity of Henryson's work. But such similarities should not blind us to the fact that, he uses this vocabulary and imagery differently according to context; here he speaks of man's soul, when coarsened by the flesh, as perpetually blind to the nature of God; in Orpheus and Eurydice and The Fox and the Wolf and, to some extent at least, later in our poem he implies that man is blind when serving the things of this world, not when he is acting in a truly Christian fashion and scorning the world. But of course this is not a contradiction: man is completely blind when following this world; but even when following the true way he is still blind, restricted by his own place in space and time, to the true nature of God. (Dante, while ascending Mount Purgatory and the Heavens, following the true way, is still ignorant of much concerning the truths of God.) Man must realize his ignorance compared with God; indeed we might say that he is blind when he does not recognize his blindness, as the birds will not recognize theirs.

The poet continues to stress the difference between God and man:

Pfor god is in his power infinyte
And mannis saule is febill and owir small
Off understynding waik and unperfyse
To compreheend hin that containis all (22-5)

We note again the use of two adjectives ('febill' and 'small'; 'waik' and 'unperfyse'), the stress given by the adverb 'owir', the use of rhyme to point to the contrast (small ... all). The
word 'small' reappears throughout the fable, reminding us of its context here.

In the first three and a half stanzas then man has been shown to be pitifully ignorant compared to God who is omniscient. This will be illustrated by the tale: the Swallow, preaching the word of God (and thus able to expound God's knowledge) has foresight; the birds (mankind) are ignorant and doomed unless they 'trow femalie and lat dirk resounis bo' (29). Again the advice is traditional. We compare with a mystical treatise:

Bot eith alle reasoonable creatures, angel and man, hath in hem, ilch one by hymself, a principal worching might, the which is clepid a knowable might, and another principal worching might, the whiche is clepid a louyng might; of the whiche two mightes, to the first, the which is a knoweing might, God, that is the maker of hem, is euermore incomprehensible.

For haue a man neuer so moche goostely undirstondying in knoweing of alle maaed goostly thinges yit may he neuer bi the werk of his undirstondying com to the knoweing of an ungaad goostly thing, the which is noght bot God.

Sermon material:

And theryfore we that beleve thus, lat vs not be to inquisitiff in oure wittis, for God forbedeth it and seyth to everych of vs thisse wordeis, "Com thou no nere hidurward. For tho thinges" seyth oure Lord, "that beth aboven kynde, seche not to knowe hem naturally, but rather," seyth God, "doth of thi shoes of thi feete" - that is to say, the seyntl coueryngus of thin affectio for this erthe that thin affectio stondeth on in this - "dowynge it is an holy grounde: Solus calciamenta pedum tuorum quia locus in quo

3. ibid., ch. 70, p. 125.
... Do we than
as Ioyces enforceth us in ys obeynge
unto God. First, let us keuer the
face of our understonde with the
sudaire of fay3the, that we wauere not
in non article of oure fay3th but
fully beleve hem

Poetry: Hoccleve's Regement of Princes

... Pfor mannes reason may not preue ourc fay,
That they wole it dispreuen or denye.
To oure lorde god that sytte in hevene hye,
Schal they desgre for to ben egal?
May, that was neuer, certes, ne be schall (332-6)

Similar parallels - for this and for all other passages for which
parallels have been found - could be multiplied almost indefinitely,
but no useful purpose would be served in doing so: we are not
looking for definite sources for such a search would be fruitless;
we are examining how Henryson draws his material from a common
stock of image and thought, and how, by combining it freshly -
for instance with this fable - he gives it new life and power.

Reason, then, cannot bring knowledge of God, but some knowledge
of Him can be gained by examination of Creation. Again, we can
perhaps see here an apparently Biblical source, Job xii, 7:

Nimirus interroga jumenta, et docebunt te;
et volatilia caeli, et indiscobunt tibi.
Loquerr terrae, et respondebit tibi; et
narrabunt pisces maris. Quis ignorat quod
omnia haec manus Domini fecerit?

Wisdom xiii, 1 and 4-5:

Vani autem sunt omnes homines in quibus
non subest scientia Dei; et de his quae
videntur bona, non potuerunt intelligere
eum qui est, necque operibus attinentes
agnoverunt quis esset artifex; ... Aut si

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Cermons, op. cit., p. 223.
virtutem et opera eorum mirati sunt,
intelligant ab illis quoniam qui haec fecit
fortior est illis; a magnitudine enim
speciei et creaturarum cognoscibiliter poterit
creator horum videri.

St. Paul echoes this in Romans 1, 20:

Invisibilia enim ipsius, a creatura mundi,
per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta,
conspiciuntur; sempiterna quoque eius
virtus et divinitas

Petrus Lombardus comments on St. Paul:

Et attendite quod sit: Ipsa invisibilia
intellecta per ea quae facta sunt, quia
per coelum et terram et alias creaturas,
quas immensas et perpetuas esse intellexerunt
ipsam conditorem incomparabilem, immensum,
esternum mente conspexerunt.

We might also note Psalm xviii, 1: 'Caeli ennarunt gloriem Dei,
et opera manuum eius annunciat firmamentum'; however the commentators,
at least until the time of Petrus Lombardus, tended to take this
allegorically. But the idea expressed in the first three passages
quoted was widespread in medieval commentary, particularly in the
concept of the two revelations — Scripture and creation. It
influenced literature too: I quote at length the preface to Mayno de
Mayneri's Dialcog Creaturarum which is of particular interest:

1. Collectanea in Omnes D. Pauli Apostoli Epistolae: In Epistolam
et Romanae, P.L. cxxi, col. 1327.

2. Cassiodorus, Expositio in Psalterio, P.L. lxx, col. 138,
interpreta caeli as the stars guiding the Magi and as the
prophets; Bede, In Psalmorum Librum Expositio, P.L. xciii,
cols. 579-80, as the prophets; St. Augustine, Enarationes
I et II in Psalmum XVIII, P.L. xxxvi, cols. 154 and 157,
as the evangelists and the saints; Petrus Lombardus,
Commentarium in Psalmog, P.L. cxxi, cols. 206-7, as the apostles.

3. Henri de Lubac expounds this at length in L'Exégesè Médièvale,
Les Quatre Sens de l'Écriture, I (Aubier, Collection "Théologie"
III, Paris, 1959), pt. 1, pp. 121 ff. See also D.W. Robertson
Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, op. cit., p. 296.
151.

Quoniam sicut testatur Ysidorus in libro de summo bono, libro primo capite quarto dicens, quod ex pulchritudine circum scriptae naturae ostendit nobis deus pulchritudinis suas partem aliquam. Quis circumscribi nequit et intellegi, ut ipsis eisdem vestigiis homo revertatur ad deum, quibus aversus est a Deo, et qui per amorem pulchritudinis creaturarum a creatoris forma se abstulit, rursus per creaturarum decorum ad creatoris sui pulchritudinem revertatur. Quae quidem creaturarum etsi nobis, sicut liber iste fingit, dialecticae voce formata non loquantur, inclinatione tamen et naturalis institutionis proprietate nos docere nostrosque mores corrigere, si bene peneamus, non desinunt. Quod illud gloriissim lumen doctorum sanctus Augustinus optime intellegebat cum dicebat: o domine deus, omnes creaturarum tuse, quas fecisti, ad me clamant et clamare non desinunt, ut te solus deus creatorem meum super omnia diligas ...

The description of the objects in the natural world shows us further examples of the poet's recreation of form and image. But first two points should be noted concerning the first part of the list: firstly, the order in which the objects are described is that of Creation: the flowers (Genesis 1, 11-12), the firmament (Genesis 1, 14 - the same word: firmamentum: is used in Henry's and in Genesis), the fish and the birds (Genesis 1, 20), man made in God's image with all things subject to him (Genesis 1, 26 ff.):

... Faciatus Hominem ad imaginem, et similitudinem nostram; et praebuit placibus maris, et volatilibus caeli, et bestiis universaeque terrae, omnique reptilii, quod auctur in terra. Et creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam ...

2. E. W. O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 313.
Once again we find that Henryson's so-called 'personal observation' has been inspired by a literary source. The second point to note is the emphasis on the fact that they reveal God:

Thus distribute the gift of his godhead (35)
Till understand it is anuch I wis
That god in all his werkis Wittie is (41-2)
Be thir we know that god is fair and gude (42)

These lines come — emphatically — at the end of three successive stanzas. Now normally in Henryson's poetry — in medieval poetry — the things of this world are seen as things distracting man from God, becoming false gods; here they are His revelation. And this is how they should be when viewed in their proper perspective: they are good unless misused. In this connection the use of images is most interesting:

Example takis be thir lolye flouris
Pycht swet off smell and plemand of colouris
Sum grene sum blew sum purpure quhyte and ride (32-4)

The 'sum ... sum ... sum' rhetorical device (used several times in this fable; we have seen it also in The Lyon and the Moue) emphasizes both number and variety: the immensity of God's creation.

We have seen before this image used to remind us of the fading pleasures of this world (the white and red flowers, for instance in The Lyon and the Moue); Henryson has not stereotyped his image, however; and the contrast in usage adds to the meaning: when the things of this world are used properly, they are good; when used wrongly they, because they have been trusted, been worshipped, lead to distress and destruction. The order, the fitness, and the immensity of creation are stressed: the stars are 'cleir' (36); every planet is in its 'propir sphere' (38); there are 'all kynd' of animals.
The foulis fair so forcelye they flee
Scheddand the air with pennis grite and small (45-6)

In the description of the seasons which follows we have several of the same emphases: we note the order for instance: summer - autumn - winter - spring. This is the order when the seasons, the world, are looked upon in their proper perspective; the order in the fable itself is however different - the more conventional spring - summer - autumn - winter, with the worst and most disastrous season last - the season in which the birds are killed. This latter is the fatal order when man puts his trust in the things of this world, not taking them for their true purpose. Time passes, natural things change (the pageant of the seasons) but when looked at in their proper perspective this change (the natural order) is not disastrous; when they are trusted the change proves disastrous (ending in winter and death) - an unnatural order. Henryson uses his typical means of stress: alliteration, intensifying adverbs (note here 'everye'):

The sozer with his Iolye mantill grene
With flouris fair furrit on everye fent
Cuhilk florisa godden of everye flourisa quene
Has to that lord as for his seassoun fent
And phoebus with godin beames gent
Has purfillit and paintit plesandlie
With heat and moisture stilland fra the skye (57-63)

I shall examine the function of the gods later; but we notice that in the description of June in The Lyon and the Mowse (1. 2), and in the setting of the court in The Fox tryved before the Lyone (1. 71) Phoebus is mentioned: in this latter too, green and gold are specifically mentioned. In the description of autumn the emphasis

is again on pleasure: the abundance of 'wynis wicht end liccour of pleasainece' (68), again emphasis is given by alliteration ('Hir barnis benit hes with abundance'; 65). But the winter destroys all pleasure:

Syne winter man quhen austene Eolus
God off the wind with blastis boriall
The grene garmont of symmer glorious
Hea all torent and revin in peices small
The flouris fair faidit with frost moist fall
And birtis blyth changeis thair notis swelt
Intill murning neir alane with snaw and sleit (71-7)

Alliteration ('grene garmont, glorious' ... 'rent and revin'), emphatic adjectives and adverbs (all to rent; peices small) emphasize the picture of destruction; joy is turned into mourning; and the birds (a hint of the tale to follow) suffer. Again comparison with other poems by Henryson is interesting: The Testament of Cressaeid portrays the effect of the north wind (stanza 3); in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff the portrayal is very similar:

quhen boreas with blastis bittrily
with fraewart frostis the flouris doun can faid (143-4)

There are two stanzas devoted to the terrors of winter, one only to each of the other seasons: we may perhaps interpret this as a warning against the transitoriness of earthly beauty which is made to help man, not to be worshipped by him:

Baith hill and holt heilit with frostis hair
And blevis bens are heibit bare of blis
Be wickit windis of the wintare wair
All wyld bealtis than fra the bentsis bair
Draiwis for driet vnto thair deis deir
Couchand for cauld in cowis thame to keip (78-84)

The emphasis is on suffering ('bare of blis'; 'driet'; 'wair'; 'couchand for cauld') and the immensity of that suffering ('baith ... and'; 'all'). These two stanzas have led to some misguided criticism.
Speirs speaks of them as 'the sudden assertion of the poet's locality... the actuality of this points forward to the Scottish winter of the Prologue to Book VII of Douglas' Aeneid'.

To sitting the descriptions:

of winter (11. 1692 ff.) and spring (11. 1706 ff.) are based on genuine observation of the Lowland scene. The bleak picture of winter, with the wild animals (11. 1703 ff.) creeping together for warmth in sheltered places, is wonderfully suggestive;

By contrast Pauline E. Knight writes:

In other passages where Henryson uses regular alliteration, it is obvious that he uses it because of its association with a strong and onomatopoetic traditional vocabulary [lines 213-4, also winter description are then quoted]. This is also the source from which Gavin Douglas was later to draw the forcefulness of his winter description in the prologue to the seventh book of the Aeneid, and which is part of a tradition stretching back to the famous natural descriptions in such poems as Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. The strongly traditional character of such passages in Henryson is indicated by the sudden regularity and consistency of the alliteration, each line having at least three alliterating stressed syllables.

One particular passage of Sir Gawain and pe Greene Knyvit comes to mind:

pe haseel and pe haseorne were harled al samen
With roje raged mosse rayled eywhere,
With mony brydde vmblyke vpon bare twyges,
Pat pitosly per piped for pysc of pe colde (744-8)

There is little 'personal observation' in Henryson's winter descriptions; nor in his description of spring:

Syne cumis war quhen winter is away
The secretarie of somer with his acell
Quhen columbia vp kikis throw the clay
Cuhilk fleit was before with frostis feill
The mavis and the merle beginnis to meeke
The lark on loft with uthir birds ansale
Than drawis furth fra darne on down and daile (85-91)

Everything has changed: 'ayne' (rhetorically this follows the
'ayne' introducing the previous two seasons); 'away'; 'before';
'beginnis'; 'drawis furth'. The 'mavis' and the 'merle' were
in the description of June in The Lyon and the Lyon (l. 18). The
mavis, the merle and the lark were the only three birds mentioned
in the spring setting of The Fox tryed before the Lyon (1. 76)\(^1\)

Bot penne pe weder of pe worldes wyth wynter hit prepes;
Colde inglese adoun, cloues vplyfen,
Schyre schede; pe rayn in schowre; ful warme,
Falle; vpon rayre flat, flowrez por scheuen,
Sope grounde; and pe greue; grene ar her wede;,
Bryddie; busken to bylde; and brezlych syngen
For solace of pe softe somer pat sues perafter (504-10)

In our poem the description serves a double purpose: it is the
culmination of the seasons when they are seen in true perspective.
It is also, we should note, the typical spring introduction to a
poem of worldly things and Fortune. Once again we see Henryson
using his imagery creatively. The use of classical gods is also
interesting in this connection: elsewhere in Henryson they are
used to suggest a pagan materialistic culture: in the introduction
to The Testament of Cresseid, the narrator - blinded, like Cresseid,
by this world - speaks of Phoebus and Venus; in The Fox and the
Wolf, the Fox’s blindness is shown by reference to Thetis, Phoebus
and Hesperus; again, Phoebus is introduced in the spring setting of
The Fox tryed before the Lyon.

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\(^1\) The whole description is, of course, conventional as I have
shown in my discussion of these poems.
The introduction to the fable, then an addition by the poet, immediately places the fable in a different class of poetry from its originals by showing it to be a religious poem. It shows (by use of conventional thought and image, images, however, that have often been given additional meaning by the way in which the poet has used them) completely ignorant compared to God. When he realizes this the things of this world show themselves as revelation of God; if however, when he trusts in his own 'dark reasoning', they take the place of God, are worshipped in His stead, as it were, they become destructive (cf. 11. 296-301).

The true way has been stated, the false will be shown in the fable itself when the ignorant birds claim to know better than God (His word is preached by the Swallow) and suffer the consequences.

The fable begins with another addition by the poet of a conventional form: the chanson d'aventure setting with the narrator wandering out into the spring fields, the conventional opening for a poem dealing with worldliness; with false values; more specifically, it is the conventional opening for the rhetorical debate form - and such Henryson makes the first dispute between the Swallow and the Lark. I have examined the common opening for this form in my discussion of The Reasoning Betuix Aige and Yowth 1 - several parallels will be found there; that of The Owl and the Nightingale 2 is perhaps of particular interest to us:

Ich was in one sumere dale
In one supe di3ele hale
Iherde ich holde grete tale
An Hule and one Nijtingale (1-4)

1. pp. 334-5.
The narrator's position in the poem is equivocal: he seems overwhelmed by spring (another example of the 'blind' narrator we so often find in Henryson) as was the narrator in The Lyon and the Mouse; he has gone to see 'the flouris spring' (94) like the narrator in Chaucer's Prologue to the Legend of Good Women. But his joy in the natural world may be in proper perspective - he also insists on his joy at seeing the corn sown, a scene which, it seems to me, has allegorical meaning. The narrator looked:

To se the guyll that was right seasonable
Sappie and to resease all assidius hablo (97-8)

The hard work of the labourers is stressed: 'the beaynace' (100);
they labourd 'an at evin and mornes' (105)

Sum sakynd diko and sum the pleuch can wynd
Sum sawnd sedes fast fra place to place (101-2)

The reason for the busyness (at least of those who sow the linen seed), is explained in the moralitas (11. 278-80). The scene reminds us of that at the opening of Piers Plowman:

A feire felde ful of folks fornse I there bytwene
... Some putten hem to pe plow played ful solde
In setting and in sowing swonken ful harde

And just as there is an allegorical meaning in Piers Plowman, I am sure there is one in our poem: in the moralitas the author interprets the linen seed as sin sowed in the heart; the corn is the word of God (as in the Parable of the Sower: St. Matthew xiii) or perhaps good deeds. But the birds know so little of the corn that later they will mistake the chaff for it (225-6). The narrator, rejoicing

1. It is interesting to note that the only discussion by Stearns of The Swallow and Other Birds concerns 'realistic' detail: the sowing and the treatment of the flax (pp. 11 and 38-9).

in the landscape stands under 'a hawthorne grene' (108; 160).
The narrator in The Lyon and the Hous ley in the shadow of 'an
awthorne grene' (23).

The tone of the Swallow's warning is sermon like ('It is
grite wisdom ...' 118):

O ye birdis on bowis here me by
Ye saill well know and wyisely understand
Quhair danger is and perell appeirand
It is grite wisdom to prowdyse before
It to deuid or dredo it hurt yow more (115-9)

She quotes a Latin proverb (133) and quotes the advice of learned
men (for clericis sayys ... 134).\(^1\) This type of argument - giving
support and emphasis to one's own argument - is a characteristic
of the debate form.\(^2\) It is also used by the Lark (lines 141-63).
It is noticeable however that she uses the more homely, rural
proverb of natural reason, rather than the authority used by the
Swallow - mankind's trust in its own reason instead of that of
God perhaps. The Swallow argues for foresight (134-40); she
insists too on the shortness of time for which the present happiness
will last; the seed will grow 'in lytill tyme of bode' (124).
But the other birds laugh at the preacher (120, 141, 147),
despising 'hir haller document' (148).

In the Swallow's second warning many of the same characteristics
can be seen:

The Swalow suyft put furth a piteous pryme
Said vois him can nocht be war in tyme

---

1. In 1, 134 'nocht' is required before 'sufficient' to complete
the sense; it is found in all other early versions.
2. For the use of proverbs in the debate form see E. O. Stanley
ed., The Owl and the Nightingale, op. cit., pp. 33-4. On the
use of proverbs and other forms of argument in this extract see
also Denton Vox, 'Henryson's Fable', op. cit., pp. 351-2.
3. See the list of proverbs in Gregory Smith's glossary, Poems,
op. cit., 1, 146-7.
O blind birds and full of negligence
Unmyndfull of your prosperitis
Cast up your aycht and tak guid aduertence ... (167-71)

The 'woe is' is, of course, a common Biblical construction\(^1\) and preaching formula; we have already seen the significance of 'blind' (contrasted with 'aycht') - blinded by the things of this world to their sinful state in which they trust their own reason. On this occasion the birds do not only neglect the Swallow's warning but actually plan to use and enjoy the linen seed (to 'mak ws feyat and fill ws of the seid', 164): they not only neglect sin but positively enjoy it:

Proceeding furth be use and consuetude
Syn rypis and schame is set on syde (288-9).

The Swallow threatens the spit of the churl (109): a reference of course to the fires of hell. The subtlety of the fowler (the Devil) is stressed: he is 'Ryght cawtelous and full of subteltye' (191). So 'God keip me fra him and the hellie rude' (196) is a prayer of eternal significance:

Thir small birdis hailfand bot litill thocht
Off perrell that mycht fall be aventoure
The counsale of the swallow sett at nocht (197-9)

We note 'small' birds and remember the clause 'And mannis saule is febill and owir small' (23). They have blindly trusted themselves and their sin - thus they are at the mercy of Fortune. (aventoure 198). All these details - contributing to the expression of the theme of the poem - are, of course, additions by Henryson.

A further addition - and one which has been noticed often - is the detailed description of the preparation and spinning of the

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flax. It performs the function I discussed in writing on The 
Tree Lyit: contemporary detail makes the story and its theme more 
relevant to its readers/hearers. But this craft is not specifically 
Scottish, as Wittig would have us believe: Gregory Smith pointed 
out the widespread existence of the terms used. Again — another 
addition — Henryson stresses the horrors of winter; the same 
objects, the same destruction are emphasized; and the methods of 
emphasis are similar to those in the earlier description of winter (ll. 7-34):

The winter can the wickit wind can blow
The woodis grene war wallowit with the wait
Bayth firth and wyll with frostis war maid faw
Glondie and alak maid glisderie with the goit
The foulis faur Mor salt thai fyll of frit
Cuhien beuis hair it was na bute to byde
Bot hyit on in hous thame to hyde (211-7)

The Fowler sets the nets 'with diligence' (222) for 'thir small 
birdis' (225); again, as at lines 109, 182, 197, the emphasis is 
on their smallness for reasons we have already discussed. Once 
more, the birds lack of foresight is stressed (227-8).

The Swallow's third speech — another addition by Henryson as 
we have seen — has the same characteristics as its previous two 
speeches:

Grit fful is he that puttie in danger
Hiss lyis his honour iffor a thing of nocht
Grit fful is he that will nocht glaidlie hair
Counsall in tymes quhill it availl him nocht
Grit fful is he that na thing hes in thocht
Bot thing present and etter quhat may fall
Nor of the end has na memorall (239-45).

It is perhaps worth recalling here verses like Proverbs 1, 7:

1. The Scottish Tradition in Literature, op. cit., p. 41.
'Timor Domini principium sapientiae. Sapientiam utque doctrinam stulti despiciunt'. And Proverbs xii, 15: 'Vita stulti recta in oculi ejus: qui autem sapiens est, audit consilia'. And sermon material:

Dreaded som men haue so gret delectacion in ther synne that nothyr for the dreed of the peynes of hell, nothyr for dreed of losse of heven, nothyr for shame and unkendnes aneynat God thi cesse not to synne. And trewely this is a gret marveil ...

But wold God of is good grace that such pepull wold take hede to a shorts word of Seynt Gregore, the wiche word, thogh it be shorts in language it owes euer to abyde in remembrance. The worde is this 'Momentaneum est quod delectat, sed est eternum quod cruciat.' He sees the delite of synne is shorts and little while abidyng, but the peyn dw therfore abideth for ever. Now trewely he that for the lust of the moment will lea is souls for ever, he is not worthy to bere the name of a reasonable creature, for he is turned into a bestayll condiicon.

The poet stresses the sorrow, the different types of death and the number of those who suffer:

Alare it was ryght grite hertis sair to see
That bludy bouchure heit thai birds doun
And for to heir quhen thai wist weill to ded
Thair cirfull song and Lamentatioun
Sum with one staffe he straik to end in soun.
Sum offe the heid off sum he brok the craig
Sum half on lyve he stappit in his bag (253-9)

The Swallow too is sorrowful ('Now ar thaj deid and wo is me thairfore,' 265), another addition by the poet.

Once again then we have seen Henryson adapting his source markedly - adding new forms (the chanson d'aventure, the debate, the preaching), expanding the tale ('realistic' detail), omitting

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Verse, op. cit., p. 275.
an incident that does not suit his purpose (the Swallow does not live with the Fowler). In his hands the fable becomes something quite different - something, as we have so often noticed, of much wider application. And this is to be seen in the interpretation he has given to the moralitas. His work is taken from that of 'a clerk' (276), like the Swallow's. The 'reason' (272) here is presumably in accordance with God's; not the 'dark reasonings' of mortal man.

Henryson interprets the Fowler as the devil, the not as being made of sins. We have seen something of this in Bromyard but it is not necessary to postulate that as a source for it was a common concept, though one not introduced before Henryson to the literary fable form, and bringing with it new implications to that form.

A somewhat similar interpretation of the not is implied in The Lyon and the Hove and The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman (214-5). The Bible and Biblical commentary provide its ultimate source. I Timothy iii, 7: 'Oportet autem illum et testimonium habere bonum ab ipsis qui foris sunt, ut non in opprobrium incidat et in laqueum diaboli'. I Timothy vi, 9: 'Nem qui volunt divitos fieri incidunt in tentationem et in laqueum diaboli, et desideria culta inutilia et nocuia, quae mergunt homines in interitum et perditionem'. II Timothy ii, 26: 'et resipiscant a diaboli laqueis, a quo captivi tenentur ad ipsius voluntatem'. Hrabanus Maurus:


There are several interesting commentaries on Job xviii, 8-10 which read:


St. Jerome:

"Imisit enim in retes pedes suos, et in maculis eius ambulat." Retie nomine atque maculorum ejus, inevitabile malum significatur; quod volens quisque exucre, ipse conamine impeditur, atque implicatur ut corruat.
"Tenebitur planta illius laqueo, et exardescit contra eum sitia." Laqueus his ipsa diabolus non absurde contitut, quia ad supplantandum calcaneum, peccatores observat, et ipsa nihilominus sitis nomine appellatur; eo quod velut in aliquo bono asstuans sitiat hominem mortem.¹

Walfridus Strabus:

Vers 8. "Immissit enim in rete" (Ibid.). Qui pedes in rete mittit, non cum voluerit ojicit. Sio qui in peccatis se dejicit, non max cum voluerit, surgit "Et in maculis ejus ambulat." (Ibid.). Qui in maculis retie ambulat, gressus suos ambulando implicat; et cum se expedire ad ambulandum nititur, ne ambulet obligatur.

Vers 9. "Tenebitur planta illius" etc. Quia videlicet stringitur finis in peccato "Et exardescet contra eum". Quia quo se malis obligatum pensat, eo de suo reedit desperat; et ipsa desperatione acrius ad hujus mundi concupiscentias aeatuat.²

Rupertus:

Vers 9: "Tenebitur planta illius laqueo", videlicet quia stringitur finis in peccato, juxta illud: "Pecatum cum consummatum fuerit, generavit mortem" (Jec 1) cujus, subaudi peccati, consummatio per plantam, quae finis corporis est, exprimitur. Planta ergo laqueo tenetur, dum peccatum consummatum non facile evaditur, quia vitiocosa consuetudine tenetur peccator dum effugere consatur. Unde et acquirit, "et exardescet", subaudi, per ipsam obligationem, "contra eum sitia", id est, diabolus, qui sitit ut bibat mortem peccatoris vel ita "exardescet contra eum sitia", id est, ex consuetudine peccati magis ac magis ascenderit desiderium peccatoris, videlicet,

¹ Commentarii in Librum Job, P.L. xxvi, col. 663.
The clause 'ex consuetudine peccati magis ac magis acceditur desiderium peccatoris' is of particular interest for our poem:

And carnall lust growis full grene and gay
Throw consuetudin hantit fra day to day
Proceding furth be vs and consuetudo
dyn rypis and schanz is set on ayde (286–9)

Henryson's thought in these lines and in the lines immediately surrounding (ll. 281–301) is not new, and many of the phrases in which it is expressed are common in his work - as I shall show shortly. But well worthy of comment (and characteristic of his method of creation through fusion) is the way in which it is fitted perfectly to the imagery of growth in the tale. Rather similar use is made of the chaff - another element of the original fable.

The birds are blinded to such an extent that they mistake it for corn, the valueless for the life-giving, that which seems (291) to be good for that which is, the transitory for the eternal. Commonplaces expressed in new context take on new life.

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The low social position of the fowler is stressed:

This carill and bond of gentrics spoliate
Gawand this caff thir small birdis to slay (274-5)

His fall ('spoliate'\(^1\)) is emphasized further in lines 276-7. Once again we see the emphasis on the smallness, the insignificance and weakness of the birds. We saw in the commentaries emphasis on the devil's thirst for man's damnation; I tried to bring this out in my analysis of the fable itself; and the moralitas interprets it directly:

\[
\text{Quhilk day and nycht nevir serye to ga} \\
\text{Sawand poysoun and morny wickit thocht (278-9)} \\
\text{... our wickit ennesye} \\
\text{Quhilk slepis nocht bot evir is redaye (305-6)}
\]

Once again we must note the similarity between the vocabulary and the theme of the passage under discussion (especially lines 281-301) and that of other works by Henryson, particularly Orpheus and Eurydice. There man is advised:

\[
\text{That he bakwart cast nocht his myndis S,} \\
\text{gifand consent and delectatioun,} \\
\text{Off fleschly lust and for the affectioun; (621-3)}
\]

In our poem the soul 'Giffis consent in delectatioun' (282), the chaff is vanity 'off fleschlye lust' (294), and 'Rensoun is blindit with affectioun' (388). In both poems we have the phrases: 'this worldis vane plesaunce' (603 and 246) and 'vaine prosperitie' (549 and 626; 294).\(^2\) The phrase 'grene and gay' can also be paralleled

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1. Bannatyne reads poliate, which is meaningless. Other versions supply spoliate.

2. The reoccurrence of such phrases and words as 'this worldis vane plesaunce', 'blinding of the sprit', and 'effectioun' in other portions of Henryson's work provides further evidence for the belief that ll. 570-615 of Orpheus and Eurydice, found only in the Bannatyne Manuscript, are Henryson's own.
in Henryson's work: Jupiter 'his eyeis ful kay of grene' (The Testament of Cresseid 178). To compare with lines 286-9, two lines from The Fox and the Wolf may be quoted:

Sum bene also throw consuetudo and ryte
Vincust with carnall sensualitie (169-70)

The poem ends in a prayer: again we see the use of a conventional form:

Henryson then has taken a fable of limited application and by addition of conventional forms, images and phrases (which he has often used himself elsewhere) has made a fable of such wider application, a religious poem which reflects the attitude to life omnipresent in his poetry:

Best is be war in maist prosperitie
Pfor in this world thair is no thing lestani
Is na man waitt quhow long his stait will stand
His lyfe will lest nor how that he sall end
eftir his deid nor quhidder he sall wend (318-22)
The story of *The Fox and the Cook* had been sketched several times in fable collections before Henryson's telling. None of these versions can be proved to have influenced Henryson: the mere sketch of the story they give varies little and in the few places in which they do differ — the setting and the moralitas — there is no evident influence. We shall discuss the moralitas later; as for setting, the versions in the Munich Romulus and Steinhöwel's *Fabel* are set in a town ('villam quamdam'), that in the LSG Romulus and that of Marie de France on a dungheap. Certainly Henryson's Fox 'unto the town him groat' (30), but I assume the meaning of 'town' to be 'dwelling house', 'farm-house' as was common in Northern usage, or perhaps village (cf. 'drope' 1.15); and although a 'midding' is mentioned (the Cock's father sent the Fox 'Hote fra middingis to the muris', 46), there is no evidence that the central episode of the fable is set there.

There were two extended versions — that in the Roman de Renart branche II and Chaucer's *Honnés Prestes Tale*. It will become


2. Gait, *Fo敷*, op. cit., i, 10, note to 1.418.

obvious that Henryson certainly knew and used Chaucer's tale and perhaps the Roman when compiling his own. In the Roman de Renart the farm is owned by:

... messires Coutens des Noes,
Une vilaine qui mut iert garmiz,
Manoit cout pres dou plaissais (4072-4)

Chaucer tells how the farmyard was owned by 'A povre wydwe, nomcel etape in age' (VII 2821) and Henryson has seemingly been influenced here for I know of no other version with this detail. It is probably mere coincidence that Henryson's widow earns her food 'with spynnyng on hir rok' (16) and that Walyyn chases 'with a dystaff in hir hand' (35b4). In both Chaucer and Henryson the Cock's time-telling abilities are mentioned (2853-8; 21). In all three versions the Cock 'start bakward' (39) at the approach of the Fox (cf. Ronnes Protes Tale 3276 ff.; Roman de Renart 4537 ff.) though in the Roman he does so because the Fox attempts to seize him, in the others through natural fear. We may compare the techniques of flattery ('schir', 'gentil', self-deprecation, use of religion, praise of family) and the irony in the Fox's speeches in both Chaucer and Henryson.

Chaucer:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Gentil sire, allas! wher wol ye gon?} \\
\text{So ye affrayed of me that am youre frend?} \\
\text{Now, cartes, I were worse than a feend} \\
\text{If I to yow wolde harm or vileynye (3284-7)} \\
\text{My lord youre fader - God his soule bless} \\
\text{And eek youre mooder, of hir gentillness} \\
\text{Man in syn hous ybeen to my great ese;} \\
\text{And cartes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow please (3295-8)}
\end{align*}
\]

1. Harvey Wood however has noted (Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 229) l. 1083 of The Kinje Esair which reads 'The wyly fox, the wedowis enamy'. He comments that this gives evidence that 'the central theme of this fable had passed into proverbial use'.


Schir be my smull ye noid nocht be affraid
Nor yit for me to drede nor flei abak (40-1)
Wald I nocht serve you ser I wer to blame
As I have done to your progenitouris
Your faeder oft fulfillit has my wame
And send me mete fra middeigis to the muris (43-6)

The similaritics are very obvious; the differences (particularly of emphasis) I shall discuss later. In the _Hoon de Renart_, but not in Chaucer, the Cock sings twice as in Henryson:

lors chanta Chanteclor un vers;
un oif ot clous et l'autre overt,
Car ciot formant cre moi Renart;
Soyant regarde celo part,
"Ce, dit Renart, ne fait molant
Chanteclis chantoit aautremont
A un longo trait a jeux clingiez,
L'on l'oiat bien de. xx. plusicre"
Chanteclis que voir dis;
lors lait aler la melodie (4383-4392)

In Henryson's poen too the Cock is accused of not being like his father (66 ff.) though there the comment comes before any attempt at crowing and between the two efforts the Cock is praised (73 ff.). In both the _Nouennes Preestes Tale_ and _The Fox and the Cock_ there is direct, critical comment by the narrator at the moment of crisis (3322-30; 73-80) - the nature of Chaucer's comment I shall discuss later in dealing with Henryson's moralitas. The episode in which the hens discuss Chantecler, in _The Fox and the Cock_, is distantly related, in its revelation of the pretensions of humans though their rhetoric, to the cock-epic effect of the _Nouennes Preestes Tale_ though of course details are very different. Henryson's 'Partlot' (99) whose name is perhaps adapted from the name 'Pertelote', shows the courtliness of Chaucer's hen. In Henryson and Chaucer, but in no other version, the Fox asks the Cock to come down from the tree to
which it has fled; different pretexts are used in each poem however:

"O Chauntecleer, alas!
I have to you" quod he, "ydoon trepas
In as much as I made you aferd ...
... But sire, I did it in no wikkentente
Cum doun, and I shal tell you what I mente (3419-24)
gude chantecler
Cum doun agane and I but mete or fee
Sal be your man and servand for ane yeir (177-9)

Having seen what Henryson has taken from earlier versions of the story we are now in a position to examine his own version, to see how he has modified the tale to his own purpose. He spends two stanzas reminding his readers of the philosophical basis of his Fabillis: 'brutale bestis' are 'Irrationale, ... lukking discretioun' and have merely an 'inclinatioun' (D.O. 3, T. 'A natural disposition towards some kind of action or behaviour') - perhaps several - according to their kind. These kinds are infinite in number and therefore the number of characteristics ('inclinatioun') is infinite: the poet stresses these latter points by his use of a combination of the inexpressibility and the humility topoi (8-11). He will describe one example only ('A cas I fand quhilk fell this hinder yeir'; 2 2 13). We have been told earlier that man is often like the beasts: in him:

throw the custome and the dayly ryto
Syn in the mynd is as fast radicat
That he in brutall beist be transformat (Prolog 54-6)

2. Cf. the opening of The Bludy Birk:
This hinder yeir I hard be told
Thair was a worthy king.
The infinite number of beasts (men acting as animals) is also stressed in *The Fox tried before the Lyone* (ll. 90-126). We may recall too the importance of well-governed reason in *Orpheus and Eurydice* and *The Swallow and the Othir Birdie*. So Henryson has begun by reminding us, in an addition, of the philosophical basis of his fable. In doing so he has given us some idea of the nature of the protagonists of the story: the 'fox fenyeit craftye and cautelous' (6) and 'gentill chanteclere' (14) — presumably, as we realize later 'gentill' of birth or from present importance (cf. 'Off kyn or good quhilk is presumptuous', 196) rather than gentle in nature.

In the next two stanzas Henryson sets the scene of his fable. We have already seen that this is to some extent modelled on Chaucer's *Monnes Preestes Tale* but there are interesting changes. Henryson's widow is made to appear poorer and more dependent on her Cock and hens than Chaucer's — there is a very similar change from source in The Wolf and the Hedger. Chaucer's widow has two daughters to help her and other livestock apart from her hens:

\[Thre large eoes hadde she, and namo,\]
\[Three keon, and eek a sheep that highte Malle (2830-1)\]

1. The above is the meaning I take from two very difficult stanzas — difficult in syntax; the poet says that 'ilkane ... has monye divers inclinatioun' (5-4) yet the examples show but one (in the case of the Wolf none) such 'incliatioun'; to what antecedent does 'thay' in l. 6 refer? And, to some extent at least, difficult in meaning; are these 'incliatioun' praiseworthy or evil or neutral? The 'Thought ... yit' antithesis seems to impute some good qualities to the 'incliatioun' and l. 7 is scarcely condematory yet those illustrated in the fable are surely evil. Perhaps we are to assume that such 'incliatioun' are neutral in 'brutale bestie' but evil in men who should not be 'irrationale', who should not be 'lakking discreriou'.

2. Cf. the distinction drawn in Chaucer's *Franklins Tale* and *Squires Tale*. 
Henryson:

And no moir feudis as the fable sais
Except of hennis scho had a lofy flock (17-18)

So this 'joly cok' (19) who kept the hens was of the utmost
importance to the widow: 'Rycht curageous vnto this wedow ay' (20)
especially as the hens were constantly threatened: a Fox: ('craftye
and cawtelous', 24; his 'inclinacion' is repeated - cf. l. 6)

to this wedow did gret violence
In piking of hir pultry day and nyght
And no more revengeit on him scho nycht (26-8)

The Cock's importance provides reason for its pride and, perhaps,
further implied condemnation of its pride which divided it from
its proper task.

And so to the incident itself. The major change from Chaucer's
poem (and also, though to a somewhat lesser extent, from the Roman
de Repart) is the more emphatic position given to the Fox in this
fable; for Henryson's poem is concerned with flattery and pride
equally and with their interaction; in Chaucer the major emphasis
is given to the Cock as a symbol of human vanity. Thus whereas
in The Nonnes Preestes Tale the Fox's flattering speech takes up
only about one-twentieth of the poem (11. 3284-3321), in Henryson's
poem it takes up nearly a quarter (11. 36-77) of the fable - and
half of the moralitas is concerned with condemning flattery.

From the beginning there is emphasis on the Fox's craftiness: we
have seen something of this already in the introductory stanzas;
it is continued. The Fox was wily (29); he was named 'Lowrence'
(Chaucer has 'Russell') — probably an extension of Lowrie (lurker,
skulkar, croucher); he pondered:

1. Smith, Poems, op. cit., 1. 10 note to l. 421.
The Iuperteis the wayes and the wile
Be quhat menis ho mycht this cok begile (34-5)

Emphasis is brought by accumulation of synonyms and corroborating rhyme. So

Dissimuland thus in countenance and chere
On knees fell and omynland thus he said (36-7)

On several occasions Henryson portrays foxes falling on their knees before those they wish to flatter and deceive.1 The Fox's techniques of flattery can also be paralleled in other of the Fabillis. There are five techniques noticeable. Firstly, the Fox proclaimed himself Chantecler's servant (ll. 38, 42-43, 55, 61-3). The last instance (ll. 61-3) is most interesting with its apparent utter subservience yet ambiguity; the 'yow' is emphasized by its unusual position:

Yow for to serve I wald crepe on my wame
In frost and snow in wederis wan and wete
And lay my lyart lokki under your fete.

Secondly, Lawrence addressed the Cock as Schir (40, 43, 59).
Thirdly, he hinted at self-deprecation ('Wald I nocht serve yow nor I wer to blame', 43). Fourthly, he praised directly: 'gentill Chantecler' (38);

yor fetheris fair and gent
Your brest, your beke your hekill and your caye (57-8)

And fifthly he used pseudo-religious oaths (40, 59). As I mentioned earlier many of these techniques (all indeed except the first of those I analyzed) are to be found in The Nonnes Preestes Tale. There are differences however, differences which, it seems

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1. Cf. The Fox and the Wolf l. 58; The Fox, the Wolf and the Cracker, et. 2.
to me, give greater emphasis to flattery: the first technique (not used by Chaucer) is perhaps the most important in the fable; Henryson adds the emphasis brought by alliteration and the repetition of the possessive pronoun 'yor'; and one technique (the use of 'schir') is more extensively used here. It is noticeable too that Lawrence did not straight away introduce his desire to hear the Cock sing: he ingratiated himself with the Cock first.

The Cock was obviously impressed: 'Knew thou my fader q the cock and leuch' (50). We may compare The Fox and the Wolf 1. 71 where the Wolf reacted similarly to praise: 'A silly lowrance q the wolf and leuch'. Henryson comments directly echoing terms used before:

This feynit fox fals and dissimulate
Kaid to the cock a csuillatioun (64-5)

We have already noticed that Henryson's portrayal of the Cock's tactics in enticing the Cock to sing is closer to that in the Roman de Renart than to that in the Nonnes Prестес Tale. But there are differences too. Henryson's Fox made the contrast between Chantecler and his father before the Cock had sung; then, after his first attempt, encouraged him ('ye ar your faderis zone and air vp rycht', 74) suggesting means of improvement. So the Cock was 'inflated with the wind of fals vane gloir' (78) - the moralitas criticizes 'A nyce proud man void and vane glorious' (195).

Henryson introduces the widow's sorrow portraying it by the terms of literary sorrow used commonly to describe great misfortunes:

As echo war wof with monye yell and cry
Kyvand hir hair upoun hir breist can bete
Syne paill of hew half in ane extasye
Pfeldoun for cair in swoning and in swete (92-5)
We may compare the sorrows of Emelye in *The Knight's Tale* (IA 2817 ff.) and the parody of the convention in *The Nun's Priest's Tale* (11. 3338 ff.) where Chaucer describes the hen's reaction to the loss of Chantecler. Henryson replaces this parody by a dispute among Chantecler's three wives, 'Partlot', 'Coppok' and 'Sproutok', their names seemingly taken from literary tradition.¹ Bird disputes

1. As Smith pointed out (*Poems, op. cit.,* i, 10 note to 1. 475) the names occur in *The Tale of Colkelbie Cow*, a poem in the *Bannatyne Manuscript* (I quote from the *b.731.* edition, *op. cit.,* vol. iv; the relevant passages are to be found on p. 307). The author lists the cocks and hens born from the eggs Colkelbie purchases as a gift for his godson:

The first was the asyn chantecler to luke off quhose chaucer treitis in to his bible and his lady partlot Sister and wyfe ... The tuthir bruthir wan clipt cok caileman he tue to wyfe his fair trew sistir toppok Kok crawdoun was the thrid and his wyfe coppok (*Pt. III, 99-105*)

*Bannatyne* reads 'Coppok' other early versions 'Toppok'. As good (*Poems and Fables, op. cit.,* p. 230 note to 1. 483) points out 'Coppok' has the 'support of alliteration' (in 1. 134) and is closer to the Reynardian form Coppo. However, as we see above, both are mentioned in *The Tale of Colkelbie Cow* - either reading is possible in Henryson.

... Cok coby the tent and sproutok his speciall (117)

*The Tale of Colkelbie Cow* has been ascribed to various dates in the mid and latter parts of the fifteenth century - for a mid fifteenth century dating see D. Laing, *Select Remains of the Ancient Popular and Romance Poetry of Scotland*, 2nd edn. rev. J. Small (Edinburgh and London, 1885), pp. 234-5; Professor Denton Fox tells me that Dr. J. Aitken of the Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue dates the poem c. 1450. I find it impossible to know if it influenced Henryson's poem or vice versa. There is a possibility too that both were drawing independently on a tradition of which we know little - the fact that the three names used by Henryson occur unevenly dispersed in *The Tale of Colkelbie Cow* may support such a contention; besides, Partlot has an obvious affinity with Chaucer's Pertelote; and, as Diebler first pointed out (*Hennings's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit.,* pp. 44-5), the name Sprotius is to be found in a precursor to the *Roman de Renard*, the twelfth century *Isengrimus* - Diebler refers to the abridgement published by Grimm in *Reinhart Fuchs*, *op. cit.,* 11. 559-40; in Lien's complete edition, *op. cit.,* the relevant lines are Bk. III, 11. 17-18.
now, knowing she had support, she expressed her true thoughts and desires. Thus far it seems to me, the poet has implied that the Cock was blind both to his own capabilities and to the true attitudes of others towards him. Coppok's speech is used to concern directly: he was 'so loweous and so licherous' (136):

Prydefull he was and Ioyit of his syn
And complit nowether of goddis falvour nor foid
Bot trasitit ay to rax and as furth rin (141-3)

Pretentious, proud, self-confident yet easily deceived, the Cock
is a figure (191) of:

A nyce proud man void and vaneglorious
Off kyn or gude qhillk is presumpteous
Ffy pompous pryed thow art rycht poysoneable
Guha fauoris the of force man haue a fall
Thy strenth is nocht thy stule standis vnstable (195-9)

The considerable addition to the fable has added to our knowledge of the type of person likely to succumb to flattery.

In lists and in the chase Henryson characteristically uses alliteration (we may compare his use in the chase in The Wolf and the Teddey):

Bannatyne may be correct in reading 'Sprotok' - then the 'feyneit fayth' would presumably refer to Sprotok's pretended allegiance to Chantecler, providing further evidence of Chantecler's blind pride, for he, it appears, had been duped by her pretence. Such a reading in, however, a little strained. The Bassandyne reading 'Pertok' (Partlot) seems more natural (and provides an additional irony) - she had 'feyneit fayth' to the other hens in pretending to mourn Chantecler. We have too an example of Bannatyne misreading names in l. 87 though there the mistake is easily explicable by dittography. I have provisionally accepted the Bassandyne reading. But l. 128 of Bassandyne does not make any real sense: Partlot's (or Sprotok's) tone is critical; and from the tenor of her speech it would scarcely appear likely that she would criticise a one who 'In luste but lufe ... sett all his delyte'. The line should presumably refer to Partlot herself - as it does in Bannatyne - and her speech begin at l. 129. My suggested reading for these two lines is this

Than Partlot spek that feyneit fayth befoir
in luste but luif that sett all hir delyte.

This agrees with Professor Denton Fox's suggested emendation in his forthcoming edition of Henryson's poems.
The Cock too showed subtlety: he pretended to care about the Fox's condition (162) and suggested that the Fox should tell his pursuers that the two animals were friends; in other versions the suggestion is merely that the Fox abuse its pursuers. The narrator comments:

This Fox thocht he was fals and friuelous
And hee fraudde his quarrelles to defend
Discauit was throw cynia marvellous
Pfor falsheid failylos at the latter end (169-72)

Henryson uses this proverb elsewhere: in *The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger* the Wolf advised the Fox, who was attempting to escape him: "Falset will failye ay at the latter end" (47). Our Fox, characteristically, fell on his knees offering again to serve the Cock (177). But his flattery did not succeed; the fable ends with the traditional mutual recriminations (183-7). 2

The moralitates of earlier tellings of the fable have generally a rather limited application. The mixed Romulus of Berne reads merely: 'Docet non multum loqui'. The Munich Romulus, and the version in Steinhöwel's *Fabulae Extravagantes*, reads: 'Sic multi homines, cum multa locuntur, damnum non effugium'. Caxton: 'And therfor ouer moche talkyng letteth and to moche crowynge smarteth therfore kepe thy selfe fro ouer many words to the ende.

1. A syllable - and a subject for 'breddit' - is obviously missing here. Bassundyne supplies 'thay'.
2. The Bassundyne reading of l. 186 (Quair throw to put my pray in to pleid) seems rhetorically sounder than Bannatyne's - paralleling the 'Quairthrow' of the Cock's speech (1. 184).
that thou repentest the "not". The L50 Romulus: 'Non est exigua
res suo tempore loqui, et suo tempore reticere; mors enim et
vita in animibus linguae sunt'. Marie de France:

Geo sunt li fol: tut li plusur
Parolent quant deivent taiser
Taisent quant il deivent parler (36-8)

Bromyard: 'Sic mali mutuo se decipliant, multaque loqui, et fieri
suadent et rogant quae ad aniamarum pertinent deceptiones'. A more
interesting comparison can be made with a very distantly related
version of the story to be found in the Speculum Sapiencie:

'Contra tumentes ex scientia: Do gallo et uulpo'. The Cock,
proud in its knowledge of the heavens, flies on to a branch and
there sings exultantly. A Fox comes to ask why and, having heard,
flatters:

quippe gaudco, frator mi, co quod
liberalissima bonitas, quae conditis
omnibus participium perfectionum suarum
gradationis pulchri fistam, exundantissima
fontana diffundit, etiam nobis brutis in-
ascendibilis donum sapientiae dedit. O galle!
tu es gloria nostra, tu es beatarum laetitia,
tu nunc, quae, porrigit, si dignaris, ut
casceler mirum intelligentiae caput tuum, rogo,
comple gaudium meum! At illo quidem adulationis
dolosa molli lingua mollitus statim vitale
caput improvidus ori famelico obtulit, quod
avidus stringens deorsum miserum rapuit et
subjunxit: galla, galle ubi est sapientia
 tua? concepisti sapientiam, perdidi
tiam prudentiam et dedisti pro nihilo vitam tuam.
Cui gallus: quid gloria in malitia? At
illa respondit: non est malitia, humilia
superbus, sei ars vera, nuncque novi, quod, cum
sapientia inflat, mox tusefactioni ruptura
suocedit.

There is of course no possibility of influence. Chaucer's
Nonnes
Procestas Tale again provides the closest parallel: it is a
condemnation of human pretentiousness which, though more subtly
expressed and perhaps less extended in application (as I shall suggest later), is similar to Henryson's denunciation of pride. It contains too, warning against flattery: Chantecler bent his wings:

... So was he ravysshed with his flaterie.
Alas! ye lorde, many a fale flatour
Is in your courtes, and many a losengeour
That plesen yow wel moore, by my feith,
Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow seith ...

... Seth war, ye lorde, of hir trecherye (5324-30)

But this condemnation is of less importance in The Nonnes Preeste's Tale than the mocking of the Cock's pretentiousness. Henryson has altered this balance in his poem.

The moralitas can be specifically related to the themes of Henryson's other works. For those who trust in themselves, or in the things of this world (who are 'presumptuous ... off kyn or gude'), those who 'climb vp most he' (Twe Kyis, 210), who 'in pryde ... olym sa hie' (Wolf and the Wædder, 145), will surely fall. Henryson emphasizes his point by the implications of his metaphor (flattery is fatally poisonous 197, 213 - a fatal disease, 209) and by heavy alliteration:

Pfy pompous pryd thow art rycht poyssonable
quha fauriris the of force man hau a fall
Thy streth is nocht thy stule standis vnstable
Tak witnes of the feindis infernall
Guhilk huntit war doun fro the hevinly hall
To hellis hole and to that hidous hous
Becaus of pryd thaj war presumptuous (197-203)

Notable examples of the effect of alliteration are to be seen in 11. 198 and 200 where the 'r' stresses the inavoidability of the fall ('of force ... fall') and carries over to link with an example

1. Bannatyne reads 'all' which is obviously wrong.
of such a fall; and in 11. 201-2 where the 'hevinly hall' is contrasted with 'hellis hole' and 'hidous hous'. Line 199 reminds of the proverb used in The Wolf and the Weeder: 'Bewar in welth, for Halle benkis ar mycht aliddor' (154). The thought is of course Biblical: for instance Proverbs xvi, 16: 'Contritionem praecedit superbia, et ante ruinam exaltatur spiritus'. Sermons:

This is the firste of the viij dedely synnes, for ye shall vnairstond that pride is a wicked loue of manis hygynnes for he holdeth hym not a peyd of the hygynnes that God hath ordyned hym in, but desirith to be more hygher than good mesure haskethe. And so the synne of pride is like to the synne of Lucifere, that is the worste dewell of hell. 2

The iiij manor of men that broke this Commandement [i.e. thou shalt not haue non false goddes ...] and that folowith the feende be tho that settis here berties most on wordely worshippe, veynglorie, an highnes on themselfe. This maner of worshippe covetid the feende to haue had of Crist when that he wold haue hade hym to haue fall downe and to haue worshipped hym. And in this synne of pride synned Lucifere, the highe angell in heven, when that he thouthe in is herte, Yeaye xiiiij, "In celum ascendam super astra Dei; exaltabo sculum meum et ero simulis Altissimo - I shall goy vp to heven," said Lucifere, "and I shall enhaunce my-selfe a-boven the aterres of God and be like to hym-selfe so hie." Therefore he fell downe in-to the deapest pitt of hell.

And ther-fere seis Seynt Gregore in libello Conflictu Viciorvm et Virtutum, "Si ille Lucifere per superbiam de celo descendit, quomodo tu superbiendo in celum ascendes?" ... Trust well ther-to, itt will not be. For as sicur as God is in heven, the hierc that thou maketh thi-selfe thorowe pride, but thou amend the hier be-tyme in this liffe, thou shalte sone aftur be depe in hell. 3

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Henryson's use of the comparison with the Devil perhaps brings to the poem the suggestion that pride is dangerous not only for its present consequences but for the afterlife,¹ an extension from Chaucer's poem.

1. This suggestion is perhaps supported by biblical allegory in which the Fox is the devil or evil spirits tempting man to neglect his soul. Hrabanus Maurus, De Universo, Lib. viii, cap. 1:


Allegorices in Sacram Scripturam: Vulpes


Other writers interpret similarly: S. Hilarius (Tractatus in LXII Psalmus, P.L. ix, col. 406); S. Eucherius: vulpes haereticus vel diabolus vel peccator callidus (Liber formularum spiritualis intelligendae, P.L. l., col. 752); Rupertus: sicut vulpes occultebant in foelis ... ita maligni spiritus propter saltiam vulpesculae (Super Matthaeum, Lib. VII, P.L. clxviii, col. 1468); also St. Bernard in his Sermones in Cantica LXIII-LXVI (P.L. clxxxiii, cols. 1080-94).

However, such evidence must be treated very cautiously. The absurdity of applying biblical allegory too rigidly is illustrated by the fact that the traditional interpretation of 'gallus' is 'vir sanctus; ordo doctorum; predicatrix sanctus (Hrabanus Maurus, Allegorices in Sacram Scripturam, P.L. cxii, col. 939); Garner of ut. Victore, Gregorianus, P.L. cxciii, cols. 73-5). See however the application of such an interpretation to The Nonnes Prosesse Tale by Mortimer J. Donovan, 'The Morality of the Nun's Priest's Sermon', J.E.O.P. llii (1933), 498-508; and the attack on this by E. Talbot Donaldson, 'Patriotic Exegesis: The Opposition', Critical Approaches to Medieval Literature - Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1958-9 - ed. Dorothy Bethurum (New York and London, 1960), pp. 1-26.
The emphasis on the dangers of being deceived by flattery can likewise be paralleled in Henryson's other work. Lines 209-14 especially provide interesting comparisons. The Mouse and the Paddock:

It pass for akynd of pestilens
a wickit mynd with wrydis fair and sle (136-7)
... Grit folly is thairfor to gife credence
our sone to all that speikis fair to the
a silkin tong a haint of crewelte
ermtis mair soir than ony schot of arrow (144-7)

Arstan Majesty Credence of Titularis:

It is the grund of stryf and all distance,
moir perrellus than ony pestilence,
An lord in flatterris to haif plesance,
Or to gife lyaris hestely credence (29-32)
0 wickit tung, sawnd dissentioun
of fals taillis to tell that will not tyre
Moir perrellus than ony fell pououn;
The pane of hell thow sail half to thi hyre (41-4)

I have shown in my analysis of this poem some of the literary precedents for such advice.¹

It is perhaps legitimate to ask why this change of emphasis took place. Stearns' book is based on the assumption that specific contemporary events influenced Henryson's poetry; is there any such influence here?² One group of events is perhaps of importance.


² The following discussion will take into account the moralitates of The Two Nuis, The Wolf and the Wedder, and The Mouse and the Paddock as well as the poem under discussion. These raise similar points and it is as well to confine the discussion of these points to the one place.
The Historie and Chronicles of Scotland of Robert Lindesay of Pitscottie\(^1\) are particularly interesting in their account of the career of the architect Cochran:

... ane new courteour start wpe callit Couchren quho had at that tyme great preheminence and authorticie in court, and credence withe the King and reullit all matteris and actiouais as he pleissit to thame that wald gie him buddis or geir for his labouris.\(^2\)

Quhill at the last, thair grew sic mortall fold within the kingis breat towardis his bretherine that he could on nawayis be contentit to lat his brether leif in peace and rest to hauve godlie charatie withe them as he aught to hauve withe his awin bretherin, bot saikles in his awin heart condemnit them baihit to deith and that be persuatouen of this fallis flatterar Couchrin and the intysement of the Homes und Hepburnes quhilk was the fortifiricis of Couchrene in that cause be thair persuatouen gewin to his great giftis of gould and silluer.\(^3\)

It is worth noting that this action — allegedly caused by Cochran — helped to foster that distrust of the king which was later to lead to his arrest.

In this tyme this Couchrane grew sa familiar with his maister the kingis grace that nothing was done in court butt by him and all men that wald hauve had thair bussinesses drest with the kingis grace come to Couchrin and said him forspikeir for them and gaif him large money to dree thair bussinesses thairthrow and he became so rich and potent, of sic substance that no man might stryue withit him. Bot he knawand the kingis natur that he was covatous wpoen money and loved him better that gaif him nor they that tirk fre him for the quhilk cause the said Couchren gaif the king lairge sornies of money quhair throw he obtenit the Earledom of Mar

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2. \(\)ibid., i, 165.
3. \(\)ibid., i, 167.
frome the king and was possest in the samyn
and ever clave heigher and heigher to the
court till that he had no peir nor comparisone
of no lord of Scottland spirittuall nor temporall
into the kingis fawour.¹

... Couchrane the earles of Mar came frome the king
to the consall ... himself was clad in one ryding
pie of blak wellvet, one great cheszie of
gould about his hallis to the awaillour of v⁰
crounes, one fair blawing horne, witht one
baitharage of gould and silk sittt with preiouis
stanis. His horne was typit with fyne gould
at everie end, and one preiouis stane callit
ane burriall hingand in the midst. This Couchrane
had his humel borne benyd his ower gilt with
gould and so was all the rest of his harnes
and all his paillezouns was of fyne cammes of silk
and the cordis thairof of fyne twynit silk and
the chains wpoun his paillezouns was doubill
owergilt with gould. This Couchrane was so
proud in his consait that he contit no lord to be
narrow to him ...²

... and for dispyt they tuik one hardin tetder
and hangit him over the brige of Lawde abone
the liff of his compleces; and maad one proclie-
mation and oryit done all his cunzle, quhilk
fullfilled his awin prophasic foresaid.

This corractioun and punishment foresaid was
done at lather [Lawder] the year of God one
thousand four hundredth four score and one years
that he might be one exampill to all simpill
persons nocht to climb so his and proceid in
so great thingis in ane realm as he did. For at
his beginning he was bot one printis to ane
maison and within few seiris become weris
ingenious into that craft and bigit money stain
house witht his hand into the realms of Scottland:
and becaus he was conning in that craft nocht
afterlant thai maad him maister maision and ever
this Cochrane clam heigher and heigher quhill he
come to this fyne as is rehearsait.³

We note the alleged effect of Cochran's flattery on the king - he
was deceived and as a result he was 'taine captiue him self and lede
to the castell of Edinburgh.⁴

²  ibid., 1, 174.
³  ibid., 1, 175-6.
⁴  ibid., 1, 176.
Bishop Leslie likewise complains of how the king was misled:

with counsel of Cochran, Rodger and James Hommil, impudent and schameles persones
upon the kings counsel, nouter of any
dignite of calling, bot of the lowest degrie
of the peple, now promoust to goldechaynes;
al ar tane and in their goldechaynes hangt
over the brig of Lauder, to their greter
colander. 1

These accounts were written a hundred years or so after the events
described; 2 Pitcottie's at least shows a certain literary flavour
(the exemplum and the moral elements are stressed); neither are
free from bias. Yet it seems clear that there was very real
hatred of the upstarts even though, according to Professor
Dickinson, 'in effect the King and his favourites were blamed for
much for which they had little responsibility'. 3 And these events
were taking place about the time The Pabillis seem to have been
written (Lauder Bridge, 1482). There seems at least a possibility
that the events had some effect on Henryson's poetry. However,
against these arguments we must place the fact that all the failings
condemned (pride, flattery, social climbing) - and the way in which
they are condemned - are part of a continuing rhetorical tradition:
I am attempting to prove this in my thesis; that they are all
examples of the type of moral failing (self-blindness in trusting
oneself or the things of this world instead of the everlasting
wisdom) with which Henryson seems above all concerned in the
Pabillis, and indeed in almost all his work. Besides, Stearns'

1. Jhone Leslie, The Historie of Scotland, tr. Father James
(G.T.C. 1854-55), 11, 97.

2. For Pitcottie's sources see his preface (1, 2) and MacKay's
discussion (Introduction, I, pp. cix-cxii).

3. E. Croft Dickinson, Scotland from the Earliest Times to 1603,
op. cit., p. 228.
attempts to provide historical parallels for several of the Fnhillia
have failed as I intend to show.

It is impossible to be certain whether Henryson is referring
to these events. But of one point I think we can be certain —
if he is doing so he is merely instancing them as examples of the
type of behaviour he is criticizing, not shielding political
comment with 'fenyeit fables'. The moral purpose is paramount.
(x) The Fox and the Wolf

As far as I have been able to find there is no specific source for The Fox and the Wolf - there are parallels to most of the incidents in the tale but Henryson's contribution is to combine them into one narrative and to emphasize them in a different way.

Reynard has been known as an astrologer. In the Roman de Renart le Contrefait¹ he confesses:

Puiss je faisoie le devin
Et avec le phisicien
Faisoie l'astronomien
Je nommoie signes et poins
Et des constellacions les poins
Les planettes et les figures ... (25090 ff.)

The very fact that he considers it necessary to confess this as a sin shows something of the attitude to astrology we shall find in Henryson's poem. In Le Couronnement de Renart² Renart tells the king he has heard that a star has been seen foretelling the king's death (648-75). This is merely a ruse to frighten the Lion but the fact that the Fox believes in astrology is more evident elsewhere: he tells Isengrim on no account to inform the king of the star that has been seen prophesying the rise of a monarch - himself - who will rule all kings (864-71). There are other evidences of his superstition - he hears the cuckoo cry thirteen times and believes he has thirteen years to live (212-35); he has studied magic at Toledo (2948-57).

2. ed. A. Foulet, op. cit.
Although I know of no other occasion on which the Fox confesses to a wolf, the Wolf is often shown as a bad monk (he is a bad friar in our poem). There is the wolf who cannot keep his vows and returns to the wood;\textsuperscript{1} there is the wolf who, when learning his a.b.c., continually repeats 'agnus';\textsuperscript{2} in branche III of the Roman de Renart\textsuperscript{3} Isengrim receives the tonsure and is received into Renart's 'order' expecting to obtain a large supply of fish.

There are many stories of the Fox making a bad confession. In branche VIII of the Roman de Renart\textsuperscript{4} we are shown Renart, grown old and temporarily without desire for mischief, deciding that he should confess. He is taken to a hermit:

\begin{verbatim}
Sire, ce dis Renart, merci.
Que que j'ais fait ou sui ci:
de vont que j'ai vers vos mespris
et vers mes autres amies
Vos cri ge merci et pardon".
Au pie li chiet a croison,
mais l'ermitte l'a redresci:
"Biaux amis, dis il, or te sié
Ci devant moi, si me descreevre
tot de chief en chief la male ovre.
- Sire, dis Renart, volantiers (8891-8901)
\end{verbatim}

In our poem too the Fox falls on his knees, addresses his confessor as sir. The hermit, on hearing the immense number of sins of which the Fox is guilty (in our poem Lowrence apparently spends a whole night confessing), decides that only the Pope can absolve him and sends him on a pilgrimage – the pilgrimage, however, soon ends in

\textsuperscript{1} from a late twelfth century Manuscript: H.S.I.Q. 267, Bibliothek des Domes zu Neiße, ed. J. Klapper, Exempla aus Handschriften des Mittelalters, op. cit., no. 113, p. 77.

\textsuperscript{2} Pragnum Isengrim, B.N. MS. Add. 11284, fol. 16v; Odo of Cheriton, Herlev, iv, 172-6.

\textsuperscript{3} ed. Roques, op. cit., XII, 13164 ff.; vol. v, pp. 7 ff.

\textsuperscript{4} ed. Roques, op. cit., IX, 8791 ff.; vol. iii, pp. 100 ff.

The same story is told in Renard le Contrefait, op. cit., 11. 24643 ff.
theft and slaughter. Again, in branche I, Grimbart persuades Renart to confess to him as they journey to the Lion’s court, for, the badger explains, he will probably be put to death there. Renart confesses, makes a superficial atonement; but his resolves are soon forgotten when he sees hens in a farmyard. The same story occurs in Caxton’s Reynard, and in various shortened forms. In the Scala Celli the Wolf is the protagonist:

Consuetudo mala peccandi multa mala inducit in nobis ... Secundo est associacionum nocius. Pingitur fabula quod lupus semel considerando mala quae facerat penitenciam voluit facere de forescatis quia et cum confitebatur de rapinis et maleficiis suis vidisset gregem ovi et infestabat confessores ut expediret sum. Cumque reprehenderetur respondit Consuetudo dedit mihi hoc.

The power of sin to form an unbreakable habit is also to be seen in Henryson (11. 169-73). Jacques de Vitry’s version is interesting for its parallel with the moralitas of Henryson’s poem:

Quidam autem sicut Absalon semel in anno tunc sunt, quia tamen semel peccata confituntur, sed statim capilli crescere incipient, quia statim ad peccata redunt, et ita sacclotibus illudunt. Heo est confessio vulpis, que solet in Francia appellari confessio renardi. Cum enim debusisset suspendi et taxus cum duceret ad curiam leonis, facta confessione de omnibus peccatis, eodem die vidit gallinas juxta domum cujusdam hominis, et taxo ait: “Illa est via qua incedere debemus, scilicet juxta domum illam quam videmus.” Cui taxus respondit: “Nisi, bodie confessionem mihi fecisti de cunctis peccatis tuis, et confessus eo quod multas gallinas deorasti, et promisisti Deo in manu tua quod de cetero abstineres.” Cui renardus ait: “Verum dicis, sed ego tradideram oblivioni.”

1. ed. Roques, op. cit., I, 1035 ff.; vol. 1, pp. 35 ff..
3. op. cit., fol. 171b.
In his confession Lawrence complains: "Heid causs me to stell" (95). In *Renard le Contrefait* the Fox muses at length on this theme (11. 5073-730 11, 85; 35280 ff. 11, 112-3).

Varicous versions of the salmon story also occur, though in all the texts I have been able to discover, the characters are a wolf and a sheep. A representative version is that in the *Romulus of Robert:*

Lupus quondam, de malfactis suis penitero dispositis, uocit se non comesturum carnes a Septuagesima usque Pascha. Post modum uero uidens quendam pinguem Huiltonem solam in (h)ora nemoris gradientem, dicesat: O quam libenter de hoc Huiltonem comedere, nisi esset usto ad contrarium obligatus! Verum tamen ex quo solus est, nisi ego de co curuerim, aliquis forte hoc parte transiens cum tollet. Expedit ergo ut loco unius salmonis cum comedam, cum salmo sit cibus delicior et hoc quadragesimali tempore carius uendi poscit. Huiltonem itaque rapuit et comedit.

Sic est de quibusdam, qui malorum assuetudine animus habent ita peruercum, ut contra suarum illecebrarum desiderium neque iuramentum ualent, neque uotum, quin imo, necta qualibet occasiuncula, protinus recidiant.

In the LBO Romulus the Wolf is actually on his way to fish when he meets the sheep ('Cui ad mare piscacionis studio properanti pinguis Aries occurrit in nemore'); our poem is rather similar in this detail. After his feast Lawrence basks in the sun (143-6).

In Caxton's *Reynard*, when Bruin came to fetch the Fox to court, 'Reynart laye within the gate as he ofte was wonte to dco for the warmth of the sonne ...'.


The way in which Henryson has moulded the fragments into a coherent tale, the changes and the additions he has made, will become obvious as the tale is analyzed. The only previous attempt to analyze it - that by Stearns in his Robert Henryson¹ - seems to me completely misguided. He states:

Of the few sympathetically described protagonists of the Fables who are not peasants, the character of the Fox, in the tale of The Fox and the Wolf, is of particular interest. In a sense, the "wylie traitour Tod" is out of character as, for the space of one fable, he appears to be simply an imaginative but confused person with an honest impulse to do the right thing. The poet, of course, is occupied with his trenchant criticism of the Church, and the fable is Reynardian rather than Asopic.

Stearns has been misled by his own preconceived attitude to Henryson, whom he sees primarily as a champion of the people against the tyranny of the aristocracy and the Church, into thinking that the poem is basically an attack on the Church; I shall show that there may be a hint of such criticism - criticism of one false friar, certainly not criticism of the Church as a whole - but that, far from such criticism being the basic purpose of the poem, it is merely incidental to an examination of the wickedness and folly of the Fox, a wickedness Stearns denies. For the Fox's character is developed in terms of the preceding The Fox and the Cock (and of the whole Reynard tradition): falseness, flattery, wickedness. This is the same Fox as Henryson makes plain in the first four lines of our poem; he is certainly not out of character, nor is he sympathetically described.

Henryson leaves us in no doubt, from the first few lines of the poem, of the end of the Fox's story:

And speke we of the fatal aventure
And desteny e that to this Fox befell (3-4)

We find immediately the characteristic devices Henryson uses to stress his theme: the alliteration, the synonymous phrases 'fatal aventure', 'destinie'. There is no suspense: the poem will illustrate why the Fox deserved his fate by showing throughout his utter moral degradation and folly. This is shown, first of all, in his attitude to light: he

... durst no more with miching internell
Als long as leme and lycht was of the day;
But bydand nycht full still lurkan he lay (5-7)

The Fox's intention was certainly to do more evil; but he dared not in the daylight so waited ('full still') for the night; then he would, it is implied, seek evil again. The alliteration stresses his intentions ('more ... miching internell') and his fear of light ('lang ... leme ... lycht ... lurkan ... lay). So, the poet stresses, Lowrence was pleased when night fell: 'Mery and gled that cumyn was the nycht' (14). Repetition by a synonym stresses the Fox's reaction. He was a creature of the night, of blackness, of evil. The same characteristic is found elsewhere in the Fabillis: in *The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman*, when the Fox represents the devil, we read: 'Lowrence came lourand, for he lufit never licht' (64). In *The Swallow and Othir Birdis*:

In metaphisik aristotle sayis
That man saule is lyke ane bakkis ee
quhilk lurkis still as lang as lycht of day is
And in the glowing cumis furth to flee
Hir eine ar waik the sun scho may not see
So is our saule with phantesye opprest
To knaw the thingis in nature manifest (15-21)
Line 17 is very similar indeed to lines 6-7 of our poem and we shall see that the blindness of man's soul in this passage has certain similarities to the condition of the Fox.

In our discussion of the Fox's character the next point of interest is his attitude towards astrology. The state of the heavens he sees is shown in the accompanying diagram. The moon is in the ascendant; but though, according to medieval astrology, a beneficent planet (Benevoli sunt ut Jupiter, Venus et luna) it is in the mansion of Saturn ('Capricornus et Aquarius, domus Saturni'; Malivoli sunt ut Saturnus et Mars et dicuntur infortunati). Besides, it is in opposition to the sun, a dangerous situation:

Et semper quando tu debes aliquid facere, sit luna in ascendente fortunata. Et cavendum est summo opere quod luna non sit impedita. Et sunt modi plures impedimenti eius secundum Dorothaeum ... Secundus modus est ut sit in oppositione solis.

Saturn is in its own mansion ('Et primo sciendum est quod quilibet planeta habet virtutem fortiorem in domo quam potest habere in colo'); the most malevolent planet is thus in its strongest position. Venus, beneficent, is not in one of its own mansions; more important, it is in opposition to Saturn which, as we have seen, is in its strongest position:

Aspectus oppositionis est ratione oppositionis, unde omne signum oppositum alteri in zodiaco respicit ipsum ex oppositione, et stelle similiter existentes in signis

1. The diagram is based on those in W. C. Curry, Chaucer and the Medieval Sciences (New York, 1926).
3. Ibid., p. 169.
4. Ibid., p. 155.
5. Ibid., p. 171.
6. Ibid., p. 169.
Again, Mars, a malevolent planet, is in its own mansion ("Aries et Scorpio sunt domus Martis\(^2\)). The one redeeming feature of the election seems to be that Jupiter, benevolent, is in its own mansion ("Sagittarius et Pices, domus lovis\(^3\)). So:

My destiny and eik my word I walt
Lyn evintour is clearly to me kend (36-7)

The Fox's certainty about his prediction is stressed by the poet: by repetition of synonyms (destany, word, evintour), by rhetorical patterning of the possessive adjective, by the use of adverbs (eik, clearly) and by alliteration. The poet has earlier placed stress on the Fox's ability in this matter. In stanza three we are shown his familiarity with technical terms;\(^4\) besides, Lawrence

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2. ibid., p. 169.
3. ibid., p. 169.
4. Sum retrograde and sum var stationes (19).

Quilibet etiam planeta præter solam habet epiciculum, et est epiciculus circulus parvus per cuius circumferentiam defertur corpus planete, et centrum epicicli semper defertur in circumferentia deferentis.

Si igitur due lineae ducentur a centro terrae ita quod includant epiciculum, una ex parte orientis, reliqua ex parte occidentis, punctus contactus ex parte orientis dicitur statio prima, punctus vero contactus ex parte occidentis dicitur statio secunda. Et quando planeta est in alterutrum illarium stationem, dicitur stationarius. Arcus autem epicicli superior inter duas stationes interceptus dicitur directio, et quando planeta est in illo, dicitur directus. Arcus vero epicicli inferior inter duas stationes dicitur retrogradation, et planeta ibi existens dicitur retrogradus.

knew - he not only knew, he could teach (21) - what sign of the zodiac each one (ilkane) of the stars was in (20-1). Again,

Bot astrolab, quadrant or almanak,
Tochit of nature be instructioun,
The moving of the hevin this tod can tak quhat influence and constillatioun
Was lyk to fall vpone this erd heir doun (29-33)

The Fox, then, has a quite extraordinary knowledge of the art of astrology. Before commenting on this fact I think it worthwhile to examine what Henryson elsewhere and what other authors have to say about this art. In Orpheus and Eurydice Henryson, after interpreting the crime of Titius in an unusual way - that he desired all knowledge through astrology - condemns the art: men should dread to seek 'quhilk name in erd may know bot god allane' (576). Men should avoid 'superstitioun of astrology' (599) for

This ugly way, this myrk and dully streit
Is nocht ellis bot blynding of the oprit
With myrk cluddis and myst of Ignorance,
affetterrit in this worldis vano plesance,
And bissines of temporalite;
To kene the self a styme it may nocht se,
Pfor seameria on aftir effectioun,
Pfere ill to war ale thus to hale gois doun,
That is wan howp throw lang hanting of syn
and fowll dispair that mony fallsis In (600-9)

In The Testament of Cresseid Cresseid attributes her unhappiness and, later, her lepocrisy to the gods, whom the poet portrays to a considerable extent in astrological terms. But eventually she realizes that her unhappiness and illness have been caused by her own actions: before she was blinded by selfishness and by love of the world. Such passages I think must be taken into consideration in dealing with our fable. Other works of the period convey much the same impression. As we have seen Renard in Renard le Contrefait
thinks it necessary to confess his astrology as a sin. Deguileville, too, criticizes astrology, although, like Henryson in Orpheus and Eurydice, he considers astronomy a worthy subject. The pilgrim prays for discretion

My wordys so, for t expresse,  
That ffynally I may reppresse  
Thyn erroors and thyn sfolys,  
Groundyd on Astrologye;  
Wych ne be nat vertuous,  
Ffor they be superastycious. (20231-6)

And, later, he abuses Geomancy

... thow art ryht vnhappy,  
And dygne (to syn oppynyoun)  
Off chace and off confusional,  
That, so myche off thy sfolys  
Trusteth in astrologye ... (20774-8)

Chaucer's view of astrology is very similar: he uses it in the pagan settings of The Knight's Tale and Troilus and Cressida, in the latter as a symbol of man's enslavement to the things of this world; writing in A Treatise on the Astrolabe of 'fortunat' and 'infortunat' ascendants, he states 'Nethes these ben observances of judicial mateure and rytes of payens, in whiche my spirit hath no feith, ne knowing of her horoscopus'. In these works, then, we have astrology associated with superstitition, with paganism, with shame, with blindness and, in Henryson's own works, with 'lang hanting of syn', 'ignorance' and 'this worldis vane pleasance'. In our poem we have noted the particular emphasis the poet places on the Fox's extraordinary knowledge of the art and his obvious belief in it. Indeed the poet has been careful, from the beginning, to

place Lovrnce in a world governed by astrological conceptions, reflecting his attitude to life: thus, in the first stanza, we find the astrological terms 'aventure' and 'destenye' used to forecast the Fox's death; the same purpose explains the introduction of the pagan gods in the second stanza. Now, the prediction of the stars is correct: the Fox does die. But this, it seems to me, is part of the irony of the poem and, as we shall see as we proceed, irony plays a very important part in the expression of the poem's theme. For, in essence, the death is not caused by the stars but by the Fox's belief in the stars: his belief in what they tell him sets in motion the train of events leading to his death, a train of events impelled by his evil nature. And here we have again the double strand of the Fox's nature already implied by his attitude to light: he is evil and blind; the two characteristics go together - the evil leads to the blindness of false belief.

Similarly, in his attitude to astrology we see him blinded by his own evil: in Orpheus and Eurydice astrology is also seen to be a 'blinding of the sprit' (601). Henryson has seemingly taken the astrologer-fox from Reynardian tradition but he has adapted the character markedly to express the theme.

The Fox's attitude to confession is further evidence of his nature. For this is not true confession: he is not sorry for his sins - if he had not thought this to be the one way of escape.

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1. This at least is the reading I take from a very difficult stanza, stanza 6. It does not appear to me that the Fox is thinking of the after-life even though 1. 38 might suggest it: one might perhaps read 1 as saying that his death (mortal fail) would be 'myngat with mischel' (i.e. the punishment of hell) unless he repented (1. 39). But, to my mind, such a reading does not fit the poem: the Fox must believe that confession, in this case at least, will prevent death for otherwise we cannot explain his behaviour after his "penance" (his attitude of self-satisfaction scarcely implies that he thinks death to be imminent). Besides, the eventual punishment of the Fox is the end of this life. Of course there is an allegorical significance which I shall discuss later.
from the stars' prediction he would not have considered confession:

With mischeif mynyet is my mortall fait
By myloung the soner bot I mende
Deid in reward of syn and schamefull end
Thatirfoir I will ga seik sum confessour
And scryfe me clene of all synnis to this hour (38-42)

Line 40 is a paraphrase of St. Paul's words in the Epistle to the Romans vi, 23: 'Stipendia enim peccati, mort'. Ironically, the Fox is foretelling his own doom; for he does not act correctly upon his realization - once again he misunderstands the truth.

His 'confession' is to be a charm against impending circumstances: there is no true repentence or confession in his mind; he thinks, wrongly, that a priest can give him absolution even if he is not contrite, that once he has received external absolution he will be safe. We can compare with what Walter Hilton has to say of penance:

And what cristent man or woman pt has lost pe
liknes of God porw dedly syn brekand godis com-
mandementes; if he porw touchyng of grace
softly forsake his synne with sorow and
contricion of hert and be in ful wil for to
amende hym and torne hym to god and to gode
lifynge and in pin wil he resaynes pe
sacrament of penance if he may or if he may
not he is in wil pept to soply I say pt bis mannes
sole or womenes pt was forswapyn first to
be liknes of pe deuil porw dedly synn is now
be pe sacrament of penance restored and
achapen agayn to pe yange of ours lord god ... 
He abides not grat penance doyng ne pyntul
fleschly1, suffrying or he forgife it. But he
asks a lopyng of synne and a ful forskyng
in wil of pe soule for pe luf of hym and a
turnyng of pe herte to hym ... And pan when
he sees, pe soule wipoutyn any delayng he forgifes
pe ayn and reformes pe soule to his liknes.
pe syn is forgifen pat pe soul sal not be
damned. Nevertheless pe payn dettid for pe
syn is not sit fully forgifen bot contricion
and luf be pe more and perfore schal he go

1. Ms. flesthy.
and acheve hym and schryfe hym to his costly fadir and resayne penceaus enjoyned for his trespas and gladly fulfilleth it to pat bob pe ayn and pe payn may be don away or he passe hopen.

The passages I have underlined show the true attitude to confession; by contrast the Fox's is false. The Fox excuses himself and his like; he is not sorry that he has stolen, he regrets the outcome of theft: each night thieves' lives are risked in this "cursit craft" yet

For evir we steille and evir alyk ar pure;
In dreed and schame our dayis we indure
and widdy nek and crakraip callit als
and ayn till our hyre ar hangit be the hals (46-9)

Their reward is hanging (emphasized by the alliterating 'h's)

after a life of perpetual ('evir ... evir') dread (emphasized by the alliterating d). The Fox's attitude to confession is further illustrated by his attitude towards the priest: it is scarcely that of a sincere penitent:

1. Scala Perfectionis, Bk. 2, ch. 7 B.M. MS. Harl. 6579 fol. 67b-68a. The teaching is widespread: cf., for example, Helinandus Frigidi Montis, Sermo XXVIII, B.M. ccxii, cols. 713-4; Cæsarius Helisterbacensis, Dialogus Miraculorum, ed. J. Strange, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1851), Distinctiones II and III (De Contritione et De Confessione), 1, 55-170 - the work was translated by H. von C. Scott and C.C. Swinton Bland as The Dialogus on Miracles (Broadway Mediaeval Library, ed. C.G. Coulton and Eileen Rower, London, 1929) where the relevant sections are pp. 61 ff.; Robertus de Sorbona, 'De Tribus Dietis', De Conscientia et De Tribus Dietis, ed. P. Chambo (Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire, Paris, 1902), p. 58; Cursor Lundi, ed. R. Lorris (E.E.T.O.O. 57. 59. 62. 66. 68. 1874-7), II. 25790 ff.; Bromyard, Summa Predicantium, op. cit., 0 v (Contritio) and ivi (Confessio); Dan Michel's Avenyte of Invyt, op. cit., pp. 172-80; Jacob's Well, ed. Bland (op. cit., pp. 168-96); Chaucer's Parson's Tale, Robinson, p. 230.
Seand the wolf, this wylie tratour tod
on knees fell, with hud in to his nek
Welcome, my gaistly fadir undir god
q he, with mony binge and mony bek (57-60)

The Fox's insincerity is shown by the poet's direct comment
('wylie tratour tod') and by the exaggerated actions described
in a typically Henrysonian phrase: 'mony binge and mony bek' -
emphatic adjective repeated in balance, synonyms linked by
alliteration. It is impossible to agree with Stearns that the
Fox has 'an honest impulse to do the right thing' or that 'the
Fox's complete, immediate faith in the Wolf, whom he is traditionally
supposed to outwit is almost touching'. Stearns' misjudgement
becomes even more apparent as we read on and find the Fox's pretence
at self-denigration ('Fadir', quod he, "I half prit caus to dude"'63)
and flattery even more heavily emphasized:

Ye er the lanternes and the sicker way,
Suid gyde sic sympill folk as to me grace;
Your hairset and your rousset3 coull of gray,
Your lene cheikis, your paill and petous face;
Echawes full weill your perfyf halynace;
for weill was him that anis in his lyfe
had hap to yow his synnis anis to schryfe (64-70)

The Fox is a master flatterer: we note the emphasis given by the
repetition, and balance, of the personal pronouns and possessive
adjectives Ye, Your, and Yow, appealing to the Wolf's vanity; the
use of adjectives emphasizing the monk's holiness ('bair', 'rousset',
'lene', 'paill', and 'petous' - these linked and reinforced by

1. The devices to be found in this passage of The Fox and the Wolf
are also used by the flattering Fox in The Fox, the Wolf and the Cocker, The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, and The Fox
and the Cocks; in discussing the latter we saw how some at
least of these devices are to be found in The Nonnes Freates
Tale.


3. Ms. ousset.
alliteration - leading to the climax, alliterating with the previous two, 'perfy'); the use of adverbs ('full' and 'anis', twice used - one would need to confess once only to such a holy man: again the wrong emphasis in penance not repentance but the virtues of the priest; again appealing to the Wolf's vanity); and the false humility: 'sic sempill folk as me' implying, of course, that, by contrast, the friar is learned. Stearns' comment on 'the novelty of a Fox who not only cannot see through the Wolf's disguise but who has also convinced himself that he is one of the "sempill folk"' seems singularly inappropriate. The Fox's plan has succeeded: the Wolf believes (or pretends to believe) him penitent (1. 72). The Fox continues his pretended self-denigration:

of reif end stovist, schir, I can tell ennewoch,
that causis me full sair for till repent;
Bot Fader byd stil heir on this bent
I yow besek, and heir me now declar
my conscience that prikis me go sair (73-7)

The Fox interpolates expressions of subservience ('schir', 'fader') - expressions which perhaps are used at normal confessions but here used to an exaggerated extent; he stresses his sorrow ('full sair' 'go sair'). And so he kneels 'bairheid', 'full humly' (79). The Fox is not repentant (86-90); he rejoices in his sins. This is one of the few times in the poem that the Fox tells the truth; but even here he uses the flattering and deferential 'schir' (86); and when he is asked whether he will repent he returns to his wiles, excusing himself: how else can he live? Need is the cause. Besides:

I schame to beg I en nocht wirk ye wat
Yet wald I fane pretend a gentill stait (97-8)

These excuses have some measure of validity, if only to one who is prepared to believe what the Fox tells him: and the Fox has prepared the Wolf for this by his flattery, and by the truth of his lack of repentance. There is nothing whatsoever wrong with being ashamed to beg or even with pretending to the 'gentill stait!' (the Wolf, himself a hypocrite, should have great sympathy with this last excuse). The Fox appeals to the Wolf's judgment ('ye wät'), another form of flattery. His skill is further shown in his acceptance of penance:

\[
\text{A ser considdir my complexion,} \\
\text{And seikly and walk and of my natur tendir} \\
\text{To will ye se I am baith lene and skleender.} \\
\text{Yit nevir the leg I wald, as it wer lycht} \\
\text{And schort nocht grevand to my tendirnes} \\
\text{ Tak parte of pane, fulfill it gife I might,} \\
\text{To set my silly soule in way of grace (103-9)}
\]

We find again the Fox appealing to the Wolf's judgment and knowledge ('ser', 'considdir', 'will ye se'); and synonymous adjectives ('seikly', 'walk', 'tendir', 'lene', 'skleender') stressed by repetition of conjunctions ('and ... and ... and'; 'baith ... and') emphasizing the poor state of the Fox's health (the poem's audience, however, knew this to be quite satisfactory, judging from his previous actions). Lawrence is determined to gain absolution; so, he claims, in spite of ('Yit, nevir the leg' - again a repetition) his parlous state he is prepared to take some penance: but it must be 'lycht', 'schort', only a 'parite', 'noch grevand'; and he does not promise to fulfill it. Even the penance he is given he causes to be modified by his subtilty:

\[
\text{I grant thairto as ye will gife me laif,} \\
\text{To sit puddings or laip a littil blude,} \\
\text{Or heid and felt or pennish lat me preif} \\
\text{In cais I fant of fleshie in to my rude! (113-6)}
\]
First he accepts; then asks for relief (we note: 'so ye will give me leif'; again a type of deference), trying to make this relief seem very small; his use of 'or' suggests alternatives - 'and' would have been accumulative; he wants only a 'littill' blood; he wishes merely to 'preif' the paunches. And, of course, he supplies an apparently valid excuse for wishing to do so. And he ends with another speech of deference and flattery - it has undertones of irony as well: 'god yeild yow ser, for that text full well ye know' (119). The Fox, with masterly flattery, has succeeded in blinding, or thinks he has succeeded in blinding, the Wolf to his true nature. But also, by his sheer skill as a flatterer, just as by his sheer skill in astrology, he has shown his own blindness to truth, has contributed to his own downfall. Henryson has taken the Fox at confession, and the flattering Fox from Reynardian tradition, but he has combined them and adapted them markedly to express his theme, the Fox's self-deception.

Before dealing with the Fox's attitude to penance I shall digress briefly to discuss the character of the Wolf. He is presented as:

A worthy doctour of divinite
Pfreir wolf waitakath in science wondrous ale
To preche and pray was new cum of clostir
With beidis in hand sayand his paternoster (53-6)

The name waitakath (one who waits or watches for a chance to do harm) gives an immediate clue to the Wolf's character; as was early pointed out it was taken from Caxton. It is interesting

1. Diebler Henryson's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., p. 46.
2. Reynard is off to Rome on pilgrimage and threatens all who have sent him with the Pope's curse for 'Thar [in Rome] is prentout, wayte scathes and other of my frendis and alyes', Arber, op. cit., p. 70.
that the other occasion on which Henryson uses the word 'ale'
is also in a derogatory context:

It pass far alkynd of pestilens
a wickit mynd with wyrds fair and ale
(The Wolfe and the Paddock, 136-7)

And the Wolf is 'wondrous ale' (the 'w' linking, by alliteration,
with worthy - thus stressing the sarcasm of the use of 'worthy'
in this context - and with 'Wolf waitskath'). So we are certain
that his telling his beads and his saying of the paternoster
are mere show, designed to attract attention. This impression
is strengthened by his reaction to the Fox's flattery: he laughs
(71), obviously for pleasure, and is taken in by the Fox's tricks.
So, eventually, he gives him 'full remissioun' (112) and excuses
himself in a facile, but apparently learned, way, using a proverb:
'for naid may haif no law' (118). There is another possible
interpretation of the friar's character, an interpretation perhaps
more consistent with his name which seems to imply that he is
actively seeking to do harm. It is possible that the Wolf
understands the Fox's tactics but lets him continue deceiving
himself in order that he might make a bad confession and suffer
the consequences. Now the character of the Wolf is the only
evidence in the poem for what Stearns calls the poet's 'trenchant
criticism of the Church'. But not only does such criticism play
an insignificant part in the poem's action, but also it is criticism
not of the Church, but of one friar.

1. Cf. The Fox end the Cock, l. 50.
Lawrence's attitude to penance is as false as his attitude to repentance and confession. We have already seen Hilton saying that the sinner must 'resayne penaunce for his trespas and gladly fulfille it so pat bop be syn and pe payn may be don away or he passe hepen'. Similarly, in a fifteenth century sermon, we find:

For in certayn case thi shrift is not vaileable, and therfore it were well don that thou gouernest the wisely in thi shrift. Sir I say the ther be foure case in the wiche a monnes shrift is not vaileable ... And the fourte case is when that a man is neolgent and ewill wild to fulfill is peynaunce that the prest hath geue hym. In any of these foure case a man most shryve him agayn, for is confession is not vaileable. On than, to shrift, and loke thou be so sett that every things that thi goostely finkur woll sett the and bid the do reasonable, loke that thou wilfully take uppon the and do itt. 1

The Fox would not carry out the penance given him, when he found it difficult ('the walterand wawis wode', 123; he had 'nowdir nat bottis nor bate', 128); his scheming mind worked out a plan intended to overcome his vows (again we see an example of Henryson markedly adapting an earlier story for his own use). In the humour of lines 134-40 we catch some of the Fox's pleasure and humour at the brilliance of his plan. It is quite probable that the episode is intended as a parody of the sacrament of baptism ('ga down ser kid cum vp ser salmound agane', 135) in the Fox's mind. It would be fitting that a perversion of a sacrament which should be the means of grace is the means by which the Fox is finally brought to judgment for his own perversion of.

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 278.
another sacrament, means of grace. And we see his extreme
self-satisfaction when he imagined his plan had succeeded:

Thus synaly fillit with tendir melt
Unto a den for dreid he hes him drest
Vndir a bisk quhail that the sone cowth betit
To beke his breest and bellys he thought best
And raklesiye he said quhail he coude rest
Strakand his wambe agane this sonnes hete
Vpoun this belye ware sett a bolt full mete (141-7)

And it is part of the irony of the poem that Lowrance's jesting
words—his self-satisfaction in the success of his plan, the
extreme self-deceit—are acted upon. For the Fox throughout,
in achieving his false purposes, has been deceiving himself; and,
at the height of his self-deceit, when he thinks he has got both
a good confession and a good meal and life seems perfect (1. 146),
his own jesting words are fulfilled in earnest. One looks in
vain for evidence to support Stearns' contention that the Fox
represents 'a group of people with whom the poet might well have
sympathized—the dispossessed gentry'.

I have not been able to find any parallels for the story of
Lowrance's death: there are accounts of Renart's death² and the
death of Renart's father³ in the tradition but these are very
different from the incident told in our fable. We may perhaps
find a reason for the means of death in the interpretations of
arrows by Biblical commentators. St. Bruno commenting on Psalm
xxxvii, 3 (Quoniam sagittae tuae infixae sunt mihi) states:

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 117.
   Unedited as yet in Roques' edition.
Vel quod dicit sagittae tue infixe sunt ec.,
sic legitur ut per sagittas plusquam in
superiori sententia intelligatur. Superius
enim per sagittam solummodo mortalitas et
passibilitas intelligebantur, quae bene
sagittae dicuntur, eo quod de longe per eas
Deus Adae comminatus est antequam peccaret,
sicut sagittae de longe trahendae comminantur:
vel quia per eas genus humanum afficitur, ad
modum illius, qui sagittarum vulneribus
affligitur. Aliter autem sagittae latius
accipiuntur sic: Sagittae tue infixe sunt
meas, id est mortalitas et passibilitas et
fomes peccati.

Hrabanus Maurus interprets the arrows as being, amongst other things, the punishment of God: '... Per sagittas vindictae Domini, ut in Cantico Deuteronomii "Et sagittas meas" id est, vindictas meas, "complebo in eis"'.

Now, the punishment of God is generally thought of in connection with the after-life; this is implied in the moralitas (181.2) and also by the Biblical quotation ('Stipendia enim peccati, mora') used earlier by the Fox. The traditional interpretation of the verse refers to eternal death: Abelard: 'Herito fines dicit tam vitam quam mortem animae asternam...';

We can perhaps take the poem on two levels: the one a portrait of the Fox's self-deceit; the other allegorical, an examination of the dangers of false confession. The moralitas deals with the latter only—there is no attempt at a point by point explanation of the events of the fable nor of the characteristics of the Fox. Besides, it adds material for which no parallel can be found in the fable itself, expanding the meaning to all types of false confession: the Fox's action had been an exemplum of one type—a person believing that one need merely have external confession without contrition. Other types:

Suppose thaj be as for the tyne contryto
Can name, forbers nor fra their aynnis fflee
We dravis nature so in propertie
Off beist and man that medis thaj mon do
As thaj of lang tyne hawe hantit thame to (171-5)¹

The Fox in our fable has never been 'contryto'. Again there is nothing in the fable to parallel:

Do wilfull pennance here and ye sall wend
Eftir your deid to Ioy withouttin end (181-2)

The poet, then, in the moralitas has not explained the fable so much as taken the central situation and expanded it. His work is creative here, as we have seen it to be throughout the poem in his handling of traditional stories.

¹ The power of sin which has become a habit is also examined in *The Swallow and Othir Birds*, 11. 286 ff. and the *Prolog*, 11. 54-6.
(xi) The Fox tried before the Lyon

A story common to many medieval fable collections tells of a lion who, seeing a horse in a field, approached it with intent to kill boasting of its abilities as a doctor. The horse, recognizing the trick, complained of a thorn in its foot and the lion, stooping to pull it out, was kicked. The moralitates usually castigates the folly of the treacherous and the false.

A rather similar story in branche XIX of the Roman de Renard tells how Isengrim asked a mare to be his companion; the mare agreed to go with him on condition that he removed a thorn from her hoof. The Wolf bent down to do so and was kicked. Again, in Caxton's Aesop, one of the Fabulae Extravagantes tells of a wolf's adventures on a day he thought would be fortunate for him. He approached a mare stating that he would eat her foal; she agreed to allow him to do so after he had pulled a thorn from her foot; he was of course stunned by a blow and unable to catch mare or foal.

1. Vulgate Romulus, Steinhövel's Aesop, ed. Österley, op. cit.; p. 141; Caxton's Aesop, ed. Jacob, op. cit., ii, 65-6;
Wissembourg Aesop, Hervieux, ii, 173; Corpus Christi Oxford Aesop, Hervieux, ii, 256; Vienna-Berlin Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 435; Florence Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 493; Romulus of Nilant, Hervieux, ii, 532; LSG Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 583-4; Neckam, Bastin, i, 17-18; Gualterus Anglicus, Bastin, ii, 59-40;
Isopet de Lyon, Bastin, ii, 155-7; Isopet I, Bastin, ii, 275-5;
Isopet III de Paris, Bastin, ii, 413-4; B.M. MS. Harl. 2851, fol. 176; B.M. MS. Harley 268, fol. 44; B.M. Add. MS. 27536, ff. 74b-75a; Isopet II de Paris, Bastin, 1, 76-9; Isopet de Chartres, Bastin, i, 142-3.
These stories, however, are but distant analogues to Henryson's
The Fox tried before the Lyon. Much closer parallels exist.
In Caxton's Reynard\(^1\) the Fox confesses to Grymber that, when out
walking with Isegrym, he saw a red mare with a black colt.
'Isegrym was almost stouren for hunger And prayd me goo to the
mare and wyte of her yf she wolde sell her foole.\(^1\) The Mare
replied that she would sell it for a price'wroton in my hynde
foot. Yf ye conne rede and be a clerke ye may come see and rede
it.' The Fox recognized the Mare's plan and, having confessed
itself unable to read, ran to tell Isegrym whom he deceived.
Isegrym:

\[\text{oy neues ... what sholde me lotte I can wel}
\text{freshe, latyn, english, and duche. I hawe}
\text{ggoon to scole at oxenfor. I hawe also wyth}
\text{olde and auncyent doctours ben in the}
\text{audyence and herde piies and also hawe gruen}
\text{sentence I am lycenysd in bothe lawes what}
\text{maner wrytyng that onyx-man can deuyse I can}
\text{rede it as perfyghtly as my name I wyl goo}
\text{to her and shal anon vnderstande the prys.}
\]

She agreed to allow the wolf to read it and lyfte vp her foot
which was newe shooed wyth yron and vj stronge nayles and she
smote hym wythout mysayng on his head that he fyl doun as he had
been deed.' The mare and her foale trotted away unharmed and
Reynard proved his usual consoling self:

\[\text{Sir ysegrym dere eme how is it now wyth you.}
\text{hawe ye eten ynow of the colte?? I pray}
\text{yow tell me what was wxron vnder the mares}
\text{fote what was. prose or ryme. metre or verse.}
\text{I wold fyn knowe it. I trowe it was cantum.}
\text{for I herde you mynge me thoghte fro ferre.}
\text{for ye were no wyse that no man coude rede it}
\text{better than ye}
\]

\[\text{Sir. ysegrym dere eme how is it now wyth you.}
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\text{for I herde you mynge me thoghte fro ferre.}
\text{for ye were no wyse that no man coude rede it}
\text{better than ye}
\]

Alas reynart alas said the wulf I pray yeow
to leue youre mockyng ... The hore wyth her
longe legge had an yron foot I wende the mayles
thereof had ben lettres and she hytte me at the
fyrst stroke vij. grate wundeus in my head that
almost it is clouen. suche maner lettres shal
I neuer more desire to rede.

Dere was is that trouthe that ye tells
me I have grete meruaylle I heald ye for
one of the wysest clerkes that noe lyue
Now I here wel it is true that I long syth
haue redde and horde that the beste clerkes
ben not the wysest men.

Gregory Smith argues that this last phrase proves that Henryson
knew - and used - Caxton for, in Henryson's fable, the Lion, to
whose court the Fox and the Wolf return after their adventure,
remarks on seeing the Wolf's bloody head

This tale is true quha tant vnto it takis
The grettest clerks ar nocht the wysest men (254-5)

Now Smith may be correct but there are conflicting pieces of
evidence. In Chaucer's Reeve's Tale the Miller, planning to outwit
Aleyn and Eyakyn, remarks

'The grettest clerkes been noght wysest men'
As whilom to the wolf thus spak the mare. (1[A] 1054-5)

The proverb seems to have been taken from a version of the fable
current in Chaucer's time which Henryson too may have known. True,
here the proverb is attributed to the mare, in Henryson to the
Lion; but a similar difficulty exists with Caxton's version where
the proverb is attributed to the Fox. Smith also adduces as
evidence for Henryson's use of Caxton's Reynard

the use of the word Parliament ... for the Court
held by the Lion. The term is generally 'Court'
or 'Council', as in the heading of the first
and thirteenth chapters of Caxton; but in the
fourteenth chapter we have the calling of a
parliament! for the trial of Reynard.

1. Poems, op. cit., 1, xli-xlili.
2. ibid., p. xliii.
The use of the word can however be paralleled elsewhere. For instance, Gobi speaks twice of 'aquila rex uium [quae] semel congregavit periamentum uium'. And in a very important text, which we shall discuss later at length, Odo of Cheriton speaks De asino nolente venire ad Parliamentum Leonis. There are other difficulties in accepting the thesis that Caxton has influenced Henryson in this fable. The setting is very different: in Henryson the Lion has sent the Fox and the Wolf to the grey mare to summon her to court; she claims that her respite is written on her foot. In Caxton the Fox and the Wolf walking together see a red mare whose foal they wish to eat - she claims that the price is written on her foot. More, in Henryson's fable the Mare does not at first tell the "ambassadors" where the respite is written. Thus the Fox's plea that he 'can nocht spell a word' (201) and suggestion that the Wolf read it seem to be made to avoid responsibility (of this message he is principal, 203) rather than as a malicious attempt to injure the Wolf. Nor are there parallels in Caxton for the Mare's offer of her foot to the Fox after the Wolf had been laid low and his reply 'Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum' (224). In fact the whole emphasis of the episode seems to be somewhat nearer the 'sentence' of the fable describing the Lion, the Wolf and the Fox sharing the spoils after a hunt. But this we must discuss later. For the moment at least, then, we must recognize as unproven the case for Caxton's influence on Henryson, realizing of course that the latter's fable must have

been taken from a story very similar to Caxton's, and that Henryson himself could have made the modifications we have examined.

A somewhat similar story occurs in several medieval fable collections. It seems however to be no nearer to Henryson's version than Caxton - more distant perhaps for the tale concerns a mule. I quote from the shortest version, the mixed Romulus of Berne:

Vulpes, videns Lulum, quaesituit cujuis generis et quod nomen est, Qui eit quod ignoravit quod nomen sibi fuit imponitum (sic), quia nisius iuvenis, et idem pater suus fecit ei scribi sub pede. Quod fraudum aversus Lupo nuntiavit; qui, veniens et videre volens, interfactus est. Quem deridens, Vulpes ait: Iusto iudicio hoc pateris; volebas legere et litteras neceriebas.

Et docet hoc non nimis inquirere nec omni spiritui credere.

The moralitas in the Munich Romulus and Steinhöwel reed Taliter omnes insipientes, dum docti videri appetunt, frequenter labuntur in mala.

We are, I believe, in many ways much closer to the Henryson fable with a seemingly unique version by Odo of Cheriton which I mentioned before. I quote in full:

Leo edixit vt omnia animalia coram eo comparerent, et, illia congregati, pecuit si quod animal abasset. Cui responsum erat quod quidam Asinus aberat, in quodam prato.

1. Baldo, Fabulas Curiositatis, Hervieux, v. 375-7; Munich Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 272-3; Steinhöwel, Amor, ed. Osterley, op. cit., pp. 192-3; Caxton's Amor, ed. Jacob, op. cit., ii, 128-9; mixed Romulus of Berne, Hervieux, ii, 304; Jacques de Vitry, Crana XXXIII, pp. 13-14. In the latter version the Fox himself is fooled. The story is also to be found in exempla collections in B.M. MS. Add. 18347 ff. 121b-122a and B.M. MS. Arundel 506, fol. 47.
There are differences of course—the attitude of the moralitas towards the animals is reversed, the creature summoned is an ass not a mare, the Fox is injured and the Wolf can seem wise—but Henryson's fable must have been based on this story or at least one like it.¹ Leaving aside this latter possibility as we must leave aside, but always remember, such possibilities in our

¹ The occurrence of this fable in written form in a fourteenth century collection would seem to make unnecessary Bauman's contention ("The Folk Tale and Oral Tradition in the Fables of Robert Henryson," op. cit., p. 121) that Henryson's fable is derived from a folk-tale source. Bauman provides a parallel for Henryson's fable from the Aarne-Thompson classification. It is similar to Odo's version but, even if it could be proved to have been existent in folk-tale tradition in medieval times, I would judge it more characteristic of Henryson (from evidence adduced in this thesis) to work from a literary than from a folk-tale source.
discussion of the sources of all The Fabillus, we might take this version as our base and see how Henryson has changed it by addition from other sources. It seems as if Henryson combined into it the ending suggested by the other version of the story of the wolf: the wolf's pretentiousness is punished. But, as was shown before in our discussion of the version of the tale in Caxton's Reynard, there are striking differences between this combination and the original story (taken from Caxton or elsewhere). The fox seems to learn from his 'friend's' mistake, unless we are to assume that he is being ironical and that he has known all along that the wolf will be kicked, assumptions that I cannot find supported in the text. As it stands this portion of the fable is in some ways similar to another common fable in which the lion, the wolf and the fox share out the spoils of their hunting. The wolf suggests an equal sharing at which the lion rips off its scalp. Turning to the fox, the lion asks how it would share - the fox suggests that only the scraps should be left for itself and the wolf; the lion should have all that is best. In answer to the lion's question of how it has learned to share so well the fox answers: 'Domine, ille rubens capellanus socii mai, demonstrato capite excoriato' (Odo of Cheriton). We might suggest tentatively then


that Henryson's fable again shows his method of creativity—combination. The relationship between moralitas and fable I shall discuss later.

So far we have discussed but one, though seemingly the principal, episode in the fable. Other episodes seem also to have been combined from different sources. There is some sort of parallel for the Fox's attitude to his father in Caxton's *Reynard*. The Fox, being tried before the king, argues that once he had saved the king's life: his father was part of a plot to overthrow him, a plot which was to be furthered by bribery—the old Fox had discovered a treasure. But Reynard had removed the treasure and when his father found this for great anger and sorrow he went and lynge himself... And I pourre reynart have no thanke no reward I have buryed myn owen fader by cause the kynges shoold haue his lyf.¹ In our fable too the Fox buries his father, is pleased to be his heir.²

The parliament is held in a spring setting (71-7) like that in the *Roman de Renard*:

Ge dist l'estoire es premiers vero
que je estoit passe yvers
et l'aube copine floriscoit
et la rose espamissoit
et pres fu de l'Ascension,
mesires Noble le lyon
toutes les baisastes fist venir
en son palais por cort tenir.³

---

2. The life story of Renard in *La Rouan de Renard* is very different. Eve, continuing to spoil creation after the fall by summoning forth evil creatures, brings up the fox from the sea (*branche XXIV*; Roques, III, 11. 3733 ff. – vol. ii, pp. 16 ff.); Renard's death, brought on by a quarrel with Isengria, is accompanied by the utmost pomp and ritual; he is wept for by King and Queen (*branche XVII*; Martin, *op. cit.* 11, 197-242. Unedited as yet by Roques.)
The beginning of Caxton's *Reynard* is also interesting in this connection:

It was about the time of pentecost or whyt-sontyde that the wodes comynly be lusty and gladsom And the trees clad with leysys and blossoms and the ground with herbes and flowris sweete smellyng and also the fowles and byrdes syngen melodiously in theyr armony That the Lyon the noble kyng of all bestie wolde in the holy dayes of thyse feaste holds on open Court at stade whyche he dyde to knowe over alle in his lande And commanded by strayte comysayons and maundementes that every beast chold come thyder in suche wyse that alle the beestis grote and saele cam to the courte euf reynard the fox for he know hymself fawty and gyly ...

In our fable the Fox comes to court but he too is guilty and afraid.

The peace decree (148-51) is also part of the tradition.

In the Roman Renart tells a titmouse

> Or a dans Nobles li lions
> novelement la pes juree,
> se Dieux plaist, qui avra duree;
> par sa terre l'a fait jurer
> et a ses barons aifer
> qui soit gardee et maintenede.
> S'en sont mout lie la gent menue,
> car or charront par plusors terres
> plaiz et noises et mortes guerres,
> et les bestes granz et petites,
> la merci Dieu, seront bien quietes.

And in the Roman the Fox is several times tried for his crimes before the court; as in our fable he uses his cunning in his defence, but in the Roman this succeeds, here not so.

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Having seen as far as possible what Henryson has taken from the tradition we can now examine what he has done with his material. But first, to remove confusion, I must comment on Stearna' only reference to the fable. It concerns the account of the ingratitude of Lawrence's son, an account which, he maintains, 'has little relevance to the fable itself'. I hope to show that such a judgement is misguided but first I wish to question the interpretation he puts on the passage. He says 'This passage contains many details which appear to refer to some specific person'; no reason is given for this assumption and, in my opinion, there can be none: the 'characters' of both father and son are certainly closely observed; but so are the 'characters' of many of the animals in the Roman de Renard, for instance. Stearna goes on to point out parallels between the situation as described in the poem and the struggle between John, fourth lord of the Isles, and his son Angus. The difficulty is, however, that many of the points that Stearna quotes as parallels are not at all. Angus was illegitimate, certainly, just as Father War is; but nowhere in our poem does Father War lend a revolt against his own father and defeat him; nor is there any parallel for the fact that the motive which had led Angus to revolt against his father was a resentment of the fact that John had subjected himself to James III or for the conclusion 'Thus, having defeated his father, Angus was free to violate the boundary treaties between John and the king.' The Fox had not

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 16.
2. Ibid., p. 19.
3. Ibid., p. 20.
4. Ibid., p. 20.
given away authority over his land; his son is merely pleased that now he will have possession of the lands - the natural transference of ownership from father to son on a father's death. Stearns continues: 'The rebellion of Angus against his father is an exception to the code of clan loyalty for which the age is noted, and makes it difficult to find any other historical analogy for Henryson's allusions.' There is no question of clan loyalty in the poem and I fail to see that there are any allusions for which to find an historical analogy. Once again Stearns, presuming that Henryson is a political allegorist and satirist, has been misled by his own preconceptions into falsifying the nature of the poetry which he claims to be discussing.

The action of the poem centres largely around the king's parliament and I wish therefore to discuss the Lion first of all. Henryson stresses both his grandeur and the utter subjection of the beasts to him. The Lion commands:

-Se noble lyoun of all beisitis king.
Gretis to god ay lastand but ending
To brutall beisitis and rriotall
I send as to my subiectis gretis and small.
My celstuid and hie magnificence
Latris yow witt furth with incontinent
Thinkis to morne with riall diligence
Vpoun this hill. to hald a parliament,
Sraitlys therefore I give commandment,
Efor to compeir befoir my tribunall
Vnder all pane and parrell that may fall (60-70)

We see stressed his royalty ('We' - the royal plural; 'king'; 'celstuid'; 'hie magnificence'; 'riall') and his authority

1. Robert Henryson, 92, cits., p. 20.
2. Henryson uses similar phrasing to describe the majesty of the Lion in The Lyon and the Mouse (cf. 11. 116 and 169).
('subjectie'; 'straitlye ... I geve commandiment'; 'vnder all pane and parrell'); for those who place themselves in the world's power - the Moralitas (1. 295) tells us that the Lion represents the world\(^1\), believing it to be sovereign, become completely subject to its sway.\(^2\) In fact they are blinded by its seeming impressiveness and beauty (and by its pretended devotion, 1. 61); they are 'brutall beistie' and 'irrationall', irrational in having given up their reason by following the world (an interesting comparison is with the second epistle of St. Peter ii, 12 where those 'qui post carnea in concupiscencia immunditae ambulant' (v. 10) are called 'velut irrationabili pecora'), 'brutall' in being slaves to sin and their bodies (Prolog, 43-56), to the world:

This Wolf I likkin 'unto Sensualitee
As quhen lyke brutall beistie we accord
Our mynd all 'to this worldes vanitez
Liking to tak and love him as our lord (309-12)

The poet continues his emphasis on the Lion's royalty and power:

Thre leopardis come A crowin 'of many gold
Berand thaj brocht vnto that hillis hicht
With Ispis Hunyt and riall rubies rold
And myny divers dyamentis wele dicht
With pollis proud a palyon doun thai picht
And in that trone their sat a wild lyon
In rob rialte with cepter suerd and crowin (78-84)

1. Although I discuss here the poem in relationship to the moralitas I fully realize that one's reaction while reading the poem for the first time may suggest a very different interpretation. I shall discuss this problem later.

2. We might compare with the following: from Chaucer's translation of Boethius, Book IV, Pros 6 (Robinson, p. 368): 'ryght so, by semblable resoun, thilke thing that departeth ferrest fro the firste thoughtes of God', (one might say, into this world) 'it is unfolden and summittid to gretere bondes of destyne'. We shall examine the linkage between the Lion and the idea of Fortune in our poem shortly.
Henryson's heraldic reference (a conflation of the royal arms of England and Scotland\(^1\)) gives some indication of the power and sway of the Lion. (The fact that he is served by three leopards - aristocrats in the animal hierarchy - may remind us that the renowned of this world serve him; cf. ll. 295-8). More typically Henrysonian devices - alliteration; the use of adjectives and adverbs such as 'divers', 'mony', 'wels' - also contribute to the stress. The world seems magnificent, seems sovereign to its subjects; but the adjective 'wild' perhaps links him to the irrational beasts he rules reminding of the reality behind the façade. I shall return to the catalogue of beasts in a little while. Suffice it to emphasise now that the animals came 'for dread of deid' (122), hurrying (124). They were afraid of the King and utterly subservient to him: 'Befoir thair lord ilkane thai lowtth law' (126). 'Thair lord' - they belonged to him, accepted his values; there were none who refrained (ilkane):

Seand thir beatis at his bidding boun
He gave a braid and bennkit all about
Than flattingis to his feitt thai fell all doun
Pfor dreed of deid thay drowpit all in doun (127-30)

Again their unanimity ('all', repeated) in fear, in complete submission, is stressed. The Lion is pleased:

And bad thaim with ane countenance full sweet
Be nocht afferit But stand upoun your feit

I lat yow wit my mycht is mercisabill
and steris none that ar to me prostrat
Angrye suelne and ala vnneasabill
To all that standis againis myne estait

The quick turn agair to thair o thay way

1. Bruce Dickens, 'Contributions to the Interpretation of Middle Scots Texts', a letter in *T. L. S.* 21st February, 1924, p. 112. It does not seem to me that this device is used to accuse specific kings of worldliness; rather it is used to show the apparent respectability, the apparent magnificence and power of the world and its passing pleasures.
I rug I ryve all beistis that makis debait
Aganis the nycht of my magnificence
So none pretend to pryde in my presence (132-40)

This is the speech of a tyrant; we note the constant recurrence of the personal pronouns and possessive adjectives ('I', 'my', 'me', 'myne'); the demand for absolute obedience and the threat of punishment (the alliteration on 'st' through lines 135-7 links, and heightens, a contrast: those who obey completely are left alone; those who disobey or oppose are severely punished; the alliterating, balanced 'I rug, I ryve' emphasizes this as does the repeated threat 'angrye, austerne and els unmesabill').

Only those who give complete obedience are tolerated. He is a tyrant and he is the figure of Fortune:

\[\text{The lowest heir I may rycht sonë vp hie}
\text{And mak him maister ouer yow all I may}
\text{The Cromdaile gif he will mak deray}
\text{Or the greit camell thought thai be neuer an crous}
\text{I can thame law as litill as ans mows (143-7).}\]

Henryson gives us a sense of the king's unlimited power: the repeated 'I may'; 'I can'; in spite of all opposition ('thai be neuer an crous') he can do his will 'rycht sonë'. There is implied, I am certain, a comparison with Fortune's ability to make high or low at will. The concept of Fortune, and her instability, is introduced into the poem in two other ways: by the setting and by the catalogue of beasts:

\[\text{The morowin, come and phibus with his beysa}
\text{Consomit had the mysy cloudis gray}
\text{The ground was grene and as the gold it gleis}
\text{With greis ground gudelic grete and guy}
\text{The spice than spred to spring on every spray}
\text{The lark the maus and the merle so hee}
\text{Sweleye can sing trippand fra tre to tre (71-7).}\]
Henryson, like most other late medieval writers, always uses this traditional setting iconographically,¹ to remind us of the vanity of the world; it appears beautiful now (just as the Lion’s apparel seems beautiful), but the beauty of Nature fades — it is transitory, changing, like Fortune, like the world. The significance of the imagery is made explicit in The Lyon and the Houn:

The fair forest with levis loun and le
With fowlis song and flouris ferly seneit
Is bot the world and his prosperite
As fals plesandis myngit with cair repeleit
Ryczth as the ros with frost and wintir weit
faidis so dois the warld And thame disavis
quhilk in their lust confides havis (260-5)

The introduction of Phedrus (1. 71) may also be of significance, with its suggestion of paganism — the idolatry, and futility, of worshipping this world.

A comparison of the beast catalogue in our poem with others — it is a common device in medieval literature — is also interesting in our consideration of the similarities between King Lion and his subjects and Fortune and her servants. There is a similar catalogue in The Kingis Quair,² stanzas 155-7. Gregory Smith states that 'The correspondence between Henryson and the author of The Kingis Quair may be only accidental'.³ This seems unlikely for of the thirty animals mentioned in The Kingis Quair catalogue only five (the licness, the elk, the sable, the 'foyn3ee' — beech martin — and the ermine) are not mentioned in Henryson's fable. Whatever the relationship between the texts may be, in

both Fortune is presented in connection with the catalogue.

Of course there is a different attitude to Fortune: in The Kingis Gair the narrator has come to terms with it while in our poem Fortune represents the values of this false world which must be avoided. Other places where a catalogue of animals is used in conjunction with the concept of Fortune occur in The Book of the Duchess (11. 427 ff.) and The Parliament of Fowles (11. 323 ff.); again, this interpretation has different emphases but the correspondences are noteworthy, reinforcing our conception of the animals in our poem as under the power of the world, of Fortune. The catalogue itself provides several points of interest.

Firstly, in its composition, Henrison begins his list of animals with a group which illustrates

how many men in operation... or lyk to be lostis in their condition (Prolog 48-9)

- men who have become animals or who are, in nature, part man part beast. Thus the Minotaur, the offspring of Pasiphae, Minos' queen, and a snow-white bull - the unnatural product of lust.

The werewolf too fits his theme perfectly - a man becoming a wolf.

The other two monsters provide some difficulty. The Bellerophant that beast of bastardes (93) cannot be Bellerophon;... scarcely the action of a brutal beast. Charles Elliott suggests:


2. ibid., pp. 122-4.

3. Harvey Wood quotes a sixteenth century version of the story (Poems and Pables, op. cit., pp. 234-5, note to 1. 888). It is to be found, in varying forms, in medieval exempla collections, e.g. B.M. N3. 'Royal 12 E xxi, fol. 47v; B.M. N3. Harl. 7322, fol 99a.
Presumably Bellerophant is the Chimaera, slain by Bellerophan by the devising of Iobates, King of Lydia, acting on the request of Proteus, King of Ephyra, whose queen Antea had played Potiphar's wife to Bellerophan. It is a beast of bastard because it is of 'mixed' form, with heads of lion, goat and dragon.  

The Chimaera's parents are also of interest: it was the child of Typhon (an earth-born monster of many heads, hands and feet from different types of animals) and Echidna (half-woman, half serpent). The description of Pegasus is also perhaps a little puzzling. Henryson describes it as

the pegas perillus  
Transformit be assent of socerre (94-5)

Charles Elliott writes

Pegasus was perilluous to the Chimaera, being instrumental in its slaying. The assent of sorcerer probably refers to the effects of the golden bit, given by Minerva to Bellerophan, whereby the steed assumed a tractable nature for the enterprise of killing the three headed beast.

There is another possibility – perhaps Henryson is referring to the origin of the Pegasus, which sprang from the trunk of the Gorgon Medusa, with whom Poseidon (Neptune) had had intercourse in the form of a horse or bird, when her head was cut off by Perseus. If this suggestion is accepted we again find the theme reinforced:

the evil mortal changed (transformat) into an animal; the man in whose mind 'sin is so fixed that he 'in brutall beist be transformat' (Prolog, 5, 6). Perhaps the fact that special mention is made of

1. Poems, op. cit., p. 137 note to l. 888.
the mole's blininess (120-1) is significant reminding as it does of the attitude of the worldly to light. The second point of interest in the catalogue is the poet's stress on the large number and variety of animals who hasten in obedience to the Lion (the World). The animals selected are of all kinds, the common (aiise, mug, hors, gait, sheep), the foreign (oliphant, dromodare, leopard, panther, aip) and all ranks. Number and variety are stressed: the 'hors of everye kind' (104); 'hast ou the world' (109); with 'doggie all divers and deferent' (114); 'sik the lerron' (119). Unbroken lists also convey the impression of large numbers:

The Iolye Ionet and the gentill steid
The aiise the mug the hors of everye kind
The da the re the hornit hart the hynd
The bull the beir the bugill and the bair
The wodys wildcat and the wild wolfe (103-7)

The whole catalogue is marked by most intensive alliteration which, it seems to be, through its repetitive emphasis, gives an intensely cumulative effect. As may note too the role of the narrator intensifying this stress:

And quhat thaj ware As tod Laurence me lord?
I sell rehers a pair of every kynd
Als far as now occurris to my kynd (89-91)

Similarly:

And mony ane kynd of beist that I nocht knew
Befoir thair Lord ilkane thay lowit law (125-6)

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2. Henryson is seemingly using 'Lowrence' as a generic name. This Fox was named 'Father were' (6); his father was named 'Lowrence' specifically but he had been killed before the action of this fable begins.

3. This means of expressing large numbers was common in medieval poetry. Some form of it is to be found, for instance, in the other beast catalogues referred to earlier. Smith (Poems, op. cit., i, 16 note to 1, 87d) points out the very close resemblances between the use of this device in our poem and its use in The Kingye Gynir, ed. Skene, op. cit., stanzas 154 and 158.
The third emphasis in the catalogue is the speed with which the animals came in obedience to and in fear of their king... So 'the sparth furth culd hir speid' (100); the reindeer overcame many difficulties to be present: 'The rayndeer ran through rever ron and reid' (102). And:

The musk the litill mows with all hir mycht
In haist haykit unto that hillis hycht (123-4)

So the catalogue of animals plays an important part in the thematic development of the poem – it suggests the concept of Fortune and the complete subservience of all animals (i.e. man in his degenerate state) to the King (the World). Its importance is far greater than Wood's 'the interest of things seen and noted'; indeed one may doubt whether it can be said to have this interest for the description seems iconographic rather than realistic.

To return to the King. After his threats he demands that the animals cease from preying upon each other (148-51). In the context of the complete poem this passage may seem to provide a difficulty: in the moralitas Henryson interprets the Lion as the world, something evil, to be avoided: for instance monks are 'Abstrackit fra this wordis wretchednes' (306). We have seen how details of the fable have been moulded by the poet to fit this interpretation. But the law of 11. 148-51 seems commendable, calculated to gain the reader's sympathy. There are, however, reasons why it is perfectly appropriate to the King and to the poem as a whole: it fits, of course, the action of the poem, for later the Fox will be convicted for this very offence. The World and worldly rulers do have certain acceptable standards.

There is another possible intended effect: in our first reading of the poem (I can only record my own initial reaction which may, of course, have been produced by an incomplete response, especially to the iconographic nature of some of the imagery) we immediately sympathize with the King; few of the details given will lead us to question this reaction for many of them are, perhaps intentionally, ambiguous - for instance, the Lion's apparent recognition of God and the law; his power and majesty; 'brutall beastis' may need such a king to guide them. The Fox's attitude to the Lion¹ and his final punishment reinforce our first impression; thus we criticize the other (which, after all, is merely 'ane grey stude meir', 182, a pitiful creature in comparison with the handsome and powerful King) for failing to come to court. But the moralism causes us to look at the poem in a completely new way, at least as far as the King and the other are concerned - the Fox is condemned whatever way we look at the poem: The poet has shown us our own predicament: we too esteem the world as important and consider those who oppose it wrong; the shock of the unexpected interpretation

¹. In Bannatyne this is shown by the Fox's thought and action (ll. 160-75): The other manuscripts provide two additional stanzas, following l. 175, of direct condemnation by the author (Wood, stanzas 139-40, ll. 971-84). The alliterative pattern seems Henrysonian though the metre is very rough indeed. For instance:

Fairwell thy fame, now gone is all thy grace
The favour off thy face
For thy defence is foull and disfigureat:
Brocht to the light, basit, blunt and blait (974-7)

It is strange to find the author praising the court explicitly (ane Roy.Renyet with righteousnes, 972); this may be intended to present a blind narrator, unaware of the implications of his actions; it is perhaps intentionally misleading. In any case it is offset by l. 981: 'The worship of this world is went away' - even the 'brutall beastis and irrationall' of this world cannot abide the Fox's misdeeds.
is perhaps an important part of the poem. We have seen this device used in *The Cok and the Jewell* and shall see it in *The Wolf and the Wedder*; in dealing with the latter fable I argued that Henryson had manipulated his source to secure this very effect. Perhaps he has done likewise in *The Fox tried before the Lyon* for Odo provides the expected moralitas:

\[
\text{Mistica. Per Leonem moraliter intelligo racionem que de omnibus que fecerat homo dispositit ... per Asinum carnea ponderosum (sic) et delicias appetentes, que racioni contemplit obedient ...}
\]

It is interesting that the Lion *appears* to be even more imposing and praiseworthy in our fable than in Odo's - this could be Henryson's own change to mislead us, a change made in very much the same way as that in *The Wolf and the Wedder*. There is however, a serious objection to the contention that such an effect was intended. It would require the audience to be oblivious to the iconographic nature of much of the imagery: the setting, the Fortune figure, the procession of beasts. It seems scarcely likely that any intelligent contemporary reader would have been so.

Such is the setting of the Fox's actions; we must next examine his 'character'. As I said earlier I believe Stearns to be wrong when he states that the introductory section to the poem 'has little relevance to the fable itself'. In fact it provides an interpretation for the Fox's 'character' that explains his action in the rest of the poem. The Fox's nature is shown by comparison with his father's; Fader Were was to be still more adept at similar crimes. He too 'lufit wale with pultry tig and tere'(7). And!
Dread and nothing that samin lyfe to lede
In sownt and reif as he had done before
Bot to the end entent he tuk no more (27-9)

In the previous fable (1. 73) his father had confessed to 'reif
and sownt'. Fader Ware intended to follow his father's
example, neglecting the warning of his death - he was as blind
as his father to the realities of life; he would suffer similar
punishment as a result. So as Laurence 'deid for his misedede'
(1) ... 'Be suddane schote for deidis odious' (24),1 Father Ware
too was to die a criminal's death. The enormity of his baseness
is shown in his attitude to his father: he

\[\text{Tuke up his hede syno on his kneis fell doun}\\
\text{Thankand gret god of that conclusiou} (18-19)\]

And, his cheerfulness shown by his use of an almost meaningless
proverb ('Ay rynnis the fox als long as he fut hais,' 32), commending
the body to the devil's care, he threw it into a peat hole; a
sign, ironically, of 'faderlye pitee'.2 The narrator comments:

\[\text{O fulich man plongit in warldlynes}\\
\text{To conquist ragnwis guidie gold or rent}\\
\text{To put thy saule in panes and heynes}\\
\text{To riches thyne air quhilk efter thow be went}\\
\text{Hawe he thy gule he takis small entent}\\
\text{To sing or say for thy saluation} ... (36-41)\]

The passage of course contains thoughts commonly expressed;3 but

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1. I adopt the reading of all the other texts here; the Bannatyne
reading - 'for deid is odious' - seems indefensible, an easy
mistake for an unthinking scribe to make.

2. The reading of the other early versions - 'naturall pictie' - is
interesting; such an action is perhaps natural to a natural
son, the product of unlicensed lust ('a brutall beast and
irrational').

3. Many examples might be cited from classical times downward.
I shall restrict myself to a sermon parallel, from W.C. Ross,
Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 86. Though not exact,
it is of interest:

(Continued overleaf)
the poet certainly uses his material in an uncommon way for it is here, in one sense at least, ironic. The Fox was certainly 'ploungit in worldlynes'; he put his 'saule in pane and hevynes'. But, as far as the reader can see, he has not done so in trying to enrich his heir; he has done so in trying to fulfill his own worldly desires. Even by normal worldly standards - trying to enrich one's heir - Lawrence was culpable; his son was to be even worse.

Feder Were is next shown at the court of King Noble afraid of recognition yet afraid of the consequences of absence for he is, of course, a subject of this world, the world of bestial humanity. The Fox wondered how to save himself 'with falsheid' (170); before so pleased with himself, rejoicing in his possessions, now he pulled his hood over his eye 'for dreddour' (174), hiding behind the other animals. He has inherited another of his father's characteristics: self excuse through flattery:

A lord mercye lo I have bot ane E  
Hurt in the hench and cruikit ye may se  
The wolf is bettir in embassadry  
And maire cunning in clergye than I (186-9)

He showed his respect (A lord), appealed to the King's judgement ('ye may se'), stressed his injuries, assumed ignorance and modesty - all techniques his father used to deceive Chantecler and Friar Wolf.

And on this wise Crist had many folowers while that he fedde hem; but ther were but fewe that wold die for hym ne with hym. Like one the same wise it fareth be frendes of this world when that thei com to the a-counte of deethe and shall rekene. Ther every man taketh of othur what that thei may stell and hent away; and anon as thei be dede and passeth out of this world than thei be putt out of mynde ... But the cause of frenshippe is riches. Than cessaynge the cause of rychesse cessesse the efecte of frenshippe.
Fader here also flattered the Wolf in order to avoid responsibility (202-5). He was 'a fraudfull fox' (232), 'this traiytor to this tyran and this tike' (236), breaking the newly made laws yet returning to kneel before the king (240). Kneeling is the position taken by all the subjects; the Lamb's mother also adopts it when she comes to complain (260) of 'This harlot here this hursoun hund of hell' (262). The description is particularly appropriate; these are obviously words of abuse, but they are also literally correct: the Fox was, as we have seen a 'hursoun'; his father had gone to hell; he, worse, was to follow presumably. Again we are shown the Fox's mastery of flattery and self-excusing (269-73). But his flattery failed as, in the final analysis, had his father's; and he, like his father was punished by death; and, as his father was 'naikit' (17), so the judge commanded those who bound him to 'tak of all his ol this' (282). The Fox was worthy of death even by the standards of this world.

We have examined the King and his court, and the 'character' of the Fox. The other 'characters' worthy of mention are the Wolf and the mare. The Wolf too has characteristics similar to those of the Wolf in the previous fable; he succumbs easily to the Fox's flattery (211-12). In our present fable he suffers for his pride (225-7). The attitude of the court to the Wolf is of some interest. He seems to be a source of amusement to them (255-8), yet he becomes a Doctor of Divinity ('now maid' 283) - another similarity with the previous fable - surely a reflection on the nature of the court. The mare's importance is twofold:
firstly, in appearance she is merely 'ane gray stude mair' (182) in comparison with the noble and finely arrayed Lion (for worldly things are often externally attractive, those of spiritual value often repellent). Secondly, the mare is clever enough to outwit the ambassadors of the World - in Henryson's poetry learning is usually allied with correct values (cf. The Swallow and Other Birds).

The moralitas opens with an interesting statement of intention:

Rycht as the synoure In his synorall
Faire gold with fyre may fra the lode wele wyn
Rycht as vnder a fable figurall
A sad sentence may seke and after fyne
As daylie dots thir doctouris of dyvyn
Aterly beoure leving can applye
And preue thare preching be a poesy (288-94)

Gold (the moral) is won from lead (the fable), the image is seemingly taken from alchemy - what is precious is won, with difficulty, from what is more dross - just as the husk is pierced to reach the kernel within (Prolog, 15-21). He who does this is like the preacher: the fable becomes an exemplum ('preue thare preching be a poesy') the lessons of which we may apply to our own lives. The fourth line of the stanza is perhaps a reminiscence of part of St. Matthew vii, 7: 'quaerite et invenietis'.

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1. We may recall the phrase ending the previous fable in the Bannatyne version: 'Explicit exemplum veritatis et falsitatis'.

2. Bede's comment (in his Matthaei Evangeliun Expositio) on the verse is interesting:

Petitio et dabitur vobis et reliqua. Petitio pertinet ad impetrandam sanitatei firmitateque animi, ut ca quae praecepientur implere possimus; inquisitio autem ad inveniendum veritatem. -Cum quis autem veram viam invenerit, perveniet ad ipsam possessionem, quae tamen pulsanti aperiatur. (P.L. xclii, cols. 36-7).
have already explained I believe the second stanza - with its interpretation of the Lion as the World - to be central to our understanding of the poem as a whole. We note how the poet suggests the huge numbers following the World (heavy alliteration; the 'sum ... sum' construction we have noticed before):

To whom lowth beyth Emperor and King

... sum for to rule and sum to ran and regne
godderis gere sum gold sum vther gude

To wyn this world sum wikkis as they wer wode (296-301)

The remainder of the moralitas is, however, of a rather different kind. Henryson isolates one particular episode - the mare's hoof episode - and gives it a particular treatment. One could perhaps say that what we have been discussing is the literal - perhaps the moral - level. At this level the interpretation of the mare's hoof episode would be that sinful men tempt the virtuous into the service of this world. But, in the moralitas, Henryson discusses the episode on the allegorical level: the mare represents contemplatives, her hoof the thought of death, the Wolf sensuality, the Fox temptation. This interpretation certainly does not apply to other parts of the poem: it would be vain to say, for instance, that the world laughs at sensuality and kills temptation. The final stanza is not an interpretation of the poem but a prayer arising from that interpretation - such an ending is, of course, found in several of the Fabillis.

I think it can be fairly claimed then, that Henryson, again, has used his sources in a highly creative manner.

1. Fables giving advice to remain in the cloister are also to be found in the Dialogus Creatorum, dial. 15 and 16, ed. Graesse, op. cit., pp. 152-7. They are not directly relevant, being stories of precious jewels and from the Vitae Patrum, but it is interesting to find this subject dealt with in a collection of animal stories apart from Henryson's.

2. Warnings against sensuality, worldliness, sudden death are of course recurring themes throughout Henryson's poetry.
(xii) The Fox, the Wolf and the Codger

Gregory Smith, writing of The Fox, the Wolf and the Codger, stated: 'the source of this fable has not been traced.'¹ Harvey Wood, in his first edition, repeated this assertion adding 'Professor Bruce Dickins suggests that it may be an elaboration of the Bestiary story of the Fox feigning death in order to catch carrion crows or raven.'² Gavin Bone pointed out hints of our story in Caxton's The History of Reynard the Fox and suggested that Henryson merely needed such hints to inspire him.³ Lately David K. Crowe has accepted this suggestion.⁴ In his second edition⁵ Wood claimed that Henryson's story is a combination of two episodes from the Roman de Renard: that in which the Fox lay down as dead on the road, was thrown on to the merchant's cart and there ate the fish — there is no mention of a Wolf — and that in which the Wolf seized a bacon dropped by a labourer chasing the Fox, who had feigned death; the Wolf later refused the Fox his share.⁶ But as early as 1885 Diebler⁷ noted what seems to be the

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1. Poems, op. cit., i, 30, note to 1. 1944.
4. 'A Date for the Composition of Henryson's Fables', op. cit., p. 584.
6. Roques III, 11. 12933–13096; vol. v, pp. 1–6. Roques XVII, 11. 15220 ff.; vol. v, pp. 67 ff.. In Martin's numbering of the branches these stories occur in branches III and V. Wood's reference to 'huitième aventure' and 'vingt quatrièm aventure' appears to be derived from the numbering in the modernized Roman de Renard, texte de Paulin Paris revu, augmenté et annoté par J. de Foucault (s.l., 1949).
7. Henryson's Fabelldichtungen, op. cit., pp. 64–70. He referred to 'branch A' for this is the tenth episode in Mél's edition. Throughout this chapter I shall use Mél's edition for this branch (sec 11. 3919 ff.; vol. i, pp. 147 ff.) since it is the only edition to contain the full version: as yet Roques (Continued overleaf)
main source - branche XIV of the *Roman de Renart* - where the story is told in full. Janet Smith noted Diebler's reference.

But before I go on to examine Henryson's poem in relation to the *Roman de Renart* story, I must make three provisos. Firstly, in at least one place Henryson is closer to branche III than to branche XIV. Diebler pointed out these similarities. Henryson:

And with one swak he [the Gadger] swang him [the Fox] on the creillis (126)

... And with his teith the stoppell or he [the Fox] stint, Pullit out, and syne the haring ane and ane
Out of the croillis he swakkit down gude wane (129-31)

Branche III:

Sir le panier se jut edenz,
Si en a .1. ouvert par sens
Et si en a, bien le sachiez,
plus de xxx harans sachiez (13017-20)

In several manuscripts 'par sens' (13018) appears as 'as (or 'au') dens', providing a parallel for Henryson's version. At this point Branche XIV reads:

Et il charretier l'a chargé
Si l'a covert d'une banastre, ...

... Et si i avoit un panier
Où il avoit bien dous millier
De harens frés à bone estraine
Mangé en a une dozaine
Tant que tot ot le ventre plain; (3982-9)

Secondly, though the hint from Caxton cannot be regarded as the sole source - if it be a source at all - it poses several important problems. Isengrin had complained to Noble of Reynart's behaviour towards him and asked for punishment. But Gryzmart the Dasse,

has not published branche XIV and the manuscript used by Martin contains the latter half only of the story - he adds the first in his textual notes from MSS. used by Mécot (iii, 529 ff.).

1. The French Background of Middle Scots Literature, op. cit., pp. 60-1.
3. See 'Notes Critiques et Variantes', Roques, v, 80.
Reynart's nephew, defending him telling of Isengrim's behaviour towards Reynart:

Yet wil I telle some poyntes that I wel knowe
know not ye how ye mysdeled on the plays whiche
he threwe down fro the carre whan ye folowed
after fro ferro And ye ete the good plays
alone and gaf hym nomore than the grate or bones
whyche ye myght not ete yourself.1

We have here the same situation as in Henryson's poem: the Fox on the cart throwing down fish to the Wolf. Now in the Roman de Renard versions the Fox had eaten his fill (uno douzaine, 3986 and 4008; plus de xxx, 13020) and carried away one (3998) or several (13024 ff.) fish - there is no mention of him throwing fish from the cart, nor of the Wolf following behind. Caxton's version is as we have seen a translation of the Middle Dutch Reinar Historie: the section in which we are interested occurs in the first part, taken from Van der Vos Reinaerde, which is based on branche I of the Roman de Renard. However, though Grymbart's speech defending his uncle is to be found in the Roman de Renard there is no mention of this incident there and I have been unable to find its origin. If there were an original story which the writer of Van der Vos Reinaerde used did Henryson know it? If he did he has modified it considerably: the fish are plaice, not Henryson's herring (or the herring of branche XIV); the Wolf retains the fish which Reynard had 'earned'—Henryson presents the Fox as nominally 'earning' the fish for the Wolf but eventually taking it all. If Henryson knew this postulated original he has changed it to resemble more closely branche XIV of the Roman de Renard in which the second trick allows the Fox, not the Wolf,

to abscond with the fish. Alternatively, has the story as
hinted at in Caxton 'inspired' Henryson, in his reworking of the
Roman de Renard story? Which leads to the third proviso I wish
to make. As we shall see Henryson's account merely follows the
outlines of the story told in branche XIV of the Roman de Renard.
Many of the details are different, some even of the most important
events.

A study of these three provisos forces us to one of two
conclusions: either Henryson used some source which I have been
unable to find or he has, consciously or unconsciously - for the
story may have been written by recall rather than by working with
a text - reworked the story considerably, using material from
other versions. We are faced with a similar problem as when
dealing with The Two Nuns. With Henryson's undisputed talent for
'recreation' in mind, I should probably suggest the second alternative
to be more likely but I must stress the very tentative nature of
this suggestion.

There is another point which must be raised before we compare
Henryson's poem with the Roman de Renard. Bauman points out that
this fable is very like a folk tale, 'which has been in European
oral tradition since before the Saxons settled in Germany',1 But
again we have literary evidence which is as near Henryson's poem
as the folk-tale tradition. The question must be left open of

1. 'The Folk tale and Oral Tradition in the Fables of Robert
Henryson', op. cit. The tale is type 1 in A. Aarne
The Types of the Folk tale, a classification and bibliography
tr. and enlarged by S. Thompson, 2nd revision (F.F. Commu-
course but, as I have constantly implied, one of the chief impressions of Henryson is that of a cultivated literary artist of wide reading. The wish to ally his work with folk-tale sources (as that to see it as popular, rustic poetry) would seem to be part of a recurrent romantic tradition in nineteenth and twentieth century European criticism - we see it for example in the study of Beowulf and the Roman de Renard - which would wish to democratize medieval society, which is basically anti-intellectual in outlook: a study of the psychological basis of such criticism would prove of great interest.

We can now proceed to examine Henryson's poem in relation to branche XIV of the Roman de Renard. Our story there is part of a general episode concerning the relationship between Renart and Isengrim's brother Primaut. Renart discovered a box of communion wafers dropped by a priest. He enjoyed eating them and gave some to Primaut, who happened to come up. Primaut wanted more: so the two animals planned to celebrate mass at a local church - Renart tonsured his confère, dressed him in mass vestments and suggested that he ring the church bells. Then the Fox escaped before the priest came and summoned his parishioners to waylay the 'devil'. Primaut was beaten and blamed Renart but he, as ever, convinced the Wolf of his innocence. The two animals sold the vestments to a priest who gave them a gosling in exchange. When Primaut refused Renart his share he came away disconsolate but, seeing the fish merchants, he saw how to ease his great hunger and so the story as retold by Henryson begins.
The first seventy-seven lines, which are not to be found in this context in the *Roman de Renard*, seem to be made up from a composite of episodes in the *Roman de Renard* and characteristics of the Fox used in other fables by Henryson. The episode obviously exemplifies the moralitas:

And as the Foxe with dissimulance and guile
Gart the Wolff wene to haif worshipt for ever,
Richt swa this worldly with vane glore for one quhyle
Plattieris with folk, as they suld failye never ... (267-70)

The nearest parallel is to be found in branche V of the *Roman*. Isengrim meets Renart and threatens vengeance for the way the Fox had treated his family. So:

Renart entent o‘on li promest,
la queue entre les gambes met,
Ver son oncle mou-a‘umilie
et doucemont merci li crie;
"Oncels, fait-il, l‘an dit au plait;
Mus n‘amande s‘il ne mesfait;
S‘a amande m‘en loist venir,
fai la vos a vos plaisir (15187-94)

But Isengrim rebuffed his plea, attacked and almost killed him.

The Wolf, thinking him dead, became sorry for his action; Renart, soon recovered, rebuked his enemy for oppressing the innocent.

Seeing a man carrying bacon, flattering and crafty as ever, he appealed to Isengrim’s greed:

"Oncels, dis-i, laisser m‘aler,
car minus vos porroiz sowler
dou grant bacon a‘ce vilain;
’Ouquenuit et ore et demain;
Que vos ne feriez de moi
et je vos en afi ma foi,
Se orendroit ne le vos rant,
C‘revandrai a vos present
dont porries faire vos plaisir,
de mon oors et tot vos desvir." (15227-35)

So the Fox went off to feign death as I described earlier. We have here perhaps the germ of the idea; but Henryson portrays
also a long verbal dispute between the two animals - this dispute has many similarities with other passages in The Fabilli as we shall see in analyzing the flattery and deceitfulness of the Fox and the Wolf's response to these tricks. The poet shows us the Wolf living in 'ane wildernes' (1). Perhaps there is some significance in the interpretation in The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman:

The wodds waist quhairin wes the Wolff wyld
Ar wickit riches, quhilk all men gaipis to get (211-2)

He was a 'revand Wolff' (3), thriving ('maid him weill to ffair', 4) on what he could thieve ('puurches', 3), strong and merciless ('was nane sa big about him he wald spair', 5). And he enjoyed being flattered. The first characteristic of the Fox - we should perhaps constantly remember that in the moralitas he is the world - to be mentioned is that he is an imposter ('fenyeit to be schent', 9). He 'bad the Wolff gude day', we notice, with 'ane bek'. The Wolf was glad to see him (12) - to see the world. And, in princely condescension he:

'Yyne loutit doun and tuke him be the hand
'Rosse up, Lowrence, I leif the for to stand' (13-14)

We must compare with the behaviour of the Fox in The Fox and the Wolf:

Seand the wolf this wylie tratour tod
on kneis fell with bud in to his nek
welcome my maitly fadir vndir god
q he with mony binga and mony bek (57-60)

There too, the Wolf enjoyed being flattered (11. 71-2). The Fox in The Fox and the Cook also fell to his knees to flatter (37 and 177). In both these fables, too, the Fox constantly addressed the Wolf as 'Schir'; in our fable he adopted the same practice
A good instance of the method of 'debate' - which it must be stressed, has many similarities to that in the Roman de Renard - is provided by the fifth stanza:

'Yis' (quod the Wolff), 'throw buskis and throw brais, Law can thow lour to cum to thy Intent.'
'Schir' (said the Foxe), 'ye wait well how it gais; And lang space sfera thane they will feill my sent, Then will thay eschaip suppols I suld be schent; And I am schamefull sfor to cum behind thane; In to the feild thocht I suld aleipand find thane (29-35)'

We may note, first, the literary nature of the argument: the phrase 'throw buskis and throw brais' is found several times in Henryson; heavy alliteration is another characteristic. We note the Fox's technique of flattery - the 'Schir', the appeal to the Wolf's own reason (ye wait well how it gais), the attempt to show himself virtuous (I am schamefull sfor to cum behind thane).

Again, the two latter techniques are found elsewhere: the first in, for instance, The Fox and the Wolf (ll. 97, 105, etc.), the second in, for instance, The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman (ll. 89, 118-9). But, in this case, the Wolf realized the Fox's plans (1s, giness, senyes, falsat); later he was blind to the most deceitful, most harmful trick of all. He, like many of Henryson's 'characters', often blameworthy, resorted to proverbs:

But all thy senyes sall not availl the, About the busk with wayis thocht thow wend; Falsat will fallye ay at the latter end To bow at bidding and byde not quhill thow breast... (45-8)

1. The original reading here may have been 'eschaip' allowing perfect scansion and effective alliteration.
2. Cf. The Twa Wyis, l. 5; The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, l. 147.
3. Henryson uses this again in The Fox and the Cook, l. 172; l. 46.
The Fox used religion for his own ends (50-2): the World often seems religious. Of course, he emphasized, if it were not Lent he would serve to the best of his ability: 'To beir your office than wald I not set by' (56). But the Wolf was not to be fooled—not as yet, anyway; again he found a proverb to help him to attain his ends:

'Than' (said the Wolf), in wraith 'wenis thow with wylis
And with thine mony bowis me to mat?
It is ane auld Dog, douteless, that thow begylis
Thow wenis to draw the stra befor the Cat (57-60)

But the Fox's feigning, and pretended subservience did not fail him: he claimed that if he had meant to trick the Wolf he deserved to be hung (61-3), a statement which both flatters and pleads innocence. Again he professes subservience and apparently capitulates:

Bot now'I as he is one fulc perfay
That with his maister fallis in reasoning (64-5)

Here the Fox was using a valid point for his illegitimate purposes as the Wolf did in The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman (11. 36 ff.).

We compare the moralitas of The Wolf and the Wædder:

Thairfor I counsell men of everilk stait
To know thame self, and quhome thay suld forbair,
And fall not with their better in debl (155-7)

So the Fox, feigning, promised complete service (11. 68-9: 'in all, wond up rather than the eye stared, there to be cont... quhat ever... on nichis or on dayis'). The Fox pretended

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1. Wood (Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 245, note to 1, 2001) compares the passage with an extract he quotes from Heywood's Proverbs, with Ferguson (1641 edition) 904; with Chaucer's House of Fame, 11. 1783-5; and with lines he quotes from a MS. in Trinity College, Cambridge (c. 1260). Such comparison reinforces the concept of Henryson as a literary man, adapting his material from other literary sources rather than from 'observation' or 'imagination'.

annoyance at being required to take an oath; he swore truth till death, by Jupiter - he had earlier been talking of Lent. In The Hous and the Paddock the Paddock also, after earlier using Biblical examples to support his 'reasoning', swore by 'Jupiter of Nature god and king' (93). And the Fox again used proverbs to further his interests:

For he that will not labour and help him self,
In to thir dayis, he is not worth one sile; (94-5)

So in this added introduction Henryson has shown us the wickedness, the self-importance and the self-deceit of the Wolf, the flattery, the pretence, the tricks of the Fox.

We join here the tale as told in branche XIV of the Roman.

Some of the descriptive details are similar:

El chemin se met de travers
Si s'estoit ecouchies à envers;
Et prent les denz à rechinier
Por plutost la gent enginier.
Si a son balevre retret
Les euls clot et la langue tret;
En l'ardille s'est toollies
Tant que il estoit tosoollies:
A merveille resemble mort; ... (3951-9)

Henryson mentions the Fox's tongue hanging out ('ane hand braid off his held', 104) and his 'apparent death.' But many details are different - in Henryson's poem the whites of the eyes are turned up rather than the eyes closed, there is no mention of rolling in the mud. In Henryson's version there is but one merchant, in both branche XIV and branche III, two. In the account of the theft of the bacon, and in a rather similar story in Jacquemart the theft is in an explicit version of the Oicleé's Renart le Nouvel, in which Renart finds himself, after

l. ed. H. Roussel, op. cit., II. 3234 ff.
there is one man only. But at this point these two stories are so far removed from Henryson's and from the two closest versions in the Roman that I think there is no question of influence. Perhaps it may be suggested that Henryson changed his source to suit his moralitas; there is but one Death. To continue comparison with Branche XIV, some of the merchant's speech has similarities with that in the Roman:

At the next bait, in Faith, ye sall be flane (108)
Nos osterons sempres la pel
À la pointe de mon coutel
Qant nos seromes herbergis (3979-81)
Et dient ja n'en feront el,
Mas enquemuit, a lor ostel
Li reverseront la gondele (13011-3)

But, again, much is different - the merchants in Branche XIV considered the Fox's fur good, 'à metre en surcot' (3968); they planned to sell it - 'trois sola ou quatre de deniers' (3970); much the same price is suggested in Branche III (13001) - to pay for their night's lodging. In Henryson's poem the Cadger wished to make of the fur 'mittennis tway' (109) and was adamant that he would never sell:

Their sall na Pedder, for purs nor yit for gluifis,
Nor yit ffor poyntis pyke your pellet ffra me;
I sall of it mak mittennis to my luifis,
Till hald my handis hait quhair ever I be;
Till Flandris sall it never sall the se (120-4)

Details - local trading custom - make the story more relevant to Henryson's contemporaries; I have already discussed this feature of Henryson's style in connection with The Twa Wyis and The Dog, the Schepir and the Wolf. There is no specific mention of the merchant's happiness in the Roman Branche XIV; in Branche III
we find the general: 'il uns a l'autre en fait grand joie (3010). Henryson, characteristically, is much more specific: the Cadger:

... lap full lichtlie about him quhaire he lay,
And all the trace he trippit on his tais;
As he had hard ane pyper play, he gais (110-2)

Henryson portrays the Cadger thinking of reasons for the Fox's death (115-9), reasons which emphasize the Fox's evil nature.

We have already noticed the difficulties provided by one difference between Henryson and the Roman in the description of what happened on the cart. There is another difference - in the other versions the Fox ate his fill, then left to the merchant's astonishment; Henryson's Fox was surprised in action (134).

Lowrence's speech has several differences from Renart's in the Roman versions: 'there is no mention of the fact that he had dined well (cf. XIV 4093-10). The Fox boasts that his fur will not be made into mittens (142-3). The Fox's advice to the Cadger to sell what he has left (145-7) may be compared with Renart's:

'Je vous les tot le remnant' (4011; cf. also 13048).

In branche XIV the Fox returned to Primaut who proclaimed himself repentant for his wrongs to Renart, and hungry because he had been robbed of the gealing by Wolflart. Renart gave him

not Fifte for fish. In the Roman they eat (284) the one herring he had brought away and this whetted the Wolf's appetite; he asked Renart how he had obtained the fish; the Fox having, 277, the cadger was subject to his. We worked informed him without flourish. In our poem the Fox found the

Wolf by the board of fish and employed the same flattering tactics as previously. So 'Schir' (11, 157, 164, 166, 169, 174, 181, 199); 'Thacht ani so una' (197); 'Thacht ani so una' (197);

proverbs or proverbial type expressions:

'the one herring he had brought away' (110) 'as the score his bed' (111).
Ane wicht man wantit never, and he war wyis;
And hardie hart is hard for to suppyis (158-9);
appeals to the Wolf's judgement: "Schir" (said he than) "maid
I not fair defend?" (157); appearance of reliance upon the
Wolf:

'Schir' (said the Foxe), 'God wait, I wishit you oft,
Quhen than my pith micht not beir it on loft (174-5);
apparent righteousness: he claimed that the one herring would
'be fishe to us thir fourtie dayis' (170) and promised to say
'In principio' on the Wolf and to make the sign of the cross
over him (204-5). The Fox also had talent for appealing to the
Wolf's greed:

It is ane ayde off Salmond, as it wir,
And calloir, pyyand lyke ane Peitrik Ee;
It is worth all the hering ye have thair,
Ye, and we had it swa, is it worth sic thre (176-9)

We remember the Fox's description of the 'cheese' to the Wolf in
The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman for similar purposes. Again
the Fox took oath to achieve his ends: he swore 'suithlie' (201),
he guaranteed that the Wolf 'sali de na suddand deith this day'
(206-7) for, as the moralitas explains

The world, ye wait, is Stewart to the man,
Cuhilk makis man to haif no mynd of Deid,
Bot settis for winning all the craftis thay can; (260-2)

In the Roman the Fox described his own actions, in our poem the Fox
gave advice, for the Wolf was completely subject to him (he worked
after his 'counsell', 180-1); Lawrence's advice was of course
related to what he knew would happen: 'clois weill your Ene tway'
(186) and 'luke your Ene be clois' (192); 'thocht ye se ane staf,
have ye na dout' (190). The Wolf did 'as the ffoxe him bod' (213);
later he forgot 'the Foeze and all his wrinkis' (217) as the thought
of 'the Nekhering' (216), the huge amount of 'gold sa: Reid' (263),
blinded him (274) to all dangers.

In branche XIV of the Roman the merchants saw the Wolf lying
and debated amongst themselves, and with others who came up, whether
he were dead or not. A blow was struck. The Wolf did not move
but whimpered slightly and one of the merchants, hearing this
drew his sword - the sight of which put the Wolf to flight (4168 ff.).

But our Gadgear was thinking how to be avenged on the Fox so
'Bot giff he likhit doun, or nocht, God wait!' (224). Henryson
stresses the Wolf's suffering, the trials of those who are blinded
by the world. The Roman:

Moult est irices, moult est dolenz,
Bien est batus por les harenz
Dont il cuida avoir sa part (4231-3)
... Qhill neir he swonit and swelt in to that steid
Thre battiis he byre, or he his feit nicht find,
Bot yitt the Wolf wes wicth and wan away.
He mycht not se, he wes sa verray blind
Nor wit reddilie quhether it was nicht or day.
... Baith deif and dosinnt, fall swonand on his kneis (231-8)

The blindness is of course symbolic as well as literal. 1 As we are
told later: 'The mycht of gold makis mony men sa blind' (274).

Henryson again stresses the Wolf's suffering:

The Wolf wes neir weill dugin to the deid
That uneith with his lyfe away he wan,
For with the Bastoun weill brokin was his heid (246-8)
... The utheris blude was rynand over his heillis (252)

Our Fox laughed, characteristically, 2 and made away with the fish;
the Fox in the Roman had welcomed back Primaut and eventually
the all beastes: a cruelty of trait in the end.

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2. Cf. The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, 11. 99 and 115.
flattered him in to acknowledgment that he had not caused the mishap. The poet's moralization of ll. 239-40 is of course conventional in nature: it echoes for instance the traditional interpretations of The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman story. I quote when discussing that poem.

Henryson then has used the story very freely, if we allow that the versions discussed are his sources. He has changed details, made some considerable additions and rounded out his "characters" in ways which are characteristic to him, ways which exemplify the moralitas: the apparent goodness, but the real fickleness and transitoriness of the world which brings blindness and pain to those who trust it. Thus we see how the story reemphasizes what we have come to see as the underlying theme of The Fabillis: the folly of worldly goods, the reliance on which brings pain in this world and the next.

The moralitas seems to be Henryson's own though the interpretation by Odo of Cheriton1 of a rather similar story is interesting:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Diabolus est similis uulpi, que finxit se mortuum (sic) et eicit lingam Descendens suis, credere capere lingam, et capitur a uulpe} \\
\text{Sic Diabolus, quasi fingens se mortuum, quia fraudes eius non uiderimus, pulorum mulierem, uel alium illicitum nobis (h) ostendit; quam qui illicite capit et a diabolo capitur.}
\end{align*}
\]

And of course every detail is traditional - the emphasis on the fact that all must die; the folly of trust in this world. Chaucer,

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1. Hervieux, iv, 303. There is a copy of this in the collection of exempla in B.M. MS. Harl. 3244 fol. 60b.
in *Troilus and Cressida*, speaks of 'the blynde lust, the which that ray nat laste' (V, 1824); in *The Swallow and Othir Birdis* Henryson speaks of 'Reasoun ... blindit with affectioun' (285) and in *Orpheus and Eurydice* of worldly men 'blindit' (388, 454, 601). The *Twa Kyis* speaks of the 'blind prosperitie' of our poem (l. 278):

> grit haboundance and blind prosperitie
> oft tymis makis ane evill conclusion:
> The suetest lyfe thairfoir in thiis cuntre,
> Is of sickerness with small possessioun (216-9)

The *Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman* warns against 'wickit riches' (212), for 'Quha traistie in sic trusterie ar oft begyl'd' (213);
The *Cok and the Jewell* warns against worldly riches and points to true riches: 'science' (137):

> It is the riches that evir sall indure
> Quhilk motht nor must by nocht rwst nor ket
> and to manis sawill it is eternall meit (138-40)
(xiii) The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman

The origin of the story of The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, at least in the West, is the Disciplina Clericalis of Petrus Alfonsi. This work, written in Spain at the beginning of the twelfth century, comprises tales told by a father for his son's instruction; it achieved a wide popularity in the following centuries.¹ There is a thirteenth century French translation, Le Castoïement d'un père à son fils;² its version of our fable is close to Petrus' original and most of the differences are of no significance for us. Steinhöwel included many of the stories in his collection despite the fact that most do not concern animals. His version³ varies considerably in detail from the original text, but as far as our story is concerned there seem to be no differences which would suggest that Henryson used one rather than the other. Caxton's version,⁴ coming from Steinhöwel through Machaut's French, has several differences from other versions of the tale. Similarities between these alterations and Henryson's text suggest that Caxton is a probable source for our poem.

The best evidence concerns the episode in which the Fox, ascending, and the Wolf, descending, meet and speak in mid-well:

¹ See, for details, references cited on p. 11, n. 1.
² Published by E. Barbazan, Fables et Contes des Poètes Français des XI, XII, XIII, XIV, et XV° siécles, 2nd edn., augmenté et revu M. Méné, 4 vols. (Paris, 1808), ii, 40-183. The story in which we are interested, Du Vilein qui dona ogc buus au lour, is printed on pp. 144-8.
⁴ ed. Jacob, op. cit., 11, 276-8.
Than angerlie the Wolff upon him crys:
'I cummand thus dounwart, quhy thou upwart hyis?'
'Schir' (quod the Foxe), 'thus fairis it off Fortoun;
As one cummis up, echow quhcillis an uther doun'(186-9)

Caxton:

and when the wulf sawe the Foxe comynge vpward
he sayd to hym by god sepy ye goo hens thow
sayst trew sayd the Fox For thus hit is of the
world For when one cometh doun the other goth
vpward.

There is no equivalent passage either in Steinhöwel or in Petrus'
original; the French reads:

Ainsi con il s'entra 'encontrent
Dont li dist li gopils, beax frere
Alez vouz fromaiges menger
Dont vouz aves tel désirr. (99-102)

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1. Cf. the story in La Roman de Renard branche IV (Roques II;
vol. ii, pp. 1-15) in which Renard, trapped in a well, tells
Isengrim of the fish in his paradise. He confesses the
wolf who gets into the bucket. In mid-well they meet:

Isengrin l'a araîsoné:
"Renart, biau frere, ou va tu?"
Et Renart li a respondu:
"N'en faites ja chiere ne frumes;
bien vouz en dirai la costumé;
quand li uns va, li autres vient,
c'est la costumé qui avient'(3602-8)

This point was first noticed by Diebler, Henrisone's
Fabeldichtungen, on. cite., pp. 74-5; he also pointed to
a similarity between Henryson 11. 222-3 and

Ce vois en paradis laius'
tu vas ou puis d'enfer laius (3609-10)
There are several less positive points of evidence. In Henryson's version the Labourer becomes angry because his oxen, who were 'unusit, young and licht' (10) 'for feremes' did 'the furfforfair' (11); Caxton: a labourer 'wgiche unnethe myght gourene and lede his oxen by cause that they smote with theyr feet'; Petrus: 'boves illius recto tramite nolent incedere'; Steinhöwele: 'boves ... arando recto incessu proficerent'. Caxton's explanation of the reason for the Husbandman's anger seems somewhat nearer Henryson's than those in other versions. Again, in Henryson's version the Husbandman asked for a witness (48); Caxton: 'I promysed to the nought at al in the presence of whom I am oblyged or bound'. In no other version is there any hint of a witness - even Caxton's version is merely a hint as we shall see. Again, Henryson states that 'The shadow of the none schone in the well' (162); Caxton: [the Foxe] 'shewed to the wulf the shadowe of the none'; Petrus: 'Cui super puteum stanti formam lunae, semiplena in ima putei radiantis ostendit et inquit ...'; the French:

Li gollmens leu apela, Et dedans le puis li monstra La forme de la lune plaine, (67–9).

Steinhöwele: 'at super puteo stans [vulpus]: lupo lunam in puteo reflectentem radios ostendit'. The use of the phrase 'shadow of the none' perhaps gives further evidence for a link between Caxton and Henryson.

1. Smith, Poems, op. cit., 1, 34 note to 1. 2233 points to this difference.
There are however points to be found in other texts and in Henryson but not in Caxton:

"Than lychtly in the bucke: lap the loun;  
His wecht but weir the uther end gart ryse (103-4)"

Steinhövel: 'Lupus intrans, quia gravior erat vulpe, descendendo alium fecit urceolum cum vulpe ascendere'; Caxton: '[the Wolf]
entryd wythynne the other boke and as facts as he wente downward the Foxe came vpward'. Though this point may suggest that Henryson knew Steinhövel's version (or Petrus' original which has the same detail) as well as Caxton's there can be no certainty as the Wolf's greater weight is a logical explanation which Henryson may have inserted himself. Again, there is one interesting detail - which Diebler¹ was the first to notice - where the French is closer to Henryson than any other version. Henryson describes the Fox leading the Wolf away in search of the imaginary cheese:

'Than hand in hand they held unto one hill' (141). The French:

\[Li leus a gerpi le Vilein\]
\[Si s'en vont sundai main à main (55-6)\]

Again, there are interesting parallels between Henryson's version and a rather similar story in branche IX of the Roman de Renart,² a branche which obviously derives ultimately from Petrus' original.

It tells of a labourer, Liétard, who, cursing, offers the best ox of his ploughteam to a wolf or a bear. The bear Brun, near at hand, takes him at his word. Liétard obtains a day's respite and Renart, who has overheard all, promises him help if he will give his rooster. hen Brun comes he will

¹ Menrisone Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., p. 72.
² Roques X, 11. 925 ff.; vol. iv, pp. 1 ff. 
imitate the sound of a hunt—at which Brun, frightened, will run
and be easily caught. The plan succeeds and the bear is killed;
but when Renart comes to claim his reward he is chased by the
labourer's dogs. Diebler pointed out the parallels. His
first can be easily explained for it is a common topos:

Un boons contierres, c'est la voie,
Nos teemoigne l'estoire a vraie (9260-1)
Il avint encolement
Se l'aventure ne nos ment
qu'il aferme le conte a voir (9267-9)

Henryson: 'In elderis dayis, as Esope can declair' (1). But
there are more interesting parallels: the ploughman

His use wes ay in morning to ryse ait;
Sa happinit hym in streiking tyme off yeir
Airlie in the morning to follow furth his fair (5-5)
mes vis li est que il soit tarte
venus a tant an_song assess;
et s'estoit il au point dou jor.
Nes repos, aise ne sejor,
Ne duit a vilain ne ne plait
n'a terre qu'en son lit arest
puis que poist le jor vesci;
quen vilains ne set: aise avoir,
ains iroit en autre euvre fere,
que molt par-puet vilains mal traire (9277-86)

Also, in a passage found only in the manuscripts used for Mémon's
edition:

Et un gars qui avec lui fu
Qui les biez chacoit de vertu (Mémon, 15465-6)

Henryson also talks of a helper (a gadman, 6), who cried 'how,
haik, upon hicht' (8) and 'broddit thame fruill sair' (9). And
as the Wolf, and the Fox lay in the bushes (16-17) so 'Brun li Ors';

Le collet et les pates devant (9334-5)
Now the background of the two versions is very different (and Henryson's emphasis can perhaps be explained by the allegorical significance of the passage) but the parallels are striking.

From the above discussion it seems fairly certain that Henryson used Caxton's version; he may have known other versions as well. In the following examination of the use of source material I shall compare Henryson's work with Caxton's keeping in mind additional points from other versions mentioned in the previous discussion. The first addition sketches the background: we are given a more 'realistic' portrayal of the scene. Caxton had begun: 'Sumtyme was a labourer whiche unnothe cysht gouerne and ledes his oxen'. Henryson describes him rising early (perhaps this comes from the Roman de Renart) 'in streiking tyme of yeir' (4); 'his stottis he straucht with Benedicite' (7). Further detail is added - the oxen were 'unusit, young and licht', (10); when the 'Husband' became angry he threw his pattle and stones at the beasts. More detail, a more thorough portrayal of the background, leads to greater involvement of the reader/hearer in the action of the tale, an interest which can be exploited to emphasize the moral implications of the work: this is a common preaching technique. Possibly the emphasis on ploughing has also an allegorical significance; I shall discuss this further when dealing with the moralitas.

There follows an important change: in the original the Wolf alone heard the curse and decided to keep the labourer to his word; at the day's end he challenged the labourer, they argued, then decided to seek arbitration. They met the Fox who, after
hearing their story, offered himself as judge. In Henryson's version the Fox was with the Wolf when the threat was uttered and it was he who suggested that the Wolf should claim the promise: 'To take yone bud' (quod he), 'it wer na skaith' (19). The reason for the change is explained by the moralitas: the Fox is the Fiend:

Ae1d ilk man to ryn unrychteous rinkis
Thinkand thairthrow to lek him in his linkis (202-3)

Henryson adds further details: during the day the oxen grew more ruly (22) - the 'Husband' thus realized their true value to him; and he was afraid when he saw the Wolf come 'hirpiland in his gait' (25) and wanted to turn back (27-8).

The speeches are also extended to form a dialogue. The Wolf at first offered no explanation for his demand; replying the 'Husband' claimed never to have harmed the Wolf (35) - the wicked rich seeks to oppress the innocent poor (cf. 11. 197-200; and The Wolf and the Lamb). The original reads: 'O thow labourer many tyases on this day thyg dost gyve to me thyn oxen and ththerefore hold thy promise to me'. Henryson's Wolf uses proverbial expressions (11. 40, 42, 53, 55-6), he appeals to the 'Husband's' own judgement (1. 58); these devices are also characteristics of the Fox's speeches in The Fox and the Wolf and later in our poem. A general tone of apparent reasonableness, of moral virtue is added: the wicked often pretend to act reasonably, virtuously, within the law (cf. The Dog, the Eagle and the Wolf; The Wolf and the Lamb):
Henryson indicates the different social ranks of his characters (cf. ll. 297-9) by this form of address. The Wolf (the wicked rich) addresses the 'Husband' as 'Carl', as familiar with him ('thou'). The 'Husband' (the poor man) is subservient to his lord ('Schrir', 'ye!', 'your').

So the witness was called: 'Lowrance come lourand for he luft never licht' (64). I think such reference must be taken symbolically - the moralities states that the Fox is the Devil; in The Swallow and Othir Birdie man's soul is likened to a bat which 'lurkis still as lang as lycht of day is' (17); the Fox, in The Fox and the Wolf hated the light (stanzas 1 and 2).

Henryson sets the evil court in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff at night. The Devil rejoices in the works of darkness; and man is afraid of him: 'The man leuch na thing quhen he saw that sicht' (66). The Devil had already begun to betray his follower he could have acted as his witness; but he wishes to destroy man and man cannot help him. The oath (60-4) is a further addition.

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1. Wood, Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 248, note to ll. 2285-6 states 'I have been unable to identify this proverb with any in Scripture.' 3. Stearns, Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 120 states 'Needless to say, this praise of loyalty is not in the Bible, as the Wolf would have the Husbandman suppose.' But there is no proof that the Wolf's proverb was meant to be of biblical origin.
The Fox's conversation with the Wolf is considerably expanded.

Caxton:

And the Foxe wente and told to the Labourer thou shalt gyve to me a good henne And another to my wyf And I shalle hit soo make that thou with alle thyn oxen shalt frely goo vnto thy hows wherof the Labourer was wel content.

Henryson shows us the Fox's craft: the Fox stressed the hopelessness of the Husbandman's case but proclaimed his readiness to help him: 'Yit wald myself fano help thee, and I mocht' (88). He carefully created a favourable impression: 'Bot I am laith to hurt my conscience oocht' (89). He treated the 'Husband' without subservience ('thy') but his tone was one of familiarity, helpfulness ('Friend') rather than the superiority of the Wolf ('Carll'). And even when suggesting bribery he was careful to make it with appeals to the Husbandman's judgement (11. 92-3) and proverbial expressions: (95). 'Her the Fox did not ask for a hen for his wife, for obvious reasons; the Husbandman offered several of the best hens (cf. 1. 207; 'The hennis ar warkein that fra ferme faith procedis'), but wanted to keep the cock - there is perhaps an allegorical reason for this detail too which I shall discuss later.

... For God is gane to sleip; as for this mycht
  Sic small thins ar not sene in to this sicht;
Thir hennis' (quod he) 'sall mak thy querrell sure,
  With smotie hand na man suld Halkie lurel (102-5)

Again through a proverb, through apparent reasonableness, the

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plausibility of wrong and the wiles of the Devil are shown.

But the Devil is false to all creatures, even to those who serve him. The Fox adopted somewhat similar tactics towards the Wolf as towards the Husbandman, though he adapted himself to the Wolf’s superior social position (‘Schir’, ‘ye’) pretending to be his servant rather than the experienced mentor and friend, he pretended to be to the ‘Husband’. He ‘plukkit him be the sleiiff’ (108), an expression of confidence - and an addition by the poet. Again a considerable change has been made: Caxton’s Fox says ‘I have weel laboured and wrought for the For the labourer shall gyve to the therfore a grete chese and lette hym goo home wyth his oxen.’ Again we are shown the Fox’s cunning: he had maintained that the labourer had no chance of winning his case; he advised the Wolf similarly, claiming even to doubt the Wolf’s seriousness in pursuing his claim (ll. 109-118). He had maintained to the labourer that he could not act against his conscience; so here:

Wald I tak it upon my conscience
To do as pure a man as yone offence? (118-9)

But in spite of these difficulties he had done what he could

(‘Yit haif I’... 120; cf. ‘Yit wald myself: fane help the’... 88).

The Fox stressed the value of the cheese. Caxton: ‘a grete chese’. Henryson:

... That sic ane sall not be in all this laud; For it is Somer ches, baith fresche and ffair He says it weyis ane stane, und sumdeli mair (124-6)

Replying to the Wolf’s further questioning the Fox repeated earlier additions:
For gang ye to the maist extremitie
It will not wyn yow worth one widdorit neip;
Sehr, trow ye not, I have ansaul to keip (131-3)

It is interesting to note that May, in the Merchant's Tale, when
planning to commit adultery, uses the same expression as the
Fox in line 133. Still the argument continues - such capitulation
was against the Wolf's will (134-5); but the Fox assured him
(by my Saul) that he was to blame (136) and the Wolf agreed to
his advice. In the Wolf's speech to the Husbandman, and in the
Fox's speeches to both Husbandman and Wolf Henryson has shown us,
by his additions, the persuasiveness of evil men - their 'honied
words', their apparent reasonableness, their wiles, their treachery.
Ironically the Devil outwits his followers - the deceitful - by
their own methods.

Again we find expansion by addition of detail - though it is
not all 'realistic' detail. Caxton: 'And thenne he ledde hym
to and fro here and there unto the tyme that the mone shyned full
bryghtly And that they came to a welle.' Henryson:
Thro' the woods one day late of a mon th' outcourt there
Than hand in hand thay held unto ane hill;
The Husband till his horse's tane the way,
For he wes fane; he schaupit from their ill,
And on his fait weke the dure quhill day.
Now will we turne unto the uther tway
Throw woddes wast thir freikis on fuie can fair
Fra busk to busk quhill neir midnycht and mair (141-7)
The literary quality of this 'description' must be remarked upon -
the heavy alliteration, the phrase, used elsewhere in Henryson
(fra busk to busk), the Chaucerian device (Now wil we, turne unto

1. IV (E), 2188-9.
2. Smith, Poems, op. cit., i, 36 note to 1. 2364, comments 'This
is a scribal error for hous'.
the utter tway\). The addition of 'woddia waist' is important for the moralitas (cf. l. 211 ff.); the time too has certainly an allegorical significance - the Fox loved darkness, the darkness of this world in which illusory and fleeting pleasures are attractive. A further addition: in Caxton it is at least implied that the Fox knew from the beginning that he was to show the Wolf the Moon's shadow. In Henryson's version he did not (ll. 150-1). The poet takes the opportunity to stress his resources of cunning:

Lawrence was ever remembering upon wrinkles
And subtelties the Wolff for to begyle (148-9)

Having thought of a trick to play the Fox allowed himself a self-congratulatory smile (152) - earlier he had laughed at the thought of being judge, at successfully obtaining a bribe (99). Henryson adds the Wolf's suspicion and the detail 'ane Manure place' (157). We are told immediately of the two buckets (160-1). In the original these were not described till the Fox had been told to go down: 'And the Foxe was content by cause two bocketys were there of whiche as the one came upward ...'. The significant part of the well of Covetousness, where Fortune rules, is emphasized. The Fox was fulsome in his praise of the cheese - and ingenious in his explanation of its presence. Caxton: 'loke now godsepy how that the cheese is fayre and grete and brode'. Henryson:

'Schin' 'said Lawrence) 'anis ye sall find me leill;
Now se ye, not the Caboik weill your sell,
Qubyte as ane Heip, and round als as ane seill?

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1. **Riche Telle**, (A) 1449-50, 1488-9; **Troilus and Criseyde**, II, 687.
He hang it yonder, that na man suld it steill;
Schir, tryst ye well, yone Caboik ye coo hing
Micht be ane present to ony Lord or King (163-8)

The Fox's flattery is noticeable here: 'schir' has been used
several times previously (again we must compare with similar usage
in The Fox and the Wolf); the 'ony Lord or King' of l. 168 also
pandered to the Wolf's pleasure at being flattered. And, by an
addition, the Wolf's essential covetousness is brought out: 'Yone
wer mair mait for sic ane man as me' (173).

An omission: in Caxton the Fox suggests:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Hys the now and goo doun and after take} \\
\text{that chese. And the wulf sayd to the} \\
\text{Foxe thow must be the fyrate of us bothe that} \\
\text{shalle goo doun and yf thow mayst not} \\
\text{brynge hit with the by cause of his} \\
\text{gretenesse I shall thanne goo doun for to} \\
\text{help the.}
\end{align*}
\]

Here the Fox's suggestion is omitted; the Wolf merely told him
to go down. (174-5). An interesting example of the type of addition
of detail made by Henryson can be seen in the Fox's appeal for help.
Caxton: ... 'goddes com hyther and helps me For the chese is so
moch and soo grate that I maime not bero it up'. Henryson:

'It is sa male' (quod Lowrence) 'it maisteris me,
On all my taie it hez not left ane nail;' (178-9)

There is a further omission, the reason for which it is difficult
to understand: 'And thenne the wulf was aferd of that the Foxe
shold ete hit entryd wythynge the other boket ...' Typically,
the fable ends with addition of detail: 'And left the Wolff in
water to the waist'. (192). Typical too is the method of
transition from fable to moralitas:...
In the Fable then we have seen three types of changes; firstly, changes in the story itself (particularly the early introduction of the Fox), for allegorical purposes; secondly, the addition of details - these serve two purposes, which are often intertwined: they increase the immediacy of the work and, particularly, add to the allegory; thirdly, the rounding out of the speeches which come to provide full portraits of the "characters" and thus a revelation of the moralitas - the wicked picking quarrels with the poor 'Be Rigour reif and uther wicketness' (233), and the Devil with his wiles.

The moralitas presents many points of interest. Caxton's moral is neglected entirely:

And thus the wulf lost bothe the oxen and the chase wherfore hit is not good to leue that which is sure and certayne For to take that which is uncertayene. For many one ben therof deceyued by the falsheed and decepcon of the Adovocate and of the Juges.

Steinhövel's is much the same: 'Et ida, quia lupus pro futuro bene incerto dimisit: presens certius, boves cum caseo perdidit.

Noli ergo certius pro incerto dimittere.' 'Petrus' original again has had no influence:

Castigauit. Araba filium suum dicens: Accipe consilium ab eodem, de quo requiris experto, quod sic leuis habere potest quam si tu ipse periculose probaueris. Alius castigauit filium suum dicens: Ne crederas omni quod audieris consulio, donec prius anx utile probatum fuerit in aliquo ne contingat tibi sicut latroni contigit qui consulio domini domus cuivsdem credidit ...
Joannes Gobi\(^1\) tells the well-known fable of the dog carrying a piece of meat over water and, seeing its reflection, jumping in thus losing his meat; Gobi moralizes: 'Sic suari ... bona ... perdunt propter umbram bonorum temporaliun quam nee possidere possunt semper.' The Speculum Laiorum\(^2\) tells the same story—substituting a piece of cheese for meat—under the heading 'De amore mundi et fallaxius eius'. A fable in the LBO Romulus\(^3\) relates how a fox, wandering by waters at night, saw the moon's reflection and, thinking it to be a cheese, began to drink the river dry; he suffocated himself in the process. Moralitas: 'Sic cupidus omnis tanto labore lucrum insistit, quod se ipsum anto tempus perdit.' Marie de France\(^4\) tells the same story moralizing:

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Maint humo espirit, utre droit
X utre coo qu’il ne devrait,
Aver tutes ses volentez
Dunt puis est morz e afoles: (15-18)
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The two most interesting parallels are to be found in the works of Odo of Cheriton and Nicole Boson. Odo\(^5\) tells how a fox by chance fell into a well; a wolf finding him asked what he was doing, was told that he had found a great deal of fish and was advised to come down. The Wolf was duped. Odo moralizes:

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Vulpeula significat Diabolus qui dicit homini:
Descende ad me in puteum: peccati et inueniens
delicias et multum bona. Stultus adquiescit
et descendit in puteum culpe, et ibi nulam
inuenit refecceonem. Tandem: veniunt: inimici
et extrahunt ipsum, persequunt et perinunt:
Diabolus: multa bona Ade: proximit, sed: multa
mala persoluit.
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1. Scala Celii, op. cit., fol. xvi\(^a\).
2. B.M. Ms. Royal 7 Cxx, fol. 15; B.M. Add. Ms. 33957, fol. 84.
3. Hervieux, i, 598.
5. Hervieux, iv, 192-3.
Nicole Boson writes

Contra Cupidos
En la tiere de Ethiopie si est trovée
un pierre que est appelé crisopaz, &
este pierre lust trop cler tant com la
muyt dure, Mès ci tost com vynt a
cler jour, moytenant perde sa biel colour.
Auxint est de coveitise de ceste monde.
Ele pient belle quant a plusieurs que ne ont
aye dreit consisance de la volente.
Dampnedieu. Mès quant vendra a cler jour,
ou touez verront la verite, lors e tenu
pur folie, o foyle e tenu pur grand sen.
Saint Pool le temoigne e dit: "Le sen de
ces monde est foliequant a Dieux"2. Don
tplusieurs sont deced, com avynt jadis.

Fabula ad idem
Le lou dist al gopil: "Jeo ay trovée un
furnage bone bel, sicom or resplendissant;
ai jeu le pusse aver jeo serroye hoitée." -
"Bien" fet le gopil, "moustrez moy le
furnage e vous le averez." L'autre va e
lui moustre la lune resplendissant e un servour.

In this version the fox, taking advantage of the wolf's foolishness,
suggests that the wolf pull the cheese out with its tail: the tail
is frozen into the water and the wolf, pulling, loses it:

"Alas!" dit le lou, "ore ay perdu ma cowe e
mon furnage, e sui hony; ore, nejese mès
apparier entre la gent. A mal houre desirey
chose que no fust pas pour moy!" Auxint
moutez des gentz desiret sen e saber de
ces monde, que est semblable a la lune e al
umbre de la lune que lust en le eve, gar
quant vous le guidez happen vous en suaderes.
Tant com sont en purchaseant, le gopil lur
demande: "Coment vous est?" - "Bien font
ils," nous sentons la bourse ausques grunde
et pesante." - "Veir," fet l'autre,
"entendez uncere a tiel mistier: vous
averez lo furnage tot enter, ceo est a dire
tot la ville od la manere," Mès quant
quyent neaux happen, lors on vont sans
cowe de terrfire aver ...

1. Les Contes Moraliéda, op. cit., pp. 64-5.
2. I Corinthians iii, 19.
Biblical interpretation has, too, some points of interest: the interpretation of the ploughman as 'one godlie man', and the stress given to his activities, can be linked with **Piers the Plowman** and the tradition of interpretation which influenced it.¹ Perhaps the ploughman's desire to retain the Cock (from which, to interpret, his good works spring) is explained by Garner of St. Victore's interpretation:

De Gallo

Galli nomine praeceptor sanctus designatur ...
Sapientia quippe divinitus inspirata in visceribus hominis posuitur, quia nimium quantum ad electorum numerum spectat, non in solis vocibus, sed etiam sensibus datur, ut juxta quod loquitur lingua, vivat conscientia, et lux ejus tanto clarior resplendet insuperficie, quanto verius inardescit in corde²

Hrabanus Maurus' interpretation of 'puteus' is also interesting:

... profunmitas vitiorum, ut in Psalmis
"Neque urget super me puterus os suum,"
'id est' dominetur mihi profunditas vitiorum;
ut in Psalmis: "Deduces eos in putem
interitus," id est: demerges eos in profunmitatem actornae perditionis.³

We must examine the relationship of the moralitas to the fable itself and to the Fabillie as a whole. Firstly, it must be pointed out that there is here again an instance of the device of surprise I have discussed when dealing with other parts of Henryson's work:

The Husband may be callit and godlie man,
With quhoze tho Faynd falt findis (as Clerkis reids),
Desie to tempt him with all ways that he can.
The hennis ar warkis that fra forme faith proeideis:
Quhair sic sproutis spreidis, the eill sprait their

² and 3. See over.
Not wounds unto the wickit man agane
That he has tint, his travell is full unfane (204-10)

In the fable we had been led to believe that the 'Husband' was
tricked by the Fox, had given in to the temptation to bribe,
a temptation furthered by the argument that 'God is gone to
sleep' (102). Again then our expectations are defeated by the
moralitas. I must say, however, that I am not at all certain
that we have Henryson's own moralitas in this fable: the basis
of it is almost certainly his, but how far details have been
changed by Protestant revision it is impossible to tell us,
unfortunately, the Bannatyne Manuscript has no copy of this poem.
Details which lead me to doubt the manuscripts we have are largely
to be found in the stanza I have just quoted: line 207 for instance —
which seems thoroughly Protestant in spirit — and the impossible
scansion of line 208.

Secondly, the relationship between our fable and the Fabillis
as a whole: in detail we may compare The Swallow and Othir Birds:
The Feynd plettis his nettis stark and rude
And under plesaunce priuelye dos hyde (290-1)

our poem:

For Mammon may be callit the Devillis Net
Cuhilk Catherines for all sinfull hec set
With proud plesaour quha settis his traitis thairin,
But special grace, lychtlie can not out win (214-7)

But further, the moralitas stresses what may be seen to be the
basic theme of the Fabillis — the transitoriness of this world's

2. Gregorianum, P.L. cxciii, col. 73. But cf. my discussion of
the care needed in using such Biblical exegesis in literary
criticism with reference to The Fox and the Cock. P. 184 n. 1.

3. Alleriis in Sacram Scripturam, P.L. cxii, col. 1035; also
Garner of St. Victore, Gregorianum, P.L. cxciii, cols. 300-1.
Illusory pleasures which give no reward here or hereafter:

The Cabok may be callit Covetyce,
Guhilk blomis braid in meny mannis Ec;
Sa worth the well of that wickit vyce;
For it is all bot fraud and fantaisie,
Dryvand ilk man to leip in the buttrie
That doonwart drawis unto the pane of hell—
Christ keip all Christians from that wickit well (216-24)

The poem ends with the conventional prayer ending, as always
moulded by Henryson to fit the particular fable.

Co once again we find Henryson taking a straightforward
tale, remoulding and revivifying it and adding to it a new
moralitas: a moralitas which though new to the context is not
new in its thought: a moralitas which again stresses the
underlying theme of Henryson's work.
(xiv) The Wolf and the Wedder

I have been able to find only four versions of The Wolf and the Wedder story apart from Henryson's. The story seems to have come from the East through Baldo's Fabulas Superstition. There is an expanded, but incomplete, version in a British Museum Manuscript of the twelfth century. The important versions for our purposes are, however, the prose account in Steinhövel's collection and Caxton's translation.

Although Henryson has made many important changes in his version I think it can be proved that his source was Caxton rather than Steinhövel. Firstly, in Steinhövel - in Baldo and the Manuscript version too - the protagonist is a ram (aries). Henryson follows Caxton in describing a wether. Secondly, Steinhövel specifically describes the Wolf evacuating itself in three different places:

Cunctus lupus respiciens videret ipsum
insecutum a propriis atercoribus est
inquinatus. cepitque velocius fugere
et aries eum persequi instantium.
Intuensque eum lupus agiliter venientem,
iterum a propriis atercoribus est
inquinatus. Denuo autom intuens lupus
iam iamque videns comprehendi se ab ariete
pre velico timore iam vice tertia propriis
secibus fortiter est pollutus.

And later the version describes how the Wolf took the ram to each of the three places to accuse him. Caxton, in describing the chase, reads:

1. Hervieux, v, 368-70.
2. W3, Add. 6166, 41b-42b.
And thenne the sayd wether ranne after hyn And the wulf whiche supposed that it had ben the dogge shote thryes by the wayes for the grete fero that he had.

Later, Caxton’s version implies that this happened at one place:

And thenne the wulf ledde hym unto the place where as he had shyte sayenge thus to hym loke hyther callest thow this a playe.

Henryson describes during the chase one evacuation only (86); and the Wolf brought him back to one place only (109) – his accusation of 1. 115 would appear to apply to that one place only, as Caxton’s.

The first departure Henryson makes from his source is to specify the place where the Shepherd lived: ‘be one Forrest noir’ (2). His danger — the proximity of the Wolf’s haunt — is thus immediately emphasized. He was alone too whereas the shepherd in Caxton’s account was ‘a fader of a famylle’ who had several to help him: ‘the shepherdes were sore troubled and wrothe and sayd to one another we shall no more slepe at oure case’.

And in this lonely situation the Dog was our Shepherd’s only help. Caxton:

[he] had a greete dogge for to kepe them which was wel stronge And of his voyes all the wolves were aferd wherefore the Shepherd slepte more surely.

Henryson:

... and Hound that did him comfort; full war he wee to walk his Fauld but war, That notheir Woff nor Wildecat durst appeare, Nor Pox on feild, nor yet no uther beast, But he thare sleu, or chaissitt at the leist (3–7).

The details are more specific: the Dog attacked all types of animals; he killed them or chased them, not merely barking at them. The post has focussed attention on the Dog’s effectiveness
by his typical devices ('wit' comfort'; 'full war'; 'nother ... nor ... nor ... nor'; alliteration). So the loss of the Dog in Henryson's poem appears more disastrous despite the fact that the poet reminds, in an addition, that 'euerilk beist man de' (8: he is already pointing to the folly of trusting this world—cf. l. 160 'Nor elym so his, quhill he fall of the ledder'). And the death is sudden (l. 9) and thus, in its unexpectedness, more disastrous than that in the original: 'this dogge for his grete age dayde'. The poet stresses the Shepherd's suffering, using the traditional lament form:

```
But than (God wait) the keipar off the fe
For woory wo woxe wanner nor the wel;
'Allace' (quod he), 'now se. I na remaid
To saif the selie beistis that I koip,
For wit(h) the Wolf weryt beis all my scheip'

It wald half said one maNNis hart sair to se
The selie scheiphiirdis lamentatioun (9-16)
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Such an appeal to the reader's emotions is, of course, a common late medieval rhetorical device. But it is certainly in keeping with the other changes we have already seen: an extension of the portrayal of the Shepherd's reliance on the Dog, and his utter

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1. It is used elsewhere in Henryson: in The Testament of Cresseid the narrator several times excuses Cresseid. The Wolf and the Lamb:

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Was this no rewest was this nocht grit pate
To heir this silly lamb but gilt thus de (90-1)
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Chaucer also used the device: The Legend of Good Women:

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Al haddes folkes hertes ben of stones,
Hyt myght have maked hem upon hir rowe ... (1841-2)
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Troilus and Cresseida:

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Therwith his manly mawe to bholdes,
It myghte han mad an herto of stoen to rowe;
And Pandare wip as he to water wolde ... (113-5)
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helplessness without him. The passage quoted is certainly more effective in this way than Caxton's: 'we shall no more sleepe at our ease by cause that our dogge is dede for the vulues shall now come and ate our sheep'. And Henryson adds the lament:

'Now is my Darling deid allace' (quod ho);
For now to beg my broid I may be boun
With pykstaff and with scrip to fair off toun;
For all the beistis befoir bandonit bene
Will schute upon my beistis with Iro and tene' (17-21)

This was the end of his livelihood - he must now beg in 'fair off toun'. Henryson then has made the loss of the Dog far more important to the Shepherd - and thus more affecting for us - than his source had done. The reason for this can be explained in connection with the change in the portrayal of the Wether. Caxton describes: 'a grote wether fyers and proud'. At once our sympathies are alienated; doubly so for the fable began with a moral prejudicing our attitude to the Wether: 'Grete folye is to a fool that hath no myght that wylle begylle another stranger thy himself as reherceth this fable ...'. We soon realize that this criticism refers to the Wether. But Henryson's fable begins without a moral pointed and his Wether is presented sympathetically:

With that ans Weder wrecchitlie wan on fute
'Haister' (quod ho) 'mak meric and be blyith;
To brek your hart ffor baill it is na bute' (22-4)

The Wether - and there is no suggestion of pride here as yet, it shared its master's grief - offered to comfort and succeeded in comforting its master; and, as we are personally involved here, we adopt his point of view, we are grateful to the Wether. This then, I feel to be another example of the device I discussed in dealing with The Cok and the Jewell - it is to be found also in
The Fox tried before the Lyon — where the reader is purposely involved in sympathy with the fool, only to be shown his folly in the moralities; the reader then returns to the tale finding hints of criticism which, because of his initial sympathy he had not recognized. Thus, the Shep's speech perhaps contains hints of over confidence, of misplaced belief in its own abilities — because it will be externally like the Dog it believes itself to have the Dog's abilities (cf. ll. 131-7); it does not know its own limitations (cf. l. 156):

All hail, the cure I tak it upon me,
Your sheepe to keip at midday, lait and air.
And he persewe, be God, I sall not spair
To follow him as fast as did your Doig.
Swa that, I warrand, ye sall not want one hoig (31-5)

In essence this is an addition to the original which merely states: 'And whanne the vulues shal be sene to me they shal haue great fore of me.' At first reading we take the Wether's speech to be merely an expression of his desire to help — we are duped, like the Shepherd as shown in another addition:

'Than' said the shepheard, 'this come of ane gude wit;
Thy counsell is baith sicker, leill and trew.
Quha sayis ane shep is daft, thay licit of it' (36-8)

Such an unmotivated denial of the Wether's folly leads us eventually to question the Shepherd's judgement; and, in essence, the Wether was a fool — it did not know itself or its capabilities (cf. l. 155). A further addition adds to our understanding of the true nature of the Wether: 'Than worth the Wedder wantoun off his wold' (41). At first reading perhaps we neglect the implication of 'wantoun', despite the alliterative stressing, but it is brought out by the moralities:
Heir may thow se that riches of array
Will cause pure men presumptuous for to be;
They think they hold of none, be they als gay
Bot counterfute ane Lord in all degre (145-8)

Henryson illustrates this counterfeiting in a further addition:

In all things he counterfaint the Dog;
For all the nycht he stude, and taka na sleip,
Swa that weill lang thair wantit not ane Hog.
Swa war he wes and walkryfe thame to keip ... (43-6)

The Wether had taken not only the Dog's clothing but his manners,
'all things' (cf. l. 144). Again the poet expands his original:

Caxton's: 'And when the wulues came and saw the wether clothed
with the skynne of the dogge thay beganne all to flee and ranne
away', becomes:

Wes nonther Wolff, Wildcat nor yit Tod
Durat cum within thay boundis all about.
Bot he wald chase thame baith throw round and snod.
Thay bailfull beisitai had of thair lyvis sic doun,
For he was mekiil and semit to be stout
That everilk beist thay dreid him as the deid-
Within that woid, that nane durst hald their hold (50-6).

Again 'semit' is the important word, a word perhaps not fully
understood at first reading but paralleling 'counterfaint'.

Everything seemed to be working out well for the masquerading
Wether, but the moralitas reminds: 'Bot yit nane wait how lang
that reull will ring' (151).

In the initial portrait of the Shepherd and the Wether,
then, Henryson's additions have caused sympathy and admiration
for the Wether. But he has also added words and phrases which
when read in conjunction with the Moralitas, show the Wether's
folly - because it is dressed as one of its betters it thinks
it has the abilities of that better; it does not know itself.
Many of the later additions serve the same purposes. The Wolf's action (it is portrayed partly through its own speech here, not so in Caxton) did not harm one lamb only as in Caxton; for 'the laif start up, ffor they wer all agast' (62) — our sympathies are further engaged with the Wether, the sole protector of the flock. The poet stresses the action of the chase. Caxton states merely:

And thanne the sayd wether ranne after hym And the wulf whiche supposed that it had ben the dogge shote thryes by the waye for the grote fere that he had And ranne euer as fast as he coude and the wether also ranne after hym withoute cesse tyl that he ranne thurgh a bushe full of sharp thornes.

Henryson involves us in the chase, we sympathize with the Wether's efforts to catch the Wolf. But he does so not merely to entertain or to create a 'realistic picture' — our involvement makes the effect of the moralitas even more startling. So:

Bot (God wait) gif the Wedder followit fast Went never Hound mair haistello fra the hand, Quhen he was rynmand maist raklie at the Ra Nor went this Wedder baith over mois and strand, And stoppit noother at bane; busk; nor bra Bot followit ay sa ferslie on his fa, With sic ane drift, quhill dust and dirt over draif him And maid ane Vow to God that he suld have him (63-70)

Heavy alliteration, rhetorical emphases ('baith ... and'; 'noother ... nor'; 'sa'; 'sic') bring out the hectic nature of the chase in which the Wether has completely forgotten its real capabilities. In fact it seems as if the Wether has the Dog's capabilities (64). And we, at this stage thinking the Wether to be on God's side, secon its vow (70). Added details too make the chase more 'realistic', involve us further: the Wolf stretching out its
The wolf threw the lamb aside, to lighten its load, 'Syna lap ouer leis and draif throw dub and mire' (79). But the mother insisted on proving its strength (80-2), another addition illustrating the extent to which the mother has 'lost' herself in his part: it thinks it is a dog or that it can do all a dog can do. This folly had begun through its assuming the 'clothes' of the dog. The poet introduces an element of excitement: will the mother catch the wolf?

The Wolff ran still quhill ane strand stude behind him
Bot ay the neirer the Wedder he couth bind him (83-4)

There is something of the same suspense in the Steinhöwel version though details are very different:

[lupus] tulitque agnum as fugit. Aries autem
insequebatur eum instantius, Cumque lupus
respiciens videret ipsum: sequentem a propriis
Stercoribus est inquinatus, cepitque velocius
fugere et aries eum persequi instantius.
Intuensque cum lupus agiliter venientem, iterum
a propriis stercoribus est inquinatus: Denuo:
autem intuens lupus iam iamque videns comprehendi
se ab ariste pre valde timore iam vice tertia
propriis fecibus fortiter est pollutus. Cumque
instantius fugeret lupus: consulens sue vitae, et
aries insequitur casu evenit iuxta viam spina ...

Some after that he followit him sa neir
Quhill that the Wolff for fleidnes fyllit the Fields;
Syna left the gait, and ran throw busk and breir
And schupas him ffra the schawis for to schelid.
He ran restles, for he wist off na beld.
The wedder followit him baith out and in Quhill that ane breir busk raif rudelie off the skyne (85-91)

All is changed suddenly: the chase had been long (63-90); the unmasking swift (91) and final immediately reversed the roles of the animals.

The exchange of speeches between the animals also shows certain additions; so the Wolf's first speech where it vowed to God (98). It seized the Wether by the horn (100). The ensuing conversation stresses, as does the original, the true relation between the beasts - 'Maister' (104), says the Wether; the Wolf complained that it is wrong 'To set your Maister in so fell effray' (111). But the Wether still had argument to advance - argument not in the original - in which it used some of the devices used by the Fox in other fables (the Fox "successfully" flatters in The Fox and the Wolf; its son unsuccessfully in The Fox tried before the Lyon) - deference ('achir' 1. 120); proverb quoting (1. 122), promise to serve (11. 125-6). But the Wether too was unsuccessful - 'The Wolf 'it in schunder schuke!' (133).

Again then we have seen Henryson using traditional forms and common rhetorical devices and the use of detail to make of his fable something new: a tale which, through its sympathy and suspense, seems to engage our sympathies for one character, but

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1. Elements in the description can of course be paralleled in other passages of The Fabillis: the 'buske and braire' alliterative grouping can be found, for instance, in The Two Wyld (1. 5) and in that fable too, as in many places throughout The Fabillis, the 'baith..... and technique and the use of a heavy alliterative pattern can be paralleled. (One interesting occurrence is the chase in The Fox and the Cock, 11. 149-61).
contains undertones which, in the light of the moralitas will show our sympathies to be mistaken. The device of narrator in medieval poetry engages the readers in the action of the poetry, emphasizing its applicability to the readers' own lives; the device used in our poem achieves the same effect for we have been misled with the Shepherd, with the Wether itself. Like it we must learn to know ourselves (l. 155).

The moralitas has been considerably expanded. I quoted earlier the opening of Garton's version; at the end he translated: 'And therefore he that is wyse muste take good heed how he playeth with hym whiche is wyser more sage and more stronge than hym self is.' Henryson discusses the folly of social climbing - not merely one's actions towards one of higher rank, but attempts to be equal with, even to rule, that person. Social climbing shows blindness on two levels: failure to know oneself, to recognize the limits of one's capabilities; and failure to recognize that the respect and power one strives for in putting such an emphasis on bettering oneself are but passing anyhow - like all things in this world.

Stearns argues that the fable applied to the favourites of James III - Roger, Hommyle, Cochrane and others - whom the nobles despised and against whom they eventually acted. If this is so Henryson must have wished merely to remind of the lesson of their fall - the poem can hardly have been directed against them

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 20-2. See my more extended discussion of this type of comment in my chapter on The Fox and the Cock, pp. 185-9.
for when it was written (Caxton's Espe appeared in 1484) these
favourites had been overthrown and Cochrane killed (1482).
Such a reference may have been intended though it is impossible
to prove. And, it must be noted, such criticism is part of
a tradition. Other fables deal with the same problem: thus,
in Caxton's edition, the Ass in the Lion's Skin; The Jay and the
Peacock:

None ought to were and putte on hym the gowne
of all wheref Espe reherceth to vs such
a fable of a Jays full ofayne glory which
toke and putte on hym the fethers of a pecock ...

Hoccleve's Regement of Princes is even more explicit on this
subject: the Beggar criticizes those wearing wide scarlet
gowns, with long sleeves and an abundance of fur:

'Nay acthely, none it is al a-mys me pinkyp;
So pore a wight his lord to counterfate
In his array, in my conceyit it stynkith ... (435-7)
"Som tyne, afer een myghten lordIs knows
By there array, from oher folke; but now
A man schal stody and musen a long throwe
Which is whiche; ... (442-5)
"Let oure lord, his own3 men defende,
Swiche gret array and pan, on my peryl,
This land within a while schal azende: (456-8)

Sermon material too, as Owst has shown, discussed the same
subject:

"Now, also the comyn peple is his stied
unto the cynne of pride. For now a wrecchid
chave, that goth to the plou3 and to carte,
that hath no more good but serveth fro ser to

2. ibid., pp. 52-3. Cf. also Jacques de Vitry, Crane, CCXLIX,
Cf. also Blench, Preaching in England in the Late Fifteenth
and Sixteenth Centuries, op. cit., p. 243.
yer for his lifloge, there — as sumtyme a
white curlet and a russet gowne wolde haue
served suaxon ful wol, now he must haue a
fresch douplet of fyve schillynges or more
the price;

Most such descriptions bewail the decay of order in society;
Henryson warns against such social climbing because of its
dangers:

Out of thair cais in pryde thay oly sa his,
That thay forbeir thair better in na stoid,
Qhill sum man tit thair heillis over thair heid (145-7)
Bot yit nane waite how lang that recull will ring;
Bot he wast wyse that bad his Bone considder
Bewar in welth, for Hall benkin ar rycht slider (152-4)

Again we find Henryson using a proverb here its accumulated
wisdom gives added weight to the argument. It can hardly be
imagined that Henryson thought that such social climbers always
came to grief in this world: the tale is, too, a spiritual
exemplum. A comparison must be made here with the situation
in The Twa Lyis: there 'a lordis fair thus can thay counterfait'
(110). And:

So Intermeelit is aduersaitie
With credly Ioy so that no stait is fre

1. B.M. MS. Add. 41321, fols. 101b–2 quoted by Owat, Literature
and Pulpit in Medieval England, op. cit., p. 369. Owat has
also translated two other interesting passages: John
Waldeby (B.M. MS. Royal 7 K ii, fol. 17b):

Whatever vanity or finery can now be found amongst
lords and ladies in clothing and adornment, their
servants and maids usurp for themselves. And this
is a great sign of this world ... As the servant so
also is his lord.

Rypon (from B.M. MS. Harl. 4894, fol. 27b):
The garments, I saie, of the proud and those who were
once noble are now divided as spoil ... Hardly anyone
now is satisfied with his status, but pants after a
higher and insanely affects to be reputed better than
he is by other people.

2. Noted by Smith, Poema, op. cit., 1, 37 note to 1. 2600. Wood,
Poema and Fablia, op. cit., p. 249, note to 1. 2608 notes its
occurrence in The Thre Prestis of Pablie, 1. 614 and Ferguson
(1641 edition) 335.
I noted in dealing with *The Two Lyis* the conventional nature of this advice. In these two fables then Henryson has discussed the same problem using differing examples (food and power).

In both, his warning, implicit or explicit, is against trust in the things of this world (wealth, position). His positive recommendation is to be found elsewhere in the *Fabillins*:

"Science":

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It is the riches that evir sall indure
Qhilk notht nor mwsst may nocht mwsst nor ket
and to manis sawll it is eternall met.
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*(The Cock and the Jewell, 138-40)*
Little need be said by way of conclusion to this study of The Fabillia. The central argument has been repeatedly stressed: Henryson, by the use of traditional forms, the addition of detail (much of it literary in character) has expanded a genre previously limited in scope to the consideration of isolated ethical problems into an examination of man as a beast, man whose bodily desires so compel him that he loses sight of the spiritual element in himself and trusts to transitory 'pleasures' of this world.

This is the central point of my argument but from it arise two further aspects to the work: firstly, Henryson's Fabillia are, on the whole, very sophisticated poetry requiring perhaps a sophisticated audience (for instance, the inverted use of the chanson d'aventure form in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff would seem to require of its audience a knowledge of the original form) - this is not the poetry of a rustic. Neither is it - and this is the second aspect - the poetry of a Scot specifically. True, as we have seen occasionally Henryson would seem to have directed his criticisms at Scottish society. But generally the poetry (in form and content) shows thorough acquaintance with techniques and ideas which were European wide in application - one would scarcely expect otherwise from a man reared in a medieval Catholic environment.

There remains but some brief statement of evaluation. All such statements are of course, to some extent at least,
subjective (perhaps excessively so from one who has spent nearly three years immersed in the one subject) but, from the evidence presented, I would suggest that Henryson was more creative within the fable form, extended its possibilities and scope far wider, than any writer since the inventor with the possible exception of the writer or writers who founded the Roman de Renard tradition. His achievement must rank as a major one yet it would appear to have been completely neglected.
PART III: THE SHORTER POEMS
Henryson's shorter poems have been almost completely neglected. The only work to have received serious critical attention has been Robene and Makynes, and Gregory Smith's study still forms the only attempt at examination of most of the poems.

At the outset it must be recognized that Henryson's shorter works are genre poetry. To understand the characteristics of these genres requires a great deal of effort, for romantic and post-romantic poetry has largely been written with very different assumptions as to the nature of art. But the effort is of value, for two reasons.

Firstly, several of the poems are of considerable merit. As their merit lies largely in the fact that they have revivified genres by using them for ideas hitherto expressed elsewhere, or by altering some of their characteristic features, or by combination, we must be able to recognize these genres.

Secondly, some of the poems, though formally very conventional, are of interest in so far as they use genres which Henryson has adapted in his major works to suit his artistic purposes. A study of the shorter poems adds to our appreciation of the artistic merits of the major works.

1. Satisfactory study of this type of poetry would be well nigh impossible without the help of C. Brown and R.H. Robbin's Index of Middle English Verse (The Index Society, New York, 1944).

2. There is scarcely need to list the 'surveys' of these shorter poems which exist, occasionally taking up a whole paragraph in the various histories of Scottish Literature. They are but 'appreciations' of the briefest and most subjective kind.

Before we proceed to analyze the works separately something must be said about the difficulty of ascription of several of the poems. The tendency to ascribe poems to well-known authors was, of course, widespread—many poems were falsely attributed to Chaucer for instance.\(^1\) And the fact that the earliest extant copy of several of our poems was written eighty or ninety years after their probable date of composition raises further doubts. But, of course, where there is no contradictory manuscript evidence we must accept the attribution; for, the poems being genre poems, there is no possibility of being able to distinguish characteristic styles or tones which might suggest an author;\(^2\) and the works are too short to allow grammatical or linguistic analysis to set up valid distinguishing characteristics.

There are three poems for which the manuscript evidence leads us to doubt the ascription to Henryson. \textit{Obey and Thank thy God of All} is attributed to Henryson by Bannatyne;\(^3\) the \textit{Maitland Folio} records 'author incerto'.\(^4\) The Thre Deid Follis

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2. Priscilla Preston to some extent spoils her discussion of the authorship of \textit{King Hart} ("Did Gavin Douglas write \textit{King Hart}?", \textit{Pamphlet Review} xxviii (1959), 31–47) by relative neglect of this factor when comparing the work with \textit{The Palace of Honour}. On the other hand her grammatical and linguistic analysis is quite convincing.

3. fol. 47a.

is attributed to Henryson by the Haftland Folio; the Bannatyne Manuscript records 'ffinis q. patrik Iohinstoun'. No other poems by Patrick Johnston are extant but Dunbar records him in his Lament for the Wakerie, 1. 71 amongst the dead poets. The Want of Eyre Men, which occurs in the Chepman and Myllar tracts, and in the Bannatyne Manuscript has no attribution whatever. Smith argues for its inclusion in the Henryson canon thus: 'The collocation of the piece with Orpheus and Eurydice in Chepman and Myllar, not only in a single tract but with a run-on title, must have some weight as evidence of contemporary opinion on the authorship.' The assumption in itself appears doubtful but when we look at the Chepman and Myllar text we find it to be even more so; for this is not the only case of 'a single tract with a run-on title'. The last line of p. 133 seems to finish, with no editorial indication of this fact however, The Wayng or Disport of Chaucer; another poem, beginning 'O when by dyvyne deliberatioun,' follows, without editorial indication, at the top of p. 134. At the end of this poem the editors comment 'Explicit. Neir ondis the mayng and disport of Chaucer Imprintit in the south gait of Edinburgh bo Walter Chepman and Androw myllar the fourth day of apriile the yhere of god MCCCC and viii yheris' — there is no mention

1. P. 238.
2. fol. 58b.
4. Porteous of Noblenes and Ten Other Rare Tracts (Edinburgh, 1598), pp. 166-8. The Chepman and Myllar Prints together with the poetry from the Makculloh and Gray MSS. have been edited for the S.T.S. by G. Stevenson (1918).
5. Poems, op. cit., i, lxxvii.
of another poem. Again, between the extract from The Flying of Dunbar and Kennedy and The Praise of Aige (p. 144) there is merely one line space; the Praise of Aige has no title and begins with a small capital — no one has suggested on this evidence that Dunbar wrote The Praise of Aige. Nor has it been suggested that Henryson wrote Devise Prowen and Eke Humilitee which follows The Praise of Aige (p. 145) without a space and without title.

Obey and Thank thy God of All and The Thre Deid Pollye must certainly be retained in the canon. But there is, as far as I can see, no valid reason for retaining The Want of Wyse Men. I shall not discuss it in my text and include it as an appendix only because it illustrates the common use of a topos Henryson uses skilfully in his Fabillie.
(1) Robene and Makyne

Robene and Makyne illustrates Henryson's ability in revivifying conventional forms. It is a composite of pastourelle and ballad forms with allusion to other conventions which make its tone very different from either.

Gregory Smith attributed Henryson's inspiration in the poem to the French pastourelle;¹ W. Powell Jones, accepting this attribution, pointed out a pastourelle which has many similarities in plot to Henryson's poem.² His claim has been attacked by Arthur K. Moore who maintained that 'Robene and Makyne bears superficial resemblances to both pastourelle and ballad, but it is uncritical to describe it as either ... Henryson's poem resembles the typical pastourelle in that the setting is rural and the characters answer to the name of Robene and Makyne ... But further the comparison cannot be legitimately extended.'¹ It seems to me that Mr. Moore has rather overstated his case. One of the questions which we must ask is whether the poem could have assumed its present character without the influence of the pastourelle form. I think not for there are many resemblances, resemblances which are far more fundamental than Mr. Moore seems to think. It seems inconceivable that Henryson would have chosen the name

1. Poems, op. cit., i, lvi.
3. 'Robene and Makyne', E.L.R. xliii (1948), 400-3; and further in his The Secular Lyric in Middle English (Lexington, 1951), pp. 185-94.
Robene if he had no acquaintance with the type; besides the 
name Makyn shows some resemblance - an obviously intended 
resemblance - to the common pastourelle name Marion, Harot.¹
A cursory glance at Karl Bartch's collection of pastourelles² 
shows that almost all pastourelles quoted contain a Robin and 
that, more often than not, they also contain a Marion, or some 
variant on that name. Again, as Moore himself mentions, 
'there is the fact that the setting is rural', a fact that 
Henryson stresses; most of the characters in the 'pastourelles' 
are shepherds ('borgiére', 'pastoré', 'pastorelle') and there 
is constant mention of sheep and of the countryside. And in 
this setting the sole preoccupation is with love, as it is in 
Henryson, and very often with unrequited love: the refusal 
of the shepherd to love the maiden is a common starting point 
for the poems and often too the ending is unhappy. Frank 
expression of emotion is common. Now all these factors are 
very important in Henryson's poem. An examination of the

1. Makyn is a diminutive of Matilda, or Meld; a woman with 
such a name is not of noble rank. Henryson's change could 
have been made merely because of difference of nationality - 
Makyn itself is not, as Smith contends (Poems, op. cit., 1, 
59), 'a common name for a woman or girl in the pastourelles.' 
But he goes on to note: 'Like the name Kittok or Kit it 
was, at an early stage in its history, sometimes used in 
the deteriorated sense of slut, or wanton'. The extent 
of 'deterioration' can be seen by reference to Linday's 
use of it as a popular name for the female pudenda (Anon. 
Supplication in Contemtopy of Wyde Trillig 11, 18-92, 
The Works of Sir David Linday of the Count, ed. Douglas 
Nature of the Thrie Patritie 1, 1920, Works, op. cit., ii, 
191). Henryson's change makes Makyn's use of the terms 
of 'fine amour' even more surprising and meaningful.

'pastourelle' pointed out by Jones,¹ and a comparison of it with Robene and Makyne will illustrate all these general points. Robin is present in both; there is a 'Marot au coro mignot' (8-9) as of course Makyne. The setting is rural:

Ier main pensas chevauchai
les une saucole
Pastoral chantant trovai (1-3)
... ai va tes bestes guider (69)

Henryson's poem begins 'on gud grene hill', (1) and there are many references to sheep. In both poems the preoccupation is with unhappy love: both show the woman's unhappiness at rejection, in both the women express their feelings frankly:

'O! que ferait?
dx amor morrai
ja non vivrai
se toi non ai que j'aim ai bien,
trop m'avais d'amors greve,
se tot li mal en sont mien (30-35)

'my dule in dern bot gif thow dill,
Dowtless but dreid I de' (7-8).

And, as in Henryson's poem, the ending is unhappy. These points occur in most 'pastourelles'. The 'débat' characteristic of argument and counter argument is also found in many 'pastourelles', as in these two. But there are also several points of close resemblance belonging more exclusively to the two poems: the happiness of the shepherd before being assailed for instance:

pastorel chantant trovai,
demenant grant joie! (3-4)

The weddir is fair and I am fane' (29)

The difference in attitude between the characters is made explicit

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¹ Altfranzösische Romanzen und Pastourelles (Leipzig, 1870), pp. 503-5. The poem is by Baudes de la Kakerie.
in both poems by the differing actions of the characters:

\[ \text{Que qu'elo plore, et cil c'en rit} \]
\[ \text{de tot son dit il est petit. (29-30)} \]
\[ \text{vera moi l'enjeant mout doucement;} \]
\[ \text{cil se defont trop durement, (40-41)} \]

Robine murnit, and Halkyne lewche;
Scho sang, His echit sair (123-4)

And there are resemblances between the plots — Robin will not take the maiden when she offers; later she rejects him. Now I am not suggesting that Baudes de la Kakerie's poem is Henryson's source: the introduction of the third figure, Marot, in that poem changes its whole tone — Robin is deservedly rejected by the maiden when he returns to her after Marot has rejected him; and as Jones has pointed out, there are no real verbal similarities. Neither am I suggesting in this discussion that there are no differences between Henryson's poem and the 'pastourelle' type: the absence of the narrator, and of the riding out motif, is an oft quoted example of the differences; again, Henryson has constantly stressed certain elements, especially the sheep which are normally little more than decorative trappings in line with the rural scene in the 'pastourelles'; for reasons we have noted, he has changed the name applied to many of the maidens of the French poems from 'Marot' (or its variants, 'Marion', 'Marlotte', 'Maroie') to 'Halkyne'. But these differences do not destroy the contention that Henryson's basic source of inspiration was the pastourelle which dealt with the same subject in the same setting and could give rise to a similar plot, as in Baudes de la Kakerie's poem. Robine and Halkyne would not have been written in its present form without the 'pastourello' tradition.
Ballad elements in Robene and Nakyne have been pointed out before. There are both resemblances to particular ballads and to the ballad form in general. Moore has pointed to the fact that the opening of our poem recalls that of the ballad Lord Thomas and Fair Annet and that the proverb used by Henryson as his "moral" is found also in the concluding stanza of the Baffled Knight. More generally, both the alliterative formulae which recur constantly throughout the poem and the verse form are related to ballad technique. The directness and simplicity with which the story is told are also reminiscent of the ballad form.

But this is a literary ballad form - we have already seen that the poem is radically influenced by the pastourelle form. It is also heavily alliterative in nature, not merely in its use of alliterative formulae but in its very structure. One may cite for instance, the first stanza in which the first five lines each contain two alliterating syllables; the stanza ends with two lines in which the cumulative use of alliteration for emphasis reminds us of similar use in the Fabillis:

my dule in dorn but gif thou dill,
Dowless but dreid I de (7-8)

3. ibid., no. 112D, 11, 488.
4. Many are pointed out by Smith in his notes to the poem (Poems, op. cit., 1, 59-61).
Henryson imports into his work a surprising tone with his use of the terms and concepts of 'fine amour' in the third stanza. 1 We have already seen that Henryson has emphasized the earthy nature of his characters by the very implications of the name Makyne; the same element can be seen in Makyne’s open expression of her desires (7-8; 21-2; 36-40). The fact that the characters are shepherds also would seem to remove them from the world of 'fine amour'. In essence, Henryson’s addition suggests that all love is of this kind no matter how refined it may seem. For, if the poem can be said to have a theme, it is that human love is fickle and destructive, never fulfilling, breaking down the order and happiness of creation. While Robene fed his sheep, and cared nothing for love he was happy; in harmony with nature; he sat on a 'gud grene hill' (1), knowing nothing of love (10); his sheep symbolize his order and that of the universe about him; he

... Keipsis my scheid undir yone wid,
Lo quhail thay rait on raws (11-12)
It seemed to him that Makyne was 'marrit' in 'mude' (13)

The Weddir is fair, and I am sans
my scheid gois baille abof;
And we wald play us in this plane,
They wald us bryth reproif (29-32).

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His main concern was that his sheep should not go astray (43-6). He went away: 'als licht as leif of tre'; (66). By contrast Wakyne had suffered: she had thought she would die (8; 39-40; 54); had been extremely unhappy ('reivis me roif and rest', 49; 'full sair', 58). But love is fickle: love left Wakyne and attacked Robene - and her characteristic became his. So whereas at first:

Robene on his wayis went
als licht as leif of tre;
mauskin murnit in hir intent (65-7)

later:

Walkyne went hame blyth annewche,
Attour the holttie hair;
Robene murnit, and Wakeyno lewche;
Scho sang, He aichit sair; (121-4)

Now he lived in 'holttie hair' (122, 128) - not the 'gud grene hill' of his original state.

1. In this context I cannot see how 'bone' (54) can mean merely 'woe' as Smith and Wood suggest in their glossaries; it must have the meaning given in D.O.S.T. (bone n²; bone n³) of either a. 'slayer or destroyer' or b. 'death or destruction'.

300.
(11) Sum Practysis of Medecyne

Henryson's poem can be fully understood only by an examination of the traditions in which it was written. There seem to me to be four traditions which have important bearing on the work.

The first is that of attack on medical men of all types: physicians, surgeons, apothecaries. This tradition was widespread in the Later Middle Ages. We find it in poetry.

Le Roman de la Rose, presents the customary attack: that the physician's actions are tainted by greed for gold. A Poem on the Times of Edward II shows a similar attack; but here the greed for gold is matched by incompetence for the physician 'can noht don his werk':

And bring rotes and rindes bret ful a male off noht;
Hit shal be dere on ale, whan hit is al i-wrouht.

He wole preisen hit i-now, and seeren as he were wod,
For the King of the lond the drink is riche and god;
And yere the gode man drinke a god quantite;
And mak him worsse than he was; evele mot he tho!

That so geteth the silver, and can noht don his werk

(226-34)

Gower, in his Miroir de l'Orme also attacks physicians (11. 25621-60) coupling them with apothecaries who are merely money makers:

Car cie qui de leur ordination
User voldra d'acoustumances
Le cirimp et le lettuaires
Trop peut languir en esperance
D'amandement, car tiele usance
Est a nature trop contraire (25639-44)

Langland urges diet on his readers: then physicians will have
to sell their furred hoods and precious possessions

For moretherere are many leches lorde hem amendes:1
Thei do men daye thorw here drynkes ar designe it wolde

Chaucer's portrait of the Physician in the Prologue also contains
satirical references - among which is a hint of his mercenary
nature - as U.C. Curry2 and Muriel Bowden3 have shown. Brant4
berates the Fools who know nothing of medicine yet practise, in
his chapter 'Of folysche Peacyana and unlearned that onely folowe
paractyke knowynge nought of the speculacyon of theyr facultie':

who that assayoth the craft of medycyne
Agayn at the seke and paynfull pacient
And hath no insayght, cunnyng nor doctryne
To gyue the seke, helth and amendement
Suche is a folle, and of a mad intent
To tak on hym by Phesyke any sure
Nat knowynge of man, nor herbe the right nature;

The poet complains that:

A horbe or wede that groweth upon a wall
Beryth in it these folys medycyne.
None other bokes haue they nor doctryne.

3. A Commentary on the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales
   (Edinburgh, 1874), 1, 260-4.
They rely on legends concerning herbs, often using the same
preparation for all diseases, and not reading medical textbooks.
These physicians are like lawyers: with no knowledge they
attempt to beguile and rob the public:

Thus thou that of Phisician hast the name
If thou ought knowe of perfyte medecyne
It is forsooth to thy rebuke and shame
To boaste the scyence;

There is perhaps too a hint of criticism of doctors elsewhere
in Henryson's own poetry: the portrait of Mercury in The Testament
of Cresceid probably contains overtones of criticism:

Doctor in Phisick cled in an 8karlot goun,
And furrret well, as sic ane saucht to be,
Honest and gude, and not ane word culd le (250-2)

The denial of untruthfulness and dishonesty is an indirect way,
perhaps, of hinting that all was not well: all was attractive
and proper on the outside but we are left wondering about the
motives of the doctor. 1

Criticism of physicians is not to be found in poetry only.
John of Salisbury 2 complains:

They speak aphorisms on every subject
and make their hearers stare at their long,
unknown and high-sounding words. The
good people believe that they can do in the
anything because they pretend to all things.
They have only two maxims which they never
violate: 'Never mind the poor; never refuse money from the rich'.

1. For later Scottish criticism of a particular "doctor" see
Dunbar's The Ballad of the Pevaye Freir of Tynland,
1. 17-18, Works, ii, cit., 11, 139-43.
2. tr. John Flint South, Memorials of the Craft of Surgery
Petrarch, too, wrote criticism: *Inventive Contra Medicum*. Ovst gives several examples of sermon material containing criticism of doctors.

We have found then quite a considerable tradition of criticism of physicians in the Later Middle Ages. The criticism is, of course, not aimed at medicine as such but against fraudulent practitioners: against ignorant, against pretentious, against mercenary physicians; even against individual physicians showing these characteristics. We must next discover what relation Henryson's poem has to this tradition. There is the accusation of ignorance: the narrator's words, though aimed at another, are really a reflection on his own character - the poet here uses a modification of the technique common in later medieval poetry to incriminate the narrator along with the principal characters. Thus 11. 7-9, and 14-17, maintaining the ignorance of his opponent serve to illustrate his own pretentiousness and basic ignorance. Further:

1. ed. Pier Giorgio Ricci (Rome, 1950). We should note however Thorndike's point:

   He [Petrarch] might write to Boccaccio on the nonsense of astrologers just as he wrote to him on the audacity and pomp of physicians. He might assure Francesco Bruno that astrologers tell many lies and he might compose four books of invective against one of the papal physicians. But he numbered amongst his esteemed correspondents such prominent medical men of the century as Tommaso del Garbo of Florence and John de Dondis of Padua... Thus his attitude seems to have varied with mood, circumstance and the person addressed.


Is nowdir fevir, nor fell, that our the seild fur, 
Seiknes nor sairnes, in tyce gif I soid, 
But I can lib thame and leiche thame fra lama and lesure, 
With salvis thame sound mak ... (18-21)

There are also hints of the narrator's mercenary motives:

The seerd feisik is fyne, and of ane felloun pryce (66) ... Ye may clamp to this cure, and ye will mak cost ... (74)

There is a hint too perhaps of that collusion between apothecary
and physician which Gower and Chaucer denounced:

on your saules beid,
That ye be sicker of this sedull I send yow,
With the suth fest seggis } of malis to meniyow
that gleen all egeis } (21-25)

With salvia thame sound mak ...

We might note in passing that Henryson's physician in breaking all
contemporary ideals of a good physician:

For this poen - just like those I have quoted - is not an attack
on medicine as such but an attack upon the ignorance, pretentiousness
and mercenary motives of some of its practitioners: perhaps even
of an individual - 'as Dunbar's poem abused an individual - though
this cannot be ascertained now. Henryson's poem, then, shows
affinity with the tradition of attack on medical men for their
failings. 

The second tradition to which Henryson's poem is related is

that of the versification of medical prescriptions. Lydgate shows something of this in his Diet and a Doctrine for Pestilence:

For helthe of body keep frô cold thyn hed; 
Et no rawe mete, take good heed herto; 
Drink halsum wyn, feede the on lyht bred; 
With an appetite ryse from thi mete also ... (25-8)

But actual prescriptions were versified too:

**ffor ye gowte**
Take jua of rubarbe ful aney, 
And as mekyly of eysyl I ye sce, 
And yt ye eysyl be sharp + soore 
And nege it wt a porcion barly flour, 
And on a flaxene clout apred it elone 
And bynd it yer ye gowte is most sene 
Tax olye of rubarbe + alemd

**ffor ye gowte**
Yt wel togodir ba togorid ne yd 
Feastyr
Wt yis playstor of flaxen clowth 
Bynd ye scoor festeryd wel abowte; 
... And as good lechys alle seyn 
Ken xul yer to no oyer thyg. icy (169-82)

This example is taken from a fourteenth century manuscript which contains almost 1500 lines of prescriptions. Henryson’s poem was written with such a treatise in mind as we shall see more clearly shortly. His poem is not the only work in which such prescriptions are burlesqued:

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2. ed. O. Stephens, "Extracts in Prose and Verse from an Old English Medical Manuscript preserved in the Royal Library at Stockholm," Archaeologia xxx (1844), 349-418. The article contains a long poem (cited by line numbers only in my notes) and prose extracts (which I shall cite by the page numbers of Stephen’s article).
A good medycyn for nor even
For a man that is almost bynyd
Let him go barked all day agayn the wynd
Tyll the sojne be sette;
And than wrap hym in a cloke,
And put hym in a hows full of smoke,
And loke that every hol be wel shett.
And when his ogen begyne to ropo,
Fyll hem full of brynaton and sopo,
And hyll hym well and warmo.
And yf he be not by the next mone,
As wel at mydnyht as at none
I shal lose my ryght armel

Though the aim of the two poems is similar Henryson's poem is
easier the actual prescriptions. He uses the same wording and
constructions: the use of 'dia' is common in prescriptions as
Gregory Smith has shown. The construction 'Cape cukmaid ...'
(27), 'Tak covin cobbin ...' (54-5) is a normal way of beginning
a prescription - we compare with 'Tak jws of rubarbe', or 'Tak
thre hanful of ye ton' or 'Tak the luse of pe herbes', examples
from actual prescriptions. Similarly, 'Recipe, thre ruggio
of the reid ruke ...' (40) and 'Recipe, thre sponfull of the
blak spyce' (63) is a common prescription beginning as in, for
instance, 'Recipe - pe Iuyso of amalâche or march ...'. The
assurance of Henryson's narrator concerning the efficacy of his
medicines:

1. Songs and Carols of the Fifteenth Century, ed. T. Wright
2. Poems, op. cit., 1, 73 notes to 1. 25 and 11. 26-7 et seq.
4. ibid., 1. 297.
5. John Ardenne, Treatises of Piestula in Ano, Haemorrhoids and
Chrystera from a fifteenth century manuscript translation,
6. ibid., p. 30.
This din is rycht deir and deincht in daill,
Caus it is treit and trew ... (52-3)
The herd felsik is ryne, and of ane felloun pryce,
Gud for hauing, and hostung, or hit at the haert; (66-7)

- can be paralleled too, though Henryson's use is perhaps
exaggerated; exaggeration was part of his satirical technique,
as we shall find. Thus:

For ye brennand festre good medicine ... 
... Anoyre meducyne I fynde mytale also
Yat to ye cold dropecye is good to doo ...
... Afayre meducyne ye telle I can ...

A similar parallel may be found at the end of prescriptions:
'is gud for the host', (78) and its exaggerated form 'Is nocht
battir' (38, 49) has similarities to the assurance of the
prescription ending: 'he schall hawe helps full sone'.

Henryson's prescriptions too make use of herbs: 'colleraige ...
bowrokis, the sop of the segs ... lawrean and linget seid'. (27-31)
and so on: just as the prescriptions do. And these must be:
gathered at the right time:

Bot. luk: when ye Eaddir., ' thin, greeals. end gerne®
outhir aovrand or sour ... y4 ... That it be. In ras: good. hour (87-9),

we compare with:

In ye monyth of august allwyse
It maste be gaderyd or some ryse; ...
... Who so well on lanesse day
Erly on morw or some splay
Gadere celydony wt his roote

1. Stockholm Medical Manuscript, ed. O. Stephens, op. cit.,
   11. 201, 381-2; 291.
2. ibid., 1. 444.
3. ibid., 11. 473-4 and 645-7.
and with "and pe same wole pe sede doo, if it be gadered at
norne / before pe sun rist and ley under pe pacient hode'. 1

Again "Ser, minister this medecyne at evin to sum man" (83) and
"Lyng all thir in ane mass with the mone cruke" (46). For the
physicians, just as the surgeons, must know the 'hours' as
Curry has shown. 2 So: "Sicunt volunt Astrologi summi videlicet
Ptolomaeus, Pythagoras, Rhasis, Haly etc, non debet cirugus
incidere vel ureere in aliquo membro corporis humani nec facere
phlebotomiam dum Luna fuerit in signo regnante, illud membrum
...". 3 Once again, then, we find Henryson making use of a
tradition: he makes use of the form and content of typical
medical prescriptions (the very versification of these prescriptions
was a tradition) and he uses them for his own purpose exaggerating
them to pour scorn on false doctors and their false prescriptions.

But we must notice that it is an exaggeration not quite as great
as we might think. We consider such prescriptions as:

'Also of Pan pat restaeyne, blode bene
pise: Wumme, bole ammoniac, sang dracon,
thure, aloe, vitriol combust, puluer of
heres of ane hare, brent or nost brent;
puluis of henne, yeper brent, medled with
white of ane ey'4

cri!

1. A Middle English Translation of Haer Floridus de Viribus
Herbarum, ed. O. Frisk (The English Institute in the
University of Upsala: Essays and Studies of English
Language and Literature, ed. S.B. Liljegren, 3, Upsala,
2. Chaucer and the Medieval Sciences, op. cit., pp. 3 ff..
3. Ardène, Treatises of Fistula in Ang., op. cit., p. 16.
4. Ibid., p. 66.
For ye poiste
gayne ' ffellynga
cwyl

Take Rouynys bryddys all quyke
ooste of here noaste t loke yat
yoi towche nost the erthe nor
yat yei comy in non hawe, t
brene hem in a new potte all to
powdир t sif it ye seke man to
drynkyн

Or, for leprosy:

three black serpents are caught, their heads and tails to the measure of three fingers are cut off and their middle portions burned in a new pot; white soap and oil are added and they are rubbed up in a mortar until thick like honey. The material is applied for three days and the part is washed. If any of the infirmity is left on the patient cut off the head of a tortoise, collect its blood and anoint the affected parts with a feather.

But unless we realise that Henryson is using this tradition we miss much of the poem's meaning: such misunderstanding has led to the statement that this poem belongs to a class of poems which are 'no more than occasional exercises in sheer fun' whose sole merit is that they have 'perhaps a touch of protest against the more orderly and derivative style imposed by the ruling fashion in verse'.

The third tradition that must be examined in relation to the poem is that of verse form. The form Henryson uses is the common form for the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots. F.J. armour describes the form: the stanza is

'composed of thirteen lines, and is divided into two parts. The first part consists of eight lines riming alternately; the last five lines form the second part, technically called the "wheel", the first and last lines of which rime together, the three intermediate lines running on a fourth rime. The rime scheme is represented by the following letters: abababcddc.

The first eight lines have four accents or strongly stressed syllables, and so has the ninth ... the last four lines have two accents. The long lines are divided in the middle by a pause, there being two accents in each half-line. The number of weak or unstressed syllables in a line is undetermined ...'

As Amours shows this scheme is used by the five alliterative poems in his collection and in Dunbar's Ballad of Kynd Kittok, Douglas' Prologue to the Eighth Book of the Aeneid and in the first stanza of Lindsay's Ane Satyre of the Thre Estaitis as well as in Henryson's poem. There are two virtues of this form for Henryson's purpose: the major words are set off by both alliteration and stress - Dunbar, similarly, in his abusive poems (cf. The Flyting, and Ana Ballat of the Fenyelit Priar of Tunpland) uses heavy alliteration; secondly, the irregularity of the metre, here, serves to illustrate the confusion of the speaker's mind (this confusion - the pretence at learning, yet obscurity - is also shown by the studied difficulty of the diction). The poet is using satirical technique as opposed to that of complaint; he makes his points by innuendo - however obvious that innuendo may be - not by direct statement. His aim

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is to make the object of his scorn seem ridiculous to other eyes. And not only does the verse form help to do this but the method of exaggeration: and this is the fourth tradition. Making use of materials provided by his chosen form, he exaggerated in two ways: to absurdity and obscenity. We might instance 11. 27-33 as an example. The mixture of absurdity and obscenity was a common one in the invective of contemporary poets; thus in Dunbar's Ane Ballat of the Fenveit Freir of Tungeland we find:

The folk, the gormaw, and the gled,
Beft him with buffetis quhill he blod;
The sparhalk to the spring him sped,
   Ala fers as fyre of flynt.

The tarsall gait him tug for tug,
A stanchell hang in ilka lug,
The pyot furth his pennis did rug,
   The stork straik ay but stynt (77-84)

Even the technique of taking a form and exaggerating it for its ridiculous - and thus destructive - effect was not new: Chaucer, admittedly with a very different type of poem, had, in Sir Thomas, exaggerated the romance form for a satirical purpose.

We have found then that very little in Henryson's poem is new. But the poet is not merely recopying material; as we have seen in other poems he takes and adapts to his own purpose. A well-tried subject of Complaint Henryson transforms by using, with satirical intent, a well-tried didactic genre; this genre he gives a verse form previously used in other genres and adapts techniques, used elsewhere primarily for vilification, to his satirical purpose.
The remaining question that must be asked concerns the degree of seriousness of the poem: there has been no denial of the seriousness of the poet's attacks on lawyers, on unjust noblemen in the Pabillis; because the poet uses a different technique there is no reason to doubt his seriousness here. The subject has elsewhere been one of serious attack, as we have seen. And the alliterative technique and rugged verse form were used for serious purposes: Dunbar did not write Ane Ballat of the Penzeit Priar of Tungland for comic relief; Skelton uses irregularity in his attacks on Cardinal Wolsey which were certainly serious in intent. Henryson's poem then, is an attack on false physicians whose ignorance, self-assurance and mercenary motives made them obvious butts for attack. The statement that its prime purpose was 'to express the sense of freedom, or the demand for it, which is the excuse and motive of the rough flyting' and the hint that its sole effect was to amuse its audience cannot be proved.


(iii) Ane Prayer for the Pest

Outbreaks of the plague were common in fifteenth and early sixteenth century Scotland; a glance at the Records of Edinburgh between 1498 and 1513 shows the plague almost continuously present and such epidemics were not uncommon; there were several during Bishop Kennedy's episcopacy at St. Andrews, for instance. As Gregory Smith points out: "There is no internal evidence in this poem to help us determine to which of the plagues of the fifteenth century the writer refers." But such information would not help us in an appreciation of the poem; the prayer embodied in it could refer to any or all of the plagues - just as a prayer or sequence in a Mass for the Pestilence could. For, as we shall increasingly discover, it is not essentially a personal prayer - setting forth personal experiences, or emotions or needs; it is the type of prayer that could be prayed in a community, a general petition for the needs of community and nation. And as such we shall find the influence of Church teaching and Liturgy to be important.

I think we shall find two major influences at work in the poem, influences which give it both its ideas and its form. They are religious and literary traditions though it is perhaps dangerous to distinguish too distinctly for the religious traditions often inspire literary traditions so that it is often

impossible to distinguish the more important influence on the
poet. We shall begin with the religious traditions.

The poem states that the reason for the plague was the
people's sin (6, 51-2). This concept derived largely from
the Old Testament: Numbers xiv, 11-12:

\[
\text{\textit{Et dixit Dominus ad Moyse: Usquequo detrahet mihi populus iste? Quousque non credent mihi, in omnibus signis quae feci coram eis? Feriam igitur eos pestilenta, atque consumam;}}
\]

Again, the ark brought plague to the Philistines (I Samuel [I Regum]
v and vi), David chose three days of plague from the different
punishments offered him for rebelling against God: I Samuel
(II Regum) xxiv, 15-16: \textit{Inmisitque Dominus pestilentiam in}
Israel de manu usque ad tempus constitutum et mortui sunt ex
populo, a Dan usque ad Bersabee, septuaginta millia virorum'.'
The idea was prominent in the medieval Church: we find it in
Pope Clement's Mass \textit{'pro mortalitate evitanda'} which, composed

\begin{tabular}{l}
1. Missale ad-Usum Insignis et Præclarae Ecclesiae Sarum, 
ed. F.H. Dickinson (Burntisland, 1861-3) cols. 885*-899*. 
This Mass, and another to be mentioned, are not contained 
in the later edition of the Sarum Rite, The Sarum Missal 
edited from three early manuscripts ed. J. Wickham Legg (Oxford, 1916). For a translation of the complete missal 
see The Sarum Missal in English, tr. F.E. Warren, 2 vols. 
(The Library of Liturgiology and Eccesiology for English 
Readers, ed. V. Staley, 8 and 9, London, 1911). I have 
felt free to use the Sarum Missal for it was widely used 
in Scotland in later medieval times (introduction to 
Epistolæ in Usus Ecclesiae Cathedræ Aberdonensi, 
ed. S. McRaven (Edinburgh, 1924), pp. xi-xiii). There are 
also two interesting Masses - 'pro plagæ' and 'pro pestilencia 
et fama' - in the Arbuthnott Missal: Liber Ecclesiæ Betti 
Terræni de Arbuthnotti Missale Secundum Usum Ecclesiae 
Santæ Andreæ in Scotia, ed. A.P. Forbes (Burntisland, 
\end{tabular}
to combat 'mors subitanea', had obvious significance for times
of plague. In the Office the anger of God at the Egyptians,
and the resulting plague brought about by the destroying angel
are recalled: 'Rocordare, Domini, testamenti tui, et dic angelo
percutienti, cessat jam manus tua: ut non decool tur terra: et
ne perdas omnes animam vivam'. The Collect recalls the same
conception: 'ut dum tibi devotus existis, iracundiae tuae ab
co flagella clementer amoveas'. The Lesson is from II Kings
xxiv, which we have already noted. The Offertory: 'Stetit
pontifex inter mortuos et viventes: habens thuribulum aureum
in manu sua: et offerens incensii sacrificium placavit iram
Domini, et cessavit plaga a domo et a populo Israel'. Similarly
in sequence of the 'Missa de sancto Sebastiano, tempore pestis',
we find:

nos pro nostris tantis malis
jam aborbet pestis Italia,
quam tota gens gemuit,
Sancte martyr Sebastianus,
salva nos a peste epidemiae,
nostra gravia ob peccata
terra ista desolata
non sit, pie quossumus;
Again, in the Secret of the same Mass: 'Subveniat nobis, Domine,
tua misericordia, intercedente beato Sebastian martyro tuo;
ut ab immicentibus peccatorum nostrorum pernulis, te mereamus
protegente salvari...'. 'The conception is also found in
sermons: Wulfstan shows the connection between sin and sickness:

Foras hit is on us sallum swtol and gesene pat we ar pysan ofter brocon bonne we bettan, and by is pisse peode fels onsege. Ne dohte hit nu lange in ne ute, as was here and hunger... orfwesals and uncotu.

Of course the concept was reflected in written history. Leslie writes:

'About this tyme the pest was ryfe in Scotland, cheiflie in Dundee, Abirdine, and in sum vtheris townes and dorpes, quhilkis a hail yir skirslie culd be clinsed, that all man had this opinion:
quhilk was communie and evidente to sindrie, that God had plaget the peple for their sinne committed against him, throch his Just Judgement, with thir thrie hauie plaigie, weiris, derth and pest al at one and the selfe sam tyme.'

The concept is shown in literature too; in A Warnynge...

(8) pe-rysing-or'pe commynes in londe
pe pestiles and pe eorpe quake,
peose preo·pings, I understoondes,
Bec-tokenes pe greto vengaunce and wrake
pat schulde falle for synnes sake
As pis Clerkes conne declare (57-62).

In Piers Plowman we are told that Conscience:

preide the peple, haue pite of henselue,
And preude that this pestilles."were for peire synne."


5. A Text, Passus V, 11, 12-13; ed. Skeat, op. cit., 1, 123.
Lydgate implies the same reason in *How the Plague was Cleanned in Rome*\(^1\) where the plague is caused by the angels. The link between sin and plague is so marked that it seems to me, in the two prayers against the pestilence attributed to Lydgate—

*O Heavenly Star, Most Comfortable of Light* and *Stella Coeli Extirpavit*\(^2\)—plague, to some extent at least, becomes symbolic for sin.

*O Heavenly Star, Most Comfortable of Light:*

O blasyd vyrgyn, so wyse, so feyre, so goode
Lytght bode Aungil Adam be be holy goat down sent,
Be owre proteccyon Ageyn the olde serpent! ...

... Preserve thy peple from gostely pestylence,
And from Infection of worldly violence,
Than we shall passe - Mawgre the serpent -
Off grace and Mercy be with vs present. Amen (68-77)

In his own *The Dog, The Schein and the Wolff*, Henryson himself repeats the argument:

Thow tholie this bot for our grit offens
Thow sendis vs truble and plaigis soir
As hungir derth wer and pestilens (169-71)

There is perhaps not enough evidence to deduce a literary tradition;\(^3\) what we do see is a religious tradition accepted by artists as by Henryson:

So the poet admits that punishment is deserved (6; 51-3).

But he asks for mercy: and the grounds on which he does so are likewise part of the religious tradition. The plea: 'Use derth,
o lord, or selkenes and hunger soir' (25), can perhaps be compared to: *...*

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3. Later the concept is to be found in Lindsay's *The Monarchie*, 11. 52-4 and 421-5; *Works, op. cit.,* 1, 197-356.
to the seven years of famine, one of David's alternatives for punishment. Mercy is also claimed by recalling the merits of Christ's sacrifice (27-8; 41-3). The poet is using theological terms: we recall I Corinthians vi, 20: 'Empti enim estis pretest magno'. In the sequence for the Mass 'pro mortalitate evitanda':

Virgo Natum intercede,
ut afflicitos liberet;
Salvet hos a pestis cada,
quod pie redemerat ...

Literature too has provided parallels to this plea: Lydgate's Stella Cali Extirpavit:

Be thy Requests and Medyacyoun,
And be thy sconys gloriuous naasyn
And Remembraunce of thy Ioyes all,
Gayne frowarde Eyres Causing Infecacyoun,
Diffend vs, lady, when we to the Cali (20-4).

The plea for mercy through Christ's passion is, of course, not only relevant to the plague. A Prayer for Mercy:

Thesu, that diede one the rude for be lufe of mo,
And boughthe me with thi precious blode,
shew hafe mercy of me! (1-2)

And, Do Merci before thi Jugement:

God, putte pin holi passioun
Bitwixe us and thy jugement! (95-6).


There is another reason why the plea for mercy should be answered: the people are penitent (33:49, 86). We compare again with the Sequence of the Mass 'pro mortalitate evitanda':

Olim culpa nos ligati
respirantes cedimus,
corde moesto flagellati,
tibi soli cedimus.

The Sequence continues describing Old Testament heroes helped when repentant. In literature too, similar pleas can be found:

Do Merci Bifore thi Jugement:

God, pou desme us rightwylie,
Madele pou merci with excusiseoun,
For we had forsetid wrongfulli;
Take heed to oure contriisoun. (85-8)

But, allowing these reasons for mercy, the chief plea is to the undeserved mercy of God (35-8). The cry for mercy is common in the Psalms. The Sequence for the Mass 'pro mortalitate evitanda':

Cancus una proclamemus
Suum Deum imploremus
misereri ut dignetur; ...
... Si pro mala irascaris,
tempus est ut revertaris;
pie Jesu, misiere;

This complete reliance on the mercy of God is found in poetry too:

Do Merci Bifore thi Jugement:

Or pou pe world with fier pure;
Do Merci bifore thi Jugement (11-12)

For the important argument of 11:20-1—that the plague does not allow minister to confess; striking suddenly as it does—I have been able to find no parallel, though the suddenness of men's emotion moves still David. 'Non etsi Deus'...
death is a common topic and in his own *Fox and the Wolf* Henryson makes this fact an argument for confession and 'willfull penance' (176-82).

Thus far then we have seen the content of the poem deriving ultimately from religious traditions, expressed in the Bible and in the Mass; but we have also noticed that those ideas were not heeded by Henryson alone; there is a considerable body of literature expressing the same ideas; to some extent a literary tradition has been built up. Into this tradition *Ane Prayer for the Peat fite*; and we cannot finally decide whether the ideas expressed are the product of this tradition or of the religious sources of that tradition. Perhaps from both for, as we have discovered in studying other poems and as we shall see more fully in this, Henryson was obviously fully conversant with the poetry of his own age; we know, from Biblical allusions discovered in other poems, that his Biblical knowledge was detailed.

The religious influence of the poem extends to the form as well as the ideas expressed: actual constructions from the Bible are used: 'we beseech thee' occurs several times, for instance in Jonah i, 14: *Quæsumus, Domine...*. Again, 'Remember Lord': Psalm xxv (Vg. xxiv) 6: *Reminiscere miserationum tuarum Domine*; or Psalm cxxxvii (Vg. cxxxvi) 7: *Hæc oporteat, Domine, filiorum Edom...*; 'Heif mercy': Matthew xv, 22 *... Miserere nobis Domine fili David...*; Matthew xx, 30 and 31 'Domine, miserere nostri filii David': 'Lord of Lords' — ...

'Dominus dominatium' Revelation xix. Many of these phrases had
been taken over into the liturgy, and this is the probable source for the poet. Merely to take one of the multitude of examples of the first type from the Mass of St. Sebastian we have been using: 'Da, quasemus, Domine.' The 'half mercy' construction is that of the 'Kyrie eleison; Christe eleison'. Besides, the Psalms were a normal part of the liturgy. But the poet has not merely taken separate constructions; the poem is based on a common concept of prayer order and technique. Prayers and sequences typically begin with praise, moving thence to petition. So the Sequence for the Mass 'pro mortalitate evitanda':

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Jubilalis pia mente,} \\
\text{voci cordo concinente,} \\
\text{Trinitatem collaudantes;} \\
\text{Patrem Proleque precemur,} \\
\text{Sanctum Pneuma veneremur} \\
\text{laudis melos concerptantes.} \\
\text{Omissa una proclamemus} \\
\text{Sumnum Deum imploramus;} \\
\text{misereri ut dignetur;}
\end{align*}
\]

So Henryson begins:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{O Sterne god; of power infinit} \\
\text{To quohis his knowledge na thing is of obscure} \\
\text{That is, or was, or ever sal be, perdty;} \\
\text{In to thy sicht, quhil that this world indure;} \\
\text{Half mercy of us, Indigent and peure: (1-5)}
\end{align*}
\]

So Christ Defend Me From my Enemies:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Now rightwis Iuge, Crist lord th} \text{u} \\
\text{of kyng a kyng and lord also,} \\
\text{With thi radir bow regnes so trew} \\
\text{the haly post and elles no mo.} \\
\text{Gudey bow take my prayer now,} \\
\text{and turne moght pin ore per fro (1-6)}
\end{align*}
\]

The technique is that of stressing the Almighty Power and righteousness of God and, by contrast, the weakness and sinfulness of those praying. This contrast the poet heightens by two common poetic techniques: alliteration and careful choice of diction. We have seen Henryson constantly employing these techniques in other poems. Alliteration emphasizes by repetition: 'prince preclair' (73), the people confess themselves 'cynmaris that servis to be schent' (37), suffering from the 'perelus pestilens' (16, 40); the 'papill ar perreist' (27) for they are 'puncel with this pestilence' (48). Now they are a 'papill penent' (34). The contrast is realized more markedly still by the poet’s choice of diction: God is 'eterne', 'of power infinyt'; 'nothing' is hidden to His 'hie knowlodge'; He is 'to mankynd haill succure'. But the people confess themselves 'Indigent end peure'. The technique is used throughout: 'on kneis law prostrait'; they are 'of vertow barrane and denude'; God is 'a king post hie' while they are, they repeat, 'cynmaris' bewailing 'our syn'. How to stress the greatness of God the poet uses a special type of vocabulary: 'superne', 'lucerne', 'preclair'. Smith pointed out similar usage in Dunbar's Ballat of Our Lydy; likewise one can find similarities in other of his poems: *Ane Orinou* *Ouhen the Governour Fast in France, Jerusalem Rejoic For Joy and The Sterne* is *Rissin of Our Redemption*. The same type of usage can be seen in Lydgate's prayers: *Stella Celc Extirpavit*.

---

1. Poems, op. cit., 1: 77 note to 1. 65.
... Empresse of the hevynly Conaystoy ...  
... And Crystall Palays of owre gostely glorye  
Gladdest Aurora of most Magnificence (34-8)  

and in Skelton: Prayer to the Father of Heaven:  

O Radiant Luminary of light interminable,  
Celestial Father, potential God of might (1-2).  

We should note that these are all religious poems: hymns and prayers. Apart from the verbal 'firework-display' that has been suggested,¹ and the tendency of the period towards aureation, this usage also forms some attempt, influenced perhaps by the Latin hymns, at realizing a heightened poetic vocabulary suitable for religious verse.² The poet then has used prayer formulae and techniques heightening them by poetic techniques.  

And he is not alone in this - we have already illustrated other uses of the opening formula and of the special vocabulary.  

We have seen then the religious source of much of the poem's content and form, content and form which had been taken into poetry to form a tradition of religious verse. But there are more purely literary devices used by the poet and by the tradition within which he was working. We have already seen two - alliteration and diction - but there are others: the verse form for instance.  

The poet uses the Monk's Tale stanza with refrain. Now this is a common fifteenth and early sixteenth century stanza; it is used almost exclusively for religious themes, including hymns and prayers. Thus Dunbar uses the form in his prayers I Cry The Mercy  

¹ Good, Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 270 note to l. 64.  
² For the concept, and illustrations of the idea of 'sacred language' see Christine Kohrmann, Liturgical Latin Its Origins and Character (London, 1959).
and Lazar to Repent and Ane Orison: when the Governor Paut in France: Skelton too uses it in his three prayers to the various Persons of the Trinity. Many of the prayers in Brown's collection of fifteenth century religious lyrics are in this form— including Lydgate's poem imploring release from the pestilence Stella Celi Extirpavit. So another tradition is seen. Again, as Gregory Smith pointed out, the internal rhyming of the last three stanzas can be paralleled in Dunbar. The poem then in metre and in form, is part of a group of prayers written by this poet, by Skelton and by Dunbar. They share with much other religious poetry of the period, as we have seen, a common tradition of religious thought and technique of expression.

As we said in the first paragraph, is not a personal plea although it could perhaps be used as one. From the text it would be very difficult to justify Douglas Duncan's statement that it shows Henryson clinging to orthodoxy in the face of terrible circumstances.... In this tormented and moving poem it can be said that Henryson is just keeping his balance between faith and experience. The poet embodies his own emotion in orthodox language and doctrine; there is no suggestion of a conflict between faith and reason.

1. Poesy, op. cit., 1, 77 note to 1. 64.
(iv) The Garment of Gud Ladeis

Janet W. Smith states of The Garment of Gud Ladeis 'Henryson borrowed the central idea from a tediously long French work La Triomphi deu Parement Des Dame D'Honneur by Olivier la Marche, and with excellent judgement and taste compressed it into ten short stanzas'. By contrast Gregory Smith, though noting the similarities between the poems, which Ellis first pointed out, states 'If Henryson got his "idea" from this poem (and the suggestion is open to doubt) he got no more', a judgement with which Harvey Wood agrees. And certainly the evidence seems to support this latter judgement. For one thing, De La Marche's poem was not written until at least 1488. Julia Kalbfleisch, who edits the poem, states:

"Der Triumphi des Dames gehört zu den spätesten Werken La Marches; einen sicherem 'terminus post quem' bietet die Erwähnung des 1488 erfolgten Todes der Herzogin Marie von Calabrien (Str. 167, vg 1. S. 102). Victor Gay nimmt an, das Gedicht sei 1492 entstanden; Stein (8. 124 f.) möchte es noch ein oder zwei Jahre später setzen."

Even if we were to assume Henryson's death to have been as late as 1500, this leaves little time for a manuscript poem to circulate.

1. The French Background to Middle Scots Literature, op. cit., p. 101.
in Scotland, even taking the 'Auld Alliance' into account. But this is mere conjecture; the most important evidence is the nature of de la Marche's poem: in 181 eight lined stanzas interspersed with twenty-two prose passages giving examples of the particular virtues allegorized, its emphasis is severely moral, its order strictly logical - working from feet to head - and some attempt is made to justify the allegorization of each article of clothing. Now in none of these characteristics is The Gar-ont of Oud Ladeis similar; our poem is shorter, with no examples given of the virtue in action; we shall find no exclusively moral preoccupation; the order is very different; there is little attempt to justify the particular allegorization given to an article of clothing. Besides, the actual allegorizations of particular articles of clothing are quite different. There is no evidence then of the poem being a compression of the French work. But de la Marche's poem is of considerable interest; that two poems could be written independently on the same subject provides some evidence for a tradition. It is quite conceivable that the idea of such allegorization was current in the Later Middle Ages; as Gregory Smith has shown there was common allegorization of armour in a similar way. Besides, there was Biblical justification for the allegorization. Even more

relevant than the allegorization in Ephesians vi, 13-17 is

I Timothy ii, 9-10:

Similiter et mulieres in habitu ornato, cum verecundia et sobrietate ornantes se, et non in tortis crinibus, aut auro, aut margaritis vel veste pretiosa; sed quod decet mulieres, promittentes pietatem per opera bona.

This verse had been commented on by many of the medieval exegetes, for instance Hrabanus Maurus, and Walafridus Strabus, who had stressed the allegorical idea. So, although we are unable to pinpoint the ultimate source, it is reasonably certain that the

1. Cf. the use of this in sermon material:

And therfore whils that ye haue tyne, ryse owte of the werkes of derkenes and clothe you in Goddes armes ... with clennes, almsrede, mekenes, wakyng, and holy prayere, stedefast beleve, hope of Cristes mercy, also with charites and other vertues. And iff ye clothe you in this wise, than may ye securly abide Goddes comynge.

W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 113.

The concept is extended to describe royal virtues:

God the endewe with a crowne off glorie
And with septre off clennesse and pyte,
And with a swerde off myht and victorio,
And with a mantell off prudence clade thow be,
A shelede off ffeyth fforto defende the,
An helme off helthe wrouth to thyn encrees,
Girt with a girdyll off love and parfyte pess.


post, as in many of his other works, took his idea from current tradition. His poem, in turn, is the certain source for a sixteenth century work contained in the Bannatyne Manuscript.1

Not merely the central idea was borrowed; there are phrases too which are commonplace in later medieval literature. For instance 'wirk eftir my will', (2) was a common phrase meaning to return the speaker's love.2 The poet has also used the common allegorization of colour in the lines:

That scho woir nevir grene nor gray
That set hire half so weill (39-40).

---

1. ed. Ritchie, The Bannatyne Manuscript, op. cit., iii, 295. Its dating is perhaps suggested by some of the vocabulary used; for instance, 'pudicitia' (51) is not recorded by the N.E.D. before 1567. There are many direct parallels besides similarity of metre and form. So the later poem

(1) Wald my quy ladie that I luif
(2) lufe me best for sy
(3) I suld far mak for hir behuif
(4) Anz garmond rulg and gray
Henryson:

(1) Wald my quy ladie (2) lufe me best
and wirk eftir my will
(3) I suld (4) anz garmond pudlicat
Gar mak hir body till
in sme story
Almost every article in our poem is again used in the later; the allegorical descriptions are not always different — the gown in both cases is of goodness; in both poems the kirtill is 'malset'; the conclusion: 'it is also a vow'

Nor this: garmond sa Half I seill
 NATO haff so weill will set hir (67-8)

Henryson:

I durst sweir by my seill.
That scho woir nevir grene nor gray
That set hire half so weill (38-40)

Gregory Smith states of this that it is 'probably only an alliterative collocation ... But there is perhaps the suggestion that whether gaily or quietly dressed she would never look half so well as in the confection of the poet's allegory'. But surely the reference is to the common allegorization of colour which plays such a large part in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, for instance, where it is the colour of magic, of temptation and in the Floure and the Leafe:

And as for her that crowned is in greene,
It is Flora, of those flourers goddesses,
And all that here on her awaiting beone,
It are such that loved idlenes
And not delight of no busines
But for to hunt and hauke, and play in medes,
And many other such idle dedes (533-9)

They honour the leaf, which:

A fitting charget within a little space
Well be lost, so simple of nature
They be, that they no greevance may endure,

And every storms will blow them soone away,
Ne they last not but for a season - (558-62)

Henryson uses the tradition elsewhere; in The Testament of Cresseid we find Venus:

cled in one nyce array,
The one half greene, the uther half Babill black;
... But in hir face seem greit variaunce, ... (220-3)

The green is perhaps symbolic of fertility; it is also symbolic of change - for a while green, then black, just as leaves are green, seem beautiful, but eventually decay leaving bare, black

boughs. In the same poem Henryson uses the colour gray to symbolize the antagonistic natures of Saturn, the old: 'his lyre was lyke the Leid,' (155) and 'his gyse ful gray of grey' (164) - and of Cynthia, the changeable (254): 'Haw as the Leid, of colour naethin cleir' (258) and 'Hir gyse was gray' (260). These two punish Cresseid. These characteristics of Venus and those of Cynthia and Saturn are not, then, to be those of the lady. She is to be steadfast in love, showing: 'lesum lufe' not the rites of Venus. For this is not an exclusively moralistic portrait, as in de la Marche's poem, but one of a virtuous woman who is yet loving: 'lasit with lesum lufe' (14), 'Purfullit with pleasour' (19) - and compassionate - 'Hir hals ribbane of reth' (28). We remember the courtly love demand for pity as a fitting characteristic of a lady.

Technically, as in subject, the poem is based on conventional means. We find alliteration used for stressing in several lines, for instance in stanza five:

Hir gown suld be of gudliness
Seill-ribban with renowne,
Purfullit with pleasour in ilk place,
Frurrit with fyne fassoun (17-20)

But perhaps of most interest to us in this poem is the way in which the ballad stanza form, elsewhere used almost exclusively for narrative poetry, is used in this 'moral' poem. It is this which has given rise to impressions such as Speirs 'a poem with a taking metrical movement' - here Henryson is a very gentle moralist! More importantly for our purposes it is further evidence of Henryson's surprising use of forms to provide a new setting - and new meaning - for well-worn ideas.

1. The Scots Literary Tradition, op. cit., p. 55 n.
(v) The Bludy Berk

Smith states of The Bludy Berk that 'the source of this poem is found in the Gesta Romanorum in the tale of the daughter of the Emperor Frederick'.

The studies certainly have many similarities; they are tales of a knight who dies for a lady in distress who treasures his 'blody serke', and the moralities are essentially the same. But there are several differences between the two poems. In the Gesta Romanorum the lady's father dies:

\[
\text{Quidam rex regnavit, qui pulchram filiam habebit, quam multum dilexit, quae post decessum regis regnum occupavit, quia unica est relicta. Hoc audiens quidam dux tyrannus ad eam venit, multa ei promisit, ei ei consentiret. Illa vero seducta per eum est et deflorata.}
\]

Henryson's poem makes no mention of the father's death - in fact it states the opposite for the King in The Bludy Berk initiates his daughter's rescue (stanza 6). The tale in the Gesta Romanorum places much of the blame on the lady, who yielded to temptation - Henryson's version perhaps does this, but in a much more subtle way. Henryson blames the 'Cyane' (and we note that this is a 'Cyane', described in all his terror - stanza 4 - whereas the corresponding figure in the Gesta Romanorum is a Duke). Again, the lady in the Gesta Romanorum is seduced and robbed of her lands:

---


2. The term is found both in the English version and in Henryson.

3. R. Woolf, 'The Theme of Christ the Lover Knight in Medieval Literature', 92, cit., p. 5 calls this a relic 'as though fossilized' of the older story 'or a husband reclaiming in (continued overleaf)
facta defloracione flevit amare, tyrannus
vero cum ab hereditatam sua expulit. Illa
vero sic expulsa gemitus et suspiria
emittebat et in via publica cunctis diebus
sedebat, ut a transeuntibus elemosinan
peteret.

On the other hand Henryson’s lady is ‘stollin’ and cast into a
dungeon where she suffers great physical pain (stanza 3). There
she cannot see the knight before he saves her; in the Gesta
Romanorum the lady’s weeping disturbs a knight to whom she tells
her tale and who vows to fight for her. At this meeting, before
the battle, he asks her, when she has agreed to marry him:

Si vero in bello mortuum fureo et hereditatem
tibi acquisieris, nil aliquid peto nisi quod arma
mea sanguinolenta tecum custodies in signum
amoris. Si vero aliquid veniat, ut in uxorem
tem ducat, cameram tuam intres, in qua arma
pandent, et illa diligenter respicis, et
memoriam habes, quammodo propter tuam
vitam mean amisit.

In Henryson’s poem this request is made by the dying knight who
has succeeded in rescuing the lady. Gregory Smith explains these
differences as follows: ‘He [Henryson] has modified the story in
many ways in a manner analogous to what we find in all his
adaptations. If the tale as told in the Gesta Romanorum
were the only tale relating this subject we would, of course, be
forced to agree with Gregory Smith’s conclusions. But as Miss
Koolef has shown the story, and its interpretation, were common
in the Middle Ages.  

his charity a lapsed and fickle wife; a story which ‘the new
theology’ [i.e. the emphasis on Christ’s love for the individual
rather than on the Cross as the devil’s rights] ‘and the new
literary tastes’ [i.e. ‘fine amour’] had changed to an account
of ‘a knight fighting to save a lady and win her love’.

1. Poems, op. cit., i, lxiii.
2. ‘The Theme of Christ the Lover Knight’, op. cit.
throughout the later Middle Ages in Britain and we must examine some of the other occurrences of it before we can make any judgement about Henryson's source.

Nicole Bozon's *Du roy ki avait un ami* is one of the versions. Here again there are points of difference from Henryson's poem: there is no mention of the father; the knight is the lady's jealous husband; the lady agrees to a betrayal:

\[ \text{Et ly roi descendent en un bas dongoun} \\
\text{Ly trova s'azie en grant chaftivesoun} \]

where she had suffered: 'Unques pus ne avoi solace ne joye de nul rien; the conversation takes place after the battle, as in Henryson's poem, and it is then that the knight offers the lady, amongst other things admittedly, his shirt:

\[ \text{E qe solez plus sure encounter li adverser,} \\
\text{Vors vous retenez, en lu de baner,} \\
\text{Ma chemis de chartres et ma mort amer,} \\
\text{E ceo vous sauvera du liable encumber.} \]

Another variation of the story is found in a poem in the Vernon Manuscript: while a husband is away, his wife is tempted, but does not yield; he returns to revenge her but, though successful, is killed in doing so; she took his 'echerte...'

Al Bloodi,!

And when heo was . I tempted ouht
To any sonye . beo weal of pouht,
heo loked sone . vppon pat schurte ... (55-7)

... And when pis phout . con hire vpon,
Al wikkednesse . hire weyuede anon
ffor euer heo hedde hit . in hir mynde
pat he hedde don . a dede kynde.
So schulde . eueri cristene mon
penken on Ihü . god al on,
pat Konnes soule . weddet to wyue;
whip outer ende . he saf hit lyue,
ffair he mad hit . of Beute
To his likeness . vppon to se (59-72).

Again, in Dives and Pauper, according to H. O. Pfander's
resume, the story is told of how:

'a king's son, having married beneath his
station, became knight-errant and was at
last slain on the field of battle. As he
was dying he removed his bloody shirt and
sent it to his wife with a message asking
her fidelity for life. Afterwards, when
tempted to sin, she would look at the shirt and
say:

whil I haue his blod in myne mende
pat was to me so good and kende.
achal I neuir husbondo take
but hym pat died for wyn sake (f. 149b)

In Pasciculus Vorus we find a knight — and there is no mention
of previous treachery by the lady — fighting successfully against
a lady's enemy and returning home to die:

Accidit ergo quodam die cum de quodam
bello pro ea rodiret vulneribus sauciantus
vix secunvus evasit. Accessit ergo
ad eam tanquam ad tutoria refugia
confidenter eo quod illam tantum pre ceteris
dilexisset et se ipsum dic depauperando eam
exaltasset.

2. The version of our story in the MS. Rawl. 670 copy of the
Pasciculus Vorus (ff. 42v-43r) is cited by R. Woolf,
The Theme of Christ the Lover Knight', op. cit., pp. 7-8.
I have used her version in my text.
There is, however, no mention of a bloody shirt, and the lady apparently does not accept him. The 'gyane' in Henryson's poem can also be found elsewhere:

... I say every man was gette in bateyll through the myghtfull dethe that Crist suffered on the Rode Tre. And how that he gotte the I will shewe the by example. I rede of an ermyte that walked by a veye and met with a knyght commynge ageyns hym vnarmed. And the ermyte asked hym fro whens that he com and whethur that he wolde. And the knyght answered and seid "I com fro my fader and am goynge to fayght with a geaunte that hathe many of my faders men in pryson". Than seid the ermyte, "Sethen that thou wolte goye feyghte with that geaunte, toll me what that thou boreste in thin armes ..." 

By this armet I understonde gooslyche every Cristen man in this worlde that walketh in the veye, I hope, towards heven. For whan that thou shalt walkes that veye, thou shalt mete with a knyghte, the wiche is Crist, Goddes Sonne of heven ... But ho com vnarmed when that he lefte all is grate povere ther and com downe makely fer to feyght with a geaunte that was the dewell of hell.

We have thus seen parallels for most of the points of agreement between the Gesta Romanorum and The Bludy Serke: there seems to be only one point where the two stories do agree which cannot be paralleled in one or other of the versions we have examined: in the other versions there is no mention of a father for the lady. And we have also seen parallels between the other versions and The Bludy Serke where that poem differs from the Gesta Romanorum: the character of the giant, the apparent innocence of the lady, her imprisonment, and the knight's request

as he is dying after rescuing the lady can all be found elsewhere. The *Gesta Pontinorum* then probably cannot be regarded as the sole source of Henryson's poem. We must remember however the marked changes Henryson makes to his sources in the *Fabillia*, many to stress his allegorical purpose - thus the father remaining alive would perhaps have appeared more logical for his moralitas, man as prisoner is a common medieval idea. But whatever the actual source or sources the poem provides a further example of Henryson reworking - creatively, as we shall see, a traditional story and moral.

We have now to examine, by analysis of the three principal characters, what Henryson made of the tale. The lady's ancestry is stressed in an addition: her father was:

- a worthy king;  
- Dukis, erulis, and baronis bald  
- He had at his bidding.  
- The lord was anceane and ald,  
- And sixty yeiris cowth ring; (2-6).

The poet uses his customary methods of emphasis: repetition through synonymous adjectives, the cumulative effect strengthened by conjunctions (11. 5-6); alliteration (3-4). So the lady (man's soul) is of very noble, very powerful (controlling 'Dukis, erulis and baronis bald' - the accumulation suggests the great power), and worthy lineage, a lineage hallowed by age. The poet's portrayal of the lady herself is very interesting: he concentrates almost exclusively on her physical beauties, adding another dimension to the poem: she was:

---

1. See my discussion, pp. 141-5, of this concept as found in *The Swallow and Othir Birdis*.
fair to fold
a Lusty Lady ying.

2. Off all fairheid acho bur the flour,
And elk hir faderis air,
Off lusty laitie and he honour,
Keik bet and debonair.
Scho wynnit in a bigly bous;
On fold was none so fair;
prince luvit hir paramour
In cuntreis our all quhair (7-16)

The stress - heightened by alliteration, by conjunctions (we note
the cumulative effect of 'and' in lines 10, 11, and 12), by
superlative constructions which emphasize the lady's ability to
excel ('all fairheid'; 'none so fair'; 'paramour'; 'our all
quhair') - is thus overwhelmingly on the lady's great physical
attraction. This stress recalls Cressaid who also was 'the flour
of luif' (128); of 'birdy richis flour' (435); who also was
'Paramour' (53):

By pleasant port all utheria precelling!
Of lustines I was hald mait conding (446-7)

Now, we have seen 'lusty' used twice in the extract quoted above
from our poet; here the noun is used to describe an originally
deluded state in which Cressaid had placed her trust on the wrong
things. Other uses by Henryson imply the same meaning: the poet,
describing Cressaid in her 'original' state, speaks of 'lustie
Cressaid' (69) and her 'lustie lyre' (339). Again, in the
Moralitas to The Fox and the Wolf we find:

For noyn, gois nowe to confession
Can noncht repent, nor for thair synnis greit;
Because they think thair lustye lyfe so sait (166-8)

1. Into the balled form Henryson imports the devices of his-
more 'literary' poems, thus extending the form's possibilities.
We shall see this again in the princess' lament.
To further the argument, the word 'yingl' does not solely stress that the Lady was very desirable - young and attractive - but, being in direct contrast to the stress on her father's age, implies perhaps in this context lack of maturity and perhaps makes the reader wonder to what extent her other characteristics are different from those of the 'worthy king'. So we are perhaps left with a certain doubt concerning the lady's values, a doubt which may be explained by the Christian doctrine of the Fall of which this poem is, in part, an allegory. There is certainly a 'fall' here for whereas she was a paramour of princes and 'Echo wynnit in a bigly bourn' (13) the giant cast her:

\[
\text{quhair licht scho nicht es pane;}
\]
\[
\text{hungir and cauld and grit thrusting}
\]
\[
\text{Scho famd in to her wane (21-4)}
\]

The terror of this place (hell, as we are told in l. 103) is further stressed throughout the poem: it is referred to as 'a deip dungeon' (34); the giant finds there 'hungir, cauld and contusion' (55) when he is imprisoned; and the lady's gratelyfulness is increased when she remembers that:

\[
\text{bandoun}
\]
\[
\text{in that deip dungeoun; e (84-6)}
\]

1. I accept Smith's emendation here; perhaps it is merely a mistake in transcription for he does not seek to justify it. Wood gives the MS. reading 'wane'; 'ware' seems more likely in the context; this 'dwelling' is being contrasted with the 'bigly bourn' in which the Lady formerly lived; one would perhaps expect to suffer 'cauld' in 'wane' rather than 'ware'; besides, the rhyme throughout the stanza has been 'ane'. On the other hand, however, 'ware' would stress the physical discomfort, and, as we have seen, the physical characteristics of the lady seem to matter most to her; and the rhyme scheme is not completely regular (stanza 8).
But from this state the Lady is rescued; her gratefulness is shown by her sorrow at the death of the knight:

The lady murnyt and maid alit monewith all hir mickle micht (65-6)

Henryson brings into his ballad the literary device for portraying great sorrow which we discussed at length when dealing with The Lyon and the Moos II. 210 ff. 1

The poet uses similar artistic means to stress two characteristics of the giant: his loathsome ness and his strength. He is: 'A fowl synne of men' (18). The superlative construction is used again with alliterative emphasis to reinforce this idea:

\[\text{He was the laithliest on to luk} \]
\[\text{That on the ground mycht gang (25-6).}\]

In the next two lines the simile (an addition, of course), both refers to the allegorical meaning of the poem — the association of the devil and hell — and, it itself, is symbolic of the loathsome ness of the giant:

\[\text{Thair was none that he curtuk,} \]
\[\text{In ryght or yit in wrang.} \]
\[\text{But all in schondir he thame schuke —} \]
\[\text{The synne was so strang (29-32).}\]

The constant use or implication of superlative with reference to the giant indirectly shows the greatness of the knight who overcomes him, and also the strength of his love: he will go —

1. see p. 127.
to any lengths to rescue the Lady. The poet emphasizes both these characteristics directly. He is:

* a worthy prince that had no pair
* ... and held full trew cunnand (45-8).

He is as virtuous as the giant is vicious. Of course the adversary is so strong that the knight, though victorious, cannot escape unwounded:

> In all the world was their a wicht
> So poteous for to cy? (59-64)

Again Henryson imports into the poem a literary device - the rhetorical question used elsewhere to invoke pity.

So have seen then the emphasis of the Tale; the Moralitas does not merely interpret it, together with the last few lines of the Tale itself, emphasizes the importance of the tale for each of the readers. The Tale has served as an exemplum; this must be applied. So the poem ends on the appeal:

> hand men, will ye nocht herk?
> ffor his lufe that bocht us doir,
> Think on the bludy serk (118-20)

The relationship to sermon writing is thus marked: and, as we have seen, this very story had been used in sermons - in *Divus* and *Praper* and in the sermon manuscript MS. Roy 18 B xxiii.

Whatever version of the story Henryson has used then, he has used it creatively: he has stressed, by literary means, the essence of his moralitas - the power of God, the original nobility yet essential vanity of mankind, the horrors of hell and of Satan, the great love of Christ. This, an essentially didactic poem,

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he has cast in a surprising metre, which has links with the
ballad metre (it is the same as that used in Robone and Unkyne).
Again, the creativity of Henryson's used on conventional material
is so apparent as to need no stress whatever.
The poem is traditional in subject matter (and not only in general subject matter but in the metaphors and descriptions used), in form and in technique; we shall examine each in turn.

Middle English literature contains many warnings by older people of the passing of youth and its associated beauty, joy and love. There are three characteristics of this type of warning which can also be found in Henryson's poem. Firstly, there is depiction of the sheer horror of physical decay: a poem from B.M. MS. Harl. 7322, *Death and its Precursory* illustrates:

And ye, ye shullen dyven;
And his nose shal sharpen;
And his hew shal falwen;
And his tonge shal atameren; (other famenlen)
And his lippes shulle bliken;
And his hondes shulle quaken;
And his teth shulle ratelen;
And his throte shal rotele;
And his feet shullen stroken;
And his herte shal breken.

The Parlament of the Thre Age2 gives a similar portrait:

The thirde was a laythe lede lenyde one his nyde,
Aberyne bowne alle in blame, with bedes in his hands;
Croked and courbed encranschett for elde;
Alle disfigured was his face, and sadit his hewe,
His hondes and browses were blanchede full whitte,
And ever his hede hevede of the same.
He was balled and blynde and alle babirlippes,
Toteless and tenefull, I tell gowe for sote;
And ever he, momelled and meny and mercyle he askede ...
and the hort lustes full eyelesly gone Fynde. (152-60),


Henryson describes Age similarly (11. 10-13). Physical decay has set in, a decay which is constantly compared to decay in nature - this is the second characteristic. Rolle of Hampole in The Pricke of Conscience explains: a man:

son fayles and fades, als dos pe flour
For a flour pat sexes fayre and bright,
Thurgh stormes fayles, and tyymes pe myght ... (695-7)

... parfor a man may likend be
Til a flour, pat es fayre to se,
pan son aftir pat it es forth broght,
Welkes and dwynes til it be noght;
pis aught to be ensample til us;
For whi Job, in a boke, says pus:
Homo quasi floe, ereditur et conteritur,
et fugit ve -

Iud umbra et nymquam in eodem statu permanet
"Man" he says, "als a flour bright"
First forth comes here till pis light,
And es sone broken and passes away,
Als a shadu on pe somers day;
And never mare in pe same state duelles,"
Bot ay passand, als Iob telles; (704-17)

Not only does this conceit have similarities with that constantly appearing in our poem -

O yowth, be glaid in to thy flowris grene ...
... O yowth, thy flowris fedis fellone sone.

- but it also helps to explain the setting of the poem, a setting very much like that of The Parlement of the Thre Aces:

In the monethe of Maye when mirthes bene fele
And the seesone of somere when softs bene the wedres ... (1-2)

... There the gryse was grene, grown with fliours -
The primrose, the pervynke, and piliole pe riche -
The dewe appon dayses donkede full faire,
Burgons - blossoms - braunches full swete,
And the mery mystes full myldey gane falle ... (8-12)

The same emphasis on the beauty of spring especially of its flowers, is found in our poem (ll. 1-4). This is not merely a conventional opening; it has a purpose, commenting on the theme of the poem: the young man, in the spring time of his life, is fresh, beautiful and joyful; the old man has withered just as the flowers will wither; the young man's joy will not last just as the beauties of spring cannot last.

The third characteristic of many of these warnings is the dramatization of the threat; it is put into the mouth of one who himself has personally experienced the ravages of time - he, too, has felt the joys of youth but he has also discovered their transitoriness. The Parlement of the Thre Ayes.

While I was yong in my southe and gape of my dedys,
I was als euerrous in arnes an ouer of zoure-saluen ...
(270-1)

... Bot Elde vndire - gode me are I laiste wiste,
And alle disfigured my face and faide my howe,
Bothe my browe and my berde blawnche full whitte -
And when he sotte his sayghte, than sowe myn hert.
(283-6)

The old man in Henryson's poem complains likewise (ll. 27-30).

We are confronted by a living example: The Parlement of the Thre Ayes!

I sett an example bi my-selfe, and seke it no forthire ...
(269)

... Make youre mirrors bi me, men bi yourse truothes;
This schadowe in my schewere, schunte ye no while (290-1)
And plie with demotic gate to aunswerc in the seershere;

1. Cf. also This World is but a Venyte, ed. F.J. Furnivall, 
Lyres to the Virgin, op. cit., pp. 83-5; King Hert (ed. 
J. Laill, The Poetical Works of Gavin Douglas, 4 vols., 
[Edinburgh and London, 1874], 1, 85-120) also provides an 
living example of the transitoriness of youth. For the 
uncertain authorship of this poem see Priscilla Preston, 
'Old Gavin Douglas write King Hert?', op. cit., and Florence 
Ridley, 'Did Gavin Douglas write King Hert?' Speculum, 
xxiv (1959), 402-12.
Queen Phebus in the ranie glade:
... be me your sampill ye may se (37)

Henryson:
... Luke now my laikly lukiing gif I lie (31)

The old man's argument can thus be seen to be part of a
long tradition contrasting the terrors of old age with the
joys of youth, and from the contrast drawing a lesson; this
lesson is commonly expressed by comparison of the approach of
old age to the fading of spring and its flowers, and is commonly
spoken by one who himself provides a living example—a
dramatisation—of the threat he utters. This warning, traditional
in itself, is a vestige of the universal later medieval theme
(in sermon material, where it is ever present, and in literature—in
an extended form in the allegories)—the transitoriness of
this world.

The point of view of the young man can be seen elsewhere, too:
the behaviour of Troilus (in Chaucer's poem), and of Cresseid
dramatized his values. The young man in The Parliament of the
Three Ages voices the same feelings:

And than kayre to the courte that I come fro,
With ladyes full loyly to lappyn in myn armes,
And olyp thaym and kysse thaym and comforthe myn hert;
And than with damesels dere to daunson in thaire chambirs;
Riche Romance to rede ...

... With renkes in ryotte to reuelle in hauille,
With countysheus and caroles and compaynyes sere,
And chese me to the chese that chefe es of gemes;
And this es life for to lade while I schalle lyfe here;

(246-56)

Youth, in Henryson's poem, boasts similarly that he will:

... mill with mouth this melt, translations given in this
In secreet places, quhair we ma not be, none,
And so with birdis blythly my baulis beit; (37-9)
The young man's protestations are illustrated by their appearance: they are happy (Henryson stresses this in li. 6 and 49) and they are perfect physical beings (we remember too the original beauty of Grosseid):

He was balshe in the breaste and brode in the scholdirn,
His axles and his armes were i-liche longe,
And in the medill als a mayden menakfully schapen.
Longe legges, and large, and leale for to schewe ... (112-5)
... And he, throyly was threuen of thirthy gere of elde,
And ther-to gonge and gape, and southe was his name;
And the seenely[eate] segge that I neghe eu er (133-5)

Henryson's young man boasts his physical prowess (stanzas 3 and 7), and illustrates it in his movement (1. 17).

The form is as traditional as the subject matter. The debate form, coming from France, became established in Britain too.

Perhaps the earliest written here are those in Latin attributed to Walter Mapes, but vernacular debates soon followed: for example, The Owl and the Nightingale. It is to this tradition that Henryson's poem, and his Reasoning Betwix Deth and Man belong.

Our poem has the traditional opening, a fact which does not, of course, mean that it is irrelevant to the theme to follow. We compare with the opening of the fifteenth century Eve and the Heart:

In the first weke of the saijoun of May
Than the wodes be covered al in groene
In which the nightingale list for to play
To shewe his voixe amonges pe thornes kene
Thate to vede en eu er

1. Its medieval origin, as a Carolingian imitation of the classical eclogue, and its later development are traced by J.H. Hanford, 'Classical Eclogue and Medieval Debate,' The Romantic Review, ii (1911), 16-31 and 129-43.
Thein to rejoisse, whiche loue is servantes bone
Which from al confort thinke thein for behinde
My pleasir was as was after seen
Pfor my diport to chase hert and hinde (St. 1)

The narrator goes out into the woods in springtime and there meets the combatants of the debate; a very similar situation is found in *The Parliament of the Thre Ages* although there the dream device is used in addition. Similarly in *The Owl and the Nightingale*:

Ich was in one sumere dale;
In one super digne hale;
I herde ich holde grete tale
An Hule and one Nightingale ... (1-4).

And our poem shows a characteristic type of ending: it is inconclusive. It ends by restating the views of both men. In the debate between the Eye and the Heart Venus does not judge but sends to all lovers asking their opinions - and there the poem ends; *The Owl and the Nightingale* ends with the birds going off to submit themselves to 'Maister Nichole's' judgement. The ending of *The Reasoning Betuix Aige and Yowth* might also be interpreted, as saying that the contestants are both right; and here we also have parallels. For instance in the thirteenth century French dispute between Water and Wine:

In say as that Venus did sperri
Car quant a veuté retraire,
Tous estes bons et necessaire
Chascun de voue en sa secon.

Our poem then has an obvious connection with this genre; but I think we can see too that it is part of a certain group within which the respective refrains: the bliaud; A lovely type of verse.
that genre. The Eye and the Heart is also written in the Monk's Tale stanza; it is interesting too that - at the times of dispute - the contestants debate in alternating stanzas, as in our poem. However, it must be admitted, the Monk's Tale stanza is very common in the period. A more interesting comparison can be found with two other poems. Firstly with A Dialogue between a Clerk and a Husbandman.\(^1\) The poem begins traditionally:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{As I cowthe walke - because of recreacioun} \\
\text{Be a grene wode syde as I kane} \\
\text{I herde a meroule comynsacioun} \\
\text{Betwene a clerk and a husbandman (1-4)}
\end{align*}
\]

The characters debate in alternating stanzas and each, as in our poem, has his own refrain, the clerk: 'Quia amore languio', the husbandman: 'Turn up hyr haltur and let hyr goo'. The debate ends inconclusively. The stanzas are of eight lines, rhyming a, b, a, b, c, b, c. In fact the only difference in form between this poem and ours is that the metre of the former is an irregular tetrameter whereas that of the latter is solely the pentameter. Secondly, we must compare our poem with Dunbar's In May as that Aurora did upspring.\(^2\) This also opens in a spring setting with the narrator overhearing:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{In May as that Aurora did upspring} \\
\text{With cristall one chasing the cluddis sable,} \\
\text{I herd a merle with mirry notis sing ...}
\end{align*}
\]

The birds debate on much the same subject - the transitoriness of earthly love - in alternating Monk's Tale stanzas, and each has its respective refrain: the blackbird 'A lusty lyfe in luves

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acheruice bene'; the nightingale 'All luve is lost bot vpone God allone'. Here, admittedly, the debate is resolved but the similarities are such, in my opinion, that it seems impossible to argue coincidence. I would suggest that the three poets, certainly Henryson and Dunbar in any case, are using a recognized form.

Content and form then rely closely on traditional patterns; so does technique - in its use of alliteration for instance. The extraordinarily close pattern of alliteration here reminds us of parts of the Fabillis, particularly the description of spring mornings in The Lyon and the Mous (1-21) and The Fox tryed before the Lyon (71-8). It is used to intensify the theme. We find too the common rhetorical techniques we have found elsewhere in Henryson's poems: the 'both ... and' technique of emphasizing size and importance: 'Faith firth and feildis freshely had our fret'(2); the use of repetition with cumulative effect:

Anne freik on fold, ala formes and ala fre
ala slaid, ala gay, ala Ying, ala yaipe yie (28-9); the use of balance and contrast (the 'my' and 'thy' of stanzas 7 and 8; lines 65 and 67).
(vii) The Praise of Age

The poem is partly an old man's complaint - in the same manner as the complaint in The Reasoning Betwixt Age and Youth - of the folly of pursuing youthful pleasures which must perish. How traditional this is we have already seen in our examination of the Reasoning and there is no need to repeat the evidence. There are, however, a few additional points which must be made. As in the Reasoning, the opening is set in the traditional garden with the common scene of the narrator overhearing; but here we have a 'rede rosers' featured rather than flowers and green leaves. However, this too has parallels. The young man in The Parliament of the Thre Ages wears:

A chaplet one his cheffe - lere, chosen for the nones,
Raylode alle with rede rose, richeaste of floures (116-9)

Dunbar begins The Golden Targe similarly: '... I raise, and by a rosers did me rest!' (13). The explanation for the use of this convention, which can be found as early as Le Roman de la Rose, can be found in Lydgate's As Mydesomer Rose:

[Quotations from the text are omitted for brevity.]

2. Works, op. cit., ii, 1-10. 'Rosere' is found in the Bannatyne reading only; Maitland Folio reads 'rivers'.
Again, the symbol of kingship as the highest of earthly attainments
(1. 23) can be paralleled elsewhere: This World is but a Vane.

At his noon y was crowned king
his world was only at my wille; ...
... Now age is open on me ful stille ... (41-5)

An additional reason is given in this poem for the folly of
youthful pleasures: not only does youth fade, but the world
itself is variable, largely because of covetousness (stanza 2).
The same reason is given (in much the same type of 'laudator
temporis sati' form) as in The Dog, the Soep and the Wolff:

So far we have discussed the poem as though it were simply
a restatement of the old man's complaint in The Reasoning Batusx
of the creator (though in different verses) drawn in Aire and Yowth. But, of course, it is very different in tone.

In that poem the old man showed nothing but despair at his state;
this man rejoices in his old age because it brings him nearer to
God. I have been able to find no parallel to this theme, earlier
(though I suspect it is traditional), but there are two very
interesting parallels in Middle Scots literature, parallels which
once again give evidence for at least a community of interest, a
... a little youth that had additions
common stock of thought and technique, and perhaps even for direct
imitation. By studying such parallels we gain some understanding
of the attitudes towards the theory of poetry current at the time;
attitudes held by Henryson as well as by those who have imitated
... (1. 23-5).
him here. Dunbar's *Now Cumis Aige Quhair-Yewth het bene* shows exactly the same theme: the falseness of the things of this world, blind, unhappy youth; the coming of age shows man the true reality - the love of Christ:

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How culit is dame Venus brand;
Trew luvis: hyre is oy kindilland,
And I begyn to undirstand,
In faynit luve quhat foly bene;
Now cumis aige quhair yewth het bene
And trew luve rysis fro the splene ... (1-6)
... Quhair I wes hurt with jeloay,
And wald no luvor wer bot I,
Now quhair I lufe I wald al wy
Als weill as I luvit I wene;
Now cumis aige quhair yewth het bene
And trew lufe rysis fro the splene. (43-8)
```

Here too, the refrain sums up the theme as it does in our poem. With Kennedy's *At Katynge hours in midis of the night* there are even closer resemblances, in both subject matter and form. In both the narrator (though in different circumstances) hears an old man singing gaily: Kennedy:

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Ane aigit man semit sextic yairs of sicht
This sentence sett and sang it in gud tone (3-4)
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11. 2-3 of Henryson's poem are very similar. Youth is folly; old age brings holiness:

```
Grone youth to aige thow mon obey and bow
thy foly lustis leatis akant ane may
That than wes witt Is naturall foly now ... (9-11)
... O bittir yowith that semis delicitious
O haly aige that sumtyne semit soure
O restless yowth his hait and vicious
O honest aige fulfilllit with honoure (17-20)
```

As in our poem the contemporary state of the world is condemned:

This world is set for to dissaive us evin pryd is the nett and covece is the trane ... (25-6)
... Law luve and lawtie gravin law they ly
Dissimvlance has borrowit conscience clayis
Aithis writ walx nor seillis ar not set by flattery is fosterit baith with freindis and fayis ... (33-6)

Because of the falseness of the world and the folly of youthful desires Kennedy's 'aigit man' does not wish to be young again; he wishes (like Henryson's protagonist) to worship Him in whom stability is found: he seeketh:

Omnipotent and eterne god in trone
To be content and lufe the I half coae
That my licht yowtheid is opprest and done ... (5-7)
... Yfor na reward except the Ioy of hevin
Wald I be yung in to this world agane (27-8)

Both poems are written in the Monk's Tale stanza, both have refrains, and both use alliterative devices constantly.
(viii) Obey and thank thy god of all

Advice to accept the vicissitudes of life, indeed to thank
God for them, was common in poetry before Henryson. Chaucer
gives the advice in his *Palade de Bon Conseyle*:

> Tempest thee noght al crooked to redresse,
> In trust of hir that turneth as a ball;
> Grete restes stant in litel business;
> Be war also to sporne ayens an al;
> Stryve not, as dought the crokke with the wal ... (8-12)
> ... Know thy contree, look up, thank God of all; (19)

We note that Chaucer uses some of the same type of proverbial
expressions as does our poet (1, 30\(^1\) and the refrain). A poem
in the Bannatyne Manuscript *Thus I propose in my earning\(^2\) contains
the same advice:

> Welcum be wert as evir. God will ... (5)
> ... Eiss or disess quhilk god sall send
> Allyx sall pleiss. Eiss or disess
> ay till obeyess Till lyfe mak end
> Eiss or disess quhilk god will send (13-16)

An anonymous fifteenth century poem *Lefte our heres with good
sentent\(^3\) has the refrain: 'And thanks God that al hath sent'.

Again, *Deo Gracie\(^4\) from the Vernon Manuscript of the later
fourteenth century (Bodl. 3958):

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1. The proverb is also used in *The Testament of Cresseid*, l. 475.
3. ed. T. Wright, *Songs and Carols of the Fifteenth Century*,
   op. cit., pp. 37-8; *op. cit.*, 10.3; *op. cit.*, pp. 769-9.
4. ed. H. Varnhagen, 'Die Kleineren Gedichte der Vernon - und
   Simeon Handschrift', *Anclia* vii (1884), 287-9. Cf. also:
   I see a Rysteg Ryshe newe, ed. C. Brown, *Religious Lyrics of
   the Fifteenth Century*, op. cit., pp. 283-4.
pons I wore out of bonchef brought,
What help wore to me to seye: Allen!
In he none of god what ever be wornst,
I schal saie Deo Gratias.

In mischief and in bonchef bope
pat word is good to seye and syngye
And not to wyle ne to be wrope,
pouz al be nowght at ure lykynge; (45-52)

As might be expected, sermons recommend the same virtues:

But here ye shall understant that ryght as
Crist afore is passion prayed that is passion
should passe fro hym, for he was so sore
a-dred of in deth that he sweit strems of
bod for drede of is passion that he knewe
was commynge, and yit he said to is Fadur,
"thi will be do and natt myn", and so shull we,
what-ever that we will desire of God, putt it
all in is will, for he will do the beste for
vs, thogh it be strait and hard to yse

we have, then, enough evidence to show that the poet was
writing within a tradition even without the evidence of source
material pointed out by O. Gregory Smith. We showed the great
similarities between our poem and the one in the before mentioned
Vernon Manuscript.

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 51.
3. ed. H. Varnhagen, 'Die Kleineren Gedichte der Vernon - und
are found in MS. Bodl. 2169b, fol. 15a (ed. C. Brown,
O.V. Smithers (Oxford, 1952) pp. 157-60); MS. Trinity Coll.
Camb. 1450, fol. 25b (unedited); B.M. MS. Cotton Calig.
A. 11, fol. 68b (ed. J.O. Halliwell, Lydgate's Minor Poems
[Percy Society, London, 1840], pp. 225-8); B.M. MS. Sloane
2593, fol. 19b (ed. T. Wright, Songs and Caroles from a
Manuscript in the British Museum of the fifteenth century
[Warton Club, London, 1856], pp. 56-9); Princeton MS.
Garret 143, fol. 47a (ed. R.K. Root, 'Poems from the Garret
MS.', Englische Studien xii [1910], 374-6).
The evidence seems fairly conclusive for as Smith shows, not only are the first stanzas, although differently phrased, very similar but there are some close verbal parallels. But if this poem is accepted as the source, it must be admitted that our poet has considerably modified it, not only condensing certain parts and adding examples, but also, to my mind, radically altering the emphasis of the poem. Although the original states that the fluctuations and adversities are God's will it also constantly reassures the sufferers of improvement:

God sende him [Job] hele and catel bo,
Toun and tour and steedes in stal,
For he never gruced in weles ne wo
But ever ponke god of al ... (45-8)
... In what meschaf but ever we be,
He is mihti inong, ur acrwe to slake.
Good amends he wol us make,
And we to him wol crie and cal ... (83-6)¹

If we submit to His will He will restore happiness either in this world or in the next. These promises are not offered in our poem; the emphasis is on thankfulness and obedience, whatever the circumstances. We note that the refrain in the original poem was merely 'Euer to ponke God of al'; likewise, in Chaucer's poem, as we have seen, the phrase reads merely 'thank God of al'. In our poem we are repeatedly urged to obey God's will.

Besides, for the poet, there can be no question of restoration of this world's possessions, for they are: 'nocht bot verrey vanitie' (52). For they:

Ball mocht endur at thy desyre,
Bot as the wind will wend away; (11-12).

¹ Cf. also 11. 105-8, 118-20, 131.
He cannot say, as does the other poet:

But he has provided the answer given by Boethius:

The conception is certainly not new in literature, of course.

Other differences between our poem and its source are perhaps less important. The poem is considerably shorter: the example of Job is reduced to its bare essentials; some general examples — jealousy of neighbour’s prosperity, betrayal by friends — are
omitted. Much of the original poem is essentially repetition of the main theme; this repetition too is omitted. An addition is the example of Tobias: Tobias 'maist full of charitie' (18) was 'tempit with adversitie' (20) just as much as 'maist riche' Job — adversity befalls the very virtuous as well as the very rich. The setting is made more explicit. The original begins: 'Bi a way wandryng as I went'. There is no suggestion of the abbey setting used by our poet. Wood writes that the setting may suggest the Great Benedictine Abbey of Dunfermline, in the Grammar and Song School of which the poet taught; ¹ a suggestion first made by Laing.² But they have overlooked the fact that such a beginning was not an uncommon feature in contemporary poetry. The poem Deo gratias mentioned before, presents the narrator in Church; he was at prayer, a clerk brought out a book:

Faste he sought what he schulde syngne,
And al was Deo gracias.

Alle be queristed in pat quere
On pat word fast gon pei cri; (7-10)

He called aside a priest to explain the phrase. A Lamentacion bente marie³ begins:

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3. Ed. H.R. Sandison, The Chanson d'Aventure in Middle English, op. cit., pp. 105-9. Cf. also 'Very hit is in may morynge' (ed. Sandison, The Chanson d'Aventure, op. cit., p. 102), which tells how the narrator had a vision of Christ and certain of the apostles 'by a chappell as I came'. For much fuller, more recent, introduction to the poem and vers de sagesse, see an annotated manuscript of the Fifte Anon book (sutton Club, London, 1955), pp. 229-30.
In a chyrch as I gan knelle
Thyn endres day for to hore messe,
I saw a syght me lykyd walls...
... Oure lody and hyre sonne in fere

Reading advice on a wall is also to be found elsewhere: Hyre

and see and say not al

Throwe a toun as y com ryde,
Y saw wrotyn on a wall
A loffe of letterys long and wyde;
'Hyre and se, and say not al!' (1-4)

Metre and verse form remind us once again of the question
of genre. As in many of Henryson's other directly didactic
and religious poems the rhyme scheme of the Monk's Tale stanza
is used. The metre is that of the source, iambic tetrameter;
it should be noted that most of Dunbar's poems using this rhyme
scheme and metre are also directly didactic; and that the source
is but one of many similar poems, found together in the Vernon
Manuscript, with the same verse form.

The same convention is used in As I stod in a ryelle hullo,
ed. J. O. Halliwell, Early English Miscellanies in prose and
verse selected from an unedited manuscript of the fifteenth
(ix) The Annunciation

The ultimate source of The Annunciation is, of course, St. Luke's Gospel (1, 26-38) and traditional exegesis of certain other Biblical passages. The Gospel account tells of the sending of Gabriel, of his greeting Mary, of her fear and of her acceptance of God's will. All these events are mentioned by the poet, though reordered slightly — for instance, in the Gospel account Mary is afraid before Gabriel has told her of God's purpose — and added to: there is no 'Brightness fra bufe abundis' (20) in St. Luke. There is no verbal parallel between Gospel and poem, much is omitted, and the emphasis — on the virgin's chastity — in The Annunciation is an emphasis of one facet of that story (vv. 34-5). The poet then is not merely restating the Gospel narrative.

The allegorization of the burning bush and of Aaron's rod has its ultimate source in patriotic exegesis. Thus Bede, commenting on Exodus iii, 2 (et vocas) videbat quod rubus ardoret, et non comburatur) writes 'Alii por rubum sanctam Mariam significari volent, in qua divinitas ardebat et nullum detrimentum patiebatur.' And of Numbers xvii, 8 (sequentis dia regressus invent geminases virgam Aaron in domo Leui, et turgentibus geminis eruperat flores, qui; folis dilatatis, in amygdalas deformati sunt) he writes 'Alii virgam hanc, quae sine nuxore florem protulit, Mariam putant, quae sine coitu virili...'

1. In Pentateuchum Commentariz — Exodus, P.L. xci, col. 293.
Of course the story had been retold countless times. Sermons had dealt with it, stressing the virtues of Mary and her power to help. And there were very many poems written in the Later Middle Ages, as earlier, retelling the Gospel story and using the same Biblical interpretation as our poet, Chaucer, translating Deguileville, in the A. B. C. writes:

Moyses, that saugh the bush with floweres rede
Brenninge, of which ther never a stikke brende,
Was signe of thin unwedded maidenhede.
Thou art the bush on which ther can descende
The roli' count, the which that Moyses wende
Had been a fyr; and this was in figure. (89-94)

In poems by Ryman we find:

Behold, the yerde of Aaron
Unmoysted bare a flower

Behold, and see how that nature (St., 11. 3-4)

Aaron yerde withowe; moystowe;
Thatte longe was sere, a flower hape born;
So eche hath bornoure sauyowre retelling of the story
To saue mankynde, that was forlorn

Mireabile Misterium (St., 6, 11. 1-4)

5. Ibid., pp. 293-4.
Several of these poems refer, as does The Annunciation (ll. 53-60) not merely to this event but also to the death of Mary's Son. Thus, in Hec salutatio composita Angelus Gabrielus, a poem whose central theme is the Annunciation, we find Audelay writing:

\[
\text{Hent he out ged, batelis bede to al p[e] floc,}
\text{Beryng on his chulderis bloo}
\text{pe hole cros pat kene a knock}
\text{Untooure dedly foo (27-30)}
\]

And a very large number end with a similar plea to that expressed in our poem. Thus in a thirteenth century poem, Gabriel's Greeting to Our Lady, we find:

\[
\text{Maiden, moder makeles,}
\text{of milche ful ibunden,}
\text{bid for hus im pat pe ches}
\text{at wann pu grace funde,}
\text{pat he forgive hus senne and wrake,}
\text{and cleene of euri gelt us make ... (49-54)}
\]

Of course this is a common ending, not merely for poems retelling the story of The Annunciation, but also of hymns in praise of Mary. And we must remember that our poem, as was pointed out in the opening paragraph, is not merely a retelling of the story of the Annunciation. Mary's virtues, especially her purity, are stressed throughout.

4. Of course this combination is not new: see, for instance, Ryman's A Roos hath borne a lilywhite, ed. Zupitza, 'Die Gedichte des Franziskaners Jakob Ryman', op. cit., pp. 187-8; Audelay's Hec Salutatio composita Angelus Gabrielus, op. cit.
The introductory passage in praise of love has no parallels elsewhere in Annunciation poetry. However poems telling of the power of love are numerous and some begin in similar manner to Henryson's. For instance, a fourteenth century poem, A Song of the Love of Jesus, begins:

Luf es lye pat lastes ay, par it in criste es feste,  
For wele ne wa it chaunge may, als wyten has mon wyseste.  
Pe nyght it turns in-till pe day, bi travel in-tyll reste;  
If pou wil luf pus as I say, pou may be wyth pe beste.  

(1-4)

As in our poem: 'Luf us fra barret betis;' (5) — love removes all ills.

The verse form provides several points of interest: it is a twelve lined-stanza rhyming a, b, a, b, a, b, a, b; the a rhymes end lines of iambic tetrameter, the b rhymes those of iambic trimeter. Dunbar's poem Ane Ballat of our Lady, also dealing with the Virgin Mary, it should be noted:—also has a twelve lined stanza;—although the rhyme scheme is slightly different from that of The Annunciation, it is also formed largely from two rhymes (except the ninth line) and, again, the a rhymes and lines of iambic tetrameter, the b rhymes, lines of iambic trimeter. A twelve lined stanza — often completely tetrameter — was common in medieval verse, often in religious poems, including poems concerning the Virgin Mary. Thus A Prayer of the Five Joyes, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century, pp. 102-6.

uses a twelve lined stanza, though it is completely of iambic tetrameter; the previously mentioned, Gabriel's Greeting to Our Lady, uses a twelve lined stanza, with varying metres. The Marian lament, *Filius Regis Fortunae Est* 1 the prayer to the Blessed Virgin 'Off all ye bryngda bat ever met were,' 2 and the song, *I Have now set my Heart so High* 3 all use the twelve lined stanza of tetrameters as does Audeloy's hymn, *Haile! be freynet her ever God fone.* 4 It should be noted too that, though his Hec salutatio composita: *Angelus Gabrielus* uses a ten lined stanza, its metre is that of our poem—a tetrameter and trimeter. Thus although it would be false to suppose that Henryson was following a rigid genre—many other metres are used for similar poems; and Dunbar, for instance, uses a similar metre, admittedly with very different rhyme scheme, in his humorous poem *The Turnament* 5—

we can assume that our poet was following a widely known tradition.

Just as the poet has drawn upon a common stock of thought and verse form, so his vocabulary can be traced in other Annunciation poems. Thus stress on Mary's mildness 6 is common.

2. Ibid., pp. 43-5.
3. Ibid., p. 74.
She is often referred to as a princess, as one who is without peer, as a blossom, as one whose face is 'moist fair and schone' (62), one who is 'clene' (64).

So far we have examined the elements of Henryson's poems which are conventional in character. We have already seen one aspect of the poem which is new. Henryson has added the opening (conventional in itself of course). This addition places the poem in a new perspective. In the paradox introduced by this opening - 'lute / through quhome al bittir suet is' (2) - we see foreshadowed the paradox (chaste with child) on which Henryson bases a large proportion of his poem structurally and thematically (cf. 11. 10-11, 15, 17-18, 40, 43, 44-9). For the miracles ar mekle and meit,

Fra luffis Ryver Rynnis" (37-7).

Love can achieve another miracle:

and'mak me'châist

Fra termigant that teyn is" (67-8).

---

1. Cf. Dunbar's Roiss most of vertew virginal, Poems, op. cit., ii. 272-3, 1. 21; I Have now Get my Heart so High, 1. 21; Ave Gratia Plena, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 103-5, 1. 43; Audelay's Hails! be frayrst per ever God fond, 1. 11.

2. Cf. Cyhen be devyne deliberation, ed. W. Tod Ritchie, The Brunnenwro Manuscript, ii, 103-5, 1. 12; Off all be bryddus per ever yesi were, 1. 3; I Have now Get my Heart so High, 1. 21.

3. Cf. Audelay's Hails! be frayrst per ever God fond, 1. 5.

4. Cf. Audelay's Hails Mary to be I say, ed. Whiting, Poems of John Audelay, op. cit., pp. 149-55, 1. 11; Off all be bryddus per ever yesi were, 11. 37-8 and 49; Dunbar, An Ballet of our Lady, 1. 39.

5. Cf. Dunbar An Ballet of our Lady, 1. 41; Dunbar, Rois Mary most of vertew virginal, 1. 17; Off all be bryddus per ever yesi were, 1. 32.

6. The thorough working out of the implications of the paradox of the Virgin Birth in this way is unparalleled in Annunciation poems I know and illustrates a degree of poetic skill far greater than that found in most such poems.
The warning given by a dead man to those living is not unusual in medieval poetry. Thus:

\[ \text{you art now as I was in wardly fygure} \]
\[ \text{I was as you art suntyme be dayes olden.} \]

Again:

\[ \text{Take hede un to my fygure here abowne} \]
\[ \text{And as bow suntyme, I was fresche and gay} \]
\[ \text{Now turned to wormes, mate and corrupcoun} \]
\[ \text{Bot fowle erth and stynkyng alyme and clay} \]

Our poe states similarly:—"As ye ar now, into this world we wair" (5) — and there is a preoccupation, too, with the physical details of decay (ll. 3-4, 21, 32, 40), a preoccupation shown in the second example above and in much other medieval literature.³

We see it for instance in Skelton's Upon a Dead Kan's Head,⁴ a poem which uses, as ours, the sight of a decayed skull as an example. We remember it, too, in The Reasoning Betuix Aige and Yowth, a poem in which it also serves as a warning example. This use of example is a recurrent factor in poems of the period. In one way we might look on many of the longer poems of the period — for instance Henryson's own Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Furnice or Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde — as among other things extended examples; you have seen, the poet seems to imply, the fate of this person who acted wrongly; avoid, then, acting

wrongly yourself. In some cases, as in our poem, the very example speaks in warning. Cresseid herself says:

O Ladye fair of Troy and Grece, attend
My miserie ...

... Be war in tyme, approchis neir the end,
And in your mind one mirrour mak of me (452-6)

In other cases the poet himself points out the warning exemplified in his story: so Chaucer,

Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love!
Swich fyn hath al his-grete worthynesse! ... (V 1828-9)

... Lo here, of payns cossed olde rites
Lo here, what alle hire goddes may availle;
Lo here, thise wrecched worldes appetites; ... (V 1849-52)

The poet has not merely stated a lesson; he has shown it in action - an example from real life, a forceful example, has been given. In *The Thre Deid Polis*, then, Henryson has used a very common device: his example from 'life' emphasizes his didactic point.

The skulls warn that all will die and become as they have come (9). The insistence that all will die recurs frequently in medieval poetry; all becomes earth (40). The very categories of people referred to by the poet are those of tradition: so


'pears and riches, all be but difference' (39) is a common classification.^{1} Rulers (38-9),^{2} the beautiful (stanza 4),^{3} the wise (45-6)^{4} the old and young (stanzas 3 and 7)^{5} all figure prominently in this type of poetry. Pride therefore is folly.^{6} The stanzas referring to youth and beauty particularly will repay a close examination, not merely because they give good examples of the author's technique but also because they show further parallels with contemporary literature. So

O wantone youth, ais fresche as lusty may, farest of floweris, renewit quhyt and roid. Behald our heidis! O lusty gallandis gay, ful lachly thus sall ly thy lusty hoid, holkit and bow, and wallowit as the weid, thy crampand hair, and elk thy cristall ene; full Cairfully conclud sall dulefull dei; (17-23)

The artistic techniques and phraseology are very reminiscent of those in Henryson's longer poems: the use of adjectives to convey attitude through intensification ('lusty' is used three times, for instance and there are also 'gay', 'fresche', 'wantone'); the intensifying adverbs 'elk' in line 22 and 'rull' in lines 20 and 23; and, above all, the emphasis given by alliteration:

1. Cf. Ryman, O cruel deth paynfull and smart, st. 1, 1. 4; O te al whilk bat by me cumues and roth, st. 6, ll. 1-3; Of bre messangers of death, l. 27.

2. Cf. Of bre messangers of death, ll. 139-40; The Dance of Death, ll. 10-11; This world's Verre Venite, ed. I. Callanaz, Parliament of the Thre Age (Select Early English Poems, 2, London, 1915), Appendix 9, at 4, ll. 1-4; Everyone, ed. A.C. Cawley (Manchester, 1951), l. 126.


4. Cf. O te al whilk bat by me cumues and roth, st. 5, 1. 1; Knight, Kingi, Clerk and to Death, ed. O. Brown, Religious Lyrical of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 245-9, ll. 9-12.

5. Cf. O cruel deth paynfull and smart, st. 1, 1. 4; Of bre messangers of death, l. 28; The Dance of Death, l. 8.

the 1, for instance, linking 'lusty', 'gallant', 'laichly', 'ly', 'lusty' (ll. 19-20), the stress on 'durefull deid' (23).

The stanza too gives very interesting points of comparison in vocabulary and thus in theme. We compare with a passage from

The Dance of Death

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Death</th>
<th>Be that be Jentel</th>
<th>so freshe and amorous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Squire</td>
<td>Of these songes</td>
<td>flowring in your grace age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lusti fre of horte</td>
<td>and eke desyrous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ful of deyuses</td>
<td>and chaunge yn your corage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pleasunt of porte</td>
<td>of loke and [of] visage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>But al shal turn</td>
<td>in to ashes dede (433-8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We see a similarity of vocabulary ('freshe', 'songe', 'lusti')

and a similarity of metaphor - the flowering of youth - giving rise to a similarity of theme. Chaucer's lines in Troilus and

Criseyde should also be remembered:

O yonge, freshe folkes, he or she,
In which that love up growth with youre ago,
Repeyrath hon fro worldly vanyte, ... (V 1835-7)

The following stanza of Henryson's poem is equally interesting:

O laeis quhyt in claithis corruscand
poleist with perle, and mony pretius stane
with palpis quhyt, and hals [so] elegant
sircuit with golde and sapheirs mony are;
your finyncles small quhyt as quhailis bane;
arrayit with ringis, and mony rubels reid;
as we ly thus, so sall ye ly ilk ane,
with pseilit pollis and holkit thus your heid (25-32)

Similar techniques are thus used: repetition of important adjectives and adverbs ('quhyt', 'mony' are both used three times in the stanza), alliterative emphasis (the stress on the previous

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1. The Biblical origins of this metaphor, its constant occurrence in medieval poetry, and the significance of the colours 'quhyt and reid' (18) have been discussed when dealing with The Lyon and the L pope, pp. 128-30 and The Reasoning Betwix Aike and Yowth, pp. 344-5.
stones in lines 26 and 30 for instance); the poet uses balance too (as we ... so call ye', 30) to emphasize his theme. The Young Man in The Parliament of the Thre Ages was similarly decked out in precious stones (including gold, rubies and sapphires).

All will die then; this world is a 'mortall se'. The sea is a common symbol for the world, its vagaries and its sins, in medieval poetry and sermon material. Henryson uses it himself in The Youn and the Paddock (11. 79-85) and I have shown its conventional nature in my analysis of that poem.

Nothing else is sensible but to

fall on thy knois; ask grace at god g-acit,
with critionis, and haly salnes swei, (52-3)

The poem ends with an exhortation that the hearers pray to Christ that, through His blood, the 'thre deid pollis' (and, by implication, the hearers themselves for they will die too) may 'cy leif and ring ... be eternitie'. Line 61 in the Maitland Folio Text makes the implication explicit, 'Throw your prayer that we and ye may Regune'. Of course similar endings were very frequent in poems warning of death.

---

3. There seems to be little to choose between either text; certainly some of the Maitland Folio lines scan more satisfactorily than those in the Bannatyne text - cf. ii. 45, 48, 52, 59 - but 1. 2 reads more satisfactorily in Bannatyne and the alliterative pattern of 1. 22 (cr ... or) is not found in Maitland.
4. Cf. Fyve more where so ever I be, ed. E. Flügel, 'Liedersammlungen Des XVI Jahrhunderts, besonders aus der Zeit Heinrichs VIII', Anselm xxvi (1903), 193, st. 8; Skelton, Upon a Dead Man's Head: O cruell deth meanfull and smerte, st. 7.
We have already examined the author's rhetorical technique. He uses the Monk's Tale stanza which, as we have already noted, was a very common form for didactic poems in the fifteenth century. It will be sufficient to note then, that the translator of the Dance of Death also uses this form as does Lydgate in his Minor Mortis Conturbat 2.

(xi) The Reasoning betwixt Death and Man

Many of the details of The Reasoning betwixt Death and Man have been dealt with in discussing The Thre Deid Polliq and it will not be necessary to repeat that discussion; we have seen before the common occurrence of the threat that all must die (stanza 3); indeed, many of the categories in this poem are those isolated in our study of The Thre Deid Polliq: the 'fresche', the fair, the young and the old, the rich and the poor. We have seen elsewhere too the advice to repent (l. 33) and poems ending with a prayer to Jesus to have mercy on doomsday. The form of the poem, too, has been largely dealt with before in the discussion of the debate form in The Reasoning betwixt Aire and Yowth: each contestant speaks in alternate stanzas; stanzas are of the Monk's Tale form. We should note, however, that there is a conclusion to the debate: Death persuades Man to accept his decrees and advice, as the body accepts the decrees and advice of the worms in A discutucion betwyx be body and wormes\(^1\) or as the blackbird accepts the nightingale's correction in Dunbar's In Moz as that Aurora did upspring.\(^2\)

However, there are several points which need separate comment. The device of having Death speak directly to Man - another dramatization of the didactic theme, the like of which we have already discussed in The Reasoning betwixt Aire and Yowth and

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2. Poeme, op. cit., ii, 174-8; l. 97 especially should be noted.
The Thre Deid Pollis is very common and often gives rise to a form of debate, as, for instance, in Everyman and The Dance of Death. Death's speeches to man in our poem contain several traditional phrases and concepts. Death advises man to make a mirror of him; this very advice can be paralleled elsewhere. This concept is closely connected with that of example, discussed earlier; the passage quoted from the Testament of Cresseid when dealing with The Thre Deid Pollis is but one of many examples of this figure. Death twice threatens 'paip, empriour, king' (lines 4 and 40), a phrase that had become a common-place in this type of poetry. And the threat of 'edderia, askis, and wormis' (38) is of course part of the tradition.

Man's replies to Death can also be paralleled. He asks Death who he is. Similarly Everyman says to Death 'I know the not what messenger arte thou' (114). Man complains that he thought youth would remain with him forever, that he has spent his time fulfilling his sinful desires, satisfying his pride.


5. Cf. Take heele vnto my figure, ed. K. Brunner, 'Mittelenglische Todesgedichte', op. cit., p. 30, 1. 3; A disputacioun betwix the body and wormes.
This admission is the very complaint made by the Old Man in both The Parliament of the Thre Aree and Henryson's Reasoning Betwixt Aire and Yowth. Once again we are given a living illustration of a didactic point: Man's pride is illustrated by his words in stanza 2—anyone who attacks him will be caused to 'bow to me on force' (16).

In considering these two poems on death we should remember, then, that they are part of a long tradition of such poems. It is helpful, I believe, to consider them and their like as just one type of the very large number of poems of the period condemning the folly of this transitory world and its passing possessions.
Again! ality credence of Titiarie complain o contemporary conditions ('now', l. 1), yet the very complaints voiced come from a common stock of complaint poetry.

Tale-telling in condemned by Biblical writers to whom the tongue is a dangerous enen. The theme is continued in sermon material. And there is a fairly considerable group of poems advising reticence, or at least wisdom, in speech to avoid the evil consequences of flattery, of scandal, of tale-telling and of rash speech. A representative stanza may be quoted:

Certiyn thyse ys a wondere thyng:
Do a tale neve so fals
Menys men haue grete lekyng
To tell it forth, and ech e it els;
And he it tolde ons or twyse
Hyt wol be long or it downe fall,
There-for y rede be ware, and wyse;
And hyre, and se, and se not eill.

1. Cf. my discussion of the possible relationship between this type of complaint and political conditions in Scotland in the early 1480's, pp. 185-9.

2. Cf. Leviticus xix, 16; Proverbs xi, 13, xviii, 6-8, xx, 19, xvi, 22.

3. Cf. Psalm liii, 4 (Vg. II, 6), cxx, 2-3 (Vg. cxix, 2-3); Proverbs xvii, 14; James iii, 5-6.


(Continued overleaf)
Several poems confine themselves to condemning the wickedness of the tongue, as do lines 41-3 of our poem. Thus a carol begins:

Off al the enymes that I can fynd
The tong is most enyme to mankynde

 Others (cf. line 44 of our poem) threaten the pains of hell to wicked tongues.  

Still more akin to our poem are those advising against credulity. P.W. Thomson pointed out to Gregory Smith similarities between our poem and two of Lydgate. In the Churl and the Bird the bird, in return for her release, gives the churl three pieces of advice, the first of which is

Yeff nat of wisdym to hasty credence
To every tale, nor to eche tidying,
But considre of reson and prudence
Long many tallis is many grett leasying;
Hasty credence hath causid gret hyndryng.
Report of tallis, and tydynges brought vs new
Makith many a man to be hold vntrews. (197-203)

The bird tests the churl and, discovering he has forgotten the advice, complains:

Tauht I the nat this wisdym in sentence;
To every tale brough to the of newes,
Nat hastily yeus ther-to credence,
Into tyne thou knowes that it were trewe? (301-4)

pp. 260-2; As I stod in a rualle baulle (Ewyre say wylle, or hold the styll), ed. J.O. Halliwell, Early English Miscellanies, op. cit., pp. 62-5.
3. Poemas, op. cit., i, lxxii n.
Thomson's other reference is even more interesting. Lydgate's Fall of Princes¹ Book I Chapter 8 tells the story of Theseus whose greatest sorrow was that he 'gaff credence' (4485) to his wife. Readers are advised:

Nor be [to] hasti talis for to leue
Off flaterers in chaumbe nor at table;
Forgers of leuyngis, myn auntour doth weel preue;
Tabide with lordis that thei be nat able ...
... That pryncis sholdex examine ech parti.

Off wisdom also and off discrescion,
Withoute a proof nat be parciall; (I 4495-4503)

Princes must not be hasty of judgment nor

Leue no talis nor yiue no credence,
Till that the parti may come to audience ...
... hasti credence, I dar say in sentence;
A thousand fold is more perileous; ...
... For haste ful offte, for lakkyng off resoun,
Off moche peeple hath be destruccioun (I 4584-92)

A prince ought to examine well before he delivers judgment

For there is noon mor dredeful pestilence
Than is a tunge that can flatre and fage (I 4621-2)

The first line of these two is very similar to line 29 of our poem.

The cause of much trouble

Been these lieres with ther tunges double,
Themsilff afforcynge ay trouthe to oppresse;
With whom flatrie is a cheeff maistresse:
And, werat of all, to ther dreedful sentence,
Is when pryncis been hasti off credence.

Hasti credence is roote off all errour ...
... Olauti concluding with full gret dissauil ...
... To al that truste and haue in hir plesaunce (I 4805-16)

In 1. 30 of our poem it is the ground of strife for a lord 'to haif plesaunce' in flatterers. There is nothing so evil.

As chaung off pryncis to yiuo iugement,
Or hasti credence, withoute auisement (I 4822-3)

The envoy ends with a plea

Prynys, Prynnessis, off noble and hih parage,
which ha[ue] lordshippe and domynacioun
Voide hem aside that can flatter and fage;
Pro tungs that haue a tareage off tresoun,
Stoppith your eris from ther bittir soun;
Beth circumpeect, nat haue but prudent,
And yiueith no credence withoute susisement (I 4638-44)

The resemblances to our poem are indeed very close, in theme and vocabulary. Lydgate's work could be the source, though no final proof could be offered for such an assumption. Elsewhere Lydgate echoes the advice: Consider welle with sverie circumstance:

Most noble princes, cherissheris of vertu ... 
... Chastiseth the reuers, and of wisdome doth this,
Voideth joure heryng from al that sey a-rys (127-53)

In a poem from Oxford MS. Digby 102, we find the same themet:

Glosere maken mony lenynges -
Al to sone men hem leue -
Bope to lordys and to kuynges,
pat bope partye ofte greue.
Vilde lordis soche repreus,
Glosere shoulde not go so gay (73-7)

Dunbar likewise advises flight:

... fra all fals tungis fulfild with flatttry,
Als fra all schrewis, or ellis thy art eschamit;
Sic art thy callit as is thy cumpany;
Fle perrellus taillis foundit of invy;
To Dwell in Court My Freind3 (26-9)

In Henryson's fables there are also similar passages: The Houe
and the Paddock 11. 135-49, and The Fox and the Cook 11. 204-10.

2: As ye see doo esbe and flowe, ed. J. Kail, Twenty Six
Political and Other Poems, i-(E.E.T.S.O.S. 124, 1904), 14-22.
Two further points need to be made concerning the theme. Firstly, this poem belongs to a group addressing lords, or princes, or the king (often employing the apostrophe) and giving advice. Secondly, the poem and its like are part of a very large number of poems decrying contemporary conditions, a class that will be discussed in Appendix B when dealing with The Want of Wyse Men.

We end this study of Henryson's shorter poems then where we began it, stressing the fact that without a thorough understanding of the genres within which they were written we miss their very nature and purpose.

Appendix A

In this brief appendix I wish merely to hint at a method of approach to The Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Eurycle which may prove of value. Dr. S. J. Harth has already undertaken for those poems the type of research — a hunt through previous tellings and related stories to find just what is traditional and what Henryson has added or changed — which I think has been proved to be of value in our study of the Fabliau. But one has not undertaken in any detail study of the more formal material of the poems.

In The Testament of Cresseid there are four points to which I should like to draw attention. Firstly, the opening.

Henryson, as is normal in a poem dealing with fortune, with trust in worldly pleasures, began his poem with a spring opening (in midding of Lent, 5); but he has used the convention creatively: this is not the normal spring, when all seems lovely, but a sour spring when the things of this world show themselves in true perspective — the narrator in old, Cresseid has contracted physical disease through unnatural affection, spiritual disease through trust in the things of this world. Knowledge of the normal use of the convention and the counterpoint which Henryson plays on it contribute to our understanding of the poem. Secondly, the role of the narrator. Henryson's narrator is very similar to that

in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, not fully understanding the situation into which the central characters have brought themselves, sympathising with them, echoing their blindness to their own true nature in his own blindness to their nature and to his own.

Thirdly, the 'extasie'. Macrobius explains:

> the patient experiences in dreams vexations similar to those that disturb him during the day. An examples of the mental variety, we might mention the lover who dreams of possessing his sweetheart or of losing her, or the man who fears the plots or sight of an enemy and is confronted with him in his dream or seems to be fleeing him. Anxiety about the future would cause a man to dream that he is gaining a prominent position or office or that he is being deprived of it as he feared.

The 'gods' are projections of Cressida's own imagination and fears, just as the narrator's dream in *The Book of the Duchess* is a projection of what he has been reading and of his personal life.

Leprosy was thought of as a type of venereal disease and Cressida's fears after her life of wantonness (an gigotlike, takand thy foull plesance, 83) are projected on to the gods, on to Fortune (Venus in a fortune figure in the poem [221-35] as in *The Kings Quair*).

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For Cressida, like Troilus in Chaucer's poem (IV.950ff.) has, in trusting this world, become a determinist, cannot see that her 'punishment' is of her own creation - at least, she does not realize this until her encounter with Troilus (cf. I.574): the poem is a study of the growth of self-knowledge. And fourthly, the lament (11.406 ff.). The form here shows exactly the same characteristics as others in Henryson, for instance that in The Lyon and the Lion (11.210-21): the opening phrase 'said her none' (406); the heavy alliterative pattern (indeed the alliterative frequency throughout the whole poem is rather high and would repay close study); the ubi sunt motif; the expression of hopelessness at Fortuna's attack - for the complaints are made by determinists, those who have blindly put their trust in the things of this world: this can be seen by the very nature of the complaint Cressida makes; she does not complain because she has lost Troilus but because she has lost those worldly pleasures which were her true love.

Orpheus and Eurydice can be similarly approached. It has three points of interest for us. Firstly, the use of the Kay morning motif (11.86-96), with protagonist wandering into the fields to 'so the flouris spring', immediately informs those of Henryson's readers/hearers who recognize the normal function of

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5. This is not the place to comment in detail on the changed role of Troilus from Chaucer's poem - here his love is pure, noble, praised - with the allegorical overtones in the poem the change implies: A Christ figure? A figure of 'the pairet intollatyfe ... seperat fra sensualite,' like Orpheus?
this form in mediaeval poetry of the nature of her pleasures (guthie to the flesche it settis the appetite, 434)\textsuperscript{6}. Secondly, the complaint form is used, with characteristics we noted when dealing with The Testament of Cresseid: 'till his harp thus sait (he) said his rone' (133)\textsuperscript{7}; we feel he was perhaps to some extent to blame for Eurydice's downfall (he too experienced 'wardly icy' \textsuperscript{7} - later he was to lose Eurydice again through 'Giffand consent and delectatioun, /off fleshcly lust' .622-3). Thirdly there is the ascent to heaven and descent through the spheres - the device had been used somewhat differently in Chaucer's House of Fame and to end his Troilus and Criseyde, there, as in Henryson, recalling Cicero's Dream of Scipio and Macrobius'

commentary:

He (Pythagoras) says that the reason why milk is the first nourishment offered to the new born infant is that the first movement of souls slipping into earthly bodies is from the Milky Way. Now you see, too, why Scipio, when the Milky Way had been shown to him, was told that the souls of the blessed proceed from hence and return hither.

6. Eurydice is a 'lady ying' (96) like the princess in The Bludy ferk. I gave in my analysis of that poem (pp. ) reasons for my belief that Henryson's stress on the princess' youth implied a condemnation of her immaturity - a similar condemnation is perhaps implied here.

7. Henryson places great stress on Orpheus' harp - the stress appears to be his, not Trivet's. The emphasis is perhaps explained by mediaeval Biblical commentary in which phrases like the following are numerous: 'cithara vero, quod ab inferiori sonat, tribulationes et infirmitates nostras in corpore Christi exhibita significat,' (Bede, commenting on Psalm 111:9 [Vg.], In Psalmorum Librum Excessus, P.L. xclii, col. 782); 'Confitebor tibi, inquam, o Deus in vasia psalmi, et prallam tibi in cithara, id est, in sanctis oraeibus ad carnis fortificationem pertinentibus' (Bede, commenting on Psalm 1xxi:22[?]), In Psalmorum Librum Excessus P.L., col.8 Cf also Macrobius' discussion of the value of music in gener Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, tr. W. H. Stahl, op.cit., Bk II, ch.III, p.195.
(4) So long as the souls heading downwards still remain in Cancer they are considered in the company of the gods, since in that position they have not yet left the Milky Way. But when in their descent they have reached Leo, they enter upon the first stages of their future condition.

(13) By the impulse of the first weight, the soul, having started on its downward course from the intersection of the zodiac and the Milky Way to the successive spheres lying beneath, as it passes through these spheres, not only takes on the afore-mentioned envelopment in each sphere by approaching a luminous body, but also acquires each of the attributes which it will exercise later... in the lunar sphere (it obtains) the function of molding and increasing bodies, phytikon. (15) This last function, being the farthest removed from the gods, is the first in us and all the earthly creation; inasmuch as our body represents the dregs of what is divine, it is therefore the first substance of the creature. (16) The difference between terrestrial and supernal bodies (I am speaking of the sky and stars and the other components) lies in this, that the latter have been summoned upwards to the abode of the soul and have gained immortality by the very nature of that region and by copying the perfection of their high estate; but to our terrestrial bodies the soul is drawn downwards, and here it is believed to be dead while it is shut up in a perishable region and the abode of mortality.

Although what I have suggested is merely a hint - much more could be learnt from a detailed study - one cannot, of course, exhaust the meaning of the poems in this way. But an understanding of the forms Henryson uses, and the counterpoint he plays on these forms, does help towards a fuller appreciation of the poems.

9. Ibid., pp. 136-7. Macrobius is also helpful in analysing for us the nature and the occasion (the punishments occur now, in this world, as well as in the next) of the sufferings in hell: Bk. I, ch. x, pp. 128-9. Cf also, on this subject, Walter Map, De Mucis Curialium, tr. M. R. James (Cymrodicton Record Series IX, London, 1923), pp. 4-5.
I have already stated that I think there can be no case made for ascribing this poem to Henryson. It is of considerable interest however for it uses, in rather crude form perhaps, several of the topoi and forms (particularly the laudator temporis acti) which Henryson uses in a more sophisticated manner.

The poem is a recording of traditional concepts: a criticism of the times. But society was not always evil. Formerly there was a Golden Age (stanza 2). Chaucer, too, writes of such an age when there was peace and trust, in The Former Age:

Unforsyth was the hauberck and the plate; ...
No pryde, non enuye, non avarice,
No lord, no taylage by no tyrannie;

and in Lak of Stedfastnesse:

Sente thee the world was so stedfast, and stable
That mannes word was obligacioun.

The reference - allegorical in our poem (1-12)² is to the sinless, and therefore happy, state in the garden of Eden. But now the world is evil, turned upside down (2-3). This image of reversal is conventional.³

The state of the world now is constantly compared, either explicitly or implicitly, with what it had been in that ideal past. The temporal contrast is accentuated by the use of the adverb "now" (ll. 5, 7, 14, 15, 25, 33, 49, 52). In line 52 another means of reinf-

1. cf. also On The Times, 1338, ed. T. Wright, Political Poems and Songs, op. cit., 1: 270–8 11. 1–6; and On the Corruptions of the Times, ed. T. Wright, Political Poems and Songs, op. cit., 1: 239–7, 1.11

2. For examples and discussion of the christianizing of pagan myth see B. P. Bopp, Doctrina and Poetry (New York, 1959), pp. 69 ff.

3. cf. Chaucer, Lak of Stedfastnesse, 11 5–6; On the Corruptions of (See Over)
forcing the comparison is used: a vice, or a virtue, have become its opposite (cf also 11.51, 59). Many verbs, too, stress the change: worthin (6), exilde (33), banyat (38), flaynt (45), lorme (46), tane leif (57). Similarly the use of 'away' (637).

Other poems use the same comparison, and the same means of comparison: for instance, Chaucer's **Lok of Stedfastnesse**:

And now it is so false and deceivable ...(3)
...
Vertu hath now no dominacions; (16)
Pro right to wrong, fro truth to fikelnesse. (20)

The expressions 'put down', 'exyled' show the same purpose.

Chaucer's whole idyllic picture in **The Pardoner's Tale** is an implied contrast with the present age, a compassion implied by the use of 'yet' and the use of the negative throughout, thus stressing that the evils present now were then absent.

A non-Chaucerian example is provided by the following lines:

Witte is tourned to trecherie
Love is tourned to lecherie
Pleye is tourned to villany
And haliday to goltery

Now, not only is the poet's constant comparison of the ideal former age with the decadence of later times - as well as the means of presenting this comparison - traditional, but many of the evils he deplores come from a common stock of complaint. Thus

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we have further evidence that the poem and its like do not necessarily or solely refer to any contemporary political or social condition. Such poems deplore the state of mankind as a whole, his fallen position, as well as having perhaps contemporary reference. Almost every complaint in The Ant of Synne Ken can be paralleled elsewhere in mediæval literature. The complaints expressed in the poem may perhaps be divided into four groups: the decay of personal virtues; the decay of reason and learning; the lack of justice; and the lack of respect for the Church.

Firstly, the decay of personal virtues. All loyalty has disappeared (4-5, 45, 51). This is one of the most common complaints in later mediæval literature. To illustrate:

... Sors trivyth: yt acet acudo,
   die qualiter Arlia start.
   Where our frendis were,
   rostrum sunt jur inimici ... 5

Love, as well as fidelity and friendship, has disappeared (11:33-4, 57). This is a contemporary topic:

Love and wroth ther is wel riva,
   And trew love is ful thynge 6

Humility also has disappeared giving way to pride (58):

Lorchery, lust and pryde
   hance sunt quibus Arlia parat; 7

5. On the Times, 1338, 11, 11-24; cf also Ills of Our Time, 1:24f et
   Inamrere of defo, ed. G. Holmestead, Speculum Christiani
   (B. E. J. S. J. 192, 1933), pp. cxxxv-cxxxvii, 11:39-44;
   Chaucer, The Former Age, 11, 61-2; Dunbar's, Couthom to Sall
   I Complese Ry he, Poesia, on cit., 11, 100-3, 11, 1-4.

6. A Sonz on the Times (Reign of Edward I), ed. T. Wright, The
   Of also God that sytteth in winitie, 11: 15-17.

7. On the Times 1338, 11:9-10; of also Skelton, The Manner of the
   World Nowaday, st. 3-6; Dunbar, Doverit with Drene, Devayny
   in my Slummeon, 11:41-2.
Secondly the poet complains about the decay of reason and learning. Now these have been set aside for other pursuits (20-21, 23, 25-6), or they are used for evil purposes (16). While men asleep those seeking worldly pleasures are awake (1.22). Once again this is a common complaint:

\[ ... \text{witte is tourned to trocheery ...} \]
\[ ... \text{Prudentes coae conquiti dexterity sunt ...} \]
\[ ... \text{wise men biean blynde ...} \]

Thirdly there is constant complaint about the lack of justice, the substitution of night for right (28, 41-2, 49-50). For contemporary parallel we may cite:

\[ ... \text{For riht is riht ...} \]
\[ ... \text{For riht is riht the lond is lawles ...} \]

For when the wise asleep, the evil are about their business (22):

\[ \text{Gwan mon rest takyn,} \]
\[ \text{poecein streno recreati,} \]
\[ \text{Swoch folaws wakyn,} \]
\[ \text{ad darna entrata parati} \]

Fourthly, the Church has lost its power (53). Similarly from contemporary literature we may cite: "the dredo of God yo al
to draw;"11 The Church is itself corrupt (17-21). As Owst has shown12 complaint about the worldly and hypocritical lives of many of the clergy is common in later mediaeval sermon material; the poetry of the age is equally condemning:

Sic pryd with prcellattia, so few till preiche and pray;
... So mony prcestis cled vp in occular weid
with blasing breistis casting thair claithis on braid . . . .13

This is but one of many possible examples.

The cause the writer gives for these calamities is also traditional:

Sen want of wyse men makis fulis to sit on binkis (8 et ff)

We should note that this is, in itself, another example of the world 'upside down': fools should be ruled over not judges and princes. Gregory Smith14 has shown that the expression itself is proverbial; as such it is another instance of the common use of proverbs by mediaeval poets. The idea occurs elsewhere in mediaeval poetry:

Quhat is the caus sic truble sic debait
Sic rugrie reif ryngia in this regioun
The lordis in youth to leir folye ar sett
Swa wantis vertew and erudition ....15

We should perhaps remember also the theological overtones of the word 'rule' for a mediaeval audience. A 'rule' was not merely one lacking in intelligence, but one who substituted the values of this world for those of the next. This is a common conception in Middle Scots poetry: we have seen it already in Henryson's

11. On the Corruptions of the Times, 1, 23
13. Dunbar, Devoti with Dreme, Devyning in My Blummer, 11.6, 11-12.
15. Re, ratious ground and pate to sapience, ed. W. Tod Ritchie (See over)
Cok and the Jewell (I. 142). It also occurs in Dunbar's In Baln as that Aurora did weeping:16

"O kerle," quod echo, "O rule, stynt of thy taill,
For in thy song God senter is their none,
For boith is stynt the tyme and the travail
Of every lye bote ypono God allone" (29-32)

And, of course, the poet's remedy for this confusion is equally traditional. God has been grieved; he prays to Him to reform the situation (70-1). This can be paralleled elsewhere:

Now lett us pray both on and all,
And especialy upon God call,
To send love and peace among us all, ... 17

The subject of The Want of Wyse Men, then is traditional; so is the form and style. We have already seen other examples of the rhetorical devices used to express contrast in time. The heavy occurrence of alliteration - found in almost every line, often linking every important word in the line - is familiar to us from our study of Henryson's poems. The rhyme scheme is that of the York's Tale stanza which is used extensively throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, largely for didactic poems of the type of The Want of Wyse Men. The meter, however, proves very interesting. Many of the lines are far from regular. Some have

15 The Barnatyne Manuscript, op. cit., II, 221-4, 11.57-60; cf. also Dunbar, Seuerit with Prerna, Devynynge in Ly Glumyn, 11.21-5.
17 God that o'thoth in Frinitio, 11, 23-5.
eleven syllables, others twelve. Thus "Sen want of wyse men makis
tulis to sit on binkis" (8) has eleven syllables; so have 11.19
(the final 'go' must be pronounced to rhyme with 'moralitee') 23,
29, 33, 35, 41, 62, 63, 71. Of course these are read with five
stresses, but they are certainly not regular iambic metre as the
beginning of the poem would lead us to expect. And there are
many lines which have twelve syllables: "For euclly gouvernance
this world was goldin calld (10)" Similarly lines 12, 27, 38, 39,
49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 57, 58, 59, 61, 69. Again, most of these
could be read with five stresses - a type of accentual metre -
but some at least, for instance that just quoted, could be read
with six. Again, some lines have less than ten syllables, and
fewer than five stresses e.g.

Cuhais power, wisdome and honoure (67)

Henryson has incorporated the basic form of this poem (the
'ludator temporis acti') into The Dyr, The Scheip and the Wolff
(11.154-68) and The Lyon and the Loas (11.69-77). Whereas The
Want of Wyse Men is merely a genre poem, however, Henryson has used
the form creatively: it transforms its context in his poems
(widenig the scope of the fable forms) and is transformed by them
(the detail of the context gives added force to the generalized
complaints).
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