

## Figural Allusions to Piers in *Pier Plowman*, Passus 13-16\*

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Passus 8-12 of *Piers Plowman* focus on Will's pursuit of Dowel as its central action. In the course of wanderings in search of Dowel, the Dreamer encounters two friars, Thought-Wit (the rational faculties of his soul) and Study-Clergy-Scripture (all, in their own way, the means of knowledge). Their remarks on Dowel's whereabouts include profitable lessons which urge the Dreamer to make an affective reform of self. Appealing to the intellectual pursuit of Dowel's nature, the Dreamer's "wikked" will, however, is resistant to the demand of the affective awakening. In the mean time, since his tearing of the Pardon (Passus 7), Piers has been off the stage of the poem until Anima

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mentions him as the guardian of the Tree of Knowledge in Passus 16. His presence, however, constantly felt even in the Passus 13-16, due to the personification-allegories's allusions to him. Piers is figured forth as the depository of Christian wisdom; further, he is said to come to embody the wisdom in himself and to prove it "in dede." Piers is ultimately noted as a being who perceives human will—the ability unique to Christian deity. The images of Piers expressed in these references are indispensable to the unfolding comprehension of his spiritual significance, that reaches finally Anima's statement "*Petrus id est christus*" (Passus 15).<sup>1)</sup>

The allusions to Piers, however enigmatic, are to be viewed in the pattern of prefiguration and fulfillment. Not in a linear or causative development, each moment of the transformation of Piers unmistakably point to Piers as the *humana natura* of Christ. The allusions to Piers's spiritual attributes and his coming are, in genuine Christian sense, to be compared to the prophecy often told by hermits and holy persons. The mode of speech employed in the allusions must contrast with that of the debates between the Dreamer and the personification-allegories, which we shall define as the "wilderness talk" shown in the Old Testament history. The "wilderness" talk on Dowel and the prophetic mode of revelation of Piers, in themselves, are a figural repetition of the Christian life.

The process of the Dreamer's seeking an affective reform of self can be viewed in keeping with the progression of allusions to Piers. After the Dreamer's being confronted with his past as a whole, through the Imaginatyf's aid in Passus 12, the "wikked" voluntas comes to see his inner reality as sinful.

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1) Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from the poem are taken from George Kane and E. Talbot Donaldson, ed. *Piers Plowman: The B Version* (London: the Athlone Press, 1975).

After this, Will comes to pursue Charity as the "way" to salvation who is ultimately Christ but provisionally Piers (Simpson, "*Vidit*" 12-13). The Dreamer feels that Dowel and Charity must be found and grown in him, although he sees it "now as an *aenigma*—in a mirror" in himself, but "then face to face." The prophetic style (the allusions to Piers's coming) and the poetic style (the imperfect image of charity in the Dreamer's heart) are of a quality that appeals to the affective side of human will, in antithesis to the sterile intellectual "wilderness talk."

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In Passus 8, the Dreamer sets out in pursuit of Dowel's whereabouts. In Passus 8-12, the definition of Dowel that each character presents for the Dreamer is not complete ideas of doing-well, but fragments of a whole truth. Nevertheless, the personification-allegories do not omit the valuable lesson that the pursuit of learning, ungoverned by love, is pointless. The way to Dowel is not to be sought in the intellectual realm, but it is to be loved and desired as a practice (the "kynde knowyng" of Dowel). Wit, Study, and Clergy, all point out that the necessary origin of Dowel is to amend the disordered and weakened *affectus* (Wittig 60). Wit points out "pat is wikked wille pat many werk shedep, / And dryueþ away dowel þoruȝ dedliche synnes" (9.209-10). Study exhorts Will to "preie hym of pardon and penaunce in pi lyue, / muche mercy to amende [vs] here" (10.125-26). And Clergy advises "ech a blynd bosard do boote to hymselfe, . . . Alle maner men to amenden bi hire myȝtes" (10.272-74). Moving from one figure to another, however, Will fails to respond to them affectively, simply because his *voluntas* is yet averse to the exhortations. The response to the demand for affective reform must be a simple act of choosing: if Will likes what they say, he accepts it; if he dislikes it, he

feels free to ignore or mock it. So he responds: "Ac yet sauorep me noꝛt pi seying" (8.112), "'This is a long lesson,' quod I, 'and litel am I þe wiser'" (10.377). The "wikked" will, the weakened *affectus*, appears to be the obstacle to turning any valuable intellectual lessons into the basis of his action. The Dreamer is hindered, because of his wounded *voluntas*, from taking in the intellectual lessons, and thus, he does not act upon them.

The rebellious mood of the Dreamer's *voluntas* expresses itself in his verbal act. Man's recalcitrant will to refuse to comply with the divine will finds its prototype in the words of the biblical "murmurings."<sup>2</sup>) The analytic and discursive mode of Will's narrative belongs to this kind of words. The disobedient and doubting mind is spoken of often in the Bible. It goes back to that of the Israelites in the Wilderness period, and is reiterated in the doubt of the disciple of Thomas as well as the vituperativeness of the Jews of our Lord's time. In 1 Cor. 10.10, for example, Christ exhorts the disciples to "neither do you murmur: as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed by the destroyer." Also, in 1 Tim. 1.5-6, "Now the end of the commandment is charity, from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an unfeigned faith: From which things some going astray, are turned aside unto vain babbling." The "murmuring" or "babbling" in the Biblical passages is pertinent to a rebellious *voluntas* in man's ordinary basis of living, i.e., in the "wilderness." Thus, the historical and figural "murmur" can be called a "wilderness word"; and "in him [Christ] the wilderness-people has at last stopped its 'murmuring.'"<sup>3</sup>)

It seems clear that Langland sees the "murmuring" not at an individual level

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2) Numbers 14.27; Matt. 20.11; John 7.12; Luke 5.30; John 6.41, 43, 62. 7.32

3) See T.F. Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel*, Studies in Biblical Theology, No.40 (Naperville, IL: A.R. Allenson, 1963), 15-18; also, A.C. Charity, *Events and Their Afterlife; the Dialectics of Christian Typology in the Bible and Dante* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1966), 107.

but at a collective level of ordinary life. The life of the common people is often compared to the "false minstrels" in the poem: the "minstrels" represent all those who use their gifts, not to praise God, but for their own glory and temporal rewards. As well witnessed in Haukyn, *Activa Vita*, a baptized Christian, a waferer, and "a Mystrall" (13.224), everyone is in Langland's view a metaphorical minstrel, the user of words. All must be either God's "fipeles" or "luciferis fiþele," destined to partake of the feast of Christ or of "Luciferis feste." References to goliards, jongleurs, singers, and bawdy songs, repeatedly occur in the poem. The motif is not confined particularly to the pursuit and dissemination of secular words among the professional jesters or entertainers, but those who profess the faith but do not work accordingly. The abuse of words by souls which turn away from God and his Word are comparable to the "murmuring" of the people in the metaphorical or psychological wilderness, or those who do not choose to direct their *voluntas* to "Jerusalem" and to the Logos. The verbal expression of the "murmuring" is the pattern which results from one's own affective aversion to divine will. The reader checks the movement of the *voluntas*, expressed by the Dreamer's verbal acts, against his own. When he "murmurs" at God's will and seeks an intellectual excuse to exonerate his deviance from God's way, he fulfills the type of the resisting will which has been repeated over and over again in history. The motif of "murmuring" or "jangling" in the poem is figural.

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It is suggested that Piers has been involved in some sort of activity after he left his half-acre; Piers increases in power and significance, since he has resolved to engage in working on his own personal spiritual welfare in Passus

7.4) During his absence from the poem, however, Piers is often cited in the dialogue between Will and the personified allegories, especially after Will's confrontation with Imaginatyf in Passus 12. The presence of Piers, although not corporeally, is deeply felt as a source of sapiential understanding, the effect of which is to reduce to nothing the confusing attempts of words (*scientia*) found in the dialogues between Will and the personification-allegories which has been sustained so far. In the banquet scene in Passus 13, when Clergy is asked to define Dowel, Clergy is aware of Piers's profounder knowledge, against which the activity of analytical arts falter. Instead of giving his own definitions, Clergy says that Piers casts aside all of the sciences with the exception of love.

For oon Piers þe Plowman hap impugned vs alle;  
 And set alle sciences at a sop saue loue one;  
 And no text ne takeþ to mayntene his cause  
 But *Dilige deum* and *Domine quis habitabit*;  
 And [demeþ] þat dowel and dobet are two Infinites,  
 Which Infinites wip a feip fynden out dobest,  
 Which shal saue mannes soule; þus saip Piers þe Plowman.' (13. 124-30)

The only texts Piers draws upon are "Love God" and "Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle" (Ps. 14.1). This Christian wisdom is the most simple virtue at the practical level (Lev. 19.18; Deut. 6.5.; Matt. 22.39, 37). The erudite and complex system of *scientia* is to be set aside when faced with the decree of love, whose place lies in the affective side of soul. The Christian wisdom is to

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4) A hint that Piers may now be travelling as a pilgrim is given in the C-Text: Patience is said to be "Ilyk Peres the ploghman, as he a palmere were" (C. 15.33). *Piers Plowman by William Langland: An Edition of the C-Text*, ed. Derek Pearsall (Berkeley: U of California P, 1978).

contemplate the order connecting all virtues and to show that these are derived from the first truth, love of God.

Piers also says ("þus saip Piers þe Plowman") that the two "infinetes"—Dowel and Dobet—are in pursuit of the "finite," Dobest. Here, the "infinetes" can mean something not yet finished or definite, thus imperfect and obscure, which needs an extended pursuit of something final, definite, perfect (Middleton 173-174). The on-going imperatives "do well" and "do better" find their final goal in "do best." Although in themselves good, "dowel" and "dobet" are subject to the order of perfection. In other words, the Dreamer needs to be a good person; a good person needs to be like Piers; Piers is like Christ, a human being who fulfills the Christian truth and charity in the highest degree. It is a matter of course that Piers is not a personified *sapientia*, but rather a living *sapientia*. Piers is a "true" Christian, what a Christian ought to be. For "truth" is the conformity between what is asserted and what is. Although only God fully verifies the idea (God is truth, "I am who am"), human beings can also be "true" insofar as they are imperfect ("infinite") imitations of the first ("finite") Truth, of the transcendental Idea which is God. Only God is Truth and Sapientia; but, in an imperfect scale, Piers is an embodiment of *sapientia* and also a "true" human being.

After Clergy's confession of incapacity, Conscience suggests that they would better leave the question till Piers comes to show Dowel in practice.

'I kan noȝt heron', quod Conscience, 'ac I knowe Piers.  
 He wol noȝt ayein holy writ speken, I dar vndertake.'  
 'Thanne passe we ouer til Piers come and preue pis in dede. (13. 131-33)

Conscience quite nearly leaves the question aside and attributes the resolution of all problems to Piers's sapiential knowledge. This indicates that

Piers is still accepted and thus believed as a guide, much as he was guide to Truth at the half acre. Conscience says that Piers will never speak against Holy Writ. Piers will never "murmur" towards God's will. His whole heart is, by habit of nature (*habitualiter*), given to God in such a way that he may neither harbor nor will anything contrary to His love.

The allusions tell us that Piers not only knows, but also will do what he knows. Here, the theme of "word" turns to "work." That is, Piers is not only thought of as the repository of Christian wisdom ("pus saip̄ Piers pe Plowman"), but he is also believed to come to prove his own sapiential utterances "in deed" ("Piers come and preue pis in dede"). For one to "preue" something "in dede" is to embody something in himself. This illustrates the conformity between words (*intellectus*) and works (*affectus*) in Piers's way of living; he adds good deeds to faith. In fact, the necessity of the conformity of the one to the other is stressed throughout the poem, in antithesis to the discrepancy of the two often found in the clerical way of living. Piers's foot of work (*pes affectus*) and his foot of word (*pes intellectus*) go together, without allowing doing-good to lag behind faith and learning.<sup>5)</sup> The conformity is also between what he says and what he ought to be, or what a human being is expected to be, which involves the concept of a "true" being. The conformity between how he is originally known and what he comes to embody is the ultimate test of truthfulness of one's being. We are reminded that Piers gains the sapiential knowledge naturally by his conscience and "kynde knowyng" (5.537 ff.), that is, the natural knowledge which makes one aware of what things

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5) For medieval Christianity, *affectus* is not a matter of sentiment and feeling but of will and love resulting in "good works." For Peraldus's equating the image of *pes intellectus* with "good intention" and of *pes affectus* with "work," see Siegfried Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth: Acedia in Medieval Thought and Literature*, 65.

ought to be. The sapiential knowledge is grasped through co-naturality between knower and known, God and Piers, which points forward to Anima's statement of the *imago dei* or *humana natura* of Christ to be found in Piers (Passus 15).

Conscience says that "then let this pass until Piers comes to prove this in deed." The anticipation of one's coming and his fulfillment of the anticipated things can be found widely in medieval literature. In the *Divine Comedy*, Virgil repeatedly mentions to Dante the coming of Beatrice when they ascend the Purgatorial mount (*Purgatorio* 27.136-38, etc). The coming of Galahad in the French *Queste de Graal* had been proclaimed by hermits and holy men for twenty years: on the vigil of Pentecost Galahad was promised to the Round Table (Matarasso 33, 37, etc.). The basic model is, of course, the numerous Old Testament prophecies of the messiah's coming. Galahad and Beatrice are themselves "types" of Christ; the anticipation of their coming is figurally presented in a similar fashion to Christ's coming. The remarks on Piers and his coming are no longer the "wilderness talk," but a typological prophecy (Woolcomb 42). The words on Piers, although put forward by the same personification allegories, are no longer mere "murmurings." Just as the "murmuring" is figural, so is the prophecy. We are witnessing, here, two kinds of verbal patterns reenacted in typological perspective.

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Words are fallible in judging one's inner soul, since a cleric's words often fall short of practising them in deeds. As mentioned above, the intellectual debates on Dowel are often unnecessary murmurings. In the same way, the most honest work can be fallible in view of the failed project of Piers's half acre. Piers was forced to reorient his project of the half acre in favor of spiritual "work." Word and work, the external expressions of one's inner soul, themselves

do not always guarantee the integrity of one's *voluntas*. It is certain that, in human words and works, Piers's is most true to divine will. For, like Piers's word ("love God and your neighbors"), the divine imperative to do well is plain and "finite"; and Piers's work most perfectly "proves it in deed." Nevertheless, even Piers's words and works are the two "infinities" in pursuit of "finite," the finished and perfect will of God. Word and work are fallible evidence of one's truth; will is the surest evidence of one's integrity. The final allusion to Piers, before he reenter the stage of the poem in Passus 16, deals with human will. Piers is here alluded to as a person who can perceive human will. A perfect harmony between word and work, Piers goes a step closer to the attribute of Christian deity, since only God can perceive one's inner being. Since both personification allegories's statements (word) and Piers's instruction at the half acre (work) fail to lead people to Dowel and Truth (Burrow 123), the safest faculty in a man which ensures doing good is his will.

When the Dreamer asks about the whereabouts of charity, Anima answers in direct and simple terms: charity is a child-like thing ("a childish pyng"; 15.149), a generous good-will that is without childishness and folly ("wipout fauntelte or folle a fre liberal wille"; 150). In these questions ("where sholde man fynde swich a frend wip so fre an herte?"; 151), the guiding term to the Dreamer's pursuit of salvation is then smoothly shifted from Dowel to Charity. For it is charity, "a fre liberal wille" (the inner, spiritual motive force), that informs Dowel (the manifested action, word or work). Since the Dreamer understands that charity is embodied in human soul, then he says, he has never seen the true charity in his life except in himself, as in a mirror, although clerics say that charity is everywhere.

'Where sholde men fynde swich a frend wip so fre an herte?  
 I haue lyued in londe', qoud [I], 'my name is longe wille,  
 And fond I neuere ful charite, bifore ne bihynde.  
 Men bip merciabie to mendinauntz and to poore,  
 And wollen lene per pei leue lelly to ben paied.  
 Ac charite pat Poul preiseþ best, and most plesaunt to ours [Saeueur]—  
*Non inflatur, non est ambiciosa, non querit que sua sunt*—  
 I seiȝ neuere swich a man, so me god helpe,  
 That he ne wolde aske after his, and ouperwhile coueite  
 Thyng pat neded hym noȝt and nyme it if he myȝte.  
 Clerkes kenne me pat crist is in alle places  
 Ac I seiȝ hym neuere sooply but as myself in a Mirour:  
*[Hic] in enigmate, tunc facie ad faciem.* (15. 151-62)

The comparison between man and the deity, recognizing the shared nature between Christ and man, is a new view acquired by Will here. The problem of charity is to be approached by the synthetic view of one's own mode of being in its total confrontation with the Being of Charity. For to know the soul is, in some measure, to know God, since no other creature approaches Him so closely. According to Augustinian theology, it is within the soul itself that man must search for truth and certitude (*in interiore homine habitat veritas*). In citing St. Paul (*Hic in enigmate, tunc facie ad faciem*),<sup>6)</sup> the Dreamer shows that he is aware that the place of charity is in his soul, not anywhere else. First of all, the created world, including the Word incarnate, was created as a mirror of

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6) "We see now through a glass darkly in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known" (1 Cor. 13.12). The Vulgate is: "*Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem. Nunc cognosco ex parte; tunc autem cognoscam sicut et cognitus sum.*" The subsequent references to the Bible are from *The Holy Bible: Translated from the Latin Vulgate*. [Douay - Rheims] (Catholic Truth Society, 1956).

the Charity, and everything in it reflects in some degree some aspect of the Creator (the *vestigia Dei*). Knowledge of God comes necessarily through the obscure but significant images of sensible creatures (*aenigma*). This is the knowledge whereby we glimpse the cause in its effects, for the similitude of the cause shines through the effects. That is, the imperfect human being finds the vestige of God in himself as "in a mirror" (thus, "infinite"), although not yet "face to face" ("finite"). The analogy again indicates that, in Anne Middleton's expression, "infinite" human beings and their "all good deeds and prophetic words" can be an imitation of the perfect "finite" being of Charity (Middleton 178), although charity is never fully actualized in the heart of man (Wittig 67).

Charity's seat is human heart. Charity is not limited by the knowledge furnished by the mind; that is, it lies more deeply in the will than at the level of its choices by understanding. Thus, Aquinas's definition of human will is *appetitus intellectivus*, that is, the appetite for, inclination toward, desire of, what intellectus indicates as good. Therefore it follows that will is the only quality which ensures the truthfulness of what one says (*intellectus*) and does (*affectus*). It is not that the outward expressions of words and works are always misleading, but the outward expression can come out as hollow formalism which is stripped of the inner virtue. In citing Christ's ability to see into the hearts of man, the "truth" of man—"Et vidit deus cogitationes eorum,"<sup>7)</sup> Anima's statement deals with an attribute of God rather than of man. The only example of the one who does perceive "words of the heart" (*locutiones cordis*) is Christ (Simpson, "Vidit" 11). Only God can see one's inner reality, and Piers shares this ability with Christ.

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7) Matt. 9:4; Luke 6:8, 7:39-40, 11:17; Mark 2:6-8

'By crist! I wolde I knewe hym', quod I, 'no creature leuere.'  
 'Wipouten help of Piers Plowman', quod he, 'his persons sestow neuere.'  
 'Wheiper clerkes knowen hym', quod I 'pat kepen holi kirke?'  
 'Clerkes haue no knowyng', quod he, 'but by werkes and wordes.  
 Ac Piers þe Plowman parceyueþ moore depper  
 What is þe wille and wherfore pat many wight suffrep:  
*Et vidit deus cogitaciones eorum.* (15. 195-200)

Charity, the very attribute of Christ, cannot be found, unless it is made visible in Piers; the tangible manifestation of charity is the human form of Piers, like a mirror of the unseen and intangible essence of charity. Only through him (the embodiment of charity, by means of the corporal and temporal things), we can apprehend the eternal and spiritual.<sup>8)</sup> Piers is a medium, and the fallen man needs this sort of medium, which is a kind of expressed likeness of the uncreated Being. That is, Piers is a potential manifestation of Charity in a Christian soul. At the same time, unless one is like Piers (although to a lesser degree), and unless one shares in what Piers really is, that is to say, if one does not experience charity, then he can never truly understand charity. Therefore, the statement ("Wipouten help of Piers Plowman, . . . his persons sestow neuere") can mean that one cannot see charity, unless he could do the way Piers does.

The ultimate source of Will's "kynde knowyng" of Dowel is Christ himself. God can be known to human being, because he was created co-natural ("kynde") to God and thus he shares the "kynde" of Christ. That Piers assumes the image of Christ, the divine nature, means at once a fulfilling and surpassing of man's

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8) 2 Cor. 5:16: "Wherefore henceforth, we know no man according to the flesh. And if we have known Christ according to the flesh; but now we know him so no longer."

highest expectations and hopes. Anima's final qualification of Piers ("Piers pe Plowman, *Petrus id est christus*"; 15.212) is the boldest foretelling, among the various allusions to him, of the ultimate spiritual significance of Piers. This foretelling is, in fact, fulfilled in Passus 18 when Piers appears as human nature of Christ. Piers is true to himself, his "kynde," the crux of which is charity. The best of the human quality, then, is fully realized in Christ; the true man, Piers, embodies the "persone" of charity.

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As discussed so far, the rebellious mood of the Dreamer's will is remarkably subdued after his encounter of Imaginatyf in Passus 12 (the affective memory of one's past as a whole) and Anima (the totality of one's own soul). The dialogue is no longer the mere exchange of questions and answers, but more effectively produces a personal experience of charity and the "kynde" knowledge of God. Consequently, Will's speech takes on the note of a confession, and increasingly supersedes the "wilderness words."

Since the poem has not yet clarified how Piers is a figure of Christ, the Dreamer's awareness of charity through Piers retains the force of an aenigma rather than its solution. The enigmatic allegory is a kind of rhetorical category which indicates the expressive difficulty of the hidden, elevated truth, a *facie ad faciem* vision.<sup>9)</sup> Since revelation is a provisional means which makes visible the unseen reality, its territory cannot but be that of rhetoric or image. The revelation of Piers's being can only be grasped by the enigmatic mode of expression, rather than by intellectual and cognitive terms. But the aenigma

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9) For a useful introduction to the rhetorical theory on aenigma, see Ian Bishop, *Pearl in its Setting: A Critical Study of the Structure and Meaning of the Middle English Poem* (New York: Barnes & Nobles, 1968), 66-70.

helps our imperfect understanding perceive the image of God in our soul. The series of enigmatic allegoresis functions to arouse in Will the sense of *imago dei* sitting in human soul. Augustine's exegesis of St. Paul's text (1 Cor. 13) is useful here.

*Hoc ergo facere conati sumus ut per hanc imaginem quod nos sumus uideremus utcumque a quo facti sumus tamquam per speculum.*

And so we have tried to use this "image" which we ourselves are, to see in some way or another him by whom we were made, as though "in a mirror."<sup>10</sup>

So, however dim the glass is, human being is a mirror of divine nature. To be reminded of this *aenigma* is to help recognize the nature of charity, the *imago dei*, inherent in human nature. The enigmatic allusions to Piers (indirectly to Charity Himself), therefore, has functioned as a provisional means for the Dreamer to make an effort to find Charity in his own soul. The enigmatic mode of revelation is an "infinite" version of the final, "face-to-face" vision of divine reality. Since enigma is reality made intelligible to human understanding, this enigmatic "infinite" must pursue the "finite" reality of Christ. Like the allusions to Piers, prophecy (i.e., the words employed in expressing the advent of Christ, Beatrice, and Galahad) ordinarily assumes the form of enigmatic rhetoric.

It is hardly surprising, then, that when Anima mentions the name of Piers in Passus 16, the Dreamer's immediate response is "pure Ioye," which reaches almost the point of swoon and ecstasy.

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10) St. Augustine, *De Trinitate* [CCSL 50A, 479], cited in Margaret E. Goldsmith, *The Figure of Piers Plowman: The Image on the Coin* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1981), 101-102.

'Piers þe Plowman!' quod I þo, and al for pure loye  
 That I herde nempe his name anon I swowned after,  
 And lay longe in a louedreem; (16.18-20)

The ecstatic response of the Dreamer clearly indicates that he has already been charged with emotional urgency and anxious expectation concerning Piers. The simple and lyrical style, found in this exclamatory remark of the Dreamer, could effectively touch the artless and even unlearned mind and instill in the reader's mind an elevated emotion. This is a human, emotional touch, which cannot be produced by the interaction of principles too far abstracted from the living flesh. Piers, the living sapiential figure who is grounded in the flesh and in history, can more effectively direct the Dreamer's appetitive ability to charity, just as Christ (the Word made flesh) could.

The Dreamer's ecstatic response is the culmination of the effect that the verbal allusions have accumulated since he first witnessed Piers, the simple plowman. In fact, in Passus 7, when Piers disputed with the priest on the validity of the Pardon, the Dreamer was not assured that Piers is the real living object he must pursue; rather, he was in the middle way between Piers who does well without learning ("work"), and the priest who possesses faith and intellectual rigor but without doing well ("word"). Neither was the Dreamer fully aware of the value of Piers when Clergy and Conscience referred to him as a figure of sapiential words and true works. Only after he realizes that charity is the "fre, liberal wille" to be found in Christ-Piers and in himself, the Dreamer felt himself quite personally and meaningfully related to Piers. The two "infinites" (word and work) must find in human will their completed inner source.

In the quest of Dowel, Will's turning from the fleshless abstraction of Dowel

to Piers indicates that the goal of his pursuit is now rightly illuminated. The movement of a stable will (*voluntas*) is complete by the mixture of *intellectus veritatis and affectus*. This change signals that the Dreamer begins to see Piers-Christ as beings of the same nature that he is. To see Piers-Christ in accord with the knower's human nature is to know himself as an *imago dei*. Also, to see Piers as a provisional means of the perfect charity implies that the imperfect man's imitation of charity has different steps and degrees according to his understanding (*intellectus*) and embodiment of charity (*affectus*). In this sense, to the extent that Piers is known to him, the Dreamer can understand charity: therefore, it can be said that Piers is a "lens" through which he can experience the Christian reality (Aers 79, 88). The Dreamer discovers and now knows what charity is (the love of God) and where to look for it (in his heart).

In short, the allusions to Piers's spiritual attributes are often deliberately set to recall each other in a figural relation (Salter 89). They serve as an intermediary stage, or a nexus, between Piers at the half acre (Passus 6-7) and Piers as *humana natura* of Christ (Passus 18), which shows the process of revelation of Piers's mode of being. Given here "in part," in *aenigmate*, the understanding of Piers produced by the allusions is a prefiguration of his later appearance. The prophetic style of Scripture used to describe Piers's coming, and the poetic (rhetorical) style employed in suggesting the shared territory between human soul and the *imago dei*—both of which are enigmatic—are of a quality which appeals to "infinite" human will. As James Simpson remarks, "This mode, the *modus prophetalis*, or *revelativus*, is included . . . among those modes which constitute the *modus poeticus* of Scripture, which is designed to appeal to the will rather than intellect" ("Affective" 17). As the Dreamer's spiritual understanding deepens, both of the styles supplant the sterile *intellectus* of the "wilderness-talk."

Also, the shifting mode of the guiding terms for the Dreamer's quest can be viewed in terms of the variation of verbal expression. In accordance with the mainstay of Will's quest which shifts itself from Dowel, via Charity, to Piers, the stylistic variation is evident. The analytical and pseudo-logical mode of narrative, along with the Dreamer's rebellious tone of speech (the "wilderness talk"), gradually gives way to the simple and "poetic" sentiment. The Dreamer's confessional and meditative mood generates affective responses in a heightened and lyrical mind.

**주제어:** 예표론, 인간이지, 지성, 감성, 광야의 언어, 예표적 예언, 에니그마, 얼굴과 얼굴을 마주보듯이

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## Figural Allusions to Piers in *Pier Plowman*, Passus 13-16

Abstract

Minwoo Yoon

In the course of wanderings in search of Dowel (Passus 8-12), the Dreamer encounters the personified allegories which denote rational faculties of human soul and the means of knowledge. The debates between them on Dowel's whereabouts are, in figural terms, compared to the "wilderness talk" of the Israelite history in the Old Testament. Meanwhile, since his tearing of the Pardon (Passus 7), Piers has been off the stage of *Piers* until Anima mentions his name in Passus 16. His presence, however, constantly felt even in these Passus 13-16. Owing to the allusions to him, Piers is figured forth as the depository of Christian wisdom ("word"); he is said to come to prove the wisdom in "dede" ("work"). Finally, Piers is noted as a human being who perceives human will ("will"); and, since this ability pertains to Christian deity, Anima comes to state that "Petrus id est christus" in Passus 15. The allusions, which anticipate Piers's coming, nullifies the pseudo-logical reasoning, and gradually replaces the "wilderness" words. These allusions to Piers are compared to the Biblical prophecy of Christ's coming. The images and roles of Piers, however enigmatic, are to be viewed in figural perspective. Each moment of Piers's transformation, here seen through the allusions, unmistakably prefigures Piers as the *humana natura* of Christ in Passus 18.

In accordance with this development of Piers's image, the Dreamer comes to pursue Charity as the way to salvation who is ultimately Christ but provisionally Piers. He realizes that Dowel does not exist outside his heart and it must be found and grown in him, although at present obscure as "in a mirror."

The divine image "on the mirror"—enigmatic and imperfect, as well—is no other than the vestige of God in the created being. The obscure and imperfect image of charity in man is an "infinite" picture in pursuit of the "finite," "face-to-face" vision of God. Also, the prophetic and poetic styles, employed respectively in describing Piers's coming and the image of charity in human heart, are of a quality that appeals to the affective side of human will, in antithesis to the sterile intellectual "wilderness talk."

Key Words

typology (*figura*), human will (*voluntas*), *intellectus*, *affectus*, wilderness-talk, prophecy, enigma, face to face (*facie ad faciem*)