

Church Reformers' Ideas of Warfare and Peace in Fourteenth-Century England: William Langland*

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The two church reformers—John Gower and William Langland—share certain similarities of not only criticizing the ills of their society but also bringing them into solution. However, they do not show the similar sensibilities towards the controversial relationship of warfare in general, including crusade, and the Christian religion. The barrier between Christianity and the military profession arose not only from the fact of bloodshed, but also from the association of the army and the un-Christian life of the soldier. Moreover, the love of neighbor preached by Jesus is very different from the spirit of war.

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Nonetheless, the two English writers seem to have overcome the contradiction between war and Christianity in terms of Christian ethics in common. As Robert Yeager confesses in the beginning of his essay on the pacifism of Chaucer and Gower, however, it is impossible to explain the sentiments of warfare which Gower and Langland reveal in their works with a few clear words to the satisfaction of everyone (97-8). What I can say convincingly is that they are not the radical pacifists, as some historians argue, nor did they entirely deny warfare itself whose ideal lies in the protection of state and church and the settlement of order.¹⁾

Langland principally takes a critical position about war, particularly crusade against heathens, in light of the love and charity preached by Christ. However, he also does not deny the necessity of making war, if necessary, under the aegis of God's cause. What I aim at in this paper is to examine Langland's attitude towards warfare in general, and crusade specifically, through his direct and indirect, though scarce, references to them in his *Piers Plowman*. In particular, I want to make Langland's ideas on crusade more clarified through his doctrine of salvation for the heathens.

In spite of the similarities in the central theme and the basic plot of John Gower and William Langland's works, Langland takes a somewhat different view from Gower in his treatment of crusades and warfares in general. Especially, unlike Gower, Langland in his *Vision of Piers Plowman* reveals himself as an ardent pacifist who strongly condemns the clergy's waging war

1) The representative historians who argue that the late fourteenth century literary men —Chaucer, Gower, Langland and Wyclif— are the strongest critics of the violence of warfare are as follows: A. S. Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*, especially, 187-9; C. T. Allmand, "The War and Non-combatant," 175-6; P. A. Throop, *Criticism of the Crusade: A Study of Public Opinion and Crusade Propaganda*, 140-1; S. Runciman, "The Decline of the Crusading Idea," iii, 649-51.

against heathens.²⁾ But their sentiments of warfare tend to converge on a common point in that both of them refuse to condemn categorically waging war in conformity with God's ordinance. They show similarly that the criteria—legitimate cause, pure intention, and authority—to fashion the justification of war were all based on the Old Testament examples of punishment and war, on to which were grafted the New Testament doctrines of love and purity of motive. However, what differs in Gower and Langland's treatment of war is only that while the former exhibits a tendency to depend more on the doctrines of the Old Testament than on the New Testament examples of love and charity, the latter seems to show the reverse. To put this another way, the former does not deny, if necessary, what we would call aggressive or offensive wars for legitimate ends, while the latter advocates the least defense for self-preservation, if possible. Langland articulates his moderate idea through the voice of his allegorical character, Conscience:

Then cam ther a kyng and by hus corone seide,
 'Ich am a kyng with corone the comune to reule,
 And holychurch and clergie fro corsesee men to defenden.

.

'In condicioun,' quod Conscience 'that thow konne defende
 And rule thi rewme in resoun right wel, and in treuth,
 Take thow may in resoun as thi lawe asketh;

Omnia tua sunt ad defendendum, set non ad depredandum! (19.467-77)

2) All quotations from *Pier Plowman* are taken from William Langland, *Piers the Plowman and Richard The Redeless*, ed., Walter W. Skeat (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1886). William Langland composed his major work, *The Vision of Piers Plowman* between 1370 and 1399 and the three versions known as A, B, and C, represent re-workings and developments of the author's ideas. Hereafter all citations on this works will be based on the B text.

The duties of ideal ruler mentioned here are exactly the same that Gower has emphasized through his works consistently. But, as a legal tenet apparently states,³⁾ Langland's focus is on the word, *defendendum*, which contrasts with John Gower's exhortation of Richard II to be like his ideal father, Edward III: "He *plundered* foreign lands but he protected his own" (*Vox Clamantis* 5.928-29).⁴⁾

As Gower uses the abortive Norwich Crusade of 1383 to illustrate the corruptive effects of the warfare among the Christian fellows, so does Langland also criticize the crusade only by allusion and innuendo in his work, though we cannot say that it is the same one that Gower mentions in his *Confessio Amantis*. Here Langland acrimoniously condemns the clergy's love of war and, in the B text, written between 1377 and 1379, he accuses the pope of equipping armies to slaughter fellow Christians:

Imparfit is the pope that al the people sholde helpe,
 And soudeth hem that sleeth such as he sholde saue;

 And god amende the pope that pileth holykirke,
 And cleymeth bifor the kynge to be keper ouer Crystene,
 And counteth nougt though Crystene ben culled and robbedk,
 And fynt folke to fygte and Cristene blode to spille,
 Ageyne the olde lawe and newe lawe as Luke ther-of witnesseth,
Non occides: michi vindictam, etc. (19.430-43)

3) According to Talbot Donaldson, the legal tenet in the Latin line might be alternatively read as "All things are yours for a defense-capacity, but not for an offense-rapacity." See William Langland, *Piers Plowman*, trans., E. Talbot Donaldson (New York: Norton, 1990): 229 n6.

4) John Gower, *Vox Clamantis, The Major Latin Works of John Gower*, trans. John Stockton (Seattle: U of Washington P, 1962).

Here, Langland's attitude towards the clergy's bearing of arms for a worldly and individual cause is shown even more strictly, compared with Gower's flexible one in his *Vox Clamantis* and "In Praise of Peace." Moreover, Langland's biblical allusion in Latin—*Thou shalt not kill; vengeance is mine, etc* (cf. 10.208-10)—serves as his final statement about his attitude towards the crusades. Like Wyclif, his theoretical basis for the prohibition of killing comes from the belief that nobody can judge one's guilt, except for the Almighty God; therefore, the infliction of punishment on the guilty in the light of positive law can be regarded as a willful act. Langland's belief also reflects his doctrine of salvation for the Saracens.

What seems to have attracted the attention of crusading historians is Langland's idea of salvation for the Saracens. The settlement of controversy over Langland's salvation is essential to approach his attitude towards the crusades against enemies of the faith more closely. It seems safe to say that, as G. H. Russell points out, Langland's concern in this poem lies with "the search for salvation, the salvation of the individual soul of the fictional dreamer and the salvation (or, more properly, the regeneration) of society" (101). In particular, in spite of various opinions on the subject of salvation for the righteous but non-Christian man among the theologians in Langland's times,⁵⁾

5) The conservative theologians, like Thomas Bradwardine, believed that man's salvation entirely depended on God's grace regardless of his free will and virtues. Those theologians who recognized the absolute power of God's grace said that he could save whom he willed, and this might include not only the heathen who did his best, but also the evil man like the thief on the cross crucified next to Christ. In his *Summa de Quaestionibus Armenorum*, FitzRalph concludes that salvation, for Armenians and for Moslems, can be won only within the *Church*. See Gordon Leff, *Richard FitzRalph, Commentator of the Sentences: A Study in Theological Orthodoxy*, 1340-4. Contrary to this traditional and orthodox vision of salvation, some radical theologians—John Wyclif, Benedictine Uthred of Bolden, William

there has been some kind of consensus of the opinions about this matter. Those who have reached agreement on Langland's idea of salvation have focused on the case of the emperor Trajan together with the poet's developing view through the three versions of his poem.⁶⁾

Langland's Trajan in his *Piers Plowman* insists that Pope Gregory had little or nothing to do with his salvation (11.140-66, even no mention of Pope Gregory in 12.280-92). Instead, as the key words in Passus 12.280-289—"lawe," "trouthe," "mede," and the all-important verb "allowes"—make it very clear that he was saved by his righteousness and justice without the mediation of the ecclesiastical sacraments. In this Passus, Ymaginatif groups Trajan with those

Ockham and Robert Holcot—emphasized salvation through good works performed naturally on the activity of God's will in granting the grace that saves. For them, *Liberum Arbitrium* indicates the necessity of deeds and divine grace working in concord. For further study on Uthred of Bolden's *clar visio*, see M. D. Knowles, "The Censured Opinions of Uthred of Bolden." G. H. Russell also develops his paper on the theme of salvation in *Piers Plowman* from the viewpoint of Uthred of Bolden's *clar visio* (112-6). Taking Uthred's radical position, Wyclif says in his *De Fide Catholica* that "from Islam and from other sects those who at the moment of death believe in the Lord Jesus Christ will be judged to be faithful Christians." See Wyclif, *Opera Minora*, ed. J. Loserth (London, 1913), 112. Also see the discussion in R. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*, 78-82. Wyclif also argues in his *De Ecclesia* that a just pagan, Trajan, like all the other saints of his invisible "*vera ecclesia*," had no need of the visible, sacramental church on earth. See *Iohannis Wyclif Tractatus de Ecclesia*, ed., Johann Loserth, *Wyclif's Latin Works V* (London, 1886), 531-4. Gordon Whatley argues in his article on "Heathens and Saints: *St. Erkenwald* in Its Legendary Context" that Langland's idea of salvation of a righteous pagan is similar to that of John Wyclif (344).

- 6) They share the similar opinion about Langland's idea of salvation of a just pagan that Trajan was a righteous man who was never baptized, but he is saved by his good deeds performed on the precepts of the natural law. See Janet Coleman, *Medieval Readers and Writers 1350-1400*, 249-53; G. H. Russell 101-16. His strong point lies in the close analysis of all three versions of Langland's *Piers Plowman* to quarry the poet's developing idea of salvation of heathens; Whatley 343-53.

saved by implicit faith, that is, by their "truthe" and their hope of a future reward:

'Troianus was a trewe knyghte and toke neuere Cristendome,
 And he is sauf, so seith the boke and his soule in heuene.
 For there is fullyng of fonte and fullyng in blode-shedyng,
 And thourgh fuire is fullyng and that is ferme bileue;
Aduenit ignis diuinus, non comburens, sed illuminans, etc.
 Ac trewth that trespassed neuere ne transuersed ageines his lawe,
 But lyueth as his lawe techeth and leueth there be no bettere,
 And if there were, he wolde amende and in suche wille deyeth,
 Ne wolde neuere trewe god but treuth were allowed;
 And where it worth or worth nought the bileue is grete of treuth,
 And an hope hangyng ther-inne to hauee a mede for his treuthe. (12.280-89)

That salvation depends on man's works, whether heathens or not, not simply upon the mediation of the institution, is decisively shown through Conscience's individualistic act at the end of poem. Conscience, realizing the inefficacy of the holy church and its orthodox ideology, leaves the institution called "vnitee, holy chirche on englissh" (19.328; 20.245-46, 380-85; Aers 38-61). The ending of the poem not only shows the poet's doubt of the institutional means of grace and salvation, but also implicitly reflects his attitude towards heathens who, in his view, are not the enemies to be converted by force but the spiritual brothers to be chosen by God (6.202-9). In conjunction with the growing individualism of spirituality, Langland's doctrine of salvation that Christ's invitation is to all the world, to Saracens, schismatics and even Jews prepares the ground for his advocacy of missionary work in accordance with Christ's command of going forth and preaching the gospel.

Langland's firm assertion that the unbaptized like emperor Trajan have a

faith that may be regarded as equivalent to that of the unlearned Christian and thus may produce salvation is confirmed in Passus 15:

As clerkes in *Corpus-Christi* feste singen and reden,
That *sola fides sufficit* to saue with lewed peple.
And so may Sarasenes be saued scribes and Jewes; (15.381-83)

The speaker goes on to say that Saracens have a belief that approximates ours in some sense—they love and they believe in one almighty Lord. What differs between Christians and un-Christians is, however, that they have been brought to a defective faith by one Mahomet whose earnest deception contrasts with the tepid apostolic activity of contemporary Christian clergy. It is with the great evangelizing activity of the Apostles in the early church and of Augustine of Canterbury in England that the speaker emphasizes the peaceful type of missionary work whose goal lies in the cleanness and the purification of the heathen soul. The similarities between Islam and Christianity (15.338-90, 393-96, 499-506, 513-15 and 519-22) together with his doctrine of salvation for the Saracens provides the theological basis for Langland to urge the clergy to obey Christ's instruction of showing the faith and charity of God. They are the clear evidence not only to suggest that Langland was a critic of the crusades as the means of converting heathens by force, but also to reflect his mysterious prophecy of the coming conversion of the Saracens after a great misfortune (1.61-63).

Unlike the matter of determining Langland's attitude towards the crusades, clarifying his thought on war is not simple. There are very few references to warfares, even specifically the war with France, if any, in his poem. Furthermore, even his viewpoint of war is reflected somewhat ambiguously.

Before examining some passages relating war, we cannot help depending on his description of the military group, that is, the group of chivalry under the control of king to get closer to his idea of warfare.

The poet's mention of the knightly class appears first in the Prologue:

The kyng and knyghthode and clergye bothe
 Casten that the comune shulde hem-self fynde.
 The comune contreued of kynde witte craftes,
 And for profit of alle the poeple plowmen ordeygned,
 To tilie and to trauaile as trewe lyf asketh.
 The kyng and the comune and kynde witte the thridde
 Shope lawe and lewte, eche man to knowe his owne. (Prologue 116-22)

In the Prologue, the poet describes the knightly class as a social estate which together with the king represents the state and the common people who all consist of a coherent and organic society. Though we do not know here what their duties are specifically for the contribution to "the commune profit," we can conjecture that undoubtedly they have their own fixed role within "trewe lif" and "lawe" without conflicting with those of other estates.

In Passus I (94-110), knighthood is regarded as fulfilling the duties of a police force in the enforcement of law and order. Simply saying, their role is to protect the innocent, the Church, and to punish the guilty, and their role is so represented here and elsewhere in the poem (6.27-28; 19.246-48). Here Langland particularly emphasizes the knight's responsibility to the upholding of truth or faith as the prime value of chivalry (cf. 6.34-6). He sees the status of knighthood as equivalent to that of angels in heaven. In addition, for the knight's administration of justice and law, Langland warns him not to fall into covetousness and greed (4.38-43). Langland's emphasis of moral virtues and his

traditional view on the duties of knighthood do not show any difference from Gower's. But what differs conspicuously between the two reformers about the view of chivalry is that Langland never stipulates any knightly role to fight against the enemies who threaten the lives and the rights of their people. Langland merely casts the highlight on the knightly role to remove domestic pests such as "wastours" and "wikked" men who destroy Piers's community:

In couenaunt that thow kepe holikirke and my-selue
 Fro wastoures and fro wykked men that this worlde struyeth.
 And go hunte hardiliche to hares and foxes,
 To bores and to brockes that breketh adown myne hegges,
 And go affaite the faucones wilde foules to kille;
 For suche cometh to my croft and croppeth my whete. (6.28-32)

Langland's adherence to the knightly duty of fulfilling conventional policing roles without any reference to warfares leaves us confused in determining his attitude towards them. Viewing the poet's description of the knightly roles above from the logic of synecdoche, we can enlarge the range of the enemies who destroy God's peace and the common wealth of people, from domestic enemies to the extent of foreign ones who trespass Piers's country. In this sense, Langland's idea of defending his country against foreign intruders is as resolute as Gower's. Furthermore, here we can catch and even smell an aggressive and hostile atmosphere which results from the use of force against enemies, whether domestic or not. On the other hand, our attention to the poet's treatment of Waster's resistance to a static and hierarchic society enables us to hear his thin voice advocating peace, though indirectly. It is through the knight's failure in fulfilling his proper role in the scene of Waster's rising against the established ordering of society (6.159-70) and even his disappearance in Waster's second

rising (6.300 ff) that Langland reveals his acknowledgment that the justice which Piers is attempting to impose through the forcible policing method is ultimately unenforceable.⁷⁾ As Myra Stokes points out, Piers's invocation of one of the natural disasters, Hunger, confirms that punishment is not man's affair but God's: ". . . nought to greuen hem that greueth vs god hym-self forbadde it, / *Michi vinddictam, et ego retribuam*" (10.203-5). But it is rash to conclude only through the poet's description of the knightly role that he holds a pacifist view or is a critic of all kinds of warfares.

Langland's definition of a king's duty helps to approach his sentiments on warfare more closely than that of a knight's role. In the Prologue of the poem, Langland defines the king as law-giver and ruler of his people and realm (Prologue 116-25). Above all, what is noticeable in Langland's definition of true kingship is that he draws specific parallels between the spiritual and the secular body politic, that is, the analogy between God and King as upholders of justice and law, of truth:

'kynges and knyghtes sholdde kepen it by resoun—
 Riden and rappen down in reumes aboute,
 And taken *transgressores* and tyen hem faste
 Til treuthe had yetermyned her trespas to the ende.
 And that is the professioun apertly that appendeth for knyghtes,
 And nought to fasten a Fryday in fyue score wynter;

7) David Aers says that these scenes represent an obsolescent order of the knight which has outlived its usefulness to society (18); see David Aers, "Imagination and Traditional Ideologies in *Piers Plowman*," in *Chaucer, Langland and the Creative Imagination*, 9-22. Differing from Aers' argument, Myra Stokes argues that the knight's failures represents Langland's acknowledgement that there are limits to the extent to which conventional policing methods can coerce the observance of justice (202-3).

But holden with hym and with hir that wolden al treuthe,
 And neuer leue hem for loue ne for lacchyng of syluer.

For Daud in his dayes dubbed knyghtes,
 And did hem swere on here swerde to serue trewthe euere;
 And who-so passed that poynte is *apostata* in the order.

But criste kingene kynge, knighted ten,
 Cherubyn and seraphin, suche seuene and an-othre,
 And yaf hem myghte in his maieste the muryer hem thoughte;
 And ouer his mene meyne made hem archangeles;
 Taughte hem bi the Trinitee treuthe to knowe,
 To be buxome at his biddyng he bad hem noughte elles. (1.94-110)

Here Langland sees the earthly *militēs* dubbed by king as equivalent to those of heaven, the angels. Knights and angels have in common in their responsibility to the upholding of truth and in their obedience to their lord's "biddyng." It is through the instances of war-play such as "apostata in the ordre," "transgressores," and "ordre" that Langland states the similarities of the role between king and God, and between knight and angel.

We can infer here that, in Langland's view, the secular political power was ordained by God for the maintenance of justice or righteousness and that the king as the regent of God's majesty should do all in his power for the common profit of and the better functioning of his society under the rules of God's love (1.159-62) and justice. Moreover, within himself, the king should subject himself to the authoritative dictates of his reason and his "kynde wit" as the guardian and trustee of his people:

For rightful reson shulde rewle yow alle,
 And kynde witte be wardeyne yowre welthe to kepe,
 And tutour of youre tresore, and take it yow at nede; (1.54-56)

Comparing the moral virtues which Gower indicates as the prerequisite conditions for being an ideal ruler in his *Confessio Amantis* with those virtues mentioned above, we can notice that there is not any clear difference between them. Even Langland's warning against material covetousness and infatuation with women for the king's proper ruling of people are the same concern that Gower shows in his works (1.103-4). Above all, as Gower does through the *Tale of Apollonius*, so does Langland see that justice is one of the chief attributes of the king. As Langland puts it, the king should imitate the equity of divine justice in giving like for like—ill for ill and well for well: "But Dowel, and haue wel and god shal haue thi sowle, / And do yuel, and haue yuel hope thow non other" (7.113-14). Langland's concept of justice as a chief virtue of kingship is reflected in Passus 1:

Kynges and knyghtes shulde kepe it bi resoun,
Riden and rappe down in reumes aboute,
And taken *transgressores* and tyen hem faste (94-6)

Langland cherishes his notion of justice not only as a means of controlling the domestic transgressors, but also of defending the Church and clergy, and in a broader sense, of defending the common wealth from foreign aggressions (19.467-78).

However, unlike Gower's aggressive and active attitude in applying the just cause to regaining the rights and to restoring peace, Langland's notion of justice, it seems, lies only in the least defense for the preservation of life and property, not in the plundering of other territories and properties. As we have examined Langland's definition of the role of king and knight, admittedly we cannot say that Langland entirely denies all kinds of warfare, though he must have been a man who advocated peace and love as the gospel teaches. Though there are

no specific references throughout his mention of the authorized military class under the leadership of king that determine his attitude towards warfare, his consistent emphasis on justice as a king's chief virtue inherited by God and on common wealth as a king's ultimate goal do not escape from the doctrine of St. Augustine's just war.

Langland's ambivalent attitude towards warfare comes to be more clarified in the debate between Lady Meed and Conscience in the presence of the King. This is the only part of the poem which specifically alludes to the war, especially the war in Normandy. Referring to the 1373 campaign in Normandy, Meed criticizes Conscience for counseling the King to give up the fight and to sell his heritage of France for a little silver. She goes on to blame Conscience as a robber who carried the brass of poor men on his back to Calais to sell. On the contrary, she defends herself by saying that she stayed behind, kept up his spirits and comforted him.

In Normandye was he nougte noyed for my sake;
 Ac thow thi-self sothely shamedest hym ofte,
 Crope in-to a kaban for colde of this nailles,
 Wendest that wyntre wolde haue lasted euere,
 And draddest to be ded for a dym cloude,
 And hiedest homeward for hunger of thi wombe.

With-out pite, piloure pore men thow robbedest,
 And bere here bras at thi bakke to Caleys to selle.
 There I lafte with my lorde his lyf for to saue,
 I made his men meri and mornyng lette.
 I bateder hem on the bakke and bolded here hertis,
 And dede hem hoppe for hope to haue me at wille.
 Had I ben marshal of his men (bi Marie of heuene)!
 I durst haue leyde my lyf and no lasse wedde,

He shulde haue be lorde of that londe a lengthe and a brede,
 And also kyng of that kitthe his kynne for to helpe,
 The leste brolle of his blode a barounes pere!

Cowardliche thow, Conscience conseiledest hym thennes,
 To leuen his lordeship for a litel siluer,
 That is the richest rewme that reyne ouer houeth!

It bicometh to a kyng that kepeth a rewme,
 To giue mede to men that mekelich hym serueth,
 To alienes and to alle men to honoure hem with giftes;
 Mede maketh hym biloued and for a man holden. (3.188-211)

Much has been written on these lines for the purpose of identifying the date of the A-text of *Piers Plowman* through the identification of contemporary people whom the poet is satirizing.⁸⁾ Before examining the poet's genuine sentiments of the war which are reflected in these lines, it is necessary to decide if Meed's accusations against Conscience here can be accepted at face value. Meed criticizes that Conscience made the King think that the campaign was ill omened and that he persuaded the King to sign away his heritage by the Treaty of Bretigny. She further blames that Conscience made cowards of every man by his wrong interpretation of a sign—"dim cloude"—as God's disapproval. Considered in terms of Professor Huppe's argument based on historical facts, however, Meed's attitude and her contemptuous phrase, "for a little silver," are not appropriate to the period of satisfaction which immediately followed the

8) See Bernard F. Huppe, "The A-text of *Piers Plowman* and the Norman Wars"; Professor Huppe identifies Meed with Alice Perrers, Conscience with John of Gaunt. J. A. Bennett mainly accepts Professor Huppe's critical principles; see J. A. Bennett, "The Date of the A-text of *Piers Plowman*." Walter Skeat's explanation also has met with general acceptance, and he interprets the last three lines as a reference to the Treaty of Bretigny; see *Piers Plowman*, ed., W. W. Skeat, "Notes to Texts, A, B, and C," *EETS*, no.67 (London, 1877), 68.

signing of the Treaty. According to Professor Huppe, the Treaty was considered as marking a great triumph for Edward, and particular for his war-weary people. Professor Huppe further points out that the dramatic suddenness of the storm with his own impatience and the desire of the people for peace may have helped to persuade Edward to enter negotiations for peace.⁹⁾

Especially, considering the exactions wrung from poor men in England to finance the war, as implied in Meed's reference to Conscience's bearing the brass of poor people on his back to Calais to sell (3.196), for the people Edward's signing of the Treaty must have meant less taxes because the outflow of war expenses would cease. In addition, it is clear that Meed's criticism of both Conscience's acts in the war and the King's Treaty originates from her covetous reaction out of her loss of worldly meed and pride, as her allegorical name symbolizes. Meed's intention of staying behind the King without leaving manifests itself in Conscience's proper citation of the story of Saul and Agag:

God sent to Saul bi Samuel the prophete,
 That Agage of Amaleke and al his peple aftre
 Shulde deye for a dede that done had here eldres.
 'For-thi,' seid Samuel to Saul 'god hym-self hoteth
 The, be boxome at his biddynghe his wille to fulfillle:
 Wende to Amalec with thyn oste and what thow fyndest there,
 slee it;
 Biernes and bestes brenne hem to ded;
 Wydwes and wyues wommen and children,
 Moebles and vnmoebles and al that thow myghte fynde,
 Brenne it, bere it noughte away be it neuere so riche,
 For mede ne for mone; loke thow destruye it,

9) Huppe 39, 42; especially see notes 8 and 40 for the chroniclers' record of the contemporary opinions about the Treaty.

Spille it and spare it nougte thou shalt spede the bettere.

And for he coueyted her catel and the knyngge spared,
Forbare hym and his bestes bothe as the bible witnesseth, (3.259-272)

God sent Saul to wreak revenge on Agag, but Saul, instead of completing God's orders, "coueytede feir catel" and left the task unfinished. Langland leaves the meaning of *culorum* unsaid, but it is clear enough. Conscience's charge against Meed by means of the biblical story shows how Meed's hidden intention of objecting to the Treaty lies with the recovery of her allegorical role of venality.

More significantly, Langland in these lines implicitly denounces covetousness and the material greed of the leaders of warfare under the name of justice sanctioned by God which Gower also indicates as one of the evil practices of war. In addition to Langland's criticism in these lines that the war had become a commercial venture, Meed's references to the misfortunes of the prolonged war and to the exorbitant levies enforced on the poor people reflect the growing disillusionment and criticism of the war which predominates as a *zeitgeist* in the late fourteenth century. Langland's ideal vision of a society is presented through the voice of Conscience at the end of Passus 3:

And one Cristene kyngge kepen hem alle.

Shal na more Mede be maistre, as she is nouthe,
Ac loue and lowenesse and lewte togederes,
Thise shul be maistres on molde treuthe to saue. (3.287-90)

suche loue shal arise,
And such a pees amonge the peple and a perfit trewthe (3.298-9)

Alle that bereth baslarde brode swerde or launce,
Axe other hachet or eny wepne ellis,
Shal be demed to the deth but if he do it smythye

In-to sikul or to sithe to schare or to kulter;
conflabunt gladios suos in vomeres, &c.;
 Eche man to pleye with a plow pykoys or spade, (3.303-7)

Batailles shal non be ne no man bere wepne,
 And what smyth that ony smytheth be smyte therwith to dethe,
Non leuabit gens contra gentem gladium, &c. (3.321-2)

To sum up, Langland, though he might be apparently seen as a radical pacifist, did not denounce bearing arms and fighting against the enemies who disturb peace and hamper the betterment of common wealth. As the parallels between the secular and the sacred, that is, between king and God, and between knight and angel imply, Langland sees that the secular lord's wielding of justice against wicked people can be justified as just punishment due to their sin. The story of Saul and Agag is the very example, though the just cause for waging war is perverted by Saul's material avarice. Compared with Gower, Langland is not referring to any words specifically related to warfare in his definition of the role of knightly class and king. But he is not much different from his contemporaneous man of letters, John Gower, in his thought on warfare. War, in both Langland's and Gower's view, was not wrong when used for legitimate ends, for example, for the defense of men's rights and for the maintenance of men's truth and common good, nor when it was initiated and controlled by a king who is equipped with Christian virtues. But Langland like Gower must have been a church reformer who desired peace with the cessation of the long-drawn war.

주제어: 존 가우어, 윌리엄 랭랜드, 전쟁, 평화, 아우구스티누스, 정당한 전쟁,
 『농부 피어스』, 『연인의 고백』, 『외치는 소리』

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Church Reformers' Ideas of Warfare and Peace in Fourteenth-Century England: William Langland

Abstract

Dongchoon Lee

Langland takes a somewhat different view from Gower in his treatment of crusades and warfares in general. Unlike Gower, Langland in his *Vision of Piers Plowman* reveals himself as an ardent pacifist who strongly condemns the clergy's waging war against heathens. But their sentiments of warfare tend to converge on a common point in that both of them refuse to condemn categorically waging war in conformity with God's ordinance. They show similarly that the criteria—legitimate cause, pure intention, and authority—to fashion the justification of war were all based on the Old Testament examples of punishment and war, on to which were grafted the New Testament doctrines of love and purity of motive. However, what differs in Gower and Langland's treatment of war is only that while Gower exhibits a tendency to depend more on the doctrines of the Old Testament than on the New Testament examples of love and charity, Langland seems to show the reverse. Gower does not deny, if necessary, what we would call aggressive or offensive wars for legitimate ends, while Langland advocates the least defense for self-preservation, if possible.

Langland's attitude towards the clergy's bearing of arms for a worldly and individual cause is shown even more strictly, compared with Gower's flexible one in his *Vox Clamantis* and "In Praise of Peace." Moreover, Langland's biblical allusion in Latin—"Thou shalt not kill; vengeance is mine, etc" (cf. 10.208-10)—serves as his final statement about his attitude towards the

crusades. Like Wyclif, his theoretical basis for the prohibition of killing comes from the belief that nobody can judge one's guilt, except for the Almighty God; therefore, the infliction of punishment on the guilty in the light of positive law can be regarded as a willful act. Langland's belief also reflects his doctrine of salvation for the Saracens.

Langland, though he might be apparently seen as a radical pacifist, did not denounce bearing arms and fighting against the enemies who disturb peace and hamper the betterment of common wealth. As the parallels between the secular and the sacred, that is, between king and God, and between knight and angel imply, Langland sees that the secular lord's wielding of justice against wicked people can be justified as just punishment due to their sin. Compared with Gower, Langland is not referring to any words specifically related to warfare in his definition of the role of knightly class and king. But he is not much different from his contemporaneous man of letters, John Gower, in his thought on warfare. War, in both Langland's and Gower's view, was not wrong when used for legitimate ends, for example, for the defense of men's rights and for the maintenance of men's truth and common good, nor when it was initiated and controlled by a king who is equipped with Christian virtues. But Langland like Gower must have been a church reformer who desired peace with the cessation of the long-drawn war.

Key Words

John Gower, William Langland, warfare, peace, St. Augustine, just war, *Piers Plowman*, *Confessio Amantis*, *Vox Clamantis*