A Check List, 1956-1968, for Study of The King's Quair, the Poetry of Robert Henryson, Gawin Douglas, and William Dunbar

Florence H. Ridley
University of California at Los Angeles
Florence H. Ridley

A Check List, 1956-1968, for Study of The Kingis Quair, the Poetry of Robert Henryson, Gawin Douglas, and William Dunbar

In his "Regement of Princes" Thomas Hoccleve lamented the death of the master poet, Geoffrey Chaucer:

O maister deere, and faidir reuerent!
Mi maister Chaucer, flour of eloquence . . .
Allas! that thou thyn excellent prudence,
In thy bed moret mighst naught by-quwethe;
What eileth deth? allas! whi wolde he sle the? . . .
She myghthe haue taried hit vengeence awhile,
Til that sum man had egal to the be.
Nay, lat be hit! sche knew wel hit hit yle
May neuer man forth bryng hit lyk to the . . .
O maister, maister, god hit soule to-reste! ¹

It seemed that Hoccleve spoke truer than he knew, for from the date of Chaucer's death in 1400 until the emergence of Edmund Spenser some hundred and seventy years later no major poet appeared in England. But in the north, in Scotland, four poets did carry on the tradition so bravely begun by Chaucer: the author of The Kingis Quair, Robert Henryson, Gawin Douglas, and William Dunbar. Their work—the philosophic, moral dream vision; the fables and moral-didactic poems of Henryson; Douglas' dream journey to wisdom and his translation of the Aeneid, earliest and best of all such translations in English; Dunbar's courtly visions, satires, and grotesque, self-revelatory, unfailingly musical lyrics—in its varied kinds is of the very best.

Certain of the poems of Henryson and Dunbar were among the earliest work to be printed in Scotland, by Chepman and Myller in 1508.² Douglas' Enneados and Palioe of Honour were printed in the mid-sixteenth century, the first in London, the second both in London


2. Porteous of Noblenes and Ten Other Rare Tracts (Edinburgh: 1508), pp. 88-100, 137-145, 149-174, 177-196.

30
and Edinburgh.

The Kingis Quair was inscribed in the Seldon MS, which dates from the end of the fifteenth century, and was referred to by John Major in his Historia Majoris Britanniae, 1521, although it was not printed until 1783. Thus much of this poetry has been known since the early sixteenth century; yet only within the past fifty years has it begun to receive competent study and to be made the subject of truly perceptive criticism. In the four centuries immediately following their emergence, some sixty articles dealing with James I (as author of The Kingis Quair), Henryson, Douglas, and Dunbar appeared. In the last twelve years one hundred and four such articles have appeared, two volumes of selections from Douglas’s poetry, one each from that of Henryson and Dunbar, and new editions of the collected works of the latter two poets. We are, it would seem in the midst of a Middle Scots boom!

And yet there is still no satisfactory book-length treatment of the Middle Scots poets as a group or of any one of them as an individual. The major poems of Henryson and Dunbar have never received adequate critical study, that on the poems of Douglas is minimal, and the problems of authorship, period, even meaning of The Kingis Quair remain to be solved. Thus although in the last twelve years much has been accomplished in study of these poets, largely through the efforts of men such as Robert Kinsley, Denton Fox, D. F. C. Coldwell, and John MacQueen, much remains to be done. It is my hope that the fol-

3. The xxiii Bukes of Eneados (London: 1553); The Palyce of Honour (Edinburgh: 1530?–1540?), fragments only remain; The Pals of Honour Compyld by Gauwayne Douglas (London: 1553?).


6. John MacQueen’s Robert Henryson, a Study of the Major Narrative Poems (London: 1967) is a useful study of the backgrounds of Henryson’s work, but critically it can be said to be of real value only for ‘Orpheus and Eurydice’; cf. review in JEGP 67.299-302. T. Scott’s Dunbar, a Critical Exposition of the Poems (Edinburgh and London: 1966), must be considered to be in reality a psychosociological study rather than a literary critical one; cf. review in TLS, July 21, 1966, p. 636.
lowing check list, although it should be of general interest to all students of British literature, will be of especial benefit to those now undertaking investigation of the medieval Scots poetry, which is so highly deserving of study and is only just now in the present decade coming into its own.

The check list is designed to be used independently or as a supplement to the fascicle on The Kingis Quair, and the works of Henryson, Douglas, and Dunbar slated for publication in J. E. Wells, Manual of Readings in Middle English, revised edition. The Manual is to include all material, primary and secondary, relating to this poetry from the period of its composition through at least 1956, and to present the material chronologically under eleven major heads. The check list includes only the more significant works which have appeared in the years 1956-1968 and presents them alphabetically under five major heads: Language, Editions and/or Selections, Commentary, Bibliography, and Dissertations. The unpublished dissertations are included so that the student may be better able to ascertain the direction recent study of Middle Scots poetry has taken. Simplified punctuation is employed throughout the check list; as a rule each item appears only initially in full and is thereafter abbreviated in accordance with MLA usage. Edition and selection entries are followed by an indication of sources, where known, and of accompanying supplementary material, both given in parenthesis, then a list of significant reviews. Commentary entries are followed by a brief description of content.

The Kingis Quair

LANGUAGE:
2. Grant W and D D Murison, The Scottish National Dictionary, Edinburgh 1929—
3. Kurath H, S M Kuhn, and J Reidy, Middle English Dictionary, Ann Arbor 1952—

SELECTIONS:

**COMMENTARY:**


40. Wood H H, Two Scots Chaucerians, Writers and Their Work, ed G Bullough, no 201.7-9 (brief; literary relations, sources).

BIBLIOGRAPHY:
41. CBEL, 5.147.

UNPUBLISHED DISSERTATIONS:
42. Bain C E, A Critical Study of The Kingis Quair, Johns Hopkins University, 1962.

Robert Henryson

AW  "The Abbey Walk"       PP  "Ane Prayer for the Pest"
HCT "Aganis Haisry Credence RAY "The Ressoning Benix of Titlaris" and 3owth"
A  "The Annunciation"     RDM "The Ressoning Berwixt Deth and Man"
BS "The Bludy Serk"       TDP "The Thre Deid Polis"  
F  The Fables
GGL "The Garmont of Gud RM "Robene and Makyne" Ladeis"
OE "Orpheus and Euryclece TC The Testament of Cresseid"
PM "Sum Practrysis of Mede- WWM "The Want of Wyse cyne" Men"
PA "The Prais of Aige"

LANGUAGE:

EDITIONS AND SELECTIONS:

**COMMENTARY:**


59. Friedman J B, "Henryson, the Friars, and the *Confessio Reynardi*," *JEGP* 66 (October 1967).550-561 (F, OE; literary
criticism and relations, poet's attitude, reflection of contemporary conditions, sources).
72. MacDonald D, "Henryson and the Thre Prestis of Pehlis,"


39. Witrig, The Scottish Tradition, pp 34-52 and passim (F, TC, HCT, OE, RM; literary criticism and relations, sources, versification).


BIBLIOGRAPHY:

41. CBEL, 5.147.

UNPUBLISHED DISSERTATIONS:

43. Conley, Four Studies in Aureate Terms.


89. MacDonald D, Verse Satire and Humor in Middle Scots, Northwestern University, 1958.

Gawin Douglas

C  "Conscience"  KH  "King Hart"
E  Eneados  PH  "The Palice of Honour"

LANGUAGE:


EDITIONS AND SELECTIONS:


COMMENTARY:

11. Bennet, Chaucer's Book of Fame, pp 48-49, 57-58, 177 (E, PH; literary criticism and relations, sources).


16. Fox, "Chaucer's Influence on Fifteenth-Century Poetry" (general discussion of literary criticism and relations, sources).


17. Fox, The Scottish Chaucerians, pp 188-200 (E, PH; literary criticism and relations, sources, versification).


101. Lewis R W B, "On Translating the Aeneid: 'Yif that I can,'"
MIDDLE SCOTS POETRY: A CHECK LIST, 1956-68

74. Mackie R L, King James IV of Scotland, pp 168-169, 183-186 (E, PH, KH; literary criticism).


39. Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature, pp 77-90, 111-
113, and passim (E; language, literary criticism and relations, versification).

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

41. CBEL, 5.147-148.

UNPUBLISHED DISSERTATIONS:


William Dunbar

AB "Ane Ballat of Our Lady"
AH "Ane His Awin Ennemy"
AE "All Erdly Joy Returnis in Pane"
AS "Advice to Spend anis Awin Gude"
ASC "Aganis the Solistaris in Court"
AT "Amends to the Telyouris and Sowtaries"
B "The Birth of Antichrist"
BB "Best to be Blyth"
BE "Ballare against evil Women"
BK "The Ballad of Kynd Kyttok"
BL "The Ballade of Lord Bernard Stewart"
BP "Bewty and the Presoneir"
C "Complaint to the King"
CKM "Complaint to the King Aganis Mure"
CP "Cristes passioun"
D "The Dream"
DD "The Dregy of Dunbar"
DI "The Devillis Inquest"
DO "Dunbar at Oxinfurde"
DR "Doun by ane Rever as I red"
DS "The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis"
E "Elegy on the death of Lord Bernard Stewart"
ED "Epitaphe for Donald Owre"
F "Faine wald I with all diligence"
FB "The Freiris of Berwick"
FD "The Flyng of Dunbar and Kennedie"
FF "The Fenyeit Freir of Tungland"
FW "Fane wald I luve but quhaiz abowt?"
G "A General Satyre"
GC "Gude Counsale"
GT "The Goldyn Targe"
GTQ "Gladethe Thowe Queyne of Scortis Regioun"
GY "Gif ȝe wald lufe and luvit be"
H "How Dumbar wes Desyrd to be Ane Freir"
HS "How Sall I Govern Me?"
I "In all oure gardyn growis thare na flouris"
IL "Inconstancy of Luve"
IP "In Prais of Wemen"
IS "In Secreit Place"
J "Jerusalem reiess for joy"
L "Lament for the Makaris"
M "The Maner of Passing to Confession"
MC "The Manere of Crying of Ane Play"
MN "The Merle and the Nychtingall"
MW "Meditatioun in Wyntir"
N "A New Year's Gift to the King"
NG "Now glaidith euery liffis creature"
NM "None May Assure in this Word"
NT "No Tressour Availis without Glaidnes"
O "Ane Orisoun"
OB "Of Ane Blak-Moir"
OC "Of Content"
OCo "Of Covetyce"
OCL "Of the Changes of Life"
OD "Of Deming"
ODA "Of Discrictiou in Asking"
ODG "Of Discrictiou in Geving"
ODQ "Of a Dance in the Quenis Chalmer"
ODT "Of Discretion in Taking"
OF "Of Folkis Evill to Pleis"
OH "On His Heid-a"ke"
OJ "Of James Dog Kepar of the Quenis Wardrop"
OL "Of Lyfe"
OLE "Of Luve Erdly and Divine"
OLS "Of the Ladyis Solistaris at Court"
OM "Of Manis Mortalitie"
ON "Of the Nativitie of Christ"
OP "Of the Passioun of Christ"
OR "On the Resurrection of Christ"
OS "Of the Said James Quhen he had plesert him"
OST "Of Sir Thomas Nomy"
OW "Of the Warldis Instabilitie"
OWV "Of the Warldis Vanitie"
P "The Petition of the Gray Horse Auld Dunbar"
Q "Quhen the Governour Past in France"
QH "Quhone he List to Feyne"
QM "Quhone Mony Benefices Vakit"
R "Remonstrance to the King"
RA "Rewl of Anis Self"
RM "Ros Mary Ane Ballat of Our Lady"
S "The Sowtar and Tailyouris Wat"
SD "Surr extinct Dominus de Sepulchro"
SR "The sterne is rissin of our Redempioun"
T "The Tabill of Confession"
TA "To Aberdein"
TAK "The Testament of Mr Andro Kennedy"
TC "The Twa Cumeris"
TCL "To the City of London"
TG "To the Gouvernour in France"
TK "To the King"
TKO "To the King—Off Benefice Schit"
TKS "To the King—Schir yet remembit"
TKSS "To the King—Sanct Salvatour"
TKW "That the King War John Thomsounis Man"
TL "To a Ladye"
TLK "To the Lordis of the Kingis Chalker"
TM "To the Merchantis of Edinburgh"
TP "To the Princess Margaret"
TQ "To the Quene"
TQD "To the Queen Dowager"
TR "The Thrissil and the Rois"
TS "Tydingis fra the Session"
TT "The Tretis of the Tua Marit Wemen and the Wedo"
TW "The Wowing of the King quhen he was in Dunfermline"
WL "Welcome to the Lord Treasurer"

LANGUAGE:


(AEJ, BL, BP, D, DS, EDO, FD, FF, GT, GS, HD, IS, JR,
MC, NM, ODG, OLS, PG, QG, RK, RM, TKS, TKSS, TQ, TQD, TTM).


**Editions and Selections:**

47. Davies, *Medieval English Lyrics*, pp 246-254, 357-359 (AB, IS, L, OR, TL; sources MS Asloa, Pepys 2553, Nat Libr Scot 1 1 6; brief critical references in introduction, glossings at foot of page, notes at end of text).


5. MacQueen and Scott, *The Oxford Book of Scottish Verse*, pp 100-157 (AB, DS, GT, L, MW, OR, PG, R, TAK, TL, TM,
TT; source W M Mackenzie, *The Poems of William Dunbar*; occasional glossings at foot of page).


**COMMENTARY:**


17. Fox, "The Scottish Chaucerians," pp 164-200 (AB, DO, ED, GT, IL, L, MN, NM, ON, OR, TAK, TB, TD, TT; literary criticism and relations, sources).

129. Hope A D, "The two marit wemen and the wedo, Protest or Satire?," *Australasian Universities Language and Literature, Assoc. Proc. of the 9th Congress*, Melbourne, August 1964, p 48 (brief reference to literary relations and sources).


NM, OP, QH, S, TCL, TT; authorship, biographical evidence, literary criticism and relations, occasion, sources).


143. Sweetman F T Jr, "Lattimore's 'Witness to Death,'" *Expl* 25 (June 1967). 59 (L; literary relations and sources).


144. Wordsworth J, "Dunbar's 'Quod Cinis Es:' A Note and a Reply," *MLR* 54 (April 1959). 223 (OM; literary relations and sources).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

41. CBEL, 5.147.

**UNPUBLISHED DISSERTATIONS:**


89. MacDonald D, *Verse Satire and Humor in Middle Scots*, Northwestern University 1958.