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**7. Tower and Tabernacle:**The Architecture of Heaven and the Language of Dwelling with/in God in the B-Text of *Piers Plowman***Mary Clemente Davlin, O. P.**

*Piers Plowman*, the fourteenth-century English dream-vision attributed to William Langland, focuses firmly on this world rather than the next. But the poem refers to heaven over fifty-five times,<sup>1</sup> although never describing it in either the radiant generalizations of Chaucer's parson or the rich detail of *Pearl*. In *Piers Plowman*, as in the New Testament, heaven is a kingdom. In Passus XV Anima states, "Nisi efficiamini sicut paruuli, non intrabitis in regnum celorum" ("Unless you become like little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven") (XV.149a; Matthew 18:3). Patience, too, speaks of heaven as Christ's "riche" or kingdom (XIV.179), and Will refers to "crist in Consistorie" (Pro. 99) and "in kyngdom, to close and to shette, / And to opene it to hem and heuene blisse shewe (Pro. 105-106). When Holy Church speaks of heaven as a place "Ther Treupe is in Trinitee and troneþ hem alle" (I.133), the phrase "troneþ hem alle" suggests the Biblical kingdom where the apostles will sit on twelve thrones to judge the tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28, Luke 22:30).

There are other references to heaven, but they add few elements of description. Rather, they establish that heaven is a *state* of "heueneriche blisse" (e.g., XV.175) as well as a *place* "hennes" as opposed to "here" (VII.203-4); it is "hei3e" (e.g., II.33; XI.81) and "vpward" (V.511), so that on earth we are "vnder heuene" (XX.276). Repentance says that heaven has a "Registre" (V.272) and Conscience that it holds a set number of people ("Heuene hap euene noumbre and helle is wiþoute noumbre" [XX.270]). Will believes that it has levels: "Ac þou3 þat þeef hadde heuene he hadde noon hei3 blisse" (XII.196).

God, under various names, is spoken of as "in heaven" or "of heaven."<sup>2</sup> But most references to heaven in the poem (thirty-seven, by my count) emphasize

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that it is the place for *people* to go, where they will have "Places in Paradis at hir partynge hennes" (XIX.61), the blissful reward (Pro. 127) to be won (X.392). Thus, for example, the patient poor "han Eritage in heuene, and by trewe ri3te" (X.347). It is the place where those who have already died "in truþe" live, "þe lordes folk of

heuene" (I.159), like "Marie . . . of heuene" (II.2) and "Patriarkes and prophetes in paradis" (VII.12).

Two architectural images for heaven are used in *Piers Plowman*: a tower at the beginning of the poem and a *tabernaculum*, a tabernacle, tent or home, at four other places. In this, as in other matters, to use Bloomfield's famous phrase, Langland "speaks Bible,"<sup>3</sup> for both images may be found in the Hebrew psalms. I should like to look briefly at these two architectural images for heaven historically and iconographically, that is, in the context of real towers in fourteenth-century England and in art, and of metaphorical towers and *tabernacula* in biblical and liturgical intertexts of *Piers Plowman*, in order to see how the poet uses cultural associations of objects and words to create the meaning of his poem.<sup>4</sup>

The architectural image of the tower dominates the first dream in *Piers Plowman*. In the Prologue, the protagonist goes to sleep and has a vision:

Ac as I biheeld into þe Eest, an hei3 to þe sonne,  
I sei3 a tour on a toft trieliche ymaked,  
A deep dale byneþe, a dongeon þerInne,  
Wiþ depe diches and derke and dredfulle of si3te.  
A fair feeld ful of folk fond I þer bitwene  
(Pro. 13-17).<sup>5</sup>

Later, in Passus I, Holy Church explains, "The tour on þe toft truþe is þerInne" (12), Truþe who is God, "fader of feiþ . . . [who] formed yow alle" (14). In the dongeon in the deep valley beneath the hill dwells "wrong . . . Fader of falshede" (I.63-64), and the field between tower and dale is "þis erþe" (I.7). This is the familiar cosmos, heaven above, hell below, and earth "Bitwene" (III.130), "the larger theological landscape within which, for medieval . . . [people], all human activity is played out and ultimately judged."<sup>6</sup> The tower, "grand, enigmatic, troubling,"<sup>7</sup> is what V. A. Kolve calls a narrative image, that is, an image "possessing public meanings independent of the narrative,"<sup>8</sup> and thus, to understand the image within the narrative it is useful to ask what public meanings towers had in fourteenth-century England.

Then, as now, a tower was a high building, either separate, like a bell-tower, or "part of a castle, church, or other edifice, or of the walls of a town," or "in the border counties . . . a solitary high-fenced house . . . too small to be called a castle."<sup>9</sup> Towers had been common in England at least since Saxon times,<sup>10</sup> and in the later fourteenth century, as Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski point out, towers filled the English landscape:

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Churches of all kinds, from cathedrals to parish churches, continued to crown their long horizontal roof lines with tall steeples. As symbols of local pride and as images of The Heavenly Jerusalem, the towers and spires of the fourteenth-century transformed the English countryside into a sacred landscape."<sup>11</sup>

A tower on a high place, whether connected with church or castle, was not only an imposing structure from which one could see the landscape for miles, but also a strong fortress against enemies. Indeed, sometimes the church tower, especially in border country, was intended for the purpose of defense; the thirteenth-century St. Michael bell-tower at Ledbury, for example, is built like a fortress, with flat forty-five inch buttresses, single lancet windows, and walls about nine feet thick. As a metaphor, therefore, a tower might suggest "spatial enclosure,"<sup>12</sup> the security of a position of impregnable power or supremacy, and perhaps stasis, because of its physical solidity.<sup>13</sup>

The tower in *Piers Plowman* is situated in the east, toward the sun, an orientation like that of churches and their towers. The precision with which this eastern orientation was sometimes followed--a sign of its importance in the culture--is seen in the placement of two adjoining churches at Cashel, in Ireland, built on the "toft" called St. Patrick's Rock. They are of entirely different dimensions. The nave of the smaller, Cormac's Chapel, built before 1134, is only about 30 feet long; the thirteenth-century transepts of the larger church, St. Patrick's Cathedral, measure over 132 feet in length, and its choir and chantry east of the central tower 93 feet, though the nave west of the central tower has been shortened to 37 feet. Cormac's Chapel is situated in the arm of the cross of St. Patrick's Cathedral between the south transept and the choir. But the cathedral is oriented "nearly due east," and the chapel "15 or 16 degrees to the north of east."<sup>14</sup> The fact that these structures, so close, are not parallel is a puzzle to architectural historians. H. G. Leask believes that the deviation may be due to an ancient custom of orienting churches "to the sunrise on the feast-day of the saint to whom they were dedicated." Thus the cathedral is oriented "nearly due east; a direction agreeing closely with the sunrise of March 17th, St. Patrick's Day," and the chapel to the sunrise on a day in May.<sup>15</sup> The tower in *Piers Plowman*, then, positioned "into the East, and heigh to the sun," suggests not only a symbolic orientation to the sun, to light, to Christ as "Sun of Justice," but also the quite literal eastern orientation of towered church buildings, from which, conventionally, "earthbound sinners could glimpse the Heavenly Kingdom."<sup>16</sup>

The tower's position "on a toft" (Pro. 14) is also rooted in historical fact, as churches with their towers were often built on hills. Metaphorically, its high position suggests that Truþe, or God, in heaven, is high above everything else. It is, of course, commonplace in art, as in the Bible and liturgy and other world religions for God and heaven to be shown as "high." Thus, for instance, in

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a Holkham Bible Picture Book illustration of the apocalypse, God is in a lunette above the earth, with angels, sun and moon.<sup>17</sup> Christ in majesty is often shown at the highest point over the center portal of cathedral doors, as, for example at Wells, Rochester and Shobdon, or in the tympanum of the Prior's door (North) at Ely (1135-39). Gothic high altars often had God at their peak: the Father or the whole Trinity. In Byzantine churches, the Pantocrator is pictured at the highest point of the cupola, as, for example, at Palermo, or of the apse, as at Cefalu. At Ely, a boss of God blessing is

at the peak of the lantern (1328-42). Thus, height is an especially significant spatial religious symbol, suggesting immense distance between heaven and earth and the "otherness" or transcendence of God. Students of myth point out that in towers, this height has a special symbolism: "the construction of towers represents the universal human need to reunite the celestial and terrestrial worlds as they were at the beginning of time . . . and to unite ourselves once more with the eternal, timeless, and sacred."[18](#)

As the *Oxford English Dictionary* notes, "In early religious use," the English word "tour" was "often applied to heaven,"[19](#) and medieval art also made use of the tower as an image of heaven. For example, a Cambridge University Library psalter (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.iv.24, fol. 35v), dated c. 1300, in an initial for Psalm 147, shows Christ or God standing in a large brown stone tower, holding his orb; a Salisbury psalter of the fourteenth century (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS lat. 765, 21v)[20](#) shows Christ in majesty seated on a throne within a large ornamental tower.

"The tour on the toft" in *Piers Plowman* fits into this historical and iconographic tradition by being up above "the faire feeld ful of folk," apparently distant from it, facing the east, and seeming to "contain" or frame Truthe who is "þerInne." Its public meanings and consequent suitability as an image for heaven are suggested in the narrative by the name of God who is said to be therein: Truthe, a Biblical name (the Hebrew *emet*) meaning one who is faithful, stable, firm, tried and found to be reliable, "that which has been put to the test and has revealed itself to be solid."[21](#) "The tour on the toft," Holy Church says, "truþe is þerinne," and the consonance between "tour" and "truþe" is not simply alliteration, but also concept: the tower, with its public meanings, in fact, seems to embody the meaning of Truthe's name. Such an idea was familiar, for Psalm 60 uses the tower as a metaphor for God who is said to be "a tower of strength against the face of the enemy."[22](#) *Piers Plowman* never states that the tower *is* Treuthe; rather, Treuthe is "therinne," but it comes very close, by using this architectural image which reflects and perhaps symbolizes Treuthe who is said to be within it.

The second architectural image for heaven is much less "dense" and specific, and operates in a different way, not as a narrative image, not as a visual construct, but as language rich in psychological and religious associations. It is part of a quotation from Psalm 14:1: "Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo? Lord, who shall dwell in your *tabernaculo*?" In *Piers Plowman* it clearly

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refers to heaven, as it is used to paraphrase the question, "How shall you be saved?": "And how ye shul saue yourself? the Sauter bereth wisse: *Domine quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo etc.*" (II.38-39).

The Latin word *tabernaculum* was used in the Vulgate Bible to translate three different Hebrew terms for the tent where Moses met God: 'tent of meeting,' 'tent of testimony,' and simply 'dwelling' or house of God. Since "The idea of the tabernacle lies at the very foundation of the religious institutions of Israel as these are conceived and formulated in the priestly sources,"[23](#) its use in *Piers Plowman* is another piece of evidence that Langland thought and wrote in Biblical terms.

Four times in the poem, in Passus II (38-39), III (234a-236), VII (52a) and XIII (126-27),[24](#) various speakers use this Latin verse, and in one passage it is translated into English:

*Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo?*  
Lord, who shal wonye in þi wones wiþ þyne holy seintes,  
Or resten in þyne holy hilles: this askeþ Dauid (III.234a-236).

The Middle English word 'wones' as a translation for *tabernaculo* means 'dwelling,' the most general of the three Hebrew terms, and pluralizes it to mean residences, dwellings,[25](#) 'habitations.'[26](#) One wonders why the poet used the plural; perhaps he was associating *tabernaculo*, despite its number, with the "many mansions" in "My Father's house" of John 14:2: "in domo Patris mei mansiones multae sunt."[27](#) These 'wones,' like the tower, are high, "in þyne holy hilles"; there, the saved will rest and dwell "wiþ þyne holy seintes."

The bare scene evoked by the phrases "in thi wones," "in þyne holy hilles" is remarkable for its lack of specificity, the absence of anything visual, its "lack of interest in description for its own sake, whether of clothing, scenery or

architecture." [28](#) Schmidt's words about another passage seem relevant to it: "It is doubtful whether we are meant to visualize at all." [29](#) I think we are to cut through the language, not to a mental image or picture, but to the notion or experience of dwelling with someone, in someone's house. Both the Latin *tabernaculum* and the English `wones' are too general to furnish an image of any particular structure. Rather, they--and especially the English word `wones'--call to mind a simple and universal human experience of dwelling with someone, of mutual presence and shared life, an experience not dependent upon status, class, or power.

The Latin word *tabernaculum* adds a web of non-visual associations of its own to the meaning of the passage. Medieval translations and commentaries on this psalm verse and others like it sometimes interpret God's *tabernaculum* figurally, as the church, the human nature of Christ, the human body, the mind, [30](#) Mary, [31](#) or the divinity itself. Two of these interpretations may be particularly relevant to the *Piers Plowman* passages: *tabernaculum* as church

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and as God. The Yorkshire metrical psalter renders Psalm 26:5, "For he has hidden me in his *tabernaculo*," "For he hide me in his kirke." [32](#) A prose gloss on the same psalm, attributed to Richard Rolle, uses the same interpretation: "he hidde me in his tabernacle . . . that is in holy chirche." [33](#)

The entrance antiphon for the Mass for the anniversary of the dedication of a church, already in use in the Middle Ages, suggests the same interpretation of *tabernaculum*, but from the other side, that is, not starting with the word but starting with the church building

Terribilis est locus iste: hic domus Dei est, et porta caeli (Genesis 28): et vocabitur aula Dei. Alleluia, alleluia. Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Domine virtutum! Concupiscit et deficit anima mea in atria Domini (Psalm 83).

Awe-inspiring is this place: it is the house of God and the gate of heaven: and it shall be called the court of God. Alleluia, alleluia. How lovely are your tents [*tabernacula*], Lord of Hosts! My soul longs and faints for the courts of the Lord. [34](#)

Paradoxically, this antiphon suggests that upon entering this "awe-inspiring" church which is "the house of God," one is already entering into heaven ("This is the gate of heaven") while still longing to go there ("My soul longs and faints for the courts of the Lord"). The "lovely *tabernacula*" of God here may refer to heavenly dwellings like those to which the poem refers and/or to churches on earth as figures of heavenly

dwellings and gates to them. The experience of belonging in the church, entering into communion there with God sacramentally, is for the believer a figural experience, a foretaste of belonging in the *tabernaculo* of heaven. And, as Crossley says, "From the sombre glowing colours of twelfth-century Canterbury, to the light brilliance of fourteenth-century York or Gloucester, English Gothic churches must have seemed like miraculous recreations of the Heavenly Jerusalem on earth." [35](#)

A further step is taken in the gloss on Psalm 26:5 attributed to Rolle, interpreting *tabernaculum* not only as "church," but also, by metonymy, as the divinity itself, glossing the phrase, "in the hidde of his tabernacle" ("in the hidden place of his tabernacle") to mean in "þe pryvyte of his godhede," that is, in "the secrecy--mystery--of his divinity." [36](#) In this interpretation, the "house" is God; dwelling in the *tabernaculum*, in the tent or house of God, is in some way dwelling *in* God. This interpretation is similar to an explicit statement in Revelations 21:22: "I did not see a temple in the city, because its temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb." An interpretation of *tabernaculum* as God seems particularly relevant to *Piers Plowman*, since the poem uses the language of indwelling in other contexts. For example, Langland twice quotes John's explicit teaching on indwelling: "Qui manet in caritate in deo manet, et deus in eo: one who dwells in love dwells in God and

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God in that person" (1 John 4:16). John's statement, quoted by Repentaunce (V.486b) and Wit (IX.65a) teaches a mysterious mutual indwelling: the loving person dwells in God, and God also dwells in the person. This "Johannine theology of immanence (the Christian in God/Jesus; God/Jesus in the Christian; God and Jesus in each other)" [37](#) is threaded through the poem.

In *Piers Plowman*, Piers himself gives the most striking description of indwelling, about twenty-five lines after the first use of the quotation from John. He describes not mutual indwelling, however, but the discovery of Truþe in one's own heart. Piers has promised to teach the people "where þat wye dwelleþ" (V.554): "I wol wisse yow wel ri3t to his place" (555). Having outlined the moral discipline of a pilgrimage to Truth, Piers says,

And if grace graunte þee to go in in þis wise  
Thow shalt see in þiselue truþe sitte in þyn herte  
In a cheyne of charite as þow a child were,  
To suffren hym and segge no3t ayein þi sires wille.  
(V.605-608).

Truþe is "in þyn herte," in the very center of the self, the place' spoken of by Holy Church in the plant of peace passage, where the source and high fountain of love dwell: "And in þe herte þere is þe heed and þe hei3e welle" (I.164). The comfortable anthropomorphic verb "sitte" in Piers' description implies an enduring presence, as Augustine says, "not transitory, but eternal." [38](#) Julian of Norwich uses the same verb: "Owre lorde . . . schewyd me my saule in myddys of my herte . . . me thought it was a wirschipfulle cite. In myddys of this cite sittes oure lorde Jhesu . . . for in vs is his haymelyeste hame." [39](#)

Holy Church, too, uses the language of indwelling--this time, the dwelling of the person in God--when she describes salvation by saying that those who "enden . . . in truþe" (I.131), when they die, "Mowe be siker þat hire soule shal wende to heuene / Ther Treuþe is in Trinitee and troneþ hem alle" (I.132-3). Two phrases should be noted: "in truþe" and "in Trinitee." To "enden in truþe" is to end one's life in a state of righteousness; but since Treuþe is also the name of God (I.133), the phrase can also mean to end life in God. This seems to be a paraphrase of John's "Qui manet in caritate in deo manet, et deus in eo: One who dwells in love dwells in God and God in that person," since God is Love. By parallel, one who dwells in truth dwells in God, who is Truth, and those who "enden in truþe" end their lives "in God." They are already "in God," and so they "Mowe be siker þat hire soule shal wende to heuene / Ther Treuþe is."

In the second phrase noted above, Truth in heaven is said to be "in Trinitee." This could be read as simply an affirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity, but it also suggests the nature of the Trinity as a "communion" of being, [40](#) God within God, Truth a Person "in" other divine Persons, in communion with

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them, as Jesus says he is in communion with the Father, in the passage from John 14:11 quoted at X.252a (and twice in C): "Ego in patre et pater in me est: I am in the Father and the Father is in me." Thus God is "o god . . . in þre persones" (XVI.200, 201), "Thre leodes in oon lyth" (XVI.181). Through baptism, human beings enter into this life within God: "Thou tau3test hem in þe Trinite to taken bapteme" (XIV.184). This could simply be a reference to the formula of baptism, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," but the line does not actually mention "the name." Rather, it seems to express the conventional theology of baptism, that one is baptised 'into/in the Trinity,' that is, that by baptism one enters in some way into the life, the mutual indwelling of the Trinity. In another passage, the Samaritan, comparing the Trinity to a hand, creates an image of the universe "wiþInne hem þre" as things are held within a human hand:

And as þe hand halt harde and alle þyng faste  
Thoru3 foure fyngres and a thombe forþ with þe pawme,  
Right so þe fader and þe sone and Seint Spirit þe þridde  
Halt al þe wide world wiþInne hem þre,  
Boþe wolkne and þe wynd, water and erþe,  
Heuene and helle and al þat is þerInne. (XVII.159-164)

This might seem to be simply a fanciful way of expressing God's provident care, except that it derives from and leads back to the underlying metaphor of the Trinity as a hand. The point is that the universe is "wiþInne hem þre"--somehow "within" God.

Such language is beyond rational understanding. Yet Langland, like John, is insistent upon using such language of interiority, immanence, or indwelling, to express the relationship of divine Persons in the Trinity and the nature of

human union with God, as if to say that each is a union so close, so intimate, that it can only be expressed as being "within" one another. The very centrality of such language in the poem suggests that for Langland, to dwell in God's 'wones' or *tabernaculo* is not metaphor, but metonymy, that is, that it means not only to live with God, but somehow to dwell in God.

These two architectural images of heaven in *Piers Plowman*, the tower and the 'wones,' express the deeply Biblical imagination of the poet, influenced here by his beloved psalms, and they reinforce other evidence that earthly architecture was seen in the Middle Ages at least partly as a sign and a promise of heaven. Different in style, the two images seem to refer to two different aspects of heaven, the tower to God, God's dwelling; the *tabernaculum* or 'wones' to salvation, our dwelling in heaven. God dwells in the tower; we will dwell in God's house, which may be to dwell in God. The image of the tower, deeply rooted in the concrete and literal, and suggesting feudal or ecclesiastical power, symbolizes the infinite faithfulness and sureness, the height and power

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of God. It seems to be an emblem of the Divine nature, Treuþe, who is said to be in it. The image of the *tabernaculum*, "wones," or houses, might refer to any dwelling, the simplest or the richest. Rather than suggesting a visual image, it postulates a heaven of dwelling with/in God, where God dwells, a heaven not totally foreign to human experience, but already known in the home, in the church where one meets God and enters into life in God, and in one's interior life where one lives "in truþe."

Thus Langland does not describe heaven in the rich visual detail of *Pearl* with its allusions to the heavenly temple and city of God described in Revelations. Nor does he stress vision as the essence of heaven, as, for example, Aquinas and Dante do. Instead, in a mostly non-visual way, he uses cultural associations of an architectural structure, the tower, and of architectural terms, *tabernaculum* and 'wones,' to suggest a state of security and joy dependent upon intimate presence and shared life. These two images embody a view of heaven as dwelling with God, being with and in God, in mutual indwelling or communion."[41](#)

## Notes

1. There are at least fifty-five mentions of heaven (or the heavenly paradise or its metaphors, in English or Latin) in *Piers Plowman: the B Version*, ed. George Kane and E. Talbot Donaldson (London, 1975): Pro. 27, 99, 105-6, 127; I.9, 111, 132, 151, 159, 205; II.2, 33; III.50, 72; V.272; VI.46, 220; VII.12, 31; IX.102, 104, 120; X.305, 341, 347, 392, 460a; XI.81; XII.40, 196; XIII.118a, 142; XIV.129, 141, 151, 154, 165, 210, 212, 215, 215a, 261; XV.175, 407, 458; XVI.118, 208, 222; XVIII.397; XIX.61, 80a, 191; XX.194, 270, 276. Some of the research for this essay was supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities.
2. E.g., "god of heuene" (XV.407); "lord of heigh heuene" (XVI.118); "Anoon after an heigh vp into heuene / He wente, and wonyep þere, and wol come at þe laste" (XIX.191-2).
3. Morton Bloomfield, *"Piers Plowman" as a Fourteenth-Century Apocalypse* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1961), p. 37.
4. Kolve has shown the value of studying "images in their iconographic identity, that is, in relation to similar images in literature and the visual arts; and these images in their contextual identity, that is, in relation to the narrative by which they are communicated." V. A. Kolve, *Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative* (London, 1984), p. 72. As M. E. J. Hughes points out, Langland is "a synthesizer of the well-established associations--both metaphoric and literal--of everyday objects." "'The Feffement that Fals hath ymaked': A Study of the Image of the Document in "Piers Plowman" and Some Literary Analogues," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 93 (1992), 125.
5. All quotations from *Piers Plowman* are from the Kane-Donaldson edition, 1975 (above, n. 1).

6. V. A. Kolve, "Man in the Middle: Art and Religion in Chaucer's Friar's Tale," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 12 (1990), 24. Kolve explores a cosmological paradigm with heaven on one side, hell on the other, and earth in the middle, but his words on the "theological landscape" apply equally to Langland's version of the paradigm, with three layers, one above the other.
7. Kolve, *Chaucer*, p. 68.
8. Kolve, *Chaucer*, p. 2.
9. "Tower," I.1, *OED* 18: 317.
10. N. J. Goode, *East Anglian Round Towers and their Churches* (Lowestoft, 1982): "The Saxon Chronicle states that King Athelstan made a law in 937 that a Bell Tower should be built on the land of every thegn" (p. 1). According to Goode, Saxon towers were frequently built on to existing churches (p. 9).
11. Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski, eds., *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400* (London, 1987), p. 506.
12. David Hult, "Author/Narrator/Speaker: the Voice of Authority in Chretien's *Charrete*," in *The New Medievalism*, ed. Kevin Brownlee, Marina Brownlee, Stephen Nichols (Baltimore, 1991), p. 86.
13. In James Simpson's interpretation of Pro. 13-17, the `tour' is a "castle (`tour' *OED*, sense 2) part of a spatial set, overlooking an agricultural space and a `dongeon.' The kind of society implied by this cluster is a feudal society, localised in its manorial form": James Simpson, *Piers Plowman: an Introduction to the B-Text* (London, 1990) p. 33. However, the tour' in *Piers Plowman* is as likely to be attached or juxtaposed to a church as to be associated with a castle.
14. H. G. Leask, *St. Patrick's Rock, Cashel* (Dublin, n.d.), p. 17.
15. Leask, *St. Patrick's*, p. 17.
16. Nicola Coldstream, "The Kingdom of Heaven: Its Architectural Setting," in Alexander and Binski, eds., *Age of Chivalry*, p. 92.
17. London, British Library, MS Add. 47680, fol. 42r; *Holkham Bible Picture Book*, ed. W. O. Hassall, 2nd ed. (London, 1954).
18. Tamora M. Green, "Towers," *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York, 1987), 14: 583.
19. The *OED* cites *Lofsong in Ctt. Hom.* 207, *Cursor Mundi* 418 (Ctt.), and *Early English Allit. Poetry* A965. "Tower," I. 2b, *OED* 18: 317.
20. V. Leroquais. *Les Psautiers Manuscrits Latins des Bibliothèques Publiques de France* (Mâcon, 1940-41), pl. 109.
21. Jacques Guillet, *Themes of the Bible*, trans. Albert J. La Mothe, Jr. (Notre Dame, 1960), pp. 34-35. See also Raymond E. Brown, *The Epistles of St. John*, Anchor Bible 30 (Garden City, N. Y., 1982), who notes, "The Hebrew word for `truth' (`emet) is related to a root (`mn) that conveys the notion of firmness or solidity as a basis for trustworthy acceptance" (p. 199).

22. "Turris fortitudinis a facie inimici," which the Yorkshire metrical psalm translates as "Tour ofe strenghte fra face of faa," Psalm 60.3, *Yorkshire Writers*, ed. Carl Horstman, 2 vols. (London, 1896), 2: 191. Greta Hort mentions three Biblical precedents for "God as living in a tower" (Proverbs 18:10, Psalm 60 (V):3-4, and Psalm 121:7), as well as similar metaphors in Rolle's work. See Hope Emily Allen, ed., *The English Writings of Richard Rolle, Hermit of Hampole* (Oxford, 1931), pp. 40, 41. See Greta Hort, *Piers Plowman and Contemporary Religious Thought* (London, 1936), p. 78. Buildings are figural, as events are, so that, for example, Mary, who is often painted by fifteenth-century artists *within* a tower (e.g., Master of Liesborn Annunciation, National Gallery 256), *is* a tower in the litany of Loretto (end of the twelfth century): "Tower of David . . . tower

of ivory." See G. G. Meersseman, O. P., *Der Hymnos Akathistos im Abendland*, 2 vols. (Fribourg, 1960), 2: 223.

23. "The term . . . was used in the Latin VSS to render indiscriminately the . . . goats' hair tent' and the . . . 'booth' . . . of the Hebrews . . . [cf. *OED* 1] also . . . the . . . 'dwelling' of the priestly writers." A. R. S. Kennedy, "Tabernacle," *A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. James Hastings and J. A. Selbie (New York, 1909), pp. 653, 655.

24. The other two texts (besides II. 38-39 and III. 234a-236b, quoted in the essay) are: (1) *Domine, quis habitabit in tabernaculo tuo* (VII. 52a); (2) And no text ne takeþ to mayntene his cause / But *Dilige deum* and *Domine quis habitabit* (XIII.126-7).

25. 'Wone' sb. 2, *OED*. The other world in "Sir Orfeo" has "wide wones / Al of precious stones" (365-66), and the author observes, "Bi al þing him þink þat it is / þe proude court of Paradis" (375-76). "Sir Orfeo," *A Book of Middle English*, ed. J. A. Burrow and Thorlac Turville-Petre (Oxford, 1992), pp. 122-23.

26. W. W. Skeat, ed., *Vision of William*, 2 vols. (New York, 1978), 2: 465. As historians of art are aware, by Langland's time a familiar English translation of *tabernaculum*, unrelated to these Biblical meanings, was "tabernacle," which meant "An ornate canopied structure, as a tomb or shrine; . . . a canopied niche or recess in a wall or pillar, to contain an image; . . . a canopy" (*OED* 'tabernacle' 4). Such structures were popular in the buildings of the late fourteenth-century, but Langland avoids any suggestion of them by avoiding the English word 'tabernacle.'

27. *Biblia Sacra juxta Vulcatam Clementinam*, ed. Faculty of Theology, Paris and Seminary of S. Sulpice (Rome, 1947).

28. A. V. C. Schmidt, "Introduction," *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (London, 1978), p. xvii.

29. Schmidt, "Introduction," p. xviii.

30. Alanus de Insulis, "Distinctiones Dictionum Theologicalium," *PL* 210: 963-66.

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31. For example, in a 13th-century German manuscript she is greeted, "Ave, templum fidei facta tabernaculum summe maiestatis" (Hail, temple of the faith, become the home of the supreme majesty), Meersseman, *Der Hymnos*, p. 165.

32. Horstman, *Yorkshire*, p. 158. "In die malorum protexit me in abscondito tabernaculi sui" ("in the day of evil he will keep me safe in the hidden place of his tabernacle").

33. Worcester, Worcester Cathedral Library, MS F158, fol. 26r.

34. London, British Library, MS Harley 5289, fol. 474v; MS Harley 2787, fol. 151v. Roman Missal, Common of the Dedication of a Church, e.g., *St. Joseph Daily Missal*, ed. Hugo Hoever, (New York, 1957), p. 1217

35. Paul Crossley, "English Gothic Architecture," in Alexander and Binski, eds., *Age of Chivalry*, p. 67. See also Coldstream, "Kingdom of Heaven," p. 92.

36. Worcester, Worcester Cathedral Library, MS F158, fol. 26r.

37. Brown, *Epistles*, p. 283.

38. St. Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, . . . on the First Epistle of John, *Soliloquies*, Tractate 76.4, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, ed. Philip Schaf. 14 vols. (New York, 1888), 7: 338. In another homily, Augustine observes, "Thou art preparing a place both for Thyself in us, and for us in Thee. For Thou hast said, 'Abide in me, and I in you.'" (Tractate 68.3 [7: 324]). Nevill Coghill interpreted "true" in V.605-8 as a personification of integrity or faithfulness, as it is, for example, in I. 97 and XII. 287: "The Character of *Piers Plowman*," *Medium Ævum* 2 (1933), 115. Others interpret it as a name for God, e.g., T. P. Dunning, *Piers Plowman* (Dublin, 1937), pp. 123-27; Guy Bourquin, *Piers Plowman*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1978), 52-63, and A. V. C. Schmidt, ed., *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (New York, 1978), p. 320. See Hort, *Religious Thought*, p. 81. Besides the tenderness of the language, which suggests personal presence, another argument for reading "true" here as "God" is that lines 609-615 say that sin drives the sinner, not *true*, from the heart. If *true* personified virtue, it should be driven out by sin.

39. Julian of Norwich, *A Book of Showings to the Anchoress Julian of Norwich*, Short Text 22.1-14, ed. Edmund Colledge and James Walsh, 2 vols. (Toronto, 1978), 1: 268.

40. Jean Zizioulas explains the ancient theology of this view in *Being as Communion* (Crestwood, N. Y., 1985), esp. pp. 15-21, 84, 100-107.

41. Dwelling with/in God is seen as social or communal in some sense. Hence, the blessed person "shal wonye in þi wones wi þ þyne holy seintes" (III.235), having gone to heaven "With Patriarkes and prophetes in paradis to be felawe" (VII.12). This is an Augustinian view: "What else is it to dwell in God's house than to be in the number of His people, since His people are at the same time in God, and God in them?" Augustine, *Homilies*, Tractate 69.1, 7: 324.