

Identity and Identification: William Langland Wrote *The Romance of William of Palerne*

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This essay shows that William Langland / Longe Wille wrote *The Romance of William of Palerne*. It brings forward evidence from its text in two main ways: (1). synchronically, i.e. across the text; and (2). diachronically, 'across time'. There is a comparison between this c. 1360-61 work and the previous 1191-4 NE Old French / Picard poem *Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne* specifically of three passages from each.

Keywords: Langland, William of Palerne, Guillaume de Palerne, Piers Plowman, medieval studies, attribution

Introduction

We resume an argument made in my 2015 essay and presentation to the IAFOR Asian Conference on Arts and Humanities in Osaka *Identity and Identification: William Langland wrote William of Palerne*. This essay (in three parts) will add to the reception and biography of this writer standing at one 'beginning' of English literature, like Geoffrey Chaucer, but a generation earlier. It bears on the publishing and editing of his *Vision or Book of Piers Plowman* especially given a likely 'first-hand' nature of its manuscript (see below).

John But's statement in his Memorandum that he had written 'more works' is partly born out. George Kane seems right in his DNB entry information that he found his way to Essex. It adds to a discovery of a legal document by Michael Bennett (where Longe Wille is indicted on a charge of murder); one recording his 'first tonsure'; and information about his life and family discovered by Robert Adams and Jonathan Foggin.

Those, like Andrew Galloway and David Lawton, who have suggested Langland might possibly have written this poem, are vindicated, against a much stronger opinion 'against'. For readers who are non-Langland specialists, this is a discovery that has been a long time coming. An attribution of the poem is something that is new, previously thought not to be so or a subject of possible 'speculation' (Warner, 2014, p. 415).

'More works'

Not one but two works are added to his collected ones as this poem is a version of an earlier one. Also, before the early Z-text and A-text versions of *The Vision of Piers Plowman* a version of *Piers Plowman* existed that was not A or Z as this poem makes mention of another about 'doing better', "**Dobet**" as he puts it in *Piers Plowman*. (WP, 5525).

This part of our Passage III (WP, 5521-6) is not his apology for not having done his job well or telling his audience he has wasted their time, but a not-quite-modest advertising of the new project.

That ‘doing better’ is an intertextual link between the two poems, this one about ‘working well’ (see Discussion III). There is also reference back from *Piers* to themes of *William*, and *Guillaume*, around wealth and what that really is, or revealing truth—and what that really is—as in the earlier poem about *sens*, see vv.1-7 and *tesor* ([v. 13], see its prologue, GP, 1-20); with some intertextuality ‘back’ from *William of Palerne*, as with the “**apertly**” / ‘openly’ of its last line). Like *Guillaume de Palerne* *Piers Plowman* Passus I (in all versions) also concerns the true meaning of wealth. Some ‘deep structures’ like this are noticed by Lawrence Warner (p. 403 ff.).

Its single manuscript is the first part of MS King’s College Cambridge 13. That is dated to ‘before 1375’ meaning between 1350 and 1375; and so could be (on a ‘bell-curve’ of probability) from the time of writing.

That manuscript’s layout also corresponds with the organisation of the poem itself, never getting this ‘wrong’. Even if some of its rubrics—the finishing off part of its production—seem hurried or unfinished it accurately reflects a *divisio textus* involving ‘steps’ (“**pas**”) and shorter sections (see Simms’ and for comparison, Sconduto’s introductions). A variety of spelling and language belongs to the work itself, not its being recopied in different places as its main edition suggests.

Its editor G.H.V. Bunt’s chapter on ‘Language and Dialect’ can be regarded as being as much about the phonology and versification of this poem—an intentional engagement with a varied English its writer has heard and wants to represent with spelling also for phonology and pronunciation. As to its ‘mix’ of dialects Gerrit Bunt may have partially changed his view later (Foggin, 2017, p. 125).

It can’t be doubted that the writer himself wanted to include both ‘ing’ and ‘ande’-type endings for the present participle, for instance (referred to by Norman Simms in his introduction). The earlier editor was closer to this situation in his view of this MS as being at second hand and understanding of its satirical qualities). Each of many ‘dialect’ points covered by Bunt’s chapter can be understood this verse-making and not recopying way. The importance of his Glossary to Langland studies should be noted. His footnotes about his text can also be interpreted this other way as showing an ‘authorial’ accuracy and intentional orthography. Mistakes are very few; and emendations in a future edition could be much reduced.

On these and other grounds I think the King’s College Cambridge MS 13 copy of *The Romance of William of Palerne* could well be an authorial copy or holograph, i.e. written by Langland himself.

When it was first commissioned (which would have been in the mid-1350s) it is unlikely this would have been from a first-time writer (and more can be said about Langland’s biography and timeline this discovery adds to). That writing career—considering the *Piers Plowman C* version ‘Repentance’ passus—would have begun in the 1340s. Not discussed in this essay are thematic and language features — especially in *William of Palerne*—that are like another possible early 1350s partly surviving work that may be attributable to Langland, *The Life of Adam and Eve*, the version of this widely told story in the Vernon manuscript (Bodleian Library MS Eng. Poet. a. 1.) to be found in N.F. Blake’s *Middle English religious prose*.

Much becomes clearer when the authorship of this poem is known including about Langland’s other writing. *William of Palerne* to *Piers Plowman* has an overall relation also of ‘secular’ to ‘religious’, like *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* compared to *Pearl*. Considering a hypothetical *Adam and Eve* that would make a

‘triptych’ of Latin-based, French-based and then contemporary English-based satirical works like *the Vox Clamantis*, *Speculum Hominis* (*Mirour de l’Omme*) and *Confessio Amantis* by John Gower. This discovery of a ‘new’ poem by Langland also adds to what is known about a lifetime of writing (Foggin, 2017, p. 100 ff.). There are further ramifications and considerations also arising from the manuscript significant for Langland studies that concern, for example, his editing.

Future editions of *The Romance of William of Palerne* should be credited to William Langland.

Method

How this attribution can come about is shown in the Discussions and Comparison that follow in Part 2 of this essay; and the summing up this ‘synchronic / diachronic’ evidence in Part 3. This mainly (but not only) concerns the three passages from the poem we will call I, II, and III that are set out below. These are compared with the “**Frensche**” (*Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne* calls itself a *romauns*-language poem) with consideration of the earlier work first.

Our method depends upon a ‘usual’ reading of these passages in their context in the poem and story, beginning with the basic events they refer to, what *Piers Plowman*, *William of Palerne* and *Guillaume de Palerne* each call their ‘fait’: the basic subject matter of them.

These are marked up closely (showing a ‘common core’ far less that is sometimes assumed but important qualitatively, as it were).

Our discussion also includes various themes and treatments or points of view in the new narration that are changed as may arise. Overall such changes of the English poem are not just for realism or probability; but concern a revisualisation of the original to some purpose, one with an ethical-semantic aspect.

This essay looks at these three passages from *William of Palerne* closely ‘in themselves’ but also bearing in mind and alongside the previous poem, the one the writer would have had in front of him when he was translating and adapting. This process is more than just one-to-one literary translation as this is understood today. That original had *auctoritas* for him and becomes part of his way of proceeding newly too.

In terms of story and its treatment the new poem differs in depth and detail from the old; but may have points in common with—or deriving from—or inspired by it.

In these extracts I have put in italics material cut from each *William of Palerne* passage (what the Middle English poem ‘leaves out’, represented by italics in the *romauns*-language poem. In the equivalent passage from *William of Palerne* I have put in bold material added to or that is new in it.

A Langland Code?

Unfortunately there has been no ‘Langland code’ to help elucidate this mystery—a mystery of medieval studies at least—except in a way there is. Langland ‘signs’ his poem—that he describes as “**his**”—not once three related times in our three passages. He does so in a way that reveals his full name.

Perhaps one mystery is why this was never noticed before, as his way of naming himself in his later work is not unlike what occurs here. The third self-naming (of our Passage and Discussion III) puts in a new context what we know about the character William, who this writer, we can see, identifies with. And that in turn—this real-life turn in his writing—will change what we know about this writer.

There is no ‘Langland code’ to break as such (although Lawrence Warner did spot the acrostic to be found in our Passage II). That second self-naming is one with a much fuller context not really explored in his essay about the ‘problem’—as it has seemed—of this poem.

This moment and its context—its place in the passage and in the poem—is also comparative and ‘relocated’ from the earlier poem and its main moment of ‘revelation’ this is not the same as (see Sconduto’s introduction and *GP* 8128 for what that angle is, one about playing close attention to reality, but also an Orthodox Trinitarian wonder at miracles, I think, one suiting its late twelfth-century time. The English poet has its own new ‘central’ idea of renewal and change that is both more far-reaching and down to earth.

In our self-introduction and self-naming I the writer as well as the character introduces himself (under an ‘integument’ of fiction). The young William is the rightful prince of Palerne (with imperial Greek ancestry) who does not know this yet. He is now the adopted son of a cowherd and his wife. He introduces himself to the much more powerful figure of the Roman emperor, who he will eventually succeed. He says he will speak truth to power (and then does that).

His initial speech is even metonymically describing and part of the discourse it is in—or ‘**Englysh speche**’ as its writer calls it (*WP*, 167)—and some statement of what will follow; a very witty play, and an intellectual one, on the overall *duplex causa efficiens*-type situation of the poem (Minnis).

That I, II, III schema (having their contexts) exists—and cannot be accidental—as our discussion will show. William Langland wanted to be known as the writer of this work; or that this fact could be known from it—even how such ‘knowing’ can come to be—with other objectives around his self-naming to do with being ‘part of’ the ‘physicality’ of his poem (Middleton, 1990, p. 208 ff.), identifying with it in that sense as well, as identifying himself. His name and ‘personality’ is pointed up in different ways (not only in these passages) though the poem.

But also he wrote it. As the person named by this uniquely Langlandian method is William Langland himself we can be quite sure that this poem, having so many other characteristics and ‘backgrounds’ that support this—or that do not contradict such a situation—must be by him. In historical time Langland wrote this work (probably an earlier one and then this revised version) and physically put pen to paper, or quill to parchment, applying in as real a way his imagination and invention to this creation.

Why the Delay?

Why the attributional delay? A certain ‘medievalism’ might be one reason, as in Edward Said’s ‘Orientalism’. It is hard, looking so far into the past, to credit a full creative imagination at work then as now. ‘Medieval’ works do not just glimmer through stained glass windows but may have a brighter light.

I agree with ideas of recognising the ‘integrity’ of past experience, allowing that a past work may have notions in it of a wider readership, not just in terms of a partially reconstructed or notional first reception. Within that an author might want to name themselves ‘now’ but also for posterity.

Because this idea has been repeated it is worth saying there is nothing ‘odd’ about this poem (although a certain marginal place in ‘the canon’ might be [Warner]). It can be urban as well as having settings that are not; and does not have a supposedly ‘rustic’ or ‘pastoral’ simplicity.

Such handed-down ideas may have detracted from the idea that this is a sophisticated ‘clerkly’ poem that could have been written by Langland, whose work otherwise it is so like!

He *couldn't* have done it. That explains that ‘problem’ away in a way that almost precludes his authorship.

Langland’s *Piers Plowman* has intellectual and poetic depth (for example in relation to texts it uses but also ‘in itself’ as a very sophisticated narration with points of difference and ‘alterity’ but not an inaccessible or ‘odd’ one as criticism began uncovering in the middle of the last century. Improvements in its textual criticism began at the same time.

But *Piers Plowman*, too, had its own medievalising interpretations before this recent academic shift, and in much the same sort of way; also looking like some pre-Raphaelite and Romantic notions of the Middle Ages in the late nineteenth-century. That period found the Middle Ages ‘pre-industrial’ and innocent (see Foggin, 2017, p. 100 ff.).

The Romance of William of Palerne, however, is held to be similarly ‘rustic’ and ‘pastoral’ even today in some of its academic reception.

The two receptions of the two poems seem parallel in fact (suggesting they might even have have something in common) up until about the ‘take-off’ of Langland studies in the 1950s. Only one then has had its moment of closer academic study and ‘reform’.

Now study of both them (which in a sense has been driven apart) should become more unified bringing this great writer’s great achievement into sharper focus.

In a wider world of English literature, or literature in English, this discovery will bring Langland in a number of ways more to the fore, I think, in academic studies and his general reception. This poem and its manuscript (being the closest of any to its writer) may also lead to a better more established text for his later writing, one that would be more ‘agreed’ across the four extant *Piers Plowman* versions.

An Inter-relational Comparativity

A certain comparativity seems part of the basic method of its writer.

That includes personal material and outlooks and starting-points from lived life; as well as using other writings and their generic conventions—what he calls “**bokes**” in *William of Palerne* (WP, 7)—and bringing all this into his work.

One particular situation that has not been discussed about this poem that it is in some relation *intrinsically* to its predecessor poem *Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne*. That makes this writing not as ‘simple’ as it has seemed in some (usually) non-comparative readings of it.

This overlapping or metonymic relation between *Guillaume de Palerne* and *William of Palerne* is not just ‘generally speaking’ but ‘really’, in an intended ‘literal’ sense; as comparison of these passages and indeed almost any part of the two poems shows.

This comparative situation between *William of Palerne* and *Guillaume de Palerne* is not separate from but part of the writing and its process. This is not just for some *post facto* differences between them to be discussed later on as between two different works, but a *modus procedendi*, a way of proceeding ‘wholly’ or “**fully**” in the writing.

We might compare the movement from version to version of (indeed) this poem or that of *Piers Plowman*, where translation is also transformation, ‘translatio’ in the sense of metaphor and a literary device. *William of Palerne* can like this too; and *Guillaume de Palerne* becomes (almost) a proleptic ‘version’ of *William*, in the conspectus of the later poem at least. That is like a metonymic or part-for-whole-relationship that is reciprocal not just one-to-one.

Between the two there is some signifying part overlapping—coming from and as compared with *Guillaume de Palerne*—that *William of Palerne* has ‘in’ it.

And so, as Langland sees it, *Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne* has some authority to it, *in* it. There is a starting-point and continuing reflection in it for him in what he is doing. This makes for a technique not unlike that of Biblical commentary which can elaborate in a ‘prophetic’ way on Bible stories to get to their ‘truth’. That is just like his poem.

Also Langland ‘likes’ the earlier poem. He wants to emulate it in a way that is entertaining and encouraging for an English-speaking audience at a time he thinks it is in some ‘misease’, to bring some “**ese**” to them (WP, 168).

An idea of *auctoritas* as applied to / taken from authoritative Latin writing is made new, seen in a new way; and that general idea is translated, in the sense of moved into a new ‘secular’ / vernacular context (Minnis).

Langland thinks there is more to say about current situations, and that there is a need to do this (a truth-telling or sense-making very much in the vein of this Old French / Picard poem). This happens here ‘newly’ through comparison with the earlier poem. There is some relation between his original / originating and the originated new work that can be satirical, or socially and religiously (or personally) commenting as he finds—even if—or even because—its story and setting seems remote and far away.

Part of that changed situation is the new step- or ‘**pas**’-structure of the newly wrought work; another is its moments of visionary insight ‘going to’ what the writer sees as the essential truth of things; what an event or situation or character or some aspect of the subject-matter or language really ‘means’. This means, for example, that change can be made in the basic story; and that leads, from our point of view, to a potential for naming himself (as occurs with self-naming in our three passages we will find).

That leads to generic change overall, a ‘modulated’ one not just about shifting about different episodes or ‘editing’ only, adding some ‘special effect’, or ‘more ‘realism’ (although there is that too). There is some visualising involved, as the writer has visualised and contemplated the original episode or events he then revisualises or has in mind when he writes what happens in the new situation of his narrative.

This is a translation (as he says in WP 167 and our Passage III) in a very wide sense, and prophecy is one of its modes. Authority is seen in a new way. A *translatio auctoritatis* happens that puts ‘the human’—meaning ‘pastoral’ but only in a religious sense of ‘care for souls’ (Foggin)—first.

In this sense therefore this writing is like what was happening in France or Italy at this time, if in a different idiom to that of Dante or Petrarch.

That overall change makes this work not just a Romance but also Menippean Satire, like *Troilus and Criseyde*, or *The Canterbury Tales* or *Confessio Amantis*—or Langland’s own *Piers Plowman*. *The Romance of*

William of Palerne is the first known example of such Menippean ‘beginnings’ of literary writing in English. (Packer / Kountouris)

The inter-related comparative situation that results may be hard to describe but is not so hard to imagine. Simply put, there is some ‘ground’ in *Guillaume de Palerne* against which *William of Palerne* shows its full meaning, in a manner that is not limited to our self-naming theme, which for obvious reasons we will concentrate on here.

Checks on Meaning

A certain ‘relativity’ both across the ‘time’ of his text (synchronically) and the time of its writing (diachronically, as compared with *Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne*) occurs. That makes for not one but two checks on meaning, and a check on the self-identification / naming of himself.

The procedure has a ‘control’ that must be intended.

This is relational, not unlike ideas of Duns Scotus’ (Kenny, 2005, pp. 170-2, 201-7); and ‘scientific’ like those of William of Ockham and his followers (Kenny, 2005, pp. 173-5, 207-11).

As we have said a new thing mentioned—such as his name—can made more perceptible in *William of Palerne* in comparison with the original poem (as applies to many of the themes and preoccupations of this work).

The overall manner of self-representation through the poem is very like what we find discussed by Anne Middleton in her essay on ‘William Langland’s “Kynde Name”’) about the A, B and C versions of *Piers Plowman*, including a threefold and “midpoint” structure these *Piers Plowman* versions have (Middleton, 1990, pp. 232-233). This is a structure that is equally (or even more) defined in *William*.

There is an effect, too—like some of his dream endings—of transience or ‘evanescence’.

The Romance of William of Palerne is also a ‘polynarrative’ (a distinctive feature of *Piers Plowman* according to John Burrow, along with its interest in life-stages of ‘knight, king and conqueror’ and the three ages of man (like Dante)). We will show that these themes are a basic part of this poem and the description of the life of its central character. Such a polynarratorial relation happens (see his *Langland’s Fictions*) also diachronically in *William of Palerne* in relation to the previous poem *Guillaume de Palerne*.

An array of common themes found by Lawrence Warner between *Guillaume de Palerne* and *Piers Plowman* also hints at some such ‘emulation’ in that poem of *Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne*. That indicates William Langland had read this poem and likes it, there being no other real explanation for this connection. But then if that were so, there would be a much more direct (and a much less hypothetical) Langland-like connection to found in *William of Palerne* itself where this process is directly occurring.

The Self-namings

Self-naming I occurs during the self-introduction of the child William. He is bold in his dialogue with the emperor and says that he will speak truthfully. The emperor will hear him out wholly as well. (WP, Passage I, ll. 232-250 of *William of Palerne* / GP, vv. 425-435 of *Guillaume de Palerne*)

Self-naming II occurs at a moment of transcendent joy and reconciliation, one present in the *romauns-language* poem that has a different focus. Langland de-emphasises some aspect of the wonder of the

earlier poem has about the re-transformation of Alphonse back into human form as such (that is its ‘central’ or ‘deepest’ moment as Sconduto says) shifting his attention to a new location in the story to do with how another transformation happens, the entry of William, Melior, Alphouns and Florence into the ‘high hall’ in Palerne, and how it is perceived by those present.

This naming (as in I and III) is also pointed up by contexts of knight, king and emperor, and ‘high’ middle age in its scheme of three ages of man, and beginning, middle and end in terms of the life of William; as well as its situation in the discourse regarding ‘instance of narration’ (see our Discussions and Comparison to follow). (WP, Passage II, ll. 4520-4550 of *William of Palerne* / GP, vv. 7892-7966 of *Guillaume de Palerne*)

Self-naming III is situated at another decisive moment the writer finds in his discourse of transition from internal narration to extrinsic epilogue before the writer William in his own person describes his work using a device or *translatio* that is about reading and a ‘pun’ (a rhyme royal-like change of referent as we read) on his own name.

This description of how he, like the emperor William, has worked well is not to be taken as gauche or naïve or foolish (although it does use a simple lexis). He is telling us ‘modestly’ in the manner of *recusatio* and about some of his real purpose in writing the poem. (WP, Passage III, ll. 5507-5540 of *William of Palerne* / GP, vv. 9645-9667 of *Guillaume de Palerne*)

Summary

To sum up, our argument is that Langland’s authorship can be known through evidence, that of this and the preceding or ‘originating’ poem.

The evidence of our senses—highly valued by this writer—and a reading of his poem itself are enough for us to know that this is so. And his self-naming is highlighted—or pointed up—by comparing the two texts *The Romance of William of Palerne* and *Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne*.

William Langland wants it to be known that he wrote this poem; and produces a successful strategy or self-reference which is why we can attribute it to him.

If the exploration of the equivalent *William of Palerne* and *Guillaume de Palerne* passages that follows seems unclear or does not not seem full enough my own *recusatio* is one of time and lack of access to a university library. This argument can filled out if necessary in a book.

There is the situation, too, of its sole manuscript being very close to the situation of the production of this poem, even a holograph. More can be added to the above.

Also, as there would have been an earlier 1350s version of *The Romance of William of Palerne*, that makes this a two-for-the-‘pris’-of-one offer!

It is hoped, with a fully accepted author that this work no longer ‘in search of’ one (not even in that Pirandello-like situation really), will fare better from now on in its critical and general reception; with, next—it seems a good next step to me—a film or television version like the Marvel franchise.

I stand ready, also, with an accurate edited text closest of any to his own orthography, for an advisory role. Hollywood beckons.

Passages I, II and III

I have put in italics material cut or not in the *William of Palerne* version in the *Guillaume de Palerne* extracts as mentioned.

In the equivalent extract from *William of Palerne* I have put in bold material that is added in it that is not in *Guillaume de Palerne*. Our Discussions I, II and III will follow.

-I-

From Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne:

*Molt l'arraisne amiablement,
Si li a dit molt doucement:
'Comment aves vos non, biau frere?'
'Guillaume sire.' Et l'emperere
Li dist: 'Et cui fix estes vos?'
'Par Dieu, sire, qui fist nos tos,
Ne vos poist mie, s'il vos plect:
Un vachier de ceste forest
Cui ces vaches sont que si gart.'
Dist l'emperere: 'Ou est, quel part?
Car le fai or parler a moi.' (GP, 425-35)*

In a very literal translation:

*He arraigns him very amiably,
Then to him has said very softly:
'What name do you have, good brother?'
'Guillaume sire.' And the emperor
Says to him; 'And whose son are you?'
'By God, sire, who made us all,
Do not trouble yourself if you please:
A cowherd of this forest
Whose cows these are who I guard.'
Said the emperor: 'Where is he, what part?
So bring him now to speak to me.' (GP, 425-35)*

Passage I from *The Romance of William of Palerne* is:

Rightly thenne themperour **wendes him even tille;**
the child **comes him agayn** and curteslich him gretes.
In hast themperour **hendely his** gretyng **him yeldes,**
and anon rightes after askes his name, This is (in direct speech in *GP*.)
and of what **kin he were kome komanded him to telle."**
The child thanne soberliche seide, 'Sir, **at youre wille**
I wol yow telle as tyt trewely alle the sothe.
William, sire, wel y wot, wighes me calles; [WP, 238, 9]
I was bore here fast by this wodes side.
A kowherde, **sire, of this kontrey is my kinde fader,**
and my menskful moder is his meke wive.
Thei han me fostered and fed faire to this time
and here I kepe is kyn, **as y kan, on dayes;**
but sire, by Crist, of my kin know I no more.'

Whan themp[er]our **hade herd holly his wordes,**
he wondered of his wis speche, as he wel might,
and seide ‘Thow bold barn, bilive, I the praye,
 Go calle **to me the cowerde thow clepus thy fadere,**
For y wold talk with him tithinges to frayne.’ (WP, 232-250)

Note: the beginning of this extract is the start of a new section in the manuscript of the Middle English poem, part of its new second ‘pas’. Its structure and themes are discussed in my essay ‘The Emperor and the Cowherd’.

-II-

This second self-naming in *William of Palerne* is a ‘central’ or main moment of it; and a high point of a life that has moved from knighthood to (soon) kingship, and soon-to-be emperordom (Burrow).

The true William will be recognised for who he is, and already has been by those close to him. But also Alphouns will be recognised for who he is, too, in a characteristic Piers Plowman-like emblematic or enigmatic makes him a main focus of this episode.

In *Guillaume de Palerne*, from GP v. 7848 Brande, Guillaume, Melior, and Florence are present with Alphonse in the chamber where he has been re-transformed back into a human being.

Now (in the ‘French’) Alphonse says that he has greatly changed his situation and his entire nature. Guillaume asks him to tell us who he is, that ‘us’ meaning those present including the person who turned him into a wolf in the first place, his stepmother Brande!

Then (in Leslie A. Sconduto’s translation):

When Guillaume hears what he says,
 He approaches him and hugs him so
 With such love, with such a manner
 As a mother would her son;
 He kisses his eyes and his chin.
 Never has one seen joy the likes of
 Which they demonstrated because of the vassal,
 For Melior in exactly the same way
 Put both her arms around his neck.
 And the maiden with the bright face,
 Florence, who had drawn back,
 Marveled greatly... (GP, 7883-7894)

After that:

... the queen (Guillaume’s mother Felise) said to them (v. 7908)
 ‘...it is time to clothe him, (v. 7914)
 To adorn him and get him [Alphonse] prepared,
 For very eager are
 The people who are waiting outside for him,
 The king his father and the other men.
 Here are his garments; they are ready.
 --- My lady, Guillaume answers her,
 You say it well, now let it be done so.
 See that your handsomest finery is evident
 And that he is attired in such a manner,
 With such an appearance and such quality

That we will not be blamed for anything.” (GP, 7908-7926)

And then comes a description of their all dressing Alphonse and then having ‘the valet’ open the door (v. 7950). Then:

*L’uis a ouvert tost et manois,
Puis s’entreprenent par les dois;
Fors de la chambre sont issu,
Tot main a main entretenu,
Et quant il el palais entrerent,
Tote la gent contre eus leverent.
Li rois connut son fil Amphons.
Ainc si grant joie ne fist hons
Com sor le cors de lui demaine
Ses frere et tot cil de foraine
Et li autre par le palais.
Ainc si grant joie ne fu mais
Com cil demainent environ
De la venue du baron.*

This is our *Guillaume de Palerne* Passage II. In my translation:

*(The valet) has opened (the door) straight away,
Then they (Alphonse, Guillaume, Melior, Florence, and Brande) join together by their fingers, (they are ‘hand in hand’ in WP) (and)
Out of the room they are gone, (They don’t leave a room and then go to the palace in WP)
All hand in hand they go together, (but not Brande, not there at this time in the the English version)
And when they entered the palace, (in WP the “**highe halle**”)
All the nobility on their arrival rose. (“Tote” – “All / Everyone” becomes “**many a lord**”. “La gent” becomes “**a peerless puple**”. “Contre eus” becomes lords ‘leaping’ against Alphouns, and also see GP v. 7961. This happens not just when they go in, but ‘when the peerless people perceived their coming’, or “**whan come**”, i.e. as a matter of their perception of them.)
The king knew his son Alphonse.
No greater joy did men ever have
As towards the body of him was shown,
His brother and all those from abroad (called “**lordesse of that londe**” in WP l. 4523 and “**the lordes of londe**” in l. 4554)
And the others through the palace – (like WP l. 4559, that adds “**with lasse and with more**”, i.e. the notion that different ranks of people are present)
Never such great joy was there more
As that they display around
The coming in of the baron.’ (Broadly the verses from v. 7959 are expanded in WP from its l. 4551 = GP, 7953-7966. So our Middle English extract below should perhaps be a little longer.)*

The following is Passage II from *William of Palerne*:

**Whan thei in that gladnesse a gret while hade sete,
Alphouns askid anon atir to have,
To fare out as faste with his fader to speke
And with lordesse of that lond that him long hade missed.
And William wightli withoute any more** [423,4]
Greithed him as gaili as any gome thurt bene

Of alle trie atir that to knight longed,
 So that non might amand a mite worth, I wene.
And whan thei were at wille, as thei wold be greithed,
eche on hent other bi the hand hendli and faire,
 and hastily into the heighe halle higheden in fere.
When the perles puple parceyveden whan [thei] come,
Many a lord ful lovely lep him agens,
As tho that were geinly glad on that gome to loke.
Gret murthe of that metyng was mad, be you sure (WP, 4520-550)

-III-

Here is the ending of *Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne*:

.II. enfans ot de sa moilier
 Qui molt furent poissant et fier;
 Chascuns refu tote sa vie
 De merveilleuse signorie:
 Li uns fu rois, l'autre emperere.
 Del roi Guillaume et de sa mere,
 De ses enfans et de son genrre,
 De son empire et de son regne
 Trait li estoires ci a fin.
 Cil qui tos jors fu et sans fin
 Sera et pardoune briement
 Il gart la contesse Yolent,
 La boine dame, la loial,
 Et il destort son cors de mal.
 Cest livre fist diter et faire
 Et de latin en roumans traire.
 Proions Dieu por la boine dame
 Qu'en bon repos en mete l'ame
 Et il nos doinst ce deservir
 Qu'a boine fin puissons venir.
 Amen
 Explicit li roumans de Guillaume de Palerne (GP, 9645-67)

This *Guillaume de Palerne* ending in the modern English translation of Leslie A. Sconduto is:

'He had two children by his wife
 Who were very powerful and proud;
 Each one like him all their life
 Showed marvelous leadership:
 One was king, the other emperor
 About Guillaume and his mother,
 About his children and his descendants,
 About his empire and his reign
 The story draws to an end here.
 May he who always was and without end
 Will be, may He pardon readily
 And may He guard Countess Yolande,
 The good lady and loyal,

*And keep her body from harm.
 She had this book written and made
 And translated from Latin into French.
 Let us pray to God for the good lady
 That he let her soul rest in peace
 And that he give us this reward
 That to a good end we may come.
 Amen.
 Here ends the romance of Guillaume de Palerne* (GP, 9645–67)

That last section (and ‘pas’ as the two organising structures now coincide) of *William of Palerne* is:

Thus William and his **worthi quen winteres fele**
 liveden in liking and **lisse, as our Lord wolde**,
 and haden two sones **samen, ful semliche childeren**,
 that seththen **thurth Goddes grace** were grete lordes after.
 That on was emperour of Rome **and regned after his fader**,
 that other was a **kud king of Calabre and Poyle**;
 and mighti men and **menskful** were thei in here **time**,
and feithful as here fader to fre and to thewe. (cf. v. ‘9584 ‘courteously’)
Thus the worthy William was emperour of Rome, (cf. vv. 9636–40)
that had many hard happe hade therebifore,
and be in gret baret and bale sum-time.
Of alle bales was he brought, blessed be Goddes might;
and so schal everich seg that secheth to the gode,
and gives him in Goddes grace and godliche ay wircheth.

In thise wise hath William al his werke ended
as fully as the Frensche fully wold aske,

[5521, 2]

and as his witte him wold serve, though it were febul.
 But though the metur be nought mad at eche mannes paye,
 wite him nought that it wrought; he wold have do beter,
 yif is witte in eny weighes wold him have served.
 But, faire frendes, for Goddes love and for your owne mensk,
 Ye that liken in love swiche thinges to here,
 preiye[th] for that gode lord that gart this do make,
 the hende Erl of Hereford, Humfray de Boune;
 The king Edwardes doughter was his dere moder;

he let make this **mater in this maner speche** (The phrase ‘let make’ is arguably either new or from *Guillaume* where the dedication to ‘Yolent’ ‘assumes this, but these actual words are not there, making this an almost ‘all new’ ending.)

for hem that knowe no Frensche, ne never understo[n].

Biddith **that blissful burn that bought us on the rode**,
and to his moder Marie, of mercy that is welle,
yif the lord god lif, wil he in erthe lenges,
and whan he wendes of this world, welthe withoute ende,
to lenge in that liking joye that lesteth evermore

And God gif alle god grace that gladly so biddes, (cf. GP v. 9665, ‘ce deservir’, ‘Briement’ means ‘quickly’ in the ‘Frensche’ but also ‘readily’ with some sense of volition, a little like ‘gladly’)

and pertli in paradis a place for to have. Amen. (WP, 5507–40)

Summary

To sum up, this essay presents evidence from our text and the adapted / translated / translated from *Guillaume de Palerne* to show that William Langland wrote *The Romance of William of Palerne*.

A reading of the poem itself is enough for us to know this.

But also his self-naming is highlighted—or pointed up—by comparing the two texts *The Romance of William of Palerne* and *Le Roman de Guillaume de Palerne*. The poem has ‘comparative’ meaning.

Conclusion

As introduced here and set out more fully in Part 2 and Part 3 of this essay, William Langland / Longe Wille wrote *The Romance of William of Palerne*. He refers to himself in a self-identifying way three times in these self-namings, we show.

William Langland should be credited as the author of *The Romance of William of Palerne* in future editing, criticism and production of this work.

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