

# Joseph Power's Note Attached to Earl Rivers's English Translation of *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*<sup>\*1)</sup>

Yoko IYEIRI\*\*

Mitsumi UCHIDA\*\*\*

## 1. Introduction

*The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers* (hereafter *Dictes*) was clearly a most popular text during the medieval period. Besides a number of French translations, there are at least four different versions in Middle English: (1) Stephen Scrope's translation, (2) an anonymous version, which is extant in MS Helmingham Hall, (3) William of Worcester's version, which is a revision of Scrope's, and (4) Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers's translation (cf. Louis 1993: 2977-2978). The present paper is concerned with the last of these. It was printed at least three times by William Caxton (1477, 1480 and 1489) and once by Wynkyn de Worde (1528) (cf. Duff-Hellinga 2009: 34-35).<sup>2)</sup> It also comes down to us in some manuscripts, of which MS Additional 22718, British Library and MS 265, Lambeth Palace Library are complete and of particular importance.

As stated in our earlier publication (see Iyeiri and Uchida 2016), we have been working on Earl Rivers's translation of the *Dictes*, with the aim of clarifying how language can be altered in the process of translation and textual transmission. Given the extreme complexity of the relationship between different English versions,<sup>3)</sup> Iyeiri and Uchida (2016) found it necessary to confirm factual details one by one and transcribed two modern notes attached to the Middle English *Dictes*: the modern note in one of the John Rylands copies and William Blades's note inserted in MS Additional 22718. The present paper transcribes yet another one, namely a note written by Joseph Power (1798-1868),<sup>4)</sup> a librarian in Cambridge, and attached to MS Additional 22718. The investigation of notes of this kind reveals how scholars in the past wrestled with the *Dictes*. This is an interesting issue *per se*.

---

\*Key words: *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*, Walter C. Trevelyan, Joseph Power, William Caxton, MS Additional 22718

\*\*Professor, Faculty of Letters, Kyoto University

\*\*\*Professor, School of Sociology, Kwansei Gakuin University

- 1) This study was in part supported by JSPS *Kakenhi* (Grant Number 15K02546). We would also like to acknowledge that the note transcribed in this paper is found in MS Additional 22718, British Library.
- 2) The first edition printed in 1477 is known to exist in three variant forms. This issue will be discussed below.
- 3) The textual relationship between different editions has attracted much scholarly attention, but the complexity still remains. Bühler, for example, spent extensive time on this without much success in the end (see Bühler 1934, 1940, 1948 and 1953).
- 4) According to Sayle (1916: 124), Power was elected librarian on 9 April 1845. See also *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/public/index.html>>.

## 2. Joseph Power’s Note Attached to MS Additional 22718

This is one of the modern notes attached to MS Additional 22718, and it discusses the relationship between the manuscript and some early printed editions. In response to a request from Walter C. Trevelyan, who was the owner of the manuscript before he handed it over to the British Museum, Joseph Power discloses his textual analyses of the *Dictes*.<sup>5)</sup> The note runs as follows:

[2r]	notes regarding 2 copies of Caxtons Dicts & Sayings in Public Library, Cambridge
AB. 9. 41 contains 75 leaves	AB. 10. 29 contains 66 leaves
<u>lines.</u> about 29 in a page Preface. imperfect at the beginning — ending “—the ground I had to speke upon as here after ensiewis.”	<u>lines.</u> about 31 in a page No Preface. begins as under.
Then “Sedechias was the first . . . . . and suffise you with the translacion of the sayenges of these philosophers. “Here endeth the book named the dictes or sayings <sup>6)</sup> of the philosophers enprynted by me Wyll <sup>m</sup> [William] Caxton at Westmestre the yere of our Lord mcccclxxvii / <u>whiche so oft</u> <u>book<sup>7)</sup> is<sup>8)</sup></u> late translated out of frenshe into englysh by þe noble & puissant lord Antoine Earle of Ryuyers lord of Scales & of the Isle of Wight, Defendour and directour of the siege Apostolique, for our holy Fader the pope in this Royaume of englond and governour of my lord prince of Wales, and It is so that at such tyme as he had accomplishid this said werke it liked hým to send it me in certayn quayers to	“Sedechias etc  . . . philosophers.” “Here endeth etc  (NB. same date exactly J.P.) <u>which book is</u> ( <u>so oft</u> which I had at first written on the other side, was a mistake due to the <u>astigmatism</u> of my right eye) J.P. (The paragraphs therefore correspond in every respect in the two copies, and therefore I might have spared myself the trouble of copying every portion J.P.)

5) The first paper in Trevelyan & Trevelyan (1872: 1-2) is on the manuscript of the *Dictes* and most of its content is the transcript of a modern note attached to the same manuscript (MS Additional 22718). In the following paper, which is entitled “canonization of King Henry V” in the same book, the name “the Rev. Joseph Power, the University Librarian” is mentioned (p. 4). It implies that W. C. Trevelyan asked Power for his expertise more than once.

6) The phrase *or sayings* is inserted with a caret above the line.

7) *book* is inserted above the line after the deletion of *so oft*.

8) The underlining of *whiche book is* is original. The practice of reproducing the underlining in the original is followed throughout this transcription.

ouerseer, Whiche forthwýth I sawe & fonde thereyn many grete notable, and wyse sayengys of the philozopheres. According unto the bookes made in frensh whiche I had ofte afore red / But certaynly I had seen none in englysh til that tyme. And so after ward I came unto my sayd Lord & told [2v] him how I had red & seen his book. And that he had don a meritory dede in the labour of the translacion therof in to our englysh tonge, Wherin he had deservid a singuler lawde and thank etc. Thenne my sayd lord desirid me to oversee it and where as I sholde fynde faute to correcte it. Wherin I answered unto his lordship, that I coude not amende it. But if I sholde so presume I might apaire it, For it was right Wel & cunninggly made and translated into right good and faýr englysh. Notwithstandyng he Willed me to oversee it & shewed me dyverce thinges Whiche as him semed might be left out as diverce letters missives sent from Alisaunder to darius and aristotle and eche to other. Whiche lettres were lityl appertinent unto dictes and sayenges aforesayd for as moche as they specifye of other matere. And also. . .” (as this is rather long I shall not, until further requested, copy it out at length, but content myself with giving the variantes lectiones J.P)

I have carefully collated the two copies & find they correspond in every respect for the remainder of this Colophon. J.P)

Then

“Socrates sayde . . . the not.”

“Lo these ben . . . heven. Amen”.

¶~~Caxton me fieri fecit~~<sup>9)</sup>

Et sic est finis ↗ ↘

NB. This same paragraph occurs word for word the same in Ab. 5. 37. with the single exception of “~~by me Wyn~~ “emprynted ~~by me~~ at London in Flestrete by me Wynkyn de Worde the year of our lord MCCCCxxviii” in lieu [2v] of “by me Will<sup>m</sup> [William] Caxton etc.” so that the tricks of printers date almost from the first origin of the art of printing.

For Wynkyn de Worde must have been winking thro’ his fingers, when he describes as happening to himself an interview with my Lord Ryuers which may or may not have happened to W. Caxton but certainly not to both. J.P.

“D . . . . D”

“D . . . . D”

¶ Caxton me fieri fecit.

9) This line is struck out in the original. The practice of showing deleted words like this is followed throughout this transcription.

[3r] The paragraph cited from Sir W. Trevelyan's copy ~~does not~~ beginning "Thus endeth the boke book of the dictes & notable wise seyinges etc" does not exist in either of the above Copies. J.P.

The Edition by Wynkyn de Worde which I have before alluded to contains The Preface ending "as here after ensiewis. It is slightly imperfect at the beginning and by help of the short quotations "Where it is so that every" in Sir W. Trevelyan's note, I think it extremely probably that it should commence as follows

Where it is so that every human creature by the<sup>10)</sup> suffraunce of our lorde god is boren and ordeyned to be subject and thrall unto the stormes of fortune.

I should be glad to know if my conjecture is right. I am not quite sure about the word boren: & it so happens that the few words supplied by Sir W. Tr. are exactly what were deficient in our copy. The Caxton Ab 9.41 contains only about the 20 last lines of the Preface, but when perfect undoubtedly contained the whole.

NB. The Wynkyn de Worde contains about 32 lines in a page, which coincides remarkably with Sir W's MS. in this need I shall give the Colophon (t.o.)

[3v] Ab 5.37.

begins imperfectly

W suffraunce of our lorde god is ~~Wor~~<sup>11)</sup> and ordeyned etc

. . . ensiewys.

Then "Sedechias was etc"

The 1<sup>st</sup> Colophon has already been described

"Lo these ben . . . in heuen. Amen"

"Thus endeth the dyctes and Sayenges of Philozophers Inprynted at London in Fletestrete at the sygne of the sonne by me Wynkyn de Worde in the yere our lorde MCCCCxxviii."

W & C

My dear Sir Walter

Above are my rough notes & remarks on the two copies by Caxton & one by Wynkyn de Worde of the Sayinges etc; I thought you might not be aware of the latter & have been induced to send you an acc<sup>t</sup> [account] of it. I dont find it mentioned in Dibdin amongst Wynkyn de Wordes publications. I think it not unlikely that your MS may have been used by both printers. It has something agreeing with all three copies.

10) The four words *human creature by the* are inserted with a caret above the line.

11) As Power confesses "I am not quite sure about the word boren" on the previous page, this word is illegible in Ab 5.37 due to the damage of the relevant leaf, where the first and a bit of the second lines are missing, and thus reproduced in Power's note as it appears in the imperfect copy. Unfortunately, all three printed versions that Power consulted had an imperfect preface, which allowed him to take only an educated guess. His conjecture is reasonable, as the same page in the Huntington copy is clear and shows *born*. Caxton's first edition (1477), when it is perfect, shows *born*, and his third edition (1489) *born*. Cf. *Early English Books Online* <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>>.

“Sic est finis” with ~~one~~ Ab 9.41<sup>12)</sup>, no preface with Ab 10.29. N° of lines in a page with Ab 5.37. Thanks for your invitation which I regret I cannot accept for the present.

Yours ever  
J. Power

### 3. Discussion and Conclusion

Power’s note includes his analysis of Caxton’s first edition (1477), third edition (1489) and de Worde’s edition (1528) compared with MS Additional 22718<sup>13)</sup>, which was in possession of Sir Walter C. Trevelyan at the time. Power explores the beginning and the end of the text, but this gives him some insights as to the similarities between the printed editions and Trevelyan’s manuscript. He tentatively comments: “I think it not unlikely that your MS may have been used by both printers [i.e. Caxton and de Worde]”.

Thanks to some scholarly work in the twentieth century, it is now known that MS Additional 22718 is in fact a copy from Caxton’s second edition (1480), which escaped the eyes of Power. See Bühler (1934) for some comparative textual analyses of Caxton’s second edition and MS Additional 22718. Power was in a privileged position as a librarian in Cambridge, where a notable number of early printed editions of the *Dictes* were extant. At the same time, it was unfortunate for him that none of the editions he explored had the famous additional colophon, which is available in MS Additional 22718:

Thus endith this book of the dytees & notable wise seyengges of the philisophers late translated and drawn owt of ffrenshe in to our englysshe tong by my forsaid lord Skales and bi his cōmādment [commandment] set in forme in this maner as ye may here in this book see whiche was ffynysshid the xxvij day of þe moneth of Novembir And þe seventh yere of þe reygne<sup>14)</sup> of Kyng Edward the ffourþ<sup>e</sup>.

The same colophon but with the date 18 November 1477 (instead of 28 November 1477 as in MS Additional 22718) appears in one of the John Rylands copies of the first edition and Caxton’s second edition (1480). Hellinga (1982: 77-79) argues that the colophon in the John Rylands copy of the first edition is a later addition than the printing of the book itself, which explains why it is unavailable in the other copies of the first edition including the Cambridge one explored by Power. As for the second edition, it was certainly printed in 1480, although it inherits the date 1477 from the first edition (see Hellinga 1982: 77). None of these editions reached Power when he investigated the *Dictes*. As for manuscripts, MS 265 in Lambeth Palace Library is another to hold the same colophon, but it was also outside the purview of Power’s analyses. It gives the date 24 December 1477.

It was unfortunate that none of the Cambridge copies of the *Dictes* held the famous added colophon, since its analysis could have highlighted the difference between MS Additional 22718 and the 1477, 1489 and 1528 editions rather than similarities. The dates in the colophon could also have given

12) *Ab 9.41* is inserted above the deleted word.

13) “AB.9.41”, “AB.10.29” and “AB.5.37” in the note show old class marks in Cambridge University Library. The current class marks are Inc.3.J.1.1[3480], Inc.3.J.1.1[3526] and Sel.5.51 respectively.

14) *g* is inserted above the line.

Power some insight into the possibility that MS Additional 22718 was copied from a printed edition instead of vice versa. On the other hand, Power was fortunate in a way in that he did not come across any versions with the colophon in question, since he would certainly have been entangled, if he had seen it in some printed editions, in the enigma of the relationship of different dates as some twentieth-century scholars such as Bühler were. Whether Power would have found the textual issue of the *Dictes* to be interesting or daunting is an open question.

### References

- Bühler, Curt F. 1934. “*The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*”. *The Library* 15: 316-329.
- Bühler, Curt F. 1940. “*The Churl and the Bird and The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers: Two Notes*”. *The Library* 21: 279-290.
- Bühler, Curt F. 1948. “New Manuscripts of *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*”. *Modern Language Notes* 63(1): 26-30.
- Bühler, Curt F. 1953. “Some Observations on *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*”. *The Library* 8: 77-88.
- Duff, E. Gordon & L. Hellinga. 2009. See Hellinga (2009).
- Hellinga, Lotte. 1982. *Caxton in Focus: The Beginning of Printing in England*. London: The British Library.
- Hellinga, Lotte. 2009. *Printing in England in the Fifteenth Century: E. Gordon Duff's Bibliography, with Supplementary Descriptions, Chronologies and a Census of Copies*. London: The British Library.
- Iyeiri, Yoko & Mitsumi Uchida. 2016. “Two Modern Notes Attached to Earl Rivers's English Translation of *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*”. *Kwansei Gakuin University, School of Sociology Journal* 123: 135-144.
- Louis, Cameron. 1993. “Proverbs, Precepts, and Monitory Pieces”, in *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500*, vol. 9, ed. Albert E. Hartung, pp. 2977-2978, 3361-3362. New Haven, Connecticut: The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences.
- Sayle, Charles. 1916. *Annals of Cambridge University Library 1278-1900*. Cambridge: University Library Cambridge.
- Trevelyan, Walter Calverley & Charles Edward Trevelyan (eds.). 1872. *Trevelyan Papers, Part III: With Introduction to Parts I, II., and III*. London: The Camden Society.

## Joseph Power's Note Attached to Earl Rivers's English Translation of *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*

### ABSTRACT

Following Iyeiri and Uchida (2016), the present paper presents another progress report on our project on Earl Rivers's English translation of *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*, which was printed at least three times by William Caxton and once by Wynkyn de Worde, and also copied in some manuscripts, including two famous ones, MS Additional 22718, British Library and MS 265, Lambeth Palace Library. Although the ultimate goal of our project is to offer a detailed description of textual and linguistic features in some major versions of the *Dictes* produced in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the objective of the present paper is more narrowly focused and is, specifically, to transcribe one of the modern notes attached to MS Additional 22718. The note concerned includes Joseph Power's comments on the relationship between MS Additional 22718 and the text in William Caxton's first and third editions (1477, 1489) and Wynkyn de Worde's edition (1528). Unfortunately, none of the printed editions investigated by Power includes the famous additional colophon, which is available in MS Additional 22718. Had he seen an edition with it, his view of the textual relationship could have been different.

**Key words:** *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*, Walter C. Trevelyan, Joseph Power, William Caxton, MS Additional 22718