



Word Order of Prepositions in Kyng AlisaunderKyng

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Word Order of Prepositions in *Kyng Alisaunder*

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山本 勉: *Kyng Alisaunder* における前置詞の語順

In Middle English, owing to "the decay of the inflectional system, which results in the levelling under *-e*,"¹⁾ the sentence construction became analytic and word order came to play a much greater part. As to the transition of the language, W. Świeczkowski says, "The fourteenth century is said to be a period of transition in the field of word order as in other fields."²⁾ The present paper aims at the description of word order of the preposition, the use of which was largely increased in Middle English to show the syntactical relationship. The examined work is a rhyming metrical romance, *Kyng Alisaunder*, which was written in the early fourteenth century.

As to the position of prepositions, they were usually placed before the words they govern, but in poetry they were sometimes postposed for the necessity of rhythm and rime. These postposed prepositions, that is, postpositions, are broadly classified into two groups; (i) the preposition postposed immediately after its object, such as '*vs among*,' and (ii) the preposition separated from its object, such as '*Many man hym went mide*.' In this paper we treat such postposed prepositions.³⁾

1. Prepositions postposed immediately after their objects.

[(...) Object-Preposition (...)]

a. In rime.

Postposed prepositions stand more frequently in rime than within the verse. See Table 1.

His dukes and his barouns, saunz doute,
Stondeþ and sitteþ hym *aboute*. (3964-5)
Jt had a croupe so an hert,

.....

An horne *in* þe forehede *amydward*⁴⁾ (: hard) (689-91)
He bad his sergeantz hem *amonge* (: stronge) (3473)
Alle þeues þat shulden ben ylore
Men brouzttē þat hors *bifore*. (699-700)

Hij ben byshett þe water *biside*. (: bride) (3698)
 Þe dust so roos hem *bituen* (: seen) (4373)
 Ac Alisaunder was sone hym *by*, (: cry) (7411)
 We willeþ hym nyme and fast bynde
 Boþe his honden his rigge *byhynde*, (2013-4)
 Alisaunder comeþ vpon his mule,

 And flyngeþ gode scour hem *forþy*. (: bloody) (5475-8)
 We shullen hym wynne, hym *maugre*.⁵⁾ (: ar he) (3400)
 Michel sorouþ was hym *myde*. (: abyde) (116)
 Ðat fel þe kyng Phelippe *neiþ*. (: fleiþ) (570)
 Anoþer lettre he sent hem *to*, (: ydo) (2972)
 Ðat þou hast oþer *tofore*. (: forlore) (4207)
 Ðoo hij plumten þe water *vnder*, (: wonder) (5769)
 Alle alouten hire *vnto*. (: moo) (188)
 Vpon a mule he went forþ onon,
 And gynneþ flynge gode scour hir *vpon*, (5469-70)
 Onon-riþttes his eren *wyþ*
 Certes al his body wriþeþ (6442-3)
 Þousandes of his he seeþ him *aboute*,
 Ae non of hem was wounde *wiþoute*. (4455-6)

b. Within the verse.

In comparison with the postposed prepositions in rime, the postposed prepositions within the verse are more rarely seen, and when they occur they are likely to be placed after the personal pronoun.⁶⁾

She clepeþ to hir ane sweyn
 Ðat is hire vnderchaumberleyn,
 And Neptanabus *after* sendeþ ;
 Þe chaumberleyn hym *after* wendeþ. (245-8)
 Me *bihynde* at my chyne, (: myne) (3973)
 Hem *tofore* nys bot deþ, (: sleþ) (3445)

2. The postposed prepositions separated from their objects.

[(...) Object... Preposition (...)]

All of these prepositions stand in rime.

He shal be kynges alle *aboute*, (: heuen-roue) (513)
 ('aboute alle kynges'=superior to all kings)
 Foure hniþttes hym comen *aboute* (: doute) (2322)
 Shal hym no foo stonde *azein*, (: man) (634)
 And a fesaunt hem fleiþ *amyddes*. (: bryddes) (568)
 Þe twoo were of Grece ybore *amyd*;⁷⁾ (: þrid) (4403)

We ben þe ost and þe water *bitwen.* (: flen) (3715)
 Porus and Alisaunder *bitwen.* (: ben) (7335)
 Anoper folk hem woneþ *by* (: Maritiny) (4925)
 Non ne spaak hym on ward *fore,* (: forlore) (4034)
 Ten þousande barons hir comen *myde,* (: ryde) (1035)
 Nyst þere non þat hym was *neiz* (: fleiz) (119)
 Þe sonne and þe hot skye
 Al þe day hem shyneþ *on* (: fom) (4902-3)
 Þe riche of hem reuþe hadden,

 And token conseil on þe morowen
 Chaumpe bataile to wenden *to.* (: so) (1232-7)
 Þe erþe quaked hem alle *vnder,* (: þonder) (3419)
 Euery wilde dere a-store
 Hij mowen by cours ernen *tofore.* (4993-4)

(The object is 'dere.' 'a-store=(adv.) in great number)

3. A compound word 'toward' is frequently separated by an intervening word or words.⁸⁾ This tmesis⁹⁾ occurs in rime but more frequently within the verse.

a. In rime. (two cases)

Whiles þe messageres weren *to* Porus *ward.* (: hard) (4547)

Doo was þe folk *to* rest *ward.* (: hard) (5329)

b. Within the verse. (eight cases)

To batail *ward* he gynneþ hym ȝarke. (1409)

To Darrie *ward* he went blijf, (1774)

To Tebes *ward* hij wendeþ whate. (2635)

Þe Tebans seiȝen hou men hem slouȝen,

And *to* her gates *ward* hem drouȝen (2761-2)

To Darrie *ward* all hij fareþ ; (4071)

To þe ost *ward* hij drowe, (5439)

Duk, and prince, erle, and kniȝth

To Ynde *ward* so dassheþ riȝth

To Faacen *ward* and heldes, (6644-6)

Table 1 FREQUENCY OF POSTPOSED PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions	In Rime		Within the Verse	Total
	Obj.-Prep.*	Obj... Prep.*	Obj.-Prep.*	
aboute	3	2		5
aboue		2		2
after			2	2

Prepositions	In Rime		Within the Verse	Total
	Obj.-Prep.*	Obj.... Prep.*	Obj.-Prep.*	
aʒein		1		1
amyd, amiddes		2		2
amydward	1			1
among	5			5
bifore	1			1
biside	2			2
bitwene	9	3		12
by	3	1		4
byhynde	3		1	4
forby	1			1
fore		1		1
fro	1			1
maugre	1			1
myde	8	3		11
neiʒ, ner	3	1		4
on		1		1
to	2	1		3
tofore	1	1	1	3
vnder	2	1		3
vnto	1			1
vpon	1			1
wiʒ	2			2
wiʒpoute	1			1
26	51(68.0%)	20(26.7%)	4(5.3%)	75(100%)

* 'Obj.-Prep.' means the preposition is placed immediately after its object, and 'Obj....Prep.' means the preposition is separated by other word or words from its object.

The separated preposition *to...ward* is excluded in this table and also excluded is the preposition which is detached from its object in the relative clause.

From the above table, we can broadly see the following points :

a. Most of the postposed prepositions stand in rime regardless of the position of their objects, the percentage being 94.7. This means the postposition occurs mainly for the necessity of rime.

b. There are many different prepositions postposed, the number being 26, and of such postposed prepositions, 'about,' 'among,' 'bitwene,' and 'myde' are frequently found in rime.

4. When the preposition governs the relative pronoun, now and then it is postposed, and when the relative subclauses are introduced by *þat*, displacement is the rule.¹⁰⁾ Such a postposed preposition was placed either in rime or within the verse according to the metrical necessity.

Ercules was whilom a man
þat non no miȝth stonde *aȝein*. (5579-80)
 Ac of wondres hadden hij more siȝth
þat any tale be *of* to telle, (: fell) (5798-9)
 For on his snoute an horne he beres
þat he sleep *wiþ* lyouns and beres. (6524-5)

Text

G. V. Smithers (ed.), *Kyng Alisaunder*. Vol. I. Text. EETS. OS 227. (Oxford, 1952).

Notes

- 1) T. F. Mustanoja, *A Middle English Syntax*, (Helsinki, 1960), Part I. p. 67.
 - 2) W. Świczkowski, *Word Order Patterning in Middle English*, (Nouton & Co., 'S-Gravenhage, 1962), p. 104.
 - 3) About a study of Chaucer's preposition, see Professor M. Masui's *The Structure of Chaucer's Rime Words*, (Tokyo, 1964), pp. 160-8.
 - 4) This is a tautological expression for the metrical reason and 'amydward' is quoted as the earliest citation in the *OED*.
 - 5) According to the *OED*, 'maugre' was often used in such phrases as 'maugre (a person's) teeth, head' (in spite of (his) resistance) and formally also used as 'maugre (his) beard, cheeks, eyes, face, heart, mind, mouth, nose, viage, will.'
- Cf. And, *maugre þe teeþ* of hem alle, (5832)
- 6) F. Mossé, *Handbook of Middle English*, (tr. by James A. Walker, Baltimore, 1952), p. 152. "This(=a postposition which governs a personal pronoun) was often a problem of rhythm, and is scarcely found except in poetry."
 - 7) This is also a tautological expression.
 - 8) T. F. Mustanoja, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 413. "Since OE the elements of the preposition (*to* and *ward*) have not infrequently been separated by a noun, in ME even by a pronoun. The pleonastic construction *to... toward* is also used."
 - 9) This separation of a word can be seen besides the preposition in some verbs which are combined by 'through' and in an adverb.

Ramel he took on þe wombe,
 And *roof* hym þorouȝ als a lombe. (2279-80)
 Also, *þorouȝ-roof* (2396)
 And *þorouȝ* hym þirleþ so a lombe (2390)
 Also, *þorouȝ-þerled* (2397)
 Miȝth Ich wyte who it ware

Þat Darrie þorouþ wiþ spere *bare* (4683-4)

Also, 'þorouþ-*bere*' (4590)

Tuelue gates þere weren *abouten*, (: douten) (2643)

Also, *þere-aboute* (542)

10) F. Mossé, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

C. T. Onions, *An Advanced English Syntax*, (London, 1904). p. 104.

"It (=the detachment of the preposition in interrogative and relative clauses) is frequent in Old Norse and the modern Scandinavian languages, and probably owes its existence in English to Old Norse influence."