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[https://www.100test.com/kao\\_ti2020/270/2021\\_2022\\_PETS\\_E9\\_98\\_85\\_E8\\_AF\\_BB\\_c67\\_270645.htm](https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/270/2021_2022_PETS_E9_98_85_E8_AF_BB_c67_270645.htm) Passage Eight ( Wakefield Masters Realism ) Moreover, insofar as any interpretation of its author can be made from the five or six plays attributed to him, the Wakefield Master is uniformly considered to be a man of sharp contemporary observation. He was, formally, perhaps clerically educated, as his Latin and music, his Biblical and patristic lore indicate. He is, still, celebrated mainly for his quick sympathy for the oppressed and forgotten man, his sharp eye for character, a ready ear for colloquial vernacular turns of speech and a humor alternately rude and boisterous, coarse and happy. Hence despite his conscious artistry as manifest in his feeling for intricate metrical and stanza forms, he is looked upon as a kind of medieval Steinbeck, indignantly angry at, uncompromisingly and even brutally realistic in presenting the plight of the agricultural poor. Thus taking the play and the author together, it is now fairly conventional to regard the former as a kind of ultimate point in the secularization of the medieval drama. Hence much emphasis on it as depicting realistically humble manners and pastoral life in the bleak hills of the West Riding of Yorkshire on a typically cold night of December 24th. After what are often regarded as almost “documentaries” given in the three successive monologues of the three shepherds, critics go on to affirm that the realism is then intensified into a burlesque mock-treatment of the Nativity. Finally as a sort of

epilogue or after-thought in deference to the Biblical origins of the materials, the play slides back into an atavistic mood of early innocent reverence. Actually, as we shall see, the final scene is not only the culminating scene but perhaps the *raison d'être* of introductory “realism.” There is much on the surface of the present play to support the conventional view of its mood of secular realism. All the same, the “realism” of the Wakefield Master is of a paradoxical turn. His wide knowledge of people, as well as books indicates no cloistered contemplative but one in close relation to his times. Still, that life was after all a predominantly religious one, a time which never neglected the belief that man was a rebellious and sinful creature in need of redemption, so deeply (one can hardly say “naively” of so sophisticated a writer) and implicitly religious is the Master that he is less able (or less willing) to present actual history realistically than is the author of the Brome “Abraham and Isaac”. His historical sense is even less realistic than that of Chaucer who just a few years before had done for his own time costume romances, such as *The Knights Tale*, *Troilus and Cressida*, etc. Moreover Chaucer had the excuse of highly romantic materials for taking liberties with history.

1. Which of the following statements about the Wakefield Master is NOT True? [A]. He was Chaucer's contemporary. [B]. He is remembered as the author of five or six realistic plays. [C]. He writes like John Steinbeck. [D]. HE was an accomplished artist.

2. By “patristic”, the author means [A]. realistic. [B]. patriotic [C]. superstitious. [D]. pertaining to the Christian Fathers.

3. The statement about the “secularization of the

medieval drama ” refers to the [A]. introduction of mundane matters in religious plays.[B]. presentation of erudite material. [C]. use of contemporary introduction of religious themes in the early days. 4. In subsequent paragraphs, we may expect the writer of this passage to [A]. justify his comparison with Steinbeck.[B]. present a point of view which attack the thought of the second paragraph. [C]. point out the anachronisms in the play. [D]. discuss the works of Chaucer. Vocabulary1. clerically educated 受过教会教育的2. lore 口头传说，口头文字3. patristic 有关早期基督教领袖的 4. vernacular 方言 5. boisterous 喧闹的 6. metrical 韵律的 7. stanza 诗节 8. medieval 中世纪的 9. plight 悲惨的命运 10. secularization 世俗化，脱离教会 11. pastoral 乡村的 12. bleak 荒凉的 13. documentary 记录文献的 14. monologue 独白 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)