Peire Cardenal

Clergue si fan pastor

Clerics pretend to be shepherds
And they are assassins;
And it appears a great saintliness
If one sees them dressed up,
And I set out to remember
That Sir Isengrin, one day,
Wished to come to a sheepfold:
But he feared the dogs so much
That he wore a sheepskin
So that he deceived them,
And then he ate and betrayed
All that which pleased him.

Kings and emperors,
Dukes, counts, countors
And knights along with them
Used to rule the world;
Now I see authority
Possessed by clerics
By robbery and deceit
And by hypocrisy,
By force and by preaching;
And they hold it a nuisance
If one doesn't turn all over to them
And he will be, however long he makes it hard.

When I am in the refectory
I don't think it any honor,
For by the highest table
I see the lowest people sitting
And the first to be distinguished.
Hear a great villainy:
For they dare to come there
And one cannot separate them from it.
However I never saw there as well
A poor low beggar
Sitting beside the lowly rich:
Of this you must excuse them.

They should never fear
Alcais or Almansor
That abbots or priors
Come to invade them
Or to seize their lands,
That should be their affair;
But here they are reflecting
On how the world could be theirs
And how Sir Frederick
They can throw out from shelter:
For such a one attacked him
Who did not rejoice for it.

Clerics, I who perceived you
Without a low heart within
Erred in his judgement,
For I never saw a lower people.