Non-scriptural Elements in the towneley cycle

Visschers, Boudewijn Servaes Jan

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Thesis presented for the degree of M.A.
in the University of Durham

by

Boudewijn Servaes Jan Visschers

Cand. Litt. Utrecht

Department of English Language
and Medieval Literature

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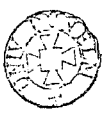

Abstract of Thesis

Non-scriptural Elements in the Towneley Cycle

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This study discusses non-biblical material in seven of Towneley's plays. Five of these plays, Mactacio Abel (II), Processus Noe cum Filiis (III), the two shepherds' plays (XII, XIII) and the Processus Talentorum (XXIV), are (influenced) by the Wakefield Master, whereas the Processus Prophetarum (VII), and the Suspencio Iude (XXXII) are not. It is argued that although each of these plays conforms to a theme current throughout the cycle - to convert and ask for mercy - the plays attributed to the Wakefield Master also pursue a different thematic concern of their own.

The non-scriptural elements can be described in terms of allusions to, and traces of, folklore customs, folktales and legendary material, social criticism and comment, inclusion of fictional characters introduced by the playwright(s) and a vivid portrayal of characters with human dimensions. By focussing on the significance of these features, their reason for introduction, their sources, and on whether a partially illiterate audience could have been familiar with them, it is suggested that although most of the material is traditional, the Wakefield Master used it in a unique way. Introducing new elements, or modifying material already present in the cycle, he reveals a predilection for depicting interpersonal conflict. This frictional relationship between man - man, based on a difference in commitments and found only where the Wakefield stanza is present, is reflected in man's relation to God.

The study suggests further that the author of the Processus Prophetarum may have used a breviary as his source, and that the Judas legend on which the Suspencio Iude is based resembles a particular offshoot of the OEdipus legend.

Of the twenty-one plates illustrating points of view, one involving a close folklore analogy to Mak's tossing in the Secunda Pastorum has hitherto received no attention, whereas some others dealing with the Noah legend have not been discussed before in English.

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Editions, Abbreviations and Acronyms

For all references and quotations the following editions of four mystery plays have been used:

York Plays: the Plays Performed by the Crafts or Mysteries of York on the Day of Corpus Christi in the 14th, 15th and 16th Centuries, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1885.

Ludus Coventriae: or the Plaie Called Corpus Christi, ed. K.S. Block, EETS ES 120. London: Oxford University Press, 1922.

The Towneley Plays, eds. George England, Alfred W. Pollard, EETS ES 71. 1897; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1952.

The Chester Mystery Cycle, eds. R.M. Lumiansky, David Mills, EETS SS 3. London: Oxford University Press, 1974.

Unless otherwise specified, all biblical references are to the Authorized King James Version. The Vulgate references are to Biblia Sacra Vulgatae Editionis Sixti V Pont. Max Jussu Recognita et Clementis VIII Auctorita te Edita, Nova Editio, Tornaci Nerviorum, 1881.

Translations of Latin quotations are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

In the footnotes, the first references to books and articles are in full so as to facilitate identification in the List of Works Consulted. Subsequent references in the same chapter are to abbreviated titles or acronyms. The latter are included in the list of abbreviations below. The titles of periodicals have been abbreviated throughout and are also found below.

Aberdeen Breviary:	Breviarium Aberdonense
ABR:	American Benedictine Review
ACD:	Ancient Cornish Drama
A.D.:	Anno Domini, "in the year of the Lord"
Addit.:	Additional
Ann. Med.:	Annuale Mediaevale
Archaeol. J.:	Archaeological Journal
Archiv:	Archiv für das Studium der Neueren Sprachen
Art Bull.:	Art Bulletin
AV:	Authorized King James Version
app.:	appendix
B.C.:	Before Christ
Beiträge:	Beiträge zur Geschicte der Deutschen Sprache und Literatur
bk.:	book
B.M.:	British Museum
B.N.:	Bibliothèque Nationale

c.:	circa, "about"
C15:	fifteenth century, etc.
CB:	Carmina Burana
CD:	Comparative Drama
cent.:	century
CFMA	Les Classiques Français du Moyen Age
cf.:	confer "compare"
Ch:	Chester
ch(s).:	chapter(s)
coll.:	college
cont.:	continued
col(s):	column(s)
Cor.:	epistle to the Corinthians
Dan.:	the book of Daniel
dept.:	department
Deut.:	the book of Deuteronomy
DMC:	Drama of the Medieval Church
DNB:	Dictionary of National Biography
ed(s).:	edited by, editor(s)
edn(s).:	edition(s)
EETS:	Early English Text Society
ES:	Extra Series
ESECL:	Essays and Studies in English and Comparative Literature
esp.:	especially
et al.:	et alii "and others"
ETJ:	Educational Theatre Journal
Exod.:	the book of Exodus
facs.:	facsimile
fasc.:	fascicle
ff.:	and the following
fig(s).:	figure(s)
fl.:	floruit "flourished"
fol(s).:	folio(s)
Gal.:	epistle to the Galatians
Gen.:	the book of Genesis
gen. pl.:	genitivus pluralis "genitive plural"
GL:	Golden Legend
i.e.:	id est "that is to say"
Isa.:	the book of Isaiah
Jer.:	the book of Jeremiah
Judg.:	the book of Judges
JEFDDS:	Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society
JEGP:	Journal of English and Germanic Philology
JWCI:	Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes
LA:	Legenda Aurea
LC:	Ludus Coventriae
LDMS:	Liturgy and Drama in Medieval Spain
l(l).:	line(s)
LSE:	Leeds Studies in English

M.Ævum:	Medium Ævum
Mal.:	the book of Malachi
Matt.:	the gospel according to Matthew
MED.:	Middle English Dictionary
MLN:	Modern Language Notes
MLQ:	Modern Language Quarterly
Monogr.:	Monograph
MP:	Modern Philology
MS	Medieval Studies
MS(S).:	Manuscript(s)
NDB:	Neue Deutsche Biographie
n(n).:	note(s)
no(s).:	number(s)
NS.:	New Series
n. sg.:	nominativus singularis, "first person singular"
NT:	New Testament
Num.:	the book of Numbers
N&Q:	Notes and Queries
Nordisk Tidskr.:	Nordisk Tidskrift for Vetenskap, Konst och Industri
OED:	Oxford English Dictionary; formerly New English Dictionary (NED). See NED in List of Works Consulted
OS.:	Original Series
OT:	Old Testament
pers.:	person
PG:	Patrologia Graeca, ed. Migne
PL:	Patrologia Latina, ed. Migne
pl(s).:	plate(s)
PMLA:	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
p(p).:	page(s)
p.p.:	per procurationem "by proxy"
prt.:	part
Ps.:	the book of Psalms
r (superscribed).:	recto "righthand page"
REED:	Records of Early English Drama
ref(s).:	reference(s)
resp.:	respectively
RORD:	Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama
rpt.:	reprint
RSSCW:	Research Studies of the State College of Washington
Sarum Breviary:	Breviarium ad Usum Insignis Ecclesiae Sarum
SEL:	South English Legendary
sg.:	singularis, "singular"
Soc.:	Society
SP:	Studies in Philology
SS.:	Second Series
St.:	Saint
st(s).:	stanza(s)
Suppl.:	Supplement(ary)

T.:	Towneley
tr.:	translated by, translation, translator
TSL:	Tennessee Studies in Literature
v (superscribed).:	verso "left-hand page"
viz.:	videlicet "namely"
Vol(s).:	Volume(s)
vs.:	verse
Vulg.:	Vulgate
Y.:	York
YES.:	Yearbook of English Studies
York Breviary:	Breviarium ad Usum Insignis Ecclesie Eboracensis

TO

MY PARENTS

"thi luf was me full lefe"

Introduction

Until the last Tudor sovereign Elizabeth I (reigned 1558-1603) formally introduced a protestant form of worship which procured the discontinuity of the religious drama, the Feast of Corpus Christi, instituted in 1311 and honouring the Transubstantiation, had been celebrated in England in dramatic form since at least 1376.[1] Depending on the date of Easter, the date set aside for the feast, the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, varied from May 23rd to June 24th (modern reckoning: June 4th to July 6th), coinciding with a fallow period in Church celebrations and (usually) clement weather. On this day, the Host was carried around town in a processional manner, accompanied by ecclesiastical authorities, municipal dignitaries and guild members, and displayed with ceremony at appointed stations.

Guild records attest that the guilds used this occasion not only ad maiorem Dei gloriam, but also as a display of craftsmanship and ingenuity. It became common practice to carry images in this procession or to depict biblical scenes in tableaux vivants on pageant wagons. It is possible that at some stage the actors in these tableaux vivants were furnished with dialogue which might account for the rise of plays known in the Middle Ages as Corpus Christi plays. Due to craft guild involvement, these plays are nowadays also referred to as mystery plays on the analogy of the Latin "ministerium" and French "mystère" or "métier." The inception of these plays, their indebtedness to the Corpus Christi procession, the manner of their staging, whether on wagons, static platforms, indoors or outdoors, and length of performance, whether of one or more days, is an intricate, not to say controversial, matter.[2] At all events, the dramatic performance consisted of a cycle of plays

usually encompassing biblical incidents ranging from the Creation to the Last Judgment. Of these cycles four have in more or less complete form survived the ravages of the Reformation and the carelessness of the following centuries: the York cycle, the Ludus Coventriae, a misnomer as the cycle has nothing to do with Coventry,[3] the Towneley cycle, connected with Wakefield and named after the family who owned the MS, and the Chester cycle.

In spite of their religious character, all surviving cycles contain non-biblical material, but the occurrence of non-scriptural features in especially the Towneley cycle poses many questions. By focussing on the significance of these features in this cycle, their sources, and on whether a partially illiterate audience could have been familiar with them, I intend to pursue the argument that although each of the plays dealt with bears witness to a theme current throughout the cycle, the plays generally attributed to the so-called Wakefield Master[4] also embrace a different thematic concern of their own. To this end I shall first discuss some of the plays (influenced) by him, i.e., Mactacio Abel (II), Processus Noe cum Filiis (III), the two shepherds' plays (XII, XIII) Processus Talentorum (XXIV), followed by those devoid of his influence: Processus Prophetarum (VII), Suspencio Iude (XXII). The extent of shared non-scriptural elements in all cycles necessitates a frequent comparison between Towneley and the other cycles, and occasionally between Towneley and surviving plays of lost cycles or continental cycles, to come to an appreciation of its handling of material.[5] The answer to the question what these non-scriptural elements are is reflected and discussed in the choice of plays, but this is not to say that non-scriptural material is not found in the undiscussed plays.

The seven plays examined are found in a unique and anonymous MS, HM. HM I in the Huntington Library, California, which contains a total of 32 plays some of which are incomplete. Available evidence suggests that the MS, probably written in the last quarter of the fifteenth century,[6] is a register, that is, the city's official copy of the text to be performed. Marginal inscriptions, local allusions and references to craft guilds connect the cycle with Wakefield although it is unknown how early that town could support a cycle of more than thirty plays; the earliest reference to a Wakefield Corpus Christi play dates from 1554.[7] Because of the connection Towneley MS. - Wakefield, the terms are sometimes used synonymously.

Footnotes to the Introduction

1. It is the thesis of H.C. Gardiner's Mysteries' End that "Every one of the four great cycles which have come down to us [see Introduction p. x] can be shown, with varying clarity, to have been put down through the intervention of authority within the period 1569-80, and that upon religious motives ... it was the Reformation and it alone, as principal cause, which killed off the religious stage in England." (p. 72).

   The earliest known reference to what may refer to Corpus Christi plays comes from an entry in the York A/Y Memorandum Book for 1376: "De vno Tenemento in quo Tres pagine Corporis christi ponuntur per annum ij s." "For one building in which three Corpus Christi pageants are housed per annum 2 s." See Records of Early English Drama: York, eds. A.F. Johnston and M. Rogerson, I, p. 3; II, 689.

   The feast of the Blessed Sacrament was first celebrated in Liège, Belgium, in 1247 on the instigation of an Augustinian nun Juliana of Liège who communicated her visions to ecclesiastical authorities one of whom was Jacques Pantaléon, Archdeacon of Liège, the future Pope Urban IV. In his bull Transituxus de hoc Mundo (1264) Urban IV proposed this feast as an official celebration, but due to his death it was not instituted until Clement V did so in 1311. John XXII published the papal decree in 1317. See "Corpus Christi," New Catholic Encyclopedia, IV, 345-7. V.A. Kolve, The Play Called Corpus Christi, p. 37, notes that the earliest reference to the celebration of Corpus Christi in England dates from 1318. The institution of the feast was probably not instantaneous as an entry in the Durham Bursars' account for 1338-9 reads: "...die Jovi in festo de Corpore Christi iiijs." "...on the Thursday in the Feast of Corpus Christi 4s." The specific mention of a Thursday as the day of Corpus Christi, the day on which the feast was always celebrated, suggests that the feast may still have been unfamiliar here.

2. D. Bevington in Medieval Drama, pp. 227-41, briefly discusses the problems involved and summarizes the constructions several scholars have put on the facts.

3. Quoting W.W. Greg, "Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles IV: Ludus Coventriae," The Library, 5 (1914) 370, the eds. of The N-Town Plays: A Facsimile of British Library MS Cotton Vespasian D VIII, P. Meredith and S.J. Kahrl remark, p. xxvii, n. 4, that "With the exception of one play the whole original text [of the LC] is in a single hand. This is a good plain hand of the second half of the fifteenth century, showing marked East-Anglian peculiarities." See also M. Eccles, "Ludus Coventriae Lincoln or Norfolk?" M. AEvum 40:2 (1971) 135-41, esp. p. 140: "...all plays were either written or revised in the dialect of East Anglia and were copied by an East Anglian scribe, probably in Norfolk."

4. The Towneley cycle, as all other cycles, was subject to constant revision. For his use of an intricate 9-line stanza, known as the "Wakefield stanza" and rhyming aaaabcccb with central aaaa rhyme in the aaaa lines, one of the revisers is known as the Wakefield Master. Authorship of the plays written entirely in this stanza form, as well as the Mactacio Abel although it contains only two Wakefield stanzas, is also frequently ascribed to him. As I hope to show, there are thematic reasons to suggest

that the versifier and author may have been one and the same person. The Wakefield stanza is found in play II, st(s). 35 (36, aaabccb; in both sts. aaaa halflines written as separate lines, total no. of lines: 13); III; XII (st. 15, aabcccb); XIII (st. 30, aabcccb); XVI (st. 6, aaaaaccca); XX, sts. 1-5, 97, 100 (in latter two: aaaa halflines written as abababab, total no. of lines: 13); XXI; XXII, sts. 1-4 (aaaa halflines written as abababab, total no. of lines: 13) 5-27; XXIII, st. 57; XXIV, sts. 1-5, 56-9 (st. 60 no aaaa central rhyme; aaaa end rhyme as abab); XXVII, st. 4; XXIX, st. 57 (two aa halflines as abab lines, other halflines as cdcd lines); XXX, sts. 16-48, 68-76. See also The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle, ed. A.C. Cawley, pp. xvii-xxxi which includes besides a discussion of the Wakefield Master's contributions to the cycle a brief commentary on the problematic Mactacio Abel.

5. Apart from other instances which will be dealt with in the discussion, Towneley has borrowed five plays from York: play VIII, Pharao (York XI); XVIII, Pagina Doctorum (York XX); XXV, Extraccio Animarum (York XXXVII); XXVI, Resureccio Domini (York XXXVIII); XXX, Iudicium (York XLVIII).

6. Usually the MS is dated to c. 1450, but linguistic/orthographic evidence supports a later date see The Towneley Cycle: A Facsimile of Huntington MS HM I, eds. A.C. Cawley, M. Stevens, p. xvii, n. 19.

7. Wakefield Pageants, ed. A.C. Cawley, app. I, pp. 124-6. Here Cawley publishes The Wakefield Burgess Court Rolls for 1554 and 1556 which contain the earliest references to Wakefield Corpus Christi plays.

Chapter One

Cain in the Mactacio Abel

Although bound by the traditional limits set by the biblical narrative to the Cain and Abel legend as found in Genesis 4:12-16, the Townsley author treats this biblical incident with such a freedom as to make the audience identify itself with the stage proceedings. By presenting Cain and Abel in a medieval environment as a ploughman and shepherd he makes them not only at once contemporaries but also more perennial, hence less historical and less esoteric. The people are now presented with a recognisable and realistic picture of life as they know it. They can easily relate the practical relevance of this biblical-turned-medieval situation to their own lives and even project it into the future in terms with which they are familiar. The Wakefield author disconnects as it were this Scriptural event from its biblical time and space and projects it into the Middle Ages using this latter day and age as a new starting point - a point with which his audience is familiar. The placing of Cain and Abel in a medieval environment need not be considered harmful since it does not teach the audience wrong moral concepts.

The above is not to say that the Wakefield author did not use any exegetical principles. As will be discussed later, he relied heavily on the Augustinian doctrine of the punishment of sin by sin, a doctrine with which the medieval population is likely to have been familiar through sermons. Both mundane and ecclesiastical elements have been fused into a coherent whole in the Mactacio Abel (II), yet it must be borne in mind that in dealing with in particular folklore elements one deals largely with material which has come down via an oral, i.e., unwritten tradition, details of which were not written down until, roughly speaking, the sixteenth century.[1]

Before embarking on a discussion of the Towneley Cain and Abel play it is necessary to consider the rendition of the legend in the individual cycles for the sake of comparison. This is because the authors of the respective mystery plays have all expanded the legend to the extent that plausible reasons have been given as to why Cain tithes unjustly and why his actions lead to his ultimate expulsion from God's grace into eternal torment. Bearing this in mind one can begin to appreciate the Towneley version.

The basis for the above mentioned expansion seems to have originated in the works of St. Augustine (354-430) who was well known in the Middle Ages. Not only did his De Civitate Dei provide much food for thought as far as the question of predestination - free will was concerned, but he was also widely quoted and alluded to in such works as the Speculum Christiani, the works of Wyclif and in sermon material such as in Middle English Sermons and Mirk's Festival. Chaucer mentions him as well.[2] St. Augustine's teachings are, briefly, that he classifies the human race as consisting of two branches or cities: those who live according to human standards and those who live according to God's will. Cain is the exponent of the former city which is doomed to eternal punishment, whereas Abel is the exponent of the Heavenly City which is predestined to reign eternally with God.[3] Predestination, however, does not mean that some men are created evil and some not. Predestination includes rather than excludes free will. Since God has foreknowledge of all events he knows all the decisions a human being will make. Only the good will stems from God whereas the evil will stems from man, or the devil, since evil runs contrary to God's nature.[4] Consequently, all evil stems from a free and conscious choice.

In his Enarratio in Psalmum LVII, Augustine succinctly teaches

that which is elaborately dealt with in De Civitate Dei, namely, that all sins are penalties of the primary sin, pride:

> Primum peccatum superbia est: ultima poena est ignis aeternus, aut ignis infernus; jam enim damnatorum. Inter illud primum peccatum et hanc ultimam poenam, media quae sunt, et peccata sunt et poenae.[5]

All men, being proud, have two choices: either to continue in pride or to adhere to God. Yet pride is by definition self-centred and relishes desires other than God. So, pride averts the will from God. The Fall was a result of this pride in man and showed him his lowly position in relation to God. In order for man to return to God's grace he must submit his will to Him.

According to Augustine the will is responsible for man's bad actions:

> ...improba voluntas, malorum omnium causa est.[6]

In this respect, the will and the soul are virtually synonymous. Consequently, Augustine can claim that:

> Peccati causam ex anima, non ex carne prodiisse, et corruptionem ex peccato contractam, non peccatum esse, sed poenam.[7]

In other words, through pride, which can be equated with concupiscence, sin generates sin as its punishment:

> ...ita concupiscentia carnis...et peccatum est... et poena peccati...et causa peccati.[8]

It is thus up to the individual which way he chooses: the way of submission or the way of pride. Should he decide against submission, then God's immediate judgement will be for him to suffer the discomfort of his own lust, be troubled by internal conflicts and consumed by his own fire:

> Qui autem illam concupicentiam...contemnit vincere... et adversus se ipse divisus, igne proprio concrematur.[9]

The internal conflicts may culminate in a hatred of anything or, because of his envy, anyone associated with God:

> Quid est invidia, nisi odium felicitatis alienae?...
> Quis vero sit invidus, qui non ei malum velit,
> cujus bono cruciatur?[10]

From the exposition below it will follow that St. Augustine applies the above mentioned concepts of pride, lust, hatred and envy in a very specific context when he relates man's human urges and passions to the relation between Cain and Abel. These concepts are all well within the realm of normal human conduct and may have provided the authors of the mystery plays with a means of escape from the short Cain and Abel account in the Bible. St. Augustine's addition of human dimensions to the legend may be seen as an extension piece of the Bible legend, and since his teachings had been accepted by the Church, the medieval dramatists could readily exploit them. They could digress from the Bible without transgressing the bounds of Christian doctrine. Since Augustine was quoted in various works of different natures it is reasonable to assume that the dramatists were familiar with his teaching as well.[11] In other words, the popularity of Augustine's works suggests them as a natural source.

The figure of Cain in the Chester Creation (play II) is typically self-centred. He had planned to sacrifice part of his great crop, "Of corne I have great plentee" (l. 517), but he does it under a pretence, he wants more:

> sacrifice to God sonne shall yee see.
> I will make too look if hee
> will sende mee any more.
> (ll. 518-20)

Having offered only fallen fruit to God, he reiterates his intentions:

> I hope thou wilte white mee this
> and sende mee more of worldly blisse;
> ells forsooth thou doest amisse
> and thou boe in my debt.
> (ll. 549-52)

but it all backfires on him in that God accepts Abel's offering and rejects his (Gen. 4: 4-5).[12] This drives him not only "...neare wood" (l. 570), but also to envying Abel. The basic concepts of avarice, envy and wrath provide the background against which the killing of Abel is to be seen. Cain regards God's advice that "yf thou doe well thou may have meede;" (l. 582) as a challenge "...in fowle manere;" (l. 605-6) and takes out his wrath on Abel. Bellowing, he warns Abel that he shall "...never efte have such grace,/ for dye thou shalt this night" (ll. 611-2). It is interesting to note that the word "grace" has been used. Cain misunderstands Abel's religious use of the word grace (l. 567) and like Mak in the Towneley Secunda Pastorum (play XIII, l. 314) interprets it as meaning "luck" or "favour." His misinterpretation will certainly have been taken by the audience for he implies that Abel will not be "lucky" nor receive any "favour" or "reward" for his offering, not while Abel is alive nor when he is dead. Yet in the end it is Abel who will receive grace and Cain who will not. So Cain not only reveals ignorance as far as mercy is concerned, but also a disbelief in reward being meted out after life. This goes a long way to suggesting that Cain does not believe in God's authoritative powers. His attitude becomes more obvious after the fratricide when he falls into despair which ushers in his damnation. He does not believe that he can be forgiven:

> ...I have donne soe muche amysse,
> that unworthy I am iwysse
> forgevenes to attayne.
> (ll. 642-4)

This quote could, of course, have been spoken by anyone. Yet the difference is that Cain will not seek to attain forgiveness.[13] In

effect he denies God's powers of mercy which falls short of saying that he denies God altogether.

Until the last moment Cain thinks in earthly terms. His concern for personal well-being, which first centred around sheaves of corn, has now shifted to one of mere survival. His pride which prevents him from submission to God becomes his downfall and he is therefore "...dampned without grace" (l. 666). Yet before leaving he tells the audience that he hopes they will meet the same fate as he does:

> A losell aye I muste bee,
> for scapit I am of thryfte.
> For soe God hath toulde mee,
> that I shall never thryve nee [thee].
> And now I flee, all yee may see
> I grant you all the same gifte.
>
> (ll. 699-704)

The Ludus Coventriae Cain (play 3), though he is perhaps a trifle more developed, resembles the Chester one. He is a rational man who thinks in practical earthly terms. Since God "...wyll neyther ete nor drynke/For he doth neyther swete nor swynke" (ll. 114-5) he thinks it preposterous to sacrifice the best part of his crop to be worse off himself(ll. 111-3). For this reason he holds "...it but vanyte" (l. 16) to visit his father to find out how to serve God, he "...had levyr gon hom well ffor to dyne" (l. 52). Yet despite his initial opposition he gives in to his father's advice, but he is definitely not going to "...make no bost" (l. 97) about his tithing as Abel does. Cain is so corrupt that he thinks the only possible reason for tithing well is to show off one's wealth. As far as he seems to be concerned, this is the first and the last time he shall be offering anything. He emphasizes that he "...wyll neuer be more chawnge my mood" (l. 124). One can almost hear him think "what is in it for me anyway?" It is here, however, that Cain falls into the classic trap described by Augustine:

> Quis autem ita desipiat, ut existimet aliquibus usibus Dei esse necessaria quae in sacrificiis offeruntur? Quod cum multis locis divina Scriptura testetur, ne longum faciamus, breve illud de Psalmo commemorare sufficerit: Dixi Domino, Deus meus es tu; quoniam bonorum meorum non [non] eges (Vulg. Ps. 15:2). Non solum igitur pecore, vel qualibet alia re corruptibili atque terrena sed ne ipsa quidem justitia homines Deus egere credendus est, totumque quod recte colitur Deus, homini prodesse, non Deo.[4]

Cain's self-interest leads him to the mistaken belief that God needs his sacrifice (ll. 111-3) whereas, ironically enough, it is he himself who is to benefit from it.

Being surprised at what happens to Abel's sacrifice, Cain gets slightly annoyed that his offering has been rejected. His anger mounts when Abel scoffs at him for his wrong tithing. Abel does not use any abusive language, but uses mere repetition to emphasize his point:

> Ffor of þe best were my tythis
> and of þe werst þou dedyst hym dyght
> bad thyng þou hym bede
> of þe best was my tythyng
> and of þe werst was þin offryng
> (ll. 137-41, my italics)

This piece of verse technique looks deliberate since it underscores the basic dichotomy between the two brothers. The repetitive element clearly has whimpering overtones and may suggest why Cain kills his brother in a moment of fierce anger: he had simply had enough of his incessant jangling. Cain's "drede" (l. 154) for his brother must have been due to his brother's psychological superiority rather than his physical predominance.

Having misunderstood the meaning of sacrifice, Cain equally underestimates God's importance. He tries to cover his brother's body with grass, assuming ignorance on God's part since the latter asks where his brother is. His answer is therefore evasive:

I kan not tellle wher that he be
. . . . . .
I know not wher he is.
(ll. 163, 165, and Genesis 4:9)

From his presuming to know more than God one may infer that he has not opted for submission. His downfall is therefore inevitable. His desire for earthly commodities until the very last moment is the last straw for God, and Cain is cast away from Him.

Another point worth mentioning about the Ludus Coventriae Cain is his cowardice. On being found out he is haunted by fear which makes him seek out concealment in a way that actually brings about death. In play 4, ll. 142-97, Lamech kills Cain, a good illustration of sin bringing forth sin. As we shall see later, this is in great contrast with the Wakefield Cain who is much more defiant and whose hiding place is eternal and cosmic, i.e., hell, rather than merely a literal thicket.

The York play Sacrificium Cayme and Abell (play VII), the shortest of the extant Cain and Abel plays even if two leaves had not been missing, explains explicitly through the mouth of an angel why man should thank God. As the tenth order of angels was sent to hell for pride, God created man to fill that place. For this goodness he asks tithes in return:

And sithen he kyd him such kyndnes,
Som-what wille he wirke þer-fore.
The tente to tyne he askis, nomore,
Of all þe goodes he haues you sent,
full trew.
(ll. 25-29)

Abel takes the angel's point, but, as in the Ludus Coventriae pageant, Cain adopts an attitude of self-interest. Surely, if God is omnipotent he does not need his offering? "If he be moste in myghte and mayne,/ what nede has he?" (ll. 65-6). Thus Cain makes the same mistake as in the Ludus Coventriae, (see pp. 6-7 above), allowing Abel to explain that God "... has non nede vn-to þi goode,/But it will please hym principall," (ll. 67-8) echoing

St. Augustine's remark quoted above (see p. 7 n. 14)

The content of the missing leaves is open to conjecture, but must at least have included the killing of Abel and the introduction of a third, biblically unjustified, person - Brewbarret. The significance of the latter is not altogether clear. If his name is anything to go by, Brewbarret meaning "Strife-brewer,"[15] then we may conclude that he was introduced to provide some comic relief from the seriousness of the play. Lines 73-98 contain some horseplay, but Brewbarret's role is too short to attach anything significant to his presence.

The fact, however, that God's role has been taken over by an angel seems to be more significant. The angel functions as an agent between God and Cain and is at the receiving end of Cain's anger after he has delivered God's curse. Cain is not remotely impressed by the angel's message and in an unparalleled scene buffets him: "Take that thy self, evyn on thy crowne,//To tyne" (l. 88). It is reasonable to assume that some horseplay was intended here. The buffeting incident may also have been used to emphasize Cain's wretchedness. Having killed his brother, which is not mentioned in the MS but must have been in the two missing leaves, and maltreated his servant, Cain treats the angel unjustly as well. It looks as if he cannot accept any hierarchy, neither the vertical one - Brewbarret, Cain, Angel -, nor the horizontal one - brother - brother.[16] It would come up to expectations that someone with an internal disorder like Cain would rebel even more against the supreme hierarch : God.

There is no biblical warrant for the appearance of the angel in this episode. This, however, is not in violation of any religious doctrine since the angel makes it clear that he is a go-between and acts on God's behalf:

God hais sent the his curse downe,
.....
God hais sent the his malyson,
.....
...god is greved with thy greuaunce,
.....
God has geffyn þe his malisonne.
(ll. 86, 90, 103, 107)

There is only one instance where the angel can be said to have fallen out of his role as agent. Just when Cain has hit him on the head he announces God's curse, adding his own in apparent retribution for the blow: "And inwardly I give the wyne" (l. 91). The role of an angel as mediator is well preserved in the Bible so that his appearance here is not too striking. Since this York play is the only surviving one in which an angel taking God's place appears and is buffeted, I am inclined to believe that the angel was introduced to provide an antagonist in this, what could be called, slapstick scene.

Cain's reaction on being cast out from God's care is stereotypical. He is desperate and afraid of asking for mercy:

My synne it passis al mercie,
For ask it þe, lord, I ne maye,
To haue it am I nou3t worthy.
(ll. 118-20)

His presumption that he is beyond mercy clearly resembles the one of his alter ego in the Chester cycle (quoted above p. 5). In a similar fashion he refuses to ask for forgiveness and this leads to his fall. Yet whether his remorse is deep rooted is open to debate. He has been made to understand that his conduct caused his present misery, but on leaving the stage he apparently hurls back his curse at the audience like the Chester Cain, showing that he has not really changed:

That curse that I haue for to feill
I giffe you þe same.
(ll. 137-8)[17]

The Towneley play Lactacio Abel is not only the most elaborate of the extant Cain and Abel plays in that it explores religious as well as social concepts, but it is also the one whose human portrayal of Cain is most realistic and convincing. It highlights the basic dichotomy between Cain and Abel with the aid of the teachings of St. Augustine and St. Ambrose (339-397).[18] The former pointed this out by making a distinction between men belonging to an earthly city and men of a Heavenly City:

> Natus est igitur prior Cain ex illis duobus generis humani parentibus, pertinens ad hominum civitatem; posterior Abel, ad civitatem Dei.[19]

whereas the latter, his contemporary and teacher, dwells on two classes or schools of people:

> ...una [secta] quae totum menti suae deputat tamquam principali et quasi cuidam cogitationis et sensus et motus omnis auctori hoc est quae omnes inuensiones humano adscribit ingenio, altera quae tamquam operatori et creatori omnium deo defert et eius tamquam parentis atque rectoris subdit omnia gubernaculo, illa prior Cain significatur, haec posterior Abel dicitur.[20]

On this basis the Towneley author is able to depict Cain as a typical medieval man whereas Abel remains more of an exegetical character.

Cain is introduced by Garcio, also known as Pikeharnes, "... a mery lad;" (l. 2), who in his speech suggests that his master, whom he does not mention by name, is a villain. Moreover, he does not exclude the possibility that some people in the audience are like Cain:

> Begyn he with you for to stryfe,
> certis, theh mon ye neuer thryfe;
> Bot I trow, bi god on life,
> Som of you ar his men.
> (ll. 17-20)

This speech of course raises the audience's suspicion as to who Garcio's master is and thus they await him eagerly. The remark "Som of you ar his men" (l. 20) puts the audience on the alert

since it implicates the audience in the sense that attention is drawn to the actors as representatives of the spectators.

Garcio's speech also includes the first allusion to Cain's character (ll. 17-8). This allusion to his quarrelsome if not fiendish nature may go back ultimately to 1 John 3:12: "...Cain, who was of that wicked one..." which permits the interpretation that he is, in figurative terms, a son of the devil. It is possible that this covert reference to Cain's impious character, reinforced by Fathers of the Church such as St. Augustine, established later allusions as to his character.[21] Augustine, for example, quotes this biblical passage in a context where he discusses how Cain's perverted self-interest led him to sacrifice a "wrongly divided" offering. As a result of its rejection he grew envious of his brother and killed him.[22] Expositions such as St. Augustine's along the lines of: evil character - self-indulgence - wrong offering - envy - murder, may have suggested themselves as natural sources for a playwright.

Then Cain appears, cursing and urging his mixed plough team forwards (see pl. 1).[23] The size of his plough team must have been familiar to the audience since the use of, for example, the eight-ox plough had been increasing ever since its introduction by the Saxons.[24] The author, however, takes his description of ploughing customs even further by having Cain cry out at Garcio "What, boy, shal I both hold and drife?" (l. 39). It was a medieval ploughing custom that a man with a goad walking backwards before the plough team should "drive" the oxen with a song (see pl. 2).[25] This is exactly what Cain wants Garcio to do as the animals are virtually unmanageable. The animals' disobedience may reflect Deuteronomy 22:10 "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together." In the Glossa Ordinaria one finds a comment on this biblical verse:

> In bove et asino arat, qui recipit Evangelia cum Iudaeorum observantia, quae praecessit in umbra. In bove quoque bene operantium vita, in asino stultorum socordia....[26]

It is clear that his handling of the plough team reflects his upsetting the natural, i.e., biblical order of things.

Cain's ignorance of the order of things, and for that matter also Garcio's, is highlighted when he strikes Garcio on his "fals chekis" (l. 48). Garcio is immediately ready to accept the challenge and fight back. Both suggest that there is no social bond of mutual respect between master and servant. The medieval audience, steeped in feudal heritage, can hardly have failed to see this point since so many feudal relationships depended on a bond of respect. This becomes apparent from M. Bloch's work where one can read that:

> ...le nouveau vassal jurait d'être fidèle à son maître.
> .....
> Dans une société troublée, où la méfiance était de règle, en même temps que l'appel aux sanctions divines semblait un des rares freins à peu pres efficaces, le serment de fidélité avait mille raisons d'être fréquemment exigé. Les officiers royaux ou seigneuriaux de tout rang, le prêtaient à leur entrée en charge. Les prélats le demandaient volontiers à leurs clercs. Les seigneurs terriers, parfois, à leurs paysans.[27]

Although the bond constituted more often than not "...un engagement unilatérale..."[28] as far as the servant was concerned, the master depended on the work of the servant without whose work his demesne would gradually regress. In other words, a mutual bond is implied since the servant depended on his lord's estate for a livelihood, whereas the lord depended on labour. An element of respect is inherent in such a relationship. Applying this to Cain and Pikeharnes, one notices that both depend on each other although they seem to deny this. Without Pikeharnes the ploughing would come to nothing and without Cain

Pikeharnes would be out of a job.

Abel who enters just after Cain's and Garcio's argument totally misapprehends the situation and mood he encounters. His wish "God, as he both may and can,/ Spede the, brother, & thi man" (ll. 57-8) just after his brother has managed to avoid a fight may have sounded rather sarcastic to Cain. The latter, still enraged, heatedly says to his brother:

> Com kis myne ars, me list not ban,
> As welcom standis ther oute.
> Thou shuld haue bide til thou were cald;
> (ll. 59-61)

Although it is possible that Cain's continued anger is the result of Abel's greeting, it seems more likely that it is a marker of his character. The Bible does not refer to any animosity between the brothers and only St. Ambrose makes a plausible suggestion, namely, that the sheer <u>sight</u> of Abel may have roused Cain:

> Cain..., qui in fratre suo uir insipiens formam speciemque uirtutis expressam ferre non potuit.[29]

Especially line 61 of the quotation above suggests that the fraternal relationship leaves much to be desired. Abel, still not understanding the seriousness of the situation, exhorts his brother to come along and offer his tithes. Yet before proceeding to the offering Abel suggests that they go through a ritual cleansing procedure to purify themselves:

> And therfor, brother, let vs weynd,
> And first clens vs from the feynd
> or we make sacrifice;
> (ll. 78-80)

This aspect, not mentioned in any of the other cycles, is peculiar to the writings of St. Ambrose: "interioria ergo nostra mundemus, ut possit oblatio non displicere."[30]

Cain, however, gets increasingly annoyed with his brother and wants him to stop his "sermonyng" (l. 86). Claiming that he is a simple ordinary farmer who has had to sweat and labour for

years to make a mongro living, Cain reminds himself of all the physical hardship he had to go through (l. 242) and he cannot understand why he should offer part of his best crop. He denies his brother's claim that whatever he possesses is a gift of God's grace(ll. 116-7) by maintaining that God has always been his enemy since his harvests failed time and again (ll. 119-26). Surely, he cannot be blamed if he treats God accordingly? Like the Ludus Coventriae and York Cain, the Towneley Cain seems to be saying "What is the advantage for me?" If he gives away his goods like that he will end up a beggar. No, "... it is better hold that I [Cain] haue/ then go from doore to doore & craue." (ll. 142-3).[31]

Apart from Cain's refusal to sacrifice being a personal denial of God's authority over him, it also has a contemporary, medieval, significance. In the Middle Ages local churches took tithes from the laity to provide for themselves. Holding back tithes could result in excommunication. Since excommunication meant to medieval man that he would come to stand alone in a world which adhered in virtually all respects to God, he was morally and through force of circumstances obliged to pay tithes. Yet "tithe-dodging" seems to have occurred time and again since John Mirk includes a service for excommunication, mentioning amongst other things the withholding of tithes, in his Instructions for Parish Priests:

> ...we accursen al them that... proper tithinges with holden, or destroyen with hem self or with her bestes, or beren awey, and all þat consenten thereto.....
> by the aucthorite of the courte of Rome
> .....
> þat þey haue no part of masse ne matenes ne of none oþer gode praiers, that ben do in holy chirch ne in none oþer places, but that þe peynes of hell be her mede...and þe life of hem be put oute of the boke of lyfe tyll þey come to amendment & satisfaction made.[32]
>
> (ll. 658-6, 691-3, 760-1, 770-6)

So, in his ranting speech against tithing, Cain does not only denounce the biblical practice of tithing, but also the medieval ecclesiastical one. The fact that "tithe-dodging" occurred suggests that it was on the popular mind and disadvantageous to the clergy. Since both Cain's dubious morals and ultimate fate are known, it is possible that the author of the play used him as the archetypal "tithe-dodger" whose fate had to discourage the audience from holding back tithes. It is not likely that the medieval spectators, the majority of whom had strong agricultural connections if they were not farmers themselves, failed to grasp Cain's point since church tithes were only one of the several tax obligations that burdened the life of the medieval population.[33]

From Cain's complaint "My wynnyngis ar bot meyn,/ No wonder if that I be leyn" (ll. 111-2) we may infer that despite hard work his crops do not yield enough to prevent him from going hungry. In addition to this he is required to give away one tenth of whatever little he has. In his train of thought this is unfair, he feels exploited and therefore not obliged to give anything away. No matter how one approaches the figure of Cain, one has to come to the conclusion that he rebels against the system and that, if possible, he will try to put his own well-being before any obligations to God.

Abel tries to exhort Cain to come along by saying that he does not want to go without him. Cain eventually consents to his brother's wishes although it is difficult to see why. It cannot be for fraternal reasons since he denies fraternity:

> Abell Ar we not brether, thou & I?
> Cayn No,...
>
> (ll. 157-8)

It cannot be for expectation of personal gain either since that led to nothing in the past:

I have gone oft on softer wise
thor I trowed sem prow wold rise.
(ll. 162-3)

It is therefore likely that he either submits to stop Abel's continuous jangling or else because he has perhaps already premeditated his brother's murder.

Abel's prayer while offering his tithes is short and, since they are accepted, effective. In his invocation he recognizes God's omnipotence and thanks him for hearing his "steven" (l. 175). He is humility itself. Cain's address to God is quite the opposite. He makes a farce of his invocation by tithing improperly:

Oone shefe, oone, and this makys two,
bot nawder of thise may I forgo:
Two, two, now this is thre,
yei, this also shall leif with me:
. . . . . .
ffoure shefis, foure, lo this makis fyfe-
. . . . . .
ffyfe and sex, now this is sevyn,
. . . . . .
Sevyn, sevyn, now this is aght,
. . . . . .
. . .aght, aght, & neyn, & ten is this
(ll. 192-5, 204, 206, 210, 218)[34]

As one can see, he repeats nearly every number interspersing it with mumbling and grumbling. This leaves him ample time to select and hide the best and most tithes on his side before selecting an inferior one for God. The very selection procedure shows Cain's hypocritical nature. He has apparently had an abundant harvest since he keeps a great number of superior sheaves to himself, but it contradicts his earlier allegation (ll. 111-2, quoted above) that he must go hungry because of failing harvests. This underscores Cain's predominant self-interest.

The result of his tithing is that only the worst sheaves remain for the offering. It looks as if the source for Cain's miscounting lies in some hints provided by St. Ambrose and St. Augustine respectively:

> Cain:...si recte offeras, non recte autem dividas...
> .....
> etenim divisionis hic ordo est, ut prima secundis, non primis secunda praecurrant et caelestia terrenis, non terrena caelestibus praeferantur.[35]

According to Augustine, offering wrongly happens amongst other things:

> ...sive cum electiora sibi ejusdem generis rerum tenet homo, quam sunt ea quae offert Deo;...[36]

These hints strongly suggest that the playwright expanded them for his dramatic cause.

Cain's obstinate self-interest is now obvious. Proud of whatever he has he cannot and will not forsake his earthly goods. A sacrifice which would mean a recognition of his own lowly position in relation to God is withheld, so that in effect he is mocking and refusing to budge for God's power. He rather uses God for his own purposes to get rich than use his own goods for the purpose of God and ultimately himself. As a writing on the wall his offering is refused amidst suffocating smoke.

The idea for Cain's lengthy speech may have been prompted by St. Ambrose, who seems to have relied on Prov. 10:19 "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin": "Orantes autem nolite multum loqui..."[37] Cain's speech itself shows how obvious his sin is:

> Exiuit multiloquium, peccatum intravit, quia in multiloquio nequaquam qui exeat sermo, trutinatur. imprudenter labitur, licet ipsum ultra mensuram aliquid loqui grande peccatum sit.[38]

Besides this, the standard indication of sinful characters in all the cycles is of course the use of foul language.

It is understandable that Cain's temper worsens by the minute. First of all, his brother distracts him when not sent for. Secondly, in order to appease Abel, he reluctantly makes an offering. Thirdly, the entire sacrifice backfires on him when the tithe

nearly chokes him. On top of that, he has to swallow his brother's comment that his offering "... is not worth come loke:" (l. 285). Virtually his every move is commented on by his almost intolerably "smooth" younger brother who also seems a bit "slow."[39] Then, and this is the last straw, God makes himself known to him by asking "...whi art thou so robell/Agans thi brother abell?" (ll. 291-2). Taken by surprise, Cain retorts "... who is that hob-ouer-the wall?" (l. 297) that minds my business? His line of thoughts can easily be followed. If God is omniscient he must understand why he is angry and need not ask any questions. Since God thinks it necessary to ask the question He apparently has no foreknowledge of events which is equal to saying that God does not exist.[40] So, the voice apparently comes from a "...hob-ouer-the wall..." (l. 297). This may reflect a rather superstitious and primitive streak in Cain, as if gods are no more than primitive "hobs."

In his anger about the failure of his sacrifice he commits two grave errors. Firstly, he ignores the significance of God's question, namely to think over what he is doing, repent and make up for it. Secondly, he denies the divinity of God Himself. As Cain is the representative of man's way of life leading away from God, while the social order is the earthly representation of the Divine order, his opting for a mundane existence instead of an existence in God symbolizes the struggle of the individual against order (hierarchy) and, for that matter, God. For Cain it is a matter of either/or, he cannot be a man of the world and a man of God: it is either the one or the other.

By opting for a life according to man, not according to God, he is "like the devil."[41] In this respect, the much earlier allusion to Cain's devilish character (ll. 17-8 and p. 12 above)

may gain considerably in weight. It means that the Towneley author from the beginning of the play onwards worked gradually but persistently at the portrayal of Cain from a mere boorish, rough-mouthed farmer to a first degree criminal. The allusion to his fiendish character is supported by Cain's frequent references to the devil and perhaps "...hob-ouer-the wall..." (l. 297) belongs to that category as well. The smoke of his sacrifice which "...stank like the swill in hell," (l. 283) may be foreshadowing his fate in hell. Thus the figure of Cain develops in character during the play.

To prevent people from meddling in his affairs, Cain takes his brother "hens" (l. 305) telling him that he has a bone to pick with him. From his very words:

> ...whi brend thi tend so shyre?
> Ther myne did bot smoked
> right as it wold vs both haue choked.
> .....
> ...that shal thou sore abite;
> (ll. 317-9, 323)

one is able to discern that he is jealous as he kills Abel. Again, the Towneley Author seems to have found his source material in St. Augustine's De Civitate Dei:

> ...sed infidentia illa diabolica, qua invident bonis mali, nulla alia causa, nisi quia illi boni sunt, illi mali.[42]

Cain's murder weapon, a "cheke bon" (l. 324), continues a widespread older English tradition. In the Ludus Coventriae, Abel is killed with a "chavyl bone" (play 3, l. 149), whereas the York and Chester plays do not mention a weapon.[43] MS. B.M., Addit. 31,042 of the Northern Passion reads: "he [Cain] tuke the cheke bone of an ass;" the same weapon is found in the MSS of the Cursor Mundi as in, for example, MS Cotton Vespasian A. iii: "Wit þe chafte ban of a ded has."[44] The oldest literary reference found so far is

contained in the Old English prose Salomon and Saturn, in a MS. which dates from the middle of the twelfth century. The relevant passage reads:

> Ic ðe secge, forðám ðe Abeles blód gefeól ofer stán, ða hine Chain his bróðer ofslóh mid ános escles cinbane.[45]

The provenance of the jawbone, not mentioned in Genesis 4:8, has intrigued several scholars. O. Emerson, quoting L. Ginzberg, mentions two legends connected with the instrument of the murder. The first one is a stone and seems to be connected with Hebrew tradition. The second one is the jawbone, and cannot be explained,[46] although a confusion with the story of Samson (Judg. 15:16) may not be discounted.

M. Schapiro produces a wealth of pictorial evidence proving that the murder of Abel with the jawbone was quite popular "from the eleventh to the sixteenth century."[47] He also shows that the rarity of the occurrence of the jawbone on the continent before the fourteenth century compared with its frequency in England suggests an English provenance. According to him a linguistic content lies at the basis of the problem. Since Cain is the "ecg-bana" of Abel in Beowulf, ll. 1261-2, he postulates the development: Cain bana - cinban.[48] G. Henderson, however, challenges this hypothesis replacing it with a suggestion "...that the tradition of Cain's jawbone originated entirely within the province of book illustration."[49] His main argument is that the artist of the earliest representation of the jawbone murder, B.M. Cotton MS. Claudius B iv: AElfric's Paraphrase of the Pentateuch and Joshua of the second quarter of the eleventh century, was probably familiar with a representation of Samson's slaughtering the Philistines with a jawbone. Since the AElfric MS. artist probably relied on an archetypal representation

of biblical incidents he may either have confused Cain's and Samson's weapon or deliberately depicted Cain with Samson's jawbone. In case of a confusion, Henderson wonders which weapon Cain may have had that resembled Samson's. On the basis of Genesis 4:2 which sees Cain as a tiller of the ground and the fact that it is possible to interpret the weapon on some Irish sculptured crosses as a coulter, he suggests that the artist may have confused a coulter with the jawbone. At least the murder weapon in the AElfric MS. and the coulter in, for example, B.M. Cotton MS. Julius A vi fol. 3 , show a remarkable similarity (Cf. pls. 2 and 4). It would thus seem that the Towneley cycle incorporates two traditions, namely the one which sees Cain as farmer and the one in which Cain wields a jawbone.

Having killed his brother in a frenzy, exemplified by "Yei, ly ther old shrew, ly ther, ly!" (l. 330), Cain threatens the audience that if they think that the fratricide was bad he shall show them something worse (ll. 331-5). In this statement one is able to detect in him a gleam of pride in what he had achieved. In an ironical way he echoes St. Augustine's teaching that through concupiscence sin becomes the punishment of sin.

Fear for the consequences of his crime overtakes him. Yet, characteristically, his thoughts of self-preservation focus on the repercussions his crime will have under mundane law, not divine law. Since he took his brother some distance away from where they were burning their tithes, anyone might conceive his crime as planned and stealthily perpetrated. Th. Green points out that homicides "deliberate but of a sudden as well as those planned and stealthily perpetrated fell into the large category of culpable homicide."[50] These crimes were capital, so it is not surprising

that Cain exclaims:

> Into Som hole fayn wold I crope;
> ffor ford I qwake and can no rede,
> ffor be I taken, I be bot dede;
> (ll. 337-9)

It is quite likely that the "hole" (l. 337) to which he refers is an outlaw's lair or some such hiding place.[51] On the other hand, it may also refer to a place of sanctuary since he also refers to a period of "fourty dayes" during which he will have to hide to save himself from capital punishment. The national practice was that if a criminal did not emerge after that period, the authorities could starve him into surrendering.[52]

In the middle of his thought of sanctuary, he is disturbed by God asking where Abel is. Cain again denies God's omniscience. He believes that God is unaware of his crime since the latter asks "...where is thi brother abell?" (l. 344), and he even tries to deceive God:

> what askis thou me? I trow at hell:
> At hell I trow he be -
> (ll. 345-6)[53]

Cain does not realize, however, that God had given him an opportunity to save himself from becoming even more entangled in his crime. God's question was meant to give him the chance to realize what he had done, and repent. God's intention is adequately described by St. Ambrose:

> est quaedam in peccatis uerecundia et paenitentiae portio crimen fateri nec deriuare culpam, sed recognoscere. mitigat iudicem pudor reorum, excitat autem pertinacia denegantium. uult te prouocare ad ueniam deus, uult de se sperari indulgentiam, uult demonstrare tua confessione quod non sit auctor malitiae.[54]

Cain clearly shirks his duty to be his brother's keeper, as if this were beyond the bounds of nature's laws. With a desperate sort of courage he tries to evade judgement as if he were above it. So God curses him, which Cain misinterprets as meaning that he cannot

receive any mercy. By saying that he will from now on "...hyde me fro thi face;" (l. 361) he shows that he doubts God's power of mercy. Therefore God resorts to the ultimate penalty. Cain shall not be killed by anyone, which may seem a relief, but the catch is that he will have to live with his guilty conscience. No penalty is more grievous than that.

Cain is so afflicted by his evil conscience that he does not dare ask for mercy:

> In hell I wote mon be my stall
> It is no boyte mercy to craue,
> ffor if I do I mon none haue.
> (l. 375-7)

It is clear from the quotation that he shifts the responsibility for his state onto God by asserting that God will not rescue him. Yet Cain forgets that by not tithing properly and by not asking for mercy he has damned himself as Judas did (see below p. 28 and my chapter on Suspencio Iude). Cain's reason for not asking for forgiveness echoes the ones in the Chester and York plays (quoted above pp. 5 and 10 respectively) to the extent that we may be led to the conclusion that there may have been a tradition which depicted Cain as a self-centred braggart who in his despair refuses to turn to God.[55] The damnation which follows is largely self-induced because of the denial of God's omniscient powers. Having opted away from God, Cain is forced to seek his own survival. In a bid to avoid being found out he resolves to bury his brother's corpse. Cain, as well as the audience, knows what the penalty for his crime will be.

Pikeharnes, who is called upon to help conceal the body, declines to cooperate as he fears the reprisals it may have for him:

> Nay, bot for ferde of grovance
> here I the forsake;
> we mon haue a nokill myschaunce
> and the bayles vs take.
> (ll. 402-5)

In his refusal one may observe his knowledge, and probably that of the audience as well, of contemporary criminal justice which ruled that "to come forward later [after a homicide] was to risk a fine for not having raised the hue."[56]

Cain who has so often been the pivot of the action decides again to defy all authority and cries the king's peace for both Pikeharnes and himself. He does this by ordering his accomplice to imitate the cry of a herald "oyes, oyes, oy!" (l. 416). The king's peace or pardon was a royal prerogative by means of which the king could in the form of a written statement, grant a pardon to a felonious slayer. Cain's peace is a clear imitation of this royal privilege. His intentions are more than obvious and cannot have been misunderstood by the audience. By means of the pardon Cain does not only seek to rectify his deed, but also tries to take justice in his own hands by turning the situation upside down. Instead of making it appear that he has been found guilty and sentenced to punishment, he presents his case, through proclaiming the king's peace, as if he is innocent and free. Superficially, "the king" must be the one of fifteenth century England, but it may also refer to God on the basis of a similar use of imagery in Magnus Herodes (play XVI). In this play a nuntius announces that:

> A kyng thay hym [Jesus] call/and that we deny;
> .....
> Therfor ouer all/Shall I make a cry,
> (ll. 28, 30, my italics)

allowing the parallel:king - God, and king's peace - cry. Whatever interpretation one wants to give to "crying the peace," it is clear that Cain parodies God's action in decreeing that no one is to harm him.

As a typical man of the earthly city he turns to the law of man rather than the law of God, but even then he wants to be in charge of the situation. It would appear as if Cain does not accept any authority or law. He is law and authority to himself. In this respect, Pikeharnes is similar to his master. When Cain proclaims the king's peace, Pikeharnes shows his irreverance towards authority by making mocking asides about food. Cain, however, gets his own back on him by warning "ffro now furth, euermore,/...greue me noght;/ ffor,... if thou do,/ I shall hang the apon this plo," (ll. 456-9).

Cain's alienation from the world is progressive. The last relationship that existed, Cain - Garcio, comes to an end. Before they go their separate ways, Garcio hands back the job of ploughboy to his master "Xey, gif don, thyne hors, a wisp of hay" (l. 438). Cain does not take too kindly to this and commands him to "...take yond plogh,..." (l. 451), but Garcio leaves wishing the spectators the blessing God gave his master. Finally, Cain sets off with the remark "...I must nedis weynd,/...dwill be thrall,/warld withoutten end." (ll. 463-5) echoing St. Augustine's teaching:

> Eorum autem qui non pertinent ad istam civitatem Dei, erit e contrario miseria sempiterna, quae etiam secunda mors dicitur: quia nec anima ibi vivere dicenda est, quae a vita Dei alienata erit; nec corpus, quod aeternis doloribus subjacebit.[57]
>
> (my italics)

It is worth noting that Pikeharnes' parting remark is very similar to Cain's in the Chester and York cycle (see resp. pp. 6 and 10 above):

> The same blissyng withoutten end,
> All sam then shall ye haue,
> That god of heuen my master has giffen;
>
> (ll. 444-6)

This transposition of lines from Cain to Pikeharnes may be deliberate for two reasons. The practical reason is that Pikeharnes, unlike

his colleague Brewbarret in the York cycle who does not need a parting remark since there the dramatic action continues with Cain and the angel, cannot simply disappear without a parting remark since that would interrupt the "flow" of the play. His departure must more or less be logical so that only Cain remains to give the last dramatic message. Transferring a few lines from Cain to Pikeharnes seems to be the easiest way out of the problem. The second reason is of a more thematical nature. Whereas Cain's remark in Chester and York is directed at the audience, transferred in Towneley it becomes Pikeharnes' directed at both the audience and Cain who, as we have seen, seems to negate all ideas of hierarchy. Through Pikeharnes the transposition of lines helps to underscore the point that Cain's breach of natural hierarchy leads to the breaking of faith between man and man.

From the discussion above one gets a clear picture of Cain. His preoccupation with earthly goods and chattels - the result of his pride - makes him reject the principle that "...god giffys the all thi lifyng" (l. 98). He harangues against God's institution the Church, and against God himself. In addition to this rejection of a vertical relationship with God and Pikeharnes he also denies and terminates the existence of a horizontal one with his brother. By killing Abel he prefigures the Jews who executed Christ, the shepherd of men prefigured by Abel the shepherd of the sheep.[58] Thus, in a way, he kills Christ. In search of himself, Cain denies the order of the Universe; his hypocrisy leads to his self-destruction, which is exemplified by his driving his plough-team to hell.

The similarity between Cain and Judas, briefly referred to above (p.24), justifies a brief comparison. As we have seen, Cain is the OT exponent of self-damnation resulting from a denial of

God's powers of mercy. Judas may be regarded as his NT counterpart, for having betrayed Christ he equally falls into despair believing that no mercy can be obtained: "He thare aske no mercy, for none mon y gete" (Y. XXXII, l. 302).[59] His assumption is expressed in almost the same way as Cain's in the Chester, York and Towneley cycles (see above pp. 5, 10, 24). In both cases the false despair-induced assumptions about God's clemency lead to self-destruction. Both are self-centred: Cain reluctantly offers tithes which he would rather keep himself; Judas sells Christ for thirty pence out of revenge for "losing" a percentage of the money which the ointment would have fetched had it been sold instead of used by Mary Magdalene to wash Christ's feet (CH. XIV, ll. 265-96; Y XXVI, ll. 145-8, 151-2; T. XX, ll. 270-81).[60] Both are involved in the execution of an innocent person who embodies goodness. The despicable deeds of the two criminals are sometimes mentioned in the same breath as in Towneley XXV (Extraccio Animarum), borrowed from York XXXVII (Harrowing of Hell), where Jesus tells Satan that he shall have Cain and Judas to keep him company in hell:

> thou [Satan] shall haue cayn that slo abell,
> And all that hastys theym self to hang,
> As dyd Iudas and archytophell;
> (T. ll. 328-30)

Chaucer too sets Cain and Judas side by side in his Parson's Tale: "...that a man ne be nat despeired of the mercy of Jhesu Crist, as Cayn or Judas" (vs. 1015).[61] So, it looks as if there was a tendency to see Cain and Judas in the same bad light, not only in the north of England, but also in the, presumably, London area. This dissemination suggests a certain, perhaps popular, knowledge of the similarities between Cain and Judas. Judas' despair, as quoted by Chaucer, is not found in the Bible, but could have been known to the audience, as I point out in my chapter on the Suspencio Iude,

through a non-cycle context which was eventually dramatized. On this basis it is not improbable that a play-watching audience saw Cain's despair, equally unbiblical, as a dramatized character description with which they were already familiar from outside the mystery play context. I have not found any clear examples that bear out this suggestion, but perhaps a passage from one of Wyclif's sermons may be significant. In Of Faith, Hope and Charity Wyclif dwells on the subject of despair, explaining that there is more than one way for man to fall into despair": ...Sum for þei trowen not in þe mercy of god; & þes ben cayms childire..." (my italics).[62] The suggestion that those who fall into despair are Cain's children implicates Cain and clearly suggests that he was thought to have fallen victim to despair at one time.

From the juxtaposition of Cain and Abel it would seem to follow that the audience was made to sympathise with Cain. He is after all the defiant man full of whimsies and fancies, whereas Abel is irritatingly pious, if not dull, and a bit slow. This manipulation of the audience's sympathy is dramatically useful since it reinforces the implication that Cain is one of them. As his way of living is ultimately destructive, it is suggested that their way of living may well need some amendment. If they do not amend, then the consequences will be as illustrated in Cain's case. From this it is clear that the Mactacio Abel serves a religious educational purpose which the spectators cannot have failed to acknowledge.

One of the puzzling aspects of the Mactacio Abel is the provenance of Garcio, or Pikeharnes, who is not mentioned in the Bible nor in the apocryphal legends. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that if the Wakefield dramatist did not invent him, he modelled him on some character known to him from, for example, the York cycle or the folkplay. It is not inconceivable that Brewbarret was used as a model for Pikeharnes since so much in the Towneley

cycle is dependent on York.[63] In both cycles Cain uses a ploughboy who in some ways may parody his master's character. Pikeharnes, "thief,"[64] refuses, like his master, to accept any authority. His name may reflect Cain's deeds in that Cain refuses to give to God what belongs to Him, the tithe, i.e., Cain steals what does not belong to him. Brewbarret, "Strife-brewer," reflects his master in that the York Cain is rather quarrelsome, as one can see from the discussion he has with the angel.

Still, even if Pikeharnes is modelled on Brewbarret it does not remove the folkplay echoes, nor does it answer the question where Brewbarret comes from. It is therefore worthwhile to consider a folkplay source, more specifically a ploughplay, since this is suggested by both Garcio's actions and the simultaneous appearance of the plough in Mactacio Abel.

Of old, the plough Monday plays have been associated with the new season of fertility after the winter and they were performed on the first Monday of January after twelfth night (Jan. 6th), ushering in the new ploughing season. In this ceremony eight to twelve young men drag a decorated plough about the village and stage a comedy in which frequently a combat, death and cure occur. Afterwards a money collection ("quete") is held and those who refuse to pay run the risk of having a furrow ploughed in front of their house or through their front garden. The young men frequently call themselves plough boys, plough jags,[65] plough bullocks and plough stotts, even when the plough is not used. It is in these self-assumed names that we may find a source for Pikeharnes' name, although his role in the play is more of a clown than of a bullock. Any other suggestion as to the origin or model of Pikeharnes will have to come from internal evidence of the plough plays and, as they have much in common with them, the mummers' plays.[66]

Customarily, the plays begin with a type called "Father Christmas," "Fool," "Clown," or "Caller" introducing not only himself, but also his fellow players. Almost invariably the introduction of the play begins with a call for "room" after which each character introduces himself with "In comes I..." This feature is echoed by Pikcharnes who introduces himself with "...here com I, ..." (l. 2). As in the folkplay some form of self-description takes place when he describes himself as "...a mery lad;" (l. 2). He amplifies this process of identification by jogging the audience's memory with the rhetorical question "Wot ye not I come before?" (l. 5), essentially telling the audience that they ought to recognize him. Of course he may be suggesting that the audience must remember him from a previous performance of this play, but he might equally be suggesting that they ought to recognize him as a character from a different sort of performance such as a folkplay.

Garcio's way of introducing Cain may also be reminiscent of the folkplay though more subtle. He does not prompt Cain's appearance with such cues as "walk in...[name]" or "enter in...[name]" but states that his master will come in (l. 23). Some folkplays contain nonsense or corrupted phrases such as "...Old Hind-before," or "...all hind before"[67] which are also found in Garcio's speech: "...behynd and before," (l. 8). The echoes of the folkplay make one suspicious as to whether the Towneley author has purposely adapted some folkplay incidents or not. If he did, then it is not unlikely that his audience took the hints and expected a piece of farce. From a religious point of view, the Cain and Abel play is of course farcical for how can Cain possibly think he can deceive God?

Garcio's question quoted above also has more religious overtones for if we look at Cain as an anti-Christ then Garcio may be regarded as an anti-John the Baptist, for the latter went before Christ "...to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17);

Garcio precedes Cain to prepare the audience for his coming.

The only folkplay type of character which I believe may have served as a model not only for Pikcharnes but also for other servant types is Jack, or John Pimmey.[68] It is, however, not so much his words as his actions that lead to this suggestion. It becomes particularly apparent in the latter's function as the doctor's horse-boy when he ridicules the image of the doctor by back-chatting, rebelling and answering back. These qualities can also be found in Garcio who defies his master's authority not only by improperly feeding the animals, but also by being quite ready to fight him. Back-chatting occurs in the proclamation scene when each of Cain's sentences is mocked in an aside by Garcio. On top of this, an allusion to the folkplay "quete" occurs in l. 437: "Eyd euery man theym pleasse to pay,"[69] so it is likely that the Mactacio Abel has been injected with incidents highly reminiscent of the folkplay.

The application of the image of the plough seems to be two-fold. Firstly, in folk-lore tradition the plough serves as a fertility symbol and the drawing of the plough across the village in the plough Monday ceremony may have been an act of ensuring a good crop by imitating ploughing. This tradition is of importance for the Towneley play since Cain only wants to offer to God if he gets something in return. His use of the plough may reflect a superstitious belief in appeasing the gods to ensure a big crop. Secondly, the plough may have been used as the visual representation of a biblical metaphor: the implement of the assiduous Christian.[70] Either way the audience will probably have captured its significance. In the first case, the simultaneous use of folkplay type language and the plough may have prompted the audience to expect a piece of farce similar to the plough Monday play. Yet at the same time this expectation of farce in a religious context where it was not

expected may have induced them to think of the relevance of a fertility symbol for a biblical play. In the second case, and on a more metaphysical level, they may have seen the plough as the plough of hope (1 Cor. 9:10) which misapplied by Cain, leads to his downfall.

Staging of the plough and animals need not necessarily have been a great problem. A large number of live animals would undoubtedly have required considerable space to manoeuvre and would have caused additional complications. Therefore it is likely that the stage manager(s) resorted to hobby horses (see pls. 5, 6, 7).[71] This is not uncommon to the folkplay in general, more specifically, to the Somerby plough Monday play, which is recorded to have had "two or three frisky hobby horses, drawing a wooden plough."[72] Since the audience was familiar with hobby horses from the folkplay, it would not have regarded them as esoteric in the Mactacio Abel.

From the discussion above it follows that Cain is self-seeking in a spirit of denial of help. By some innate force of his character, St. Augustine would call it pride, he is driven to seek happiness in earthly pursuits, but in vain for it only leads to his self-damnation. To achieve this end he rejects all relationships which can possibly exercise any influence to the contrary. He denies God, Church, brother and servant. His god is the god of mundane (bodily) desires. As the personification of utter scepticism, failing to see any distinction in hierarchy, he is proud of what he should be ashamed of. In metaphorical terms, he sows death in the field of bodily desires and reaps death (Gal. 6:7-8). He scoffs at the very institutions which he would need to save him, and believes he can maintain his own stance although this leads to a hopeless existence in hell. His unrepentant attitude is his downfall.

In Cain one recognizes the individual who tries to escape society's strait-jacket. Yet in vain, for he has to learn that no earthly city can be a substitute for the City of Heaven. The point the dramatist seems to make is that without faith in God, man has no basis for existence.

Footnotes to Chapter One

1. The earliest reference known to me to, for example, a plough play, of which the relevance to the Mactacio Abel will be discussed, can be found in the Almoners' account of 1377-8 in Extracts from the Account Rolls of the Abbey of Durham, Surtees Soc. 99, Vol. I, 212: "Dona... hominibus del Maudelans... in educcione caruce post Natale." tr.: "Given to the men of L. Magdalene for the leading of the plough after the Nativity." The ref. is here to men belonging to the parish chapel of L. Magdalene near the hospital of the same name in Gilesgate, Durham City. Nowadays only ruins remain. Page 224 contains an account of 1407-8: "Item dat. in crastino Epiphanie in Veteri Elvet trahentibus aratrum, 4 d." tr.: "Again, given to the men pulling the plough in Old Elvet the day after Epiphany, 4d." The ref. is here to men of the parish of St. Oswald's. It is worth noting that the day after Epiphany in this year was not a Monday, but a Friday. The entries suggest that plough plays may have been commonplace since they appear independently in more than one parish in the same town. Towards the middle of the C16 the references to plough Monday plays become more frequent and more specific. See OED "Plough-Monday."

2. See the respective indexes to Speculum Christiani: EETS OS 182; The English Works of Wyclif, EETS OS 74; Middle English Sermons, EETS OS 209; Mirk's Festial, EETS OS 96. For refs. to Augustine in Chaucer consult the concordance J.S.P. Tatlock and A.G. Kennedy, A Concordance to the Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and the Romaunt of the Rose. Indexes to works such as, for example, The Medieval Books of Merton College, ed. F.M. Powicke and Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries, ed. N.R. Ker, Vols. I, II, show that a substantial number of Augustine's works were known in the Middle Ages and have now survived.

3. Augustine, De Civitate Dei, PL 41, bk. XV, ch 1.

4. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. V, ch. IX.

5. PL 36, col. 687, 18. "Pride is the first of sins: eternal fire or infernal fire is the ultimate punishment; sin already belongs to the damned. Those which come between that primary sin and this ultimate punishment are both sin and punishment." For a good exposition of the Augustinian doctrine of the punishment of sin by sin to which I am indebted for the summary and quotations on pp. 3-4 nn. 5-10 see: A.L. Kellogg, "An Augustinian Interpretation of Chaucer's Pardoner," Speculum, 26 (1951) 465-81.

6. De Libero Arbitrio, PL 32, bk. III, ch. XVII, col. 1295. "The wicked will is the cause of all evil."

7. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. XIV, ch. III, col. 405. A tr. is found in: Augustine, The City of God, tr. M. Dods, Vols. I, II. Hereafter cited as Dods. Dods, II, 4: "...sin is caused not by the flesh, but by the soul, and ...the corruption contracted from sin is not sin, but sin's punishment."

8. Contra Iulianum Pelagianum, PL 44, col. 787.: "Thus the desire of the flesh ...is sin, and the punishment of sin... and the cause of sin."

9. Enarratio in Psalmum LVII, PL 36, col. 689. 19.: "But he who disdains to overcome that concupiscence... and is divided against himself, shall be consumed by the fire itself."

10. Sermo CCCLIII, PL 39, ch. I, col. 1561: "What is envy, but a hatred of someone else's happiness?... and is there any envious person who does not wish evil on him by whose good he is tormented?"

11. This seems to follow from the discussion below. E. Hartnett, "Cain in the Medieval Towneley Play," Ann. Med., 12 (1971) 21 makes the same point: "In the extant English Mystery cycles, Cain is the character who best illustrates the Augustinian doctrine of sin by sin."

12. In both the Ch. and LC. pageants a flame/fire descends from heaven to light Abel's offering. Although mentioned in Jerome, Liber Hebraicarum Quaestionum in Genesim, PL 23, ch. IV, vs. 4, col. 992, this is part of Hebrew tradition as shown by L. Ginzberg, Die Haggada bei den Kirchvätern und in der Apokryphischen Litteratur, pp. 62-3.

13. On despair as the fourth phase of accidia see: "The Parson's Tale," The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N. Robinson, 2nd edn, p. 250, ll. 692-704.

14. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. X, ch. V, cols. 281-2. Dods, I, 388: "And who is so foolish as to suppose that the things offered to God are needed by Him for some uses of His own? Divine Scripture in many places explodes this idea. Not to be wearisome suffice it to quote this brief saying from a psalm: I have said to the Lord, Thou are my God: for Thou needest not my goodness (Ps. 16:2). We must believe, then that God has no need, not only of cattle, or any other earthly and material thing, but even of man's righteousness, and that whatever right worship is paid to God profits not Him, but man."

15. W. Oelrich, Die Personennamen im Mittelalterlichen Drama Englands, p. 73: "Brewbarret ist der imperativisch gebildete Name von Kains Knecht in den Y. Pl. = strife-brewer, zu me. baret, afz. barat 'Streit.'"

16. Civ Dei, PL 41, bk. XI, ch. XVI. col. 331: St. Augustine gives a run down of the order of being. He ranks men lower than angels: "Et in his quae intelligunt, praeponuntur immortalia mortalibus, sicut Angeli Hominibus." Dods, I, 455: "And, among the intelligent the immortal, such as the angels, above the mortal, such as men."

17. In Chester and Wakefield Cain's curse is also directed at the audience. This may have been a traditional thing to do. See also n. 55 and p. 26 .

18. J.E. Bernbrock, "Notes on the Towneley Cycle Slaying of Abel," MLR 62 (1963) 317-22 argues that the Towneley author may have relied for a variety of elements peculiar to Towneley such as, e.g. Cain's dislike for his brother, his lengthy prayer, his smoking offering, his proclaiming his innocence and his urge to find a hiding place on St. Ambrose's De Cain et Abel. While Bernbrock's contribution to the understanding of the Towneley Cain and Abel play is important he could have given more specific examples from St. Ambrose's work where, for example, the division of the world into two sides (as in Civ. Dei) or Cain's false tithing are concerned. In these cases I have expanded on Bernbrock's work. The Ambrosian influence does not negate the Augustinian one as I show throughout my discussion. The influence of each of the Fathers is at times more apparent than the other, or alternatively converges with the other. Yet I think that the overall character is Augustinian since the important concept of pride/sin bringing forth sin, derives from St. Augustine. Ambrose is also mentioned in the indexes of the works mentioned in n. 2.

19. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. XV, ch. I, col. 437. Dods, II, 50: "Of these two first parents of the human race, then, Cain was the first-born, and he belonged to the city of men; after him was born Abel, who belonged to the city of God."

20. Ambrose, De Cain et Abel, ed. C. Schenkl, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Vol. XXXII, prt. I, 339-409. The passage is quoted from p. 340, 4: "... the first [sect] which ascribes everything to its own mind as the principal cause, and [as it were] the originator of all thought, sensation and motion, i.e., which ascribes all inventions to human ingenuity, the other which attributes [them] to God, maker and creator of all things, and places all things under his governance, he being begetter and ruler, Cain is the exponent of the former, and Abel of the latter."

21. O.F. Emerson, "Legends of Cain, especially in Old and Medieval English," PMLA 21 (1906) 832-7 quotes several examples from the Hebrew tradition and the Church Fathers.

22. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. XV, ch. VII, cols. 443-5. Dods, II, 60.

23. The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle, ed. A.C. Cawley, p. 91, n. to l. 25 suggests that "Cain has a plough-team of eight animals, comprising four oxen and four horses." It is difficult to see why the ratio and number should be as he suggests for there may have been as many as ten animals in the team: "greyn-horne" (l. 25), "gryme" (l. 25), "mare" (l. 28) "down" (l. 29), "donnyng" (l. 32), "mall" (l. 41), "stott" (l. 41), "Lemyng" (l. 42), "morell" (l. 42) and "white-horne" (l. 42). Additionally, the allusion to the plough play, see discussion p. 30 below, probably means that the plough was drawn by men, not animals in which case it does not matter much what the balance is imagined to be. Large traction teams, however, were sometimes "essential": M.M. Postan, The Medieval Economy and Society, p. 51. P.D. Harvey, A Medieval Oxfordshire Village: Cuxham, 1240-1400, pp. 57-8 points out that on the Cuxham demesne there were 12-16 oxen and 4 horses to make up two full plough-teams. "...probably each normally consisted

of 3 oxen and 2 horses." In The Maidstone Bible Picture Book, ed. W.O. Hassall, dated of the early C14, we find on fol. 6 a representation of Cain and a mixed ploughteam apparently consisting of 2 oxen and an ass, see pl. 1.

24. E.C. Curwen, "Prehistoric Agriculture in Britain," Antiquity, 1 (1927) 280, 287.

25. F.G. Payne, "The Plough in Ancient Britain," Archaeol. J. 104 (1947) 85. This seems to have been the usual role of the serving-boy. See The Luttrell Psalter, ed. E.G. Millar, pls. 92 and 94; AElfric's Colloquy, ed. G.N. Garmonsway, l. 29: "Ic haebbe sume cnapan pyrende oxan mid 3adisene." See pl. 2.

26. PL 113, vs. 10, col. 476. I have followed the tr. of D.L. Jeffrey, "Stewardship in the Wakefield Mactacio Abel and Noe Plays," ABR, 22:1 (1971) 69: "In ploughing with ox and ass we see one who receives the Gospel with Old Law observances, and who continues, therefore, in darkness. In the ox is signified good works, in the ass the stupidity of fools." See also: D.W. Robertson, Jr, "The Question of 'Typology' and the Wakefield Mactacio Abel," ABR, 25:2 (1974) 162.

27. Both quotations, are from M. Bloch, La Société Féodale: La Formation des Liens de Dépendance, pp. 225-6 resp.

28. Bloch, Soc. Féodale, p. 226.

29. De Cain et Abel, p. 361, 24. Bernbrock, "Slaying of Abel," p. 318. "Cain, the fool, who could not bear the clear form and look of virtue in his brother."

30. De Cain et Abel, p. 376, 46. Bernbrock, "Slaying of Abel," p. 318. "Therefore we must clean our inner parts, so that the offering is able not to displease."

31. This is a proverb. See: Proverbs, Sentences and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings Mainly Before 1500, eds. B.J. and H.W. Whiting, p. 283, no. H. 411.

32. John Myrc, Instructions for Parish Priests, EETS OS 31, pp. 21-4. The work, MS Cotton Claudius A ii, is "...written out, ...not later than the year 1450, perhaps a little earlier; but the language is of somewhat older date." (p.v.) Mirk, fl. 1403, was prior of Lilleshall , Shropshire, see DNB, 38 (1894) 50-1.

33. Postan, Med. Ec. and Soc., p. 140.

34. Although this tithe-dodging scene is unique amongst the cycle plays, allusions to a tithe-dodging Cain are also found in the Cornish Origo Mundi: "Et tunc cayn offerat partem decimarum et custodiret alteram partem decimarum... "And then let Cain offer a part of the tithes, that he may keep another part of the tithes..." The Cornish text is only known to me through the parallel Cornish - English edn: The Ancient Cornish Drama, ed. and tr. E. Norris, I, 38-9 (hereafter cited as ACD). The ordinalia are assigned to "the first half of the fifteenth century": The Cornish Ordinalia, tr. M. Harris, p. vii.

35. The two quotations are from St. Ambrose, De Cain et Abel, pp. 398, 23 and 399, 23 resp: "Cain ...if you offer justly, you must not divide unjustly....This is the order of division, what is primary must precede what is secondary, not secondary primary, what belongs to heaven must have precedence over what belongs to the earth, not that which belongs to the earth over (that which belongs to) heaven."

36. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. XV, ch. VII, col. 443. Dods, II, p. 58: "When a man keeps to himself choicer specimens of the same kind than he offers to God."

37. Ambrose, De Cain et Abel, p. 370, 35: "But when you pray do not say much."

38. Ambrose, De Cain et Abel, p. 370, 36-7: "When many words were uttered, sin came in, because when many words are spoken the utterance which slips out is by no means carefully weighed. One slips into sin for lack of foresight, although the very fact of talking too much is itself a great sin."

39. The first indication of this may be found in l. 58 where Abel fails to understand the mood of the scene he enters. On at least nine occasions Cain states categorically in foul language that tithing is none of his business: ll. 84ff, 108ff, 118ff, 134ff, 147ff, 234ff, 247ff, 259ff, 266ff. Abel apparently does not get the point that Cain is unwilling to make an offering and is working himself into a frenzy. Each of Cain's ranting speeches is naïvely met with "dear brother," "you do not tithe properly" or "brother, for God's sake make amends."

40. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. V, ch. IX, col. 152: "...aut si esse confitetur Deum, quem negat praescium futuorum, etiam sic dicit nihil aliud, quam quod ille dixit insipiens in cordo suo, Non est Deus" (Vulg. Ps. 13:1). Dods, I, 190: "...to confess that God exists, and at the same time deny that He has foreknowledge of future things, is the most manifest folly....The fool has said in his heart, There is No God" (Ps. 14:1).

41. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. XIV, ch. IV, col. 407: "vivit homo secundum hominem, non secundum Deum similis est diabolo." Dods, II, 6: "When ...man lives according to man, not according to God, he is like the devil."

42. Civ. Dei, bk. XV, ch. V, col. 441. Dods, II, 55: "...he was moved by that diabolical, envious hatred with which the evil regard the good, for no other reason than because they are good while [they] themselves are evil."

43. The York play is deficient in that it lacks the murder scene. This is not to say, however, that the jawbone was unknown in York. In a letter of June 19th 1981 David O'Connor of the History of Art department, University of Manchester informs me that the Great East window of the York Minster, which depicts the murder with the jawbone , dates from 1405-8. See also: C. Davidson and D.E. O'Connor, York Art, Early Drama, Art, and Music Reference Series, 1, p. 25. See pl. 3.

44. The Northern Passion, EETS OS 145, I, 147, l. 67. For the date of MS B.M. Addit. 31,042, c. middle of C15,: N. Passion, EETS OS 147, II, 12. Cursor Mundi, EETS OS 57, 99, 101, I, 70-1, l. 1073.

45. The Dialogue of Salomon and Saturnus, ed. J.M. Kemble, AElfric Soc, 8 (1848) 186. W.J. Sheat, "Cain's Jaw-Bone," N & Q 6th series, 2 (1880) 143; O.F. Emerson, "Legends of Cain," p. 853; M. Schapiro, "Cain's Jaw-bone that did the First Murder," Art Bull 24 (1942) 207; G. Henderson, "Cain's Jawbone," JWCI, 24 (1961) 109. Wakefield Pageants, ed. Cawley, p. 93 n. to l. 324 follows Schapiro p. 207, in dating Salomon and Saturnus of the "ninth century." Fols. 86-93 of MS Cotton Vitellius A XV contain the Salomon and Saturnus episode. This has been dated "s xii med.": Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon, ed. N.R. Ker, pp. xvii-xviii and 279-82. Henderson, p. 109, remarks that although the date of composition may lie before 1100 "no editor or bibliographer has so far produced evidence for a more precise dating." He then proceeds to point out that Schapiro confused a few dates so that a date of the ninth century was erroneously attributed to the text.

46. Emerson, "Legends of Cain," pp 858-9.

47. Schapiro, "Cain's Jaw-bone," p. 205.

48. Schapiro, "Cain's Jaw-bone," pp. 210-11.

49. Henderson, "Cain's Jawbone," p. 111.

50. Th. A. Green, "Societal Concepts of Criminal Liability for Homicide in Medieval England," Speculum, 47:4 (1972) 669.

51. The MED does not record the meaning of the word "hole" of the Towneley cycle. It records, however, meanings such as: hut, shelter, lair (of an animal), den, burrow, nest, hiding place. Bernbrock, "Slaying of Abel," p. 321 suggests that this element comes from Ambrose's De Cain et Abel, p. 405, 32: "abscondit se autem qui uelare uult culpam et tegere peccatum. qui enim male agit odit lucem et tenebras suorum quaerit ut latibula delictorum," "He who wants to cover up his crime and conceal his sin goes into hiding. Indeed, he who does wrong hates the light of day and seeks darkness to conceal his offences."

52. W.S. Holdsworth, A History of English Law, 3rd edn. rewritten, III, 304; C. Ogilvie, The King's Government and the Common Law, 1471-1641, pp. 46-7; The Dictionary of English Law, ed. C. Walsh, II, 1585 "Sanctuary."

53. Actually, Cain's statement is true for until the Redemption all deceased will reside in hell. Cain's main aim here, however, is to deceive. The idea that both good and bad people go to hell is not only expressed in the Extraccio Animarum (play XXV), but also in the C12 Anglo-Norman Le Mystère D'Adam (Ordo Representacionis Ade), ed. P. Studer, p. 37: "Venientes autem diaboli ducent Chaim sepius pulsantes ad infernum; Abel vero ducent micius." tr: "Coming forth, the devils lead Cain to hell, beating him often; they gently lead away Abel." In the Cornish Ordinalia Lucifer commissions Beelzebub and Satan to bring Abel to hell: ACD, ed. Norris, I, 40-3, ll. 541-70. In the N. Passion, EETS OS 145, I, 151, ll. 268*-71* Seth sees his brother Abel's soul at the far end of hell.

54. Ambrose, De Cain et Abel, p. 401, 207. "There is a certain sense of shame in sins and part of repentance is to confess crime not to evade guilt, but recognize it. In the guilty a sense of shame softens a judge, whereas persistent denials arouse his severity of judgement. God wants you to call for mercy, he wants forgiveness by him to be hoped for; and he wants to make it clear by your confession that he is not the author of wrong doing."

55. An additional traditional element would be Cain's hurling his curse at the audience as a parting remark in York and Chester. In Towneley this remark was probably transferred from Cain to Pikeharnes, see below p. 27 . Despite all similarities we must not neglect the possibility of mutual or other borrowings. Of the Chester York and Towneley cycles, the York one is the oldest, judged by the date of the MS., followed by Towneley and Chester. The known dependence of Towneley on York may explain why Towneley contains Cain's despair, the more so as there are some similarities between York's Brewbarret and Towneley's Pikeharnes, see below p. 30 . The MSS. of the Chester cycle are rather late, see Ch. edn. p. ix, so that details may have been borrowed from elsewhere. This seems to be the case with the introduction of a plough into the Chester play p. 34, rubric after l. 516: "Hear he [Cain] bringe in the plough," the significance of which is extremely difficult to gauge since the Cain and Abel episode, ll. 513-704, provides no clues whatsoever as to its use. Apart from a possible attempt to emulate a piece of business which had proved successful elsewhere, I can only relate it to Cain's profession which is of "...husbandes crafte..." (l. 475). Apparently four MSS of the cyclic version included this rubric, see variant readings at the bottom of p. 34, so that it may be a late detail in view of the date of the MSS. On this basis the Chester Cain could be a late detail too. However, the arguments above do not argue conclusively against a Cain tradition. The fact that the Cornish ordinalia contain a Cain who questions the value of a burnt offering to God and who considers his sin greater than God's mercy seems to underscore my point, see ACD, ed. Norris, I, 36-7, ll. 476-8 and 44-5, ll. 590-2 resp.

56. Green, Soc. Concepts, p. 671; Holdsworth, Hist. Engl. Law, p. 309. The latter also points out, pp. 307-8, that anyone helping a felon, i.e., aiding him to escape justice, could be classified as an accessary who deserved the same punishment as the principal. It is likely that Pikeharnes has either of these possibilities in mind. In murder cases, of course, this remains true today for accessory during and after the fact.

57. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. XIX, ch. XXVIII, col. 658. Dods, II,: "...they who do not belong to this city of God shall inherit eternal misery, which is also called the second death, because the soul shall then be separated from God its life, and therefore cannot be said to live, and the body shall be subjected to eternal pains."

58. Civ. Dei, bk. XV, ch. VII, col. 445: "Quomodo autem significaverit etiam Judaeos, a quibus Christus occisus est pastor ovium hominum, quem pastor ovium pecorum praefigurabat Abel," Dods, II,61: "He was also a figure of the Jews who slew Christ the shepherd of the flock of men, pre-figured by Abel the shepherd of sheep..."

59. The main reason for quoting the York Judas is that this is the only cycle in which Judas' despair and subsequent refusal to ask for mercy are expressed in the 1st pers. sg. His despair and refusal are only alluded to in: T. XXVI (Resurrexcio Domino) ll. 304-9 and XXXI (Suspencio Iude) ll. 1-2; LC banns ll. 369-71; they are absent in the Chester cycle. Cf. the Cornish ordinalia in which Judas' despair and refusal are also expressed in the 1st pers. sg: ACD ed. Norris, I, 342-3, ll. 1519-24.

60. The LC has a different account. In play 27, l. 611, Judas tells that he sells Christ because he does not want to follow His "lawe" anymore.

61. Works of Chaucer, ed. Robinson, p. 262, vs. 1015. Various scholars have dealt with the possible sources of the Parson's Tale: H. Spies, "Chaucer's Religiose Grundstimmung und die Echtheit der Parson's Tale," Festschrift fur Lorenz Morschbach, 50 (1913 rpt. 1973) 628-721; Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, eds. W.F. Bryan, G. Dempster, pp. 723-45; W. Eilers, "Dissertation on the Parson's Tale and the Somme des Vices et des Vertus of Frère Lorens," Essays on Chaucer, Chaucer Soc. SS. 19, V, pp. 501-610; K.O. Petersen, The Sources of the Parson's Tale, Radcliffe coll. Monogr. 12 (1901; rpt. 1973). Petersen shows, p. 22, that vs. 1015 is on either side enclosed by passages taken from Raymond of Pennaforte's Summa Casuum Poenitentiae, but the provenance of vs. 1015 has not been traced. It is therefore probable that it comes from Chaucer himself.

62. The English Works of Wyclif, EETS OS 74, p. 351. Although Wyclif was regarded a heretic with regard to his views on Transubstantiation, this passage is not heretical and appears in a context which any devout preacher could have spoken.

63. According to the York Plays, p. 37, n. 1., Brewbarret seems a mid-sixteenth century interpolation, but this need not affect my suggestion since he may reflect an older tradition. Because of this uncertain state of affairs it is even possible to suggest that after he had served as Pikeharnes' model and was lost from the York MS. he was "borrowed back" from Towneley.

64. Wakefield Pageants, ed. Cawley, p. 91 n. to l. 37; Oelrich, Personennamen. p. 75.

65. "Plough jags" seems to be a corruption of Plough Jacks: M.W. Barley, "Plough Plays in the East Midlands," JEFDSS, 7 (1955) 80.

66. The plays available to me were those published by R.J.E. Tiddy, The Mummers' Play, pp. 141-257.

67. Tiddy, Mummers' Play, pp. 174, 219 resp.

68. For text see E.K. Chambers, The English Folk-Play, pp. 57-9; Tiddy, Mummers' Play, pp. 163-8, 174-9, 180-4. The same suggestion is made by P. Happé, "The Vice and the Folk-Drama," Folklore, 75 (1964) 180-1. Besides Pikeharnes we find a number of servants in Towneley: Iak Garcio in the first shepherd's play (XII; his role, however, is too short to be absolutely positive

about this), Daw the third shepherd in the second shepherd's play (XXII) and Froward in Colliphizacio (XXI). York has Brewbarret (VII) and Chester has Trowle (VII). With the exception of Iak Garcio, they are all impudent argumentative servants who have a bone to pick with their superiors, so that we cannot escape the impression that they are probably based on one and the same folklore tradition. Tutivillus in Towneley's Iudicium (XXX) is also a servant, yet he does not share the characteristics of the others. This is in all probability due to the fact that he is of a homiletic origin as he appears in religious contexts from the C13 onwards. Retelling a little story by Jacques de Vitry (c. 1170-1240) about a devil who records the syllables skipped by the clergy in service, John Bromyard (fl. 1390) expands the story with: "Et dixit sanctus, "Quale nomen habes?" Daemon respondit, "Tityvillus vocor." ("And the saint says, "What is your name?" The devil answers, "I am called Tityvillus"). For text see A Selection of Latin Stories, ed. Th. Wright, Percy Soc. 8 (1842) 44, 225-6. See also L.W. Cushman, The Devil and the Vice in the English Dramatic Literature Before Shakespeare, pp. 35-6; G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, pp. 512-3, and p. 513, n. 3. As a warning against church chattering Tutivillus frequently appears as collector of fragmented words and idle talk in medieval English art, see M.D. Anderson, Drama and Imagery in English Medieval Churches, pp. 173-5, 235 n. 10 and pl. 24d.

69. Being amateurs, the cycle players did not seek payment as a rule though professionals sometimes did, see Nankind ll. 459-72 in Medieval Drama, ed. D. Bevington.

70. The figurative roles of the plough and for that matter the plough-man are implied in contemporary medieval literature such as, for example, Piers Plowman: D.W. Robertson, B.F. Huppé, Piers Plowman and Scriptural Tradition, pp. 106, 133; M.W. Bloomfield, Piers Ploughman as a Fourteenth-century Apocalypse, p. 133.

71. Plates 5, 6, 7, show a number of hobbyhorses such as may have been used. The Abbot's Bromley Hobbyhorse, (pl. 5) consists of a wooden shaft with head and loose jaw. The jaw could be moved by pulling a string. The Obby Oss 'Hobbyhorse' of the Padstow May dance (pls. 6, 7) is a bit like the Abbot's Bromley horse, but much bigger. It is a fertility symbol big enough to hide girls under its skirt when it catches them: D.R. Rawe, Padstow's Obby Oss: and May Day Festivities, p. 20. Pieter Bruegel the Elder's painting Childrens' Games (1559) shows in the bottom of the picture a child riding a hobbyhorse which consists of a wooden shaft with a realistic horsehead. O.J. Padel of the Institute of Cornish Studies University of Exeter informs me in a letter of March 8th 1982 that hobbyhorses are referred to in both Cornish and Welsh "substantially earlier" than the first record of the word in the OED. In the Cornish Beunans Meriasek, dated 1504, we read "I am going to even things with the Hobbyhorse and his companions.": The Life of Meriasek: A Medieval Cornish Miracle Play, tr. H. Harris p. 43. According to Padel, the Welsh poet Dafydd ap Gwilym refers to a hobbyhorse in the second half of the fourteenth century. See also T.H. Parry-Williams, The English Element in Welsh, p. 177.

72. Barley, "Plough Plays," p. 76.

Chapter Two

Uxor in the Processus Noe Cum Filiis

The peculiarity of Noah's belligerent wife in the Chester, York and Towneley cycles of mystery plays has been the subject of much debate.[1] G.R. Owst propounds the view that Uxor's demeanour, unwarranted by Genesis 6-10, emanates from Proverbs 7:10-12 and was developed through popular preaching. Concerning this passage he notes that:

> The curious Scriptural context of this passage and the fact that the Vulgate version of it differs somewhat from that of our Authorized English text together may explain why scholars have failed to recognize it as the ultimate source of... Noah's wife.[2]

From his argument it follows that it is the pulpit's reaction against feminine vice in the Middle Ages which is ultimately accountable for a "shrewd wyfe" in the Noah plays. The objection to this point of view is that the woman in Proverbs, although in some ways like Noah's wife, is in others quite different - she is a harlot, apparently married to someone else, who incites a young man (Noah is proverbially old) to commit adultery with her. No scriptural commentators are known to me linking this passage with Noah or the Flood, nor was it demonstrable that the Flood was regarded as a punishment for female recalcitrance. Quoting The Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry, Owst suggests that female vanity caused the Flood,[3] but that still does not account for a connection between a recalcitrant woman and the Flood, although vanity and recalcitrance are, of course, not mutually exclusive. Should it after all prove possible to connect female disobedience with the Flood then the Proverbs passage need not be the ultimate source at all. So Owst's theory rests on a less firm basis than it seems to. This argument does not contradict his general theory that popular preaching may have been accountable for the depiction of womanly vices. It merely

suggests that his "ultimate source" has to be treated cautiously and that popular preaching may, perhaps, have prompted the Wakefield author to include parts of an already popular legend about Uxor in the cycle.

A.C. Hill discusses a widespread tradition in art and folklore which features a recalcitrant wife of Noah's.[4] She shows that this tradition is by no means confined to medieval England, but is also found in Austria, Russia and Sweden. Of the literary texts dealing with Uxor's behaviour, Epiphanius' fourth century Adversus Haeresis is one of the oldest. He notes how among heretics Uxor was regarded as being malignant:

> Cum enim, inquiunt [the heretics], in arca esse cum Noemo cuperet, nunquam id ei permissum est; quod eam princeps mundi conditor una cum caeteris omnibus diluvio vellet exstinguere. Ergo haec insidens arcae non semel ac secundo, sed saepius adeoque tertio illam incendit. Quo factum est, ut ad complures annos a Noemo haec arcae structura prorogata fuerit, cum ab illa saepius esset exusta.[5]

Besides, this story is heretical, it must either be contradicting Genesis 6:18 or else it suggests that the awkwardness of Noah's wife forced God to "change his mind" which is logically impossible. It looks very interesting since its very inconsistency may explain the differences between it and the popular medieval story - she cannot object to being excluded from the Ark, because of Genesis, so she is made to object to her friends being excluded. Unfortunately, further evidence seems to be lacking until we come across "...einer spätrussischen Redaktion der Revelationes des Pseudo Methodius von Olympos..."[6] This redaction tells that Noah, obeying God's command to build the ark in utter secrecy, is visited by the devil who wants to know what is happening. Having received no answer, the devil persuades Uxor to prepare Noah an intoxicating potion to loosen his tongue. Noah discovers later that, as a result of his revelations when inebriated, the devil has destroyed the ark. An angel assists

in the rebuilding of the ark and the devil revisits Uxor to hear how he can sneak on board. He advises her to linger behind even when the Flood surrounds her and to embark only then when Noah cries for the devil. She follows this counsel as a result of which her husband shouts impatiently "Teufel, so komm doch!" thus inviting the devil to enter. Once on board, the devil disguised as a mouse attempts to sink the ark by gnawing a hole in the bottom. His plans are thwarted when one of the other animals in the ark closes the hole with its tail, or when the mouse is killed.[7]

Jansen Enikel's Weltchronik incorporates a similar story. As God's messenger, an angel orders Noah to build the ark in secret:

> ich sag dir ouch an dirre stunt,
> diu red sol nieman von dir kunt
> werden, daz ist reht getân.
> dû solt sie nieman wizzen lân.
> (ll. 1753-6)

There are no indications of a conspiracy between Uxor and the devil. Nevertheless Uxor is reluctant to embark for she cannot take her possessions with her (ll. 1798-9). Noah grows impatient saying angrily "ginc, tiufel, drât dar in!" (l. 1805) giving the devil occasion to claim that "...mir hât erloubt Noê,/daz ich in die arc gê," (ll. 1809-10). During the voyage the devil persuades one of Noah's sons into breaking his oath of chastity, which is discovered by Noah. The latter curses the devil who makes a hole in the ark, but the hole is effectively blocked by a toad.

The legend of Noah's wife is further echoed in the Newcastle play of c. the middle of the fifteenth century.[8] God sends an angel to instruct Noah to build the ark. The devil is determined to cause havoc, invoking Uxor's help:

Yet trow I they [Noah and family] shall doe -
Thereto I make a vow:
If they be never so sleo,
To taynt them yet I trow.

To Noah's wife will I wynd,
Gare her believe in me;
In faith she is my friend,
She is both whunt and sleo.

(ll. 103-12)

As in the late Russian redaction, Uxor gives Noah an intoxicating drink which will make him reveal that he has been building the ark in secret. It is worth noting, however, that Noah has not been enjoined to be secretive about his enterprise. The devil promises to be at Uxor's side when she embarks "To ship when thow shall fayre,/ I shall be [by] thy side" (ll. 138-9). Contrary to the Weltchronik and Russian redaction, no mention is made of the devil entering the ark, nor of a wife reluctant to embark although she curses her husband:

By my faith, I no rake
Whether thou be friend or foe.
The devil of hell thee take
To ship when thou shalt go.
(ll. 182-5)[9]

A quarrelsome wife occurs in the extant cycle plays of Chester, York and Towneley, but no devil involvement is apparent. It is not likely that the Chester cycle contains any traces of devil-naming, for Noah's urgent appeal to his wife to "Come in, wiffe, in twentye devylles waye,/ or ells stand there withowte" (ll. 219-20, my italics) is a commonplace expletive which is not only found elsewhere in the Chester cycle (XXIII, l. 450), but also in Towneley (II, l. 439; XIV, l. 465; XX, l. 200) and the Ludus Coventriae (play 24, l. 143).[10]

The oldest English MS. in which Uxor appears is MS. Junius XI, which contains a drawing depicting the embarkation of Noah's family (pl. 8). To the right of the picture one observes a woman,

distinguishable by her kerchief, who is apparently reluctant to climb the ladder to the ark and is arguing with a man.[11] Dividing the pictures of the MS into three groups, Raw notes that the major group, consisting of Creation and Fall of the Angels, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and Noah and Abraham, resembles Carolingian - Ottonian motifs connected with Tours in France,[12] Th. H. Ohlgren comes to the same conclusions as Raw, but argues that the motifs were transmitted via Fleury.[13] From this we may infer that the story of Noah's uncooperative wife probably has a continental origin, yet, as far as France is concerned, the devil - Uxor collusion seems to be a "sujet très rare."[14] This probably indicates that, if Raw's and Ohlgren's theories are correct and the motifs have a French connection, evidence of the story must have been lost over the centuries.

Another MS which is relevant is the Queen Mary's Psalter of c. 1370-80[15] which shows familiarity with the Uxor legend. On pl. 9, fol. 5^{v}, an angel gives Noah the tools to build the ark. The top drawing of pl. 10, fol. 6^{r}, depicts how the devil persuades Uxor to make Noah a drink. The caption under the illustration reads:

> Coment le diable viint en forme de homme a la femme Noe e demanda v son mari estoit! E ele disoit qe ele ne sout ou . il est ale pur toi traỳr e tote le mund . preỳne ces greỳnes e fetez vn aboỳcion e le donetz a boỳre . e il te dirra tote. E issint fist ele.

The embarkation of plate 11, fol. 6^{v}, shows Noah carrying his family on board one by one over his shoulder. Without stretching one's imagination too much one can see what a scope this offered to a talented actor. He could easily have portrayed this scene on stage by kicking Noah's back when being carried on board. One only has to match this idea with the concept of an uncooperative wife to establish a comic scene. Plate 12, fol. 7^{r}, (pl. 9) illustrates how the devil flees from the ark through a hole in the bottom. The

French text reads:

> Coment Noe enuoye vn corbeu e vne columbe . sauoer noum si il enurouent poi de tere . le corbeu si ad troue la teste de vn Chival ou il se arreste . E le Colowmbe est reterne . si aporte vne braunche en soun bek en signe qil ad troue terre . E Noe a le entre de la neef? si crie benedicito ou il seet a la gouernayle. E li diable sen fuyit par mi le founz de la neef? e la colouere bete sa cone par mi le pertuz.

The only two other examples in English art known to me to deal with Uxor's conduct are found in York Minster and Malvern Priory (Worcester). York Minster's Great East Window shows in the second panel from the left in the second row from the top, dated 1405-8, that "Noah's wife is apparently still recalcitrant even though she is aboard [the] ark." At Malvern Noah is seen plucking his beard while his wife's raised hand "...is poised like a chopper, ready to cut off any further argument."[16]

Although the cooperation between Uxor and the devil is meagrely illustrated in English art, it is well known in Swedish church wall-paintings. Following Andreas Lindblom's Den Apokryfa Noahsagan I Medeltidens Konst Och Litteratur, Hill describes the wall-paintings of four Swedish churches: Edshult (Småland, beginning of the fourteenth century), Villberga (Uppland, fifteenth century), Risinge (Östergötland, middle of the fifteenth century) and Örberga (Östergötland, middle of the fifteenth century).[17] The church of Edshult contains three frescoes, two of which I have reproduced in plates 10 and 11. The first fresco, not reproduced here, shows Noah and his wife in bed while an angel addresses Noah.[18] The second painting (pl. 10) depicts Noah's wife clutching a jar, possibly filled with the potion, and Noah arguing with a young man, possibly Canaan.[19] The third scene (pl. 11) shows the devil sitting on Uxor's shoulder while Noah apparently tries to pull his wife into the ark. The Villberga church has two Noah frescoes one of which

shows the angel building the ark. The second painting, here reproduced as a photograph of a drawing in plate 12, shows a triangular shaped ark, with to the left Noah signalling his wife to come aboard. Uxor, standing on a ladder, is accosted by the devil. The end of a tail protrudes through a hole in the bottom of the ark.[20] The paintings at Risinge (pl. 13) and Örberga (pl. 14) show a degree of affinity. Both sets of paintings are circular, connected by the same flower-motif. The motifs of the Örberga paintings 2-5 are found back in Risinge 1, 2, 3, 5, yet Risinge lacks God's appearance to Noah and Örberga the embarkation.[21] The scenes are self-explanatory.

To the above mentioned frescoes, three others can be added which to my knowledge have not been discussed in English before: Fjelie church (Skåne, 1360-1400), Lagga church (Uppland, c. 1450) and Estuna church (Uppland, 1460).[22] The Fjelie fresco (pl. 15) described and reproduced by M. Rydbeck,[23] depicts two scenes. To the left of the painting we find Noah working on the ark while above him a hand stretches from a cloud, possibly God the father's giving benediction. Immediately beside this hand an angel's head bends forward out of the cloud. An axe is stuck into the boat's gunwale while Noah has his hand close to his mouth, probably suggesting that he had to build the ark in secret. The second scene shows the ark, with in front of it a female figure encompassed by waves. Noah who is aboard the ark is beckoning. A female figure, similar in dress to the one outside the ark, suggests that we are dealing with one and the same woman, indicating that Uxor ultimately relinquished her recalcitrance and embarked. The devil motif is absent. Rydbeck makes the suggestion that the Risinge church frescoes were painted by the Risinge master under influence of the Vadstena school.[24] This is interesting, for Vadstena was the headquarters of the Bridgettine order, which established a house in England in the first half of the

fifteenth century.[25] Although the Noah legend was known in Sweden before the connection Sweden - England through the Birgittines was established, it is possible that this connection reinforced the migration of the Noah legend to Sweden. The Lagga church painting (pl. 16) shows Noah holding a large drinking horn while the devil stands behind Uxor. To the right of this scene we find a curious pulley and bucket, the relevance of which is not clear. The Estuna church depiction (pl. 17) is remarkably similar to the Villberga one (pl. 12). Uxor, with the devil at her side, is standing on the gangplank, apparently defying Noah's command to embark. The ark has the same curious shape and we also find the hole in the bottom again. It looks as if a mouse, or some such animal identifiable by its eye and whiskers, rather than a serpent's tail is visible through the hole. This would suggest familiarity with the Pseudo-Methodius or similar legend in which the devil changes himself into a mouse to gnaw a hole in the ark to make it sink (see above p. 46).[26]

From the discussion so far it will have become clear that during the Middle Ages a Noah legend was known internationally, the core of which was ultimately the same, but which differed superficially from locality to locality. Its main feature was the devil's enticing Uxor away from embarking, although the devil is not always present. Despite the devil's absence in the cycle plays it is likely that Uxor's stubbornness in the Chester, York and Towneley plays is an offshoot of this legend.

Chaucer's Miller's Tale shows that already in the early version of the cycles a recalcitrant woman was commonplace:

> Hastou nat herd, quod Nicholas, also
> The sorwe of Noe with his felaweshipe,
> Er that he myghte gete his wyf to shipe?
> (ll. 3538-40)[27]

Each of the extant cycles handles the embarkation incident sufficiently different to justify an evaluation of them.[28] The conflict in the

Chester play increases as the play progresses. Following God's injunction to build an ark, Noah's entire family decides to take part in its construction. Yet it is during the construction that the first difference of opinion is brought to light. Explaining the ark's crucial importance for his family's survival, Noah becomes irritated when his wife replies to his suggestion to go on board as soon as the ark is ready:

> In fayth Noe, I had as leeve thou slepte.
> For all thy Frenyshe fare,
> I will not doe after thy reade.
> (ll. 99-101)

She does not see any "neede" (l. 103) to comply with the wish of her husband who now complains "...weoman bine crabbed aye,/ and non are meeke, ..." (ll. 105-6). He acknowledges that his wife is "mastere" (l. 111) implying that there is no reason to show it off to the audience and that she might as well continue with her work. Temporarily appeased, she helps loading the ship although she remains outside the vessel when the rest of the family is inside. The situation comes to a climax when the stowing has been completed and she still refuses to embark, now for entirely new reasons. She will not leave unless she can take her Gossips with her. This, of course, does not tally with God's plan so she has to be dissuaded, but to no avail. She remains stubborn so that her family has to resort to forcible means by carrying or dragging her aboard. Here she is sarcastically welcomed by her husband: "Welcome, wyffe, into this boote." (l. 245) Since she is brought on board against her will it is not surprising that she is fuming with anger. Noah's "welcome" fuels her resentment even more and makes her strike out, making Noah wish that he had remained silent:

> Aha, marye, this is hotte;
> yt is good for to be still.
> (ll. 247-8)

This is the last we hear of Uxor in this play[29] for after the Flood

there is only a dialogue between God and Noah in which the latter enters a covenant with his Creator, symbolizing the cessation of God's vengeance.

The York Noah play is strung out over two plays. In the first, play VIII, God reveals his plan of salvation to Noah and gives him the physical endurance needed to build the ark. The ark being completed, Noah sends for his wife in the second play, play IX. Uxor, however, refuses until her curiosity is roused by her son's insistence that she visit her husband. Since Noah has not disclosed his intentions, his wife's reaction at seeing the ark is perfectly natural:

> Trowes þou þat I wol leue þe harde lande,
> And tourne vp here on toure deraye?
> (ll. 77-8)

What is the meaning of all this? It is surely one of his quirks attributable to his age? At least this is what she thinks, for Noah's brief allusion to the fact that it has already rained for nearly 40 days (l. 85-6) is equally incomprehensible to her and does not advance Noah's cause at all. It merely adds to her opinion that her husband is "...nere woode,..." (l. 91). On these grounds she can easily dismiss the situation as unimportant and order her children to make ready for town (l. 81) or go home herself (l. 92). Detaining her with the help of his sons despite her excuse that she must do her packing first, Noah owns up. His excuse that the secrecy of the enterprise[30] "...was goddis will with-owten doutte" (l. 118) will not do, he should have notified her first. This point is literally hammered home by Uxor. When it finally dawns on her what is going on she insists that her Gossips and cousins come with her. Contrary to Chester, however, she relinquishes this claim almost immediately, enters the ark without making a fuss about it and contents herself with being comforted by her daughters-in-law.

Her initial obstinacy has been overcome and the play nowhere comes near a climax such as Chester's. Utterly mollified, Uxor can only mourn her kindred after the Flood:

> ...where are nowe all oure kynne,
> And compayyo we kn[e]we be-fore.
> (ll. 269-70)

The effect of God's power, the purgation, has made a lasting impact on her. Discussing the time when the earth shall be purged again, but then by fire, she expresses her fears of a rekindling of sin, indirectly implying that she has learned her lesson and will in future be more careful.

In the Towneley Processus Noe Cum Filiis (III) comic action clearly plays a more elaborate role than in the two cycles discussed above. Its function is no longer confined to comedy for comedy's sake, but has shifted to enhance the plot and didactic purposes of the play. Because of this new role the comedy does not stand out as incongruously as in the other plays, and this results in a more satisfactory end to the entire play.

The Towneley Noah is next in sequence to the Mactacio Abel and is actually its logical successor though there is no actual narrative link as in the Ludus Coventriae. Cain's brutal fratricide is one of the cardinal sins in which man indulges and it is sins like these that prompt God to take remedial action in the Noah play. The opening of the play depicts Noah piously imploring God to save him from sin. He, God's servant, recapitulates the story of the Creation and Fall and observes how mankind inclines more and more to "syn in pride" (l. 37). This has an Augustinian ring to it, which is perhaps not surprising if one remembers that the Mactacio Abel was also interpretable in Augustinian terms.[31] Pride, says St. Augustine, is the first of all sins and runs contrary to God's wish that man pay respect to Him, the Ultimate Good. Pride induces

man to pursue other than heavenly goods and distracts him from God. Man must fear his Creator, for without fear there can be no obedience and without obedience he cannot receive reprieve or mercy. Man, according to Noah, has gone too far. This point is underscored by God who claims that "...ffor me no man is ferd," (l. 102). As a result man who "...must luf me [God] paramoure,/by reson, and repent" (ll. 80-1) will have to face the consequences.

Noah, however, has shown the correct attitude by submitting his will to God. His relationship with God, a love relationship based on subservience and friendship,[32] is his salvation, for God promises him that "To my bydyng obediand/frendship shal thou fele/To mede;" (ll. 121-2). This rapport with God as man's lord, friend and lover ties in, or at least should tie in, with a marital relationship in which two people seek bliss in each other. As Noah is soon to discover, this could not be further from the truth as far as his earthly partner is concerned.

As God explains, it is his intention to give mankind a second chance through the parenthood of Noah and his wife:

> Noe, to the and thi fry
> My blyssyng graunt I;
> Ye shall wax and multiply,
> And fill the erth agane,
> (ll. 177-80)

It will of course be observed that the idea of the "second creation" is expressed in terms of the first as found in Genesis 1:28 and 9:1, 7. Noah and his wife have been singled out for this mission "ffor thay wold neuer stryfe/With me [ne] me offend" (ll. 107-8) which is an ironic anticipatory reference to later events in the play, just as much as "With the shal no man fyght/nor do the no kyn wrake" (l. 138).

As soon as he has received his instruction from God, Noah begs

his leave and hurries home to a wife who is evidently wearing the breeches:

> My [wife] will I frast/what she will say
> And I am agast/that we get som fray
> Betwixt vs both;
> ffor she is full tethee,
> ffor litill oft angre,
> If ony thyng wrang be,
> Soyne is she wroth
>
> (ll. 183-9)

From Uxor's words of welcome one learns that Noah is not the model husband. According to her, he is a loafer and coward who neglects his family. She cuts short her husband's attempt to explain that hard times are imminent, threatening him to get her own back on him "...with gam & with gyle" (l. 214). This is enough for the meek and docile Noah who, losing all piety, flares up "...hold thi tong, ram-skyt/or I shall the still" (l. 217). Being provoked, Uxor parries his threat with a challenge as a result of which Noah has no other choice but to suit the action to his work and beat her into submission. Defiant as she is, Uxor strikes back. What has she to fear from a husband who earlier on proclaimed that he was "...old,/ seke, sory, and cold" withering away "As muk apon mold?" (ll. 60-3).

The scuffle breaks off as suddenly as it flared up when Noah remembers that he has to build the ark, whereas his wife decides to return to her spinning. Having finished the ark, Noah invites his wife to come and flee with him to escape the Flood. Yet Uxor is suspicious as to what it all means. Since Noah has not informed her at all, which is partially attributable to herself as she interrupted Noah when he was about to explain the "...tythyngis new" (l. 199), she is not only confused by what she sees and hears, but is also gradually working herself into a frenzy. Her confusion would be well described when she cannot distinguish the ark's fore from aft (ll. 330-1), but this depends largely on what the ark was like. If it was like a

proper ship, and therefore typologically comparable with the ship of the Church,[33] it illustrates how benighted she is, but there are medieval illustrations of the ark which depict a curious box-shaped houseboat which, though based on the Bible, is very unlike a contemporary ship.[34] If the ark was of the latter type, her inability to tell fore from aft would be quite understandable, and would make her seem merely naturally sceptical, an attitude which the audience could have some sympathy with, even though she is mistaken.

Her reaction shows her state of mind; she is not going to give up whatever she has in exchange for a sojourn on board the ark. So, she resorts to her spinning again, warning everyone not to come near "ffor drede of a knok" (l. 342). Threatening, pleading and reasoning are to no avail, she refuses to spin anywhere but on the hill. Any audience familiar with weaving and spinning would have interpreted this behaviour as comic cussedness since it is not possible to spin in the pouring rain. In order to spin properly wool has to be dry and fluffy, but in Uxor's case this is not possible as the Flood is rising. Eventually it catches up with her, forcing her to accept her husband's invitation to embark since she can no longer "sit...dry" (l. 370). She climbs on board, her temper as intractable as ever. Noah feels inclined to chastise his quick-mouthed ill-tempered wife, but sows the seeds for another domestic row. Obviously, he wants to reproach her not only for her behaviour exhibited throughout the play, but also for her indirect involvement, through Eve, in the Fall and purge by Deluge of humanity. His threat that "I shall make þe still as stone/<u>begynnar of/blunder</u>" (l. 406, my italics) is an argumentum ad hominem which is bound to make her blood boil.[35] The following brawl ends in victory for neither, both are too exhausted to claim physical superiority and only give up after their children intervene. Even though his wife takes the helm while he obtains soundings,[36] this

sudden cooperation cannot be interpreted as a victory for Noah since he has stopped using provocative language. Apart from this, Noah asks his wife's counsel as to which bird may soonest bring back a token of mercy. So it looks as if both have been chastened by the Flood.[37] Yet it is typical, and therefore not surprising, that Uxor's answer is the wrong one by picking out the raven. This bird is a predator which tries, sometimes agressively,[38] to exert its superiority over other birds in much the same way as Uxor tried to subject Noah. The choice does not only reflect her character, but also her unreasonable behaviour, for as Noah remarks the raven "...is without any reson" (l. 501). It needs no clarification that the dove "gentill" and "ay trew" (ll. 505, 506) broadly parallels Noah's character. The scene with the birds also shows that Uxor's conversion is now complete. Prior to the Flood she refused to regard the ark, or for that matter the Church, as the agent of her salvation, but now that the Flood is waning she understands the significance of the dove:[39] "A trew tokyn ist/we shall be sauyd all" (l. 517), indirectly acknowledging the importance of the ark for her and her family. This point is once more underscored by the meaning attributed to the drowned people. From the York and Chester cycle we learn that the people were drowned for their sins and that this should incite us to lead a righteous life. In Towneley Uxor wonders whether the drowned people "ffrom thens [death, hell] agayn/May thai neuer wyn?" (ll. 548-9). Her husband's reply is a firm affirmation that those who have been slain in pride shall never escape their torment unless God accepts them to His grace:

> Wyn? no, I-wis/bot he that myght hase
> Wold myn of thare mys/& admytte thayn to grace;
> (ll. 550-1)

Towneley's is an emphasis on grace. Noah asked God for grace, mercy, (l. 64) and received it in the form of the ark. So, Towneley's

message is more hopeful than that of the others in the sense that if one asks for mercy one can be saved no matter the sin. God's punishment is not so much a punishment of sin, but a punishment for not doing right, i.e., not asking for mercy. Thus Towneley's essential message seems to be that there is still hope for mankind.

The comedy of the action described above is plain enough in itself, but the significance of the play for its medieval audience is found on a different, more metaphysical level. The basic conflict between Noah and his wife stems from a difference in love commitments. The former is whole-heartedly committed to God's cause, whereas the latter can only think of herself and what she has to sacrifice if she sails with the ark, in other words Uxor is a materialist. Their interests are diametrically opposed in that Noah loves God, i.e., his love transcends his earthbound interests, whereas his wife basically loves none but herself. Noah venerates an order of relationship with God based on obedience, faith in, and subjection to an everlasting law although he is far from perfect himself. Uxor's idea of her relationship with Noah also rests on obedience, but it is an obedience enforced by physical reprisals. The differences between them are very much a conflict between the spirit (Noah) and the flesh (Uxor). Similarly, we can see the differences between them reflecting those between the city of God and the earthly city:

> Fecerunt itaque civitates duas amores duo;
> terrenam scilicet amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei,
> coelestem vero amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui.
> Denique illa in se ipsa, haec in Domino gloriatur.[40]

The Flood has a reconciliatory effect as both relinquish their disputatious attitudes and cooperate in a new and harmonious fashion. This domestic earthly peace, although related to it, is inherently different from the Heavenly one, since both want peace for different ends. Nevertheless it is possible to use earthly peace as a support

if not stepping-stone to attain Heavenly peace. Effectually, the stay on earth is, or can be, a preparatory stage or pilgrimage to the Heavenly City.[41] This pilgrimage is exemplified by Noah who is sailing from an old and corrupt world to a new one where he can father a new generation which will have a fresh chance to attain the City of God. As so often happens with a change from an old to a new order, the change is effected by a younger generation, in this case Noah's children. If it had not been for them, Noah and his wife might not have given up their quarrel.

Noah's pilgrimage from an old to a new order is also symbolized by the position of the Noah play in the cycle. In the Mactacio Abel (II), Cain establishes a what may be called earthly city based on pride, deceit, murder etc. In the Abraham and Isaac plays the movements towards the Heavenly City are quite distinct. The Noah play is hemmed in between these two extremes so that its very position indicates its transitional character. Noah has been turned into a true pilgrim.

At the outset of the play one is presented with an anarchic world picture:"In erth I se bot syn/reynand to and fro" (l. 111). The deterioration is partially reflected in Noah's decrepitude, and partially in Uxor's belligerence. The chaotic situation is also reflected in the constellation of the stars, whereas the ultimate fate of the world is mirrored in Uxor. As man does not revere God, Uxor does not revere her husband. This discord, both in the macrocosm and microcosm, has to be eradicated before a harmonious situation can be brought about. God's plan, therefore, is to retaliate against disrespectful and disobedient man which must lead to a new harmony. Noah, for that matter, has to chastise his wife to harmonize his marriage. As soon as he has proved his point that he is not as meek and docile as Uxor thinks him to be, his wife decides to cooperate

and the stars return to their places within the firmament. What both of them learn is that harmony can only be achieved by giving and obeying orders.

From the discussion above it follows that Uxor is an indispensable character to the play. Without her whimsies and fancies the discordance in the world would be more difficult to make to bear on the immediate significance of the play for a medieval audience. To this end the playwright used a stock-character, with which the spectators will undoubtedly have been familiar in view of the widespread occurrence of the legend, and employed her as an antagonist to a biblical character. This, of course, is in keeping with the legendary tradition, but since the devil plays no part our attention focusses automatically on Uxor's behaviour rather than on any external forces. Thus Uxor receives a psychological dimension in that her stubbornness and obstreperousness now come from within not from without. Uxor has come to exemplify humanity in need of salvation. She portrays vividly man's recalcitrance and stubborn refusal to accept God's law. Superficially an hilarious character with which the audience can identify, she carries a serious sting about her in the form of her embarkation dilemma. To embark is to give in to obedience and dependence, but it brings salvation in its wake. Sinning in pride, of which her recalcitrance and disobedience are exponents, leads to eternal damnation as exemplified by the drowned people, unless one takes up the hint dropped by Noah and asks for mercy. In essence her choice, and that of mankind, is one of life or death.

The occurrence of Uxor will of course have raised the audience's suspicion and expectation of being entertained, for what has a recalcitrant woman to do with a pious husband in a <u>religious</u> setting? The Noah play answers the question satisfactorily. It

teaches that reciprocal love and obedience create a harmonious world which will lead to Salvation. By implication the audience is invited to respond accordingly.

Footnotes to Chapter Two

1. LC attributes a mere four lines to Noah's wife, play 4, ll. 214-7. She is presented as meek and docile compared with her appearance in the other cycles and will therefore be excluded from our discussion of the other plays. On Noah's wife prefiguring the Virgin, see: R. Woolf, The English Mystery Plays, p. 133 and n. 3 on p. 376. On the inclusion of Cain's killing in the LC Noah play see D.P. Poteet II, "Symbolic Character and Form in the Ludus Coventriae 'Play of Noah,'" ABR, 26:1 (1975) 75-88.

2. G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, p. 386, and cross references to pp. 492-3. The Vulgate version reads: "Praeparata ad capiendas animas; garrula et baga, quietis impatiens, nec valens in doma consistere pedibus suis, nunc foris, nunc in plateis..."

3. Owst, Lit. and Pulpit, p. 493; The Book of Knight of La Tour-Landry, EETS OS 33, p. 64.

4. A.J. Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," PMLA 56 (1941) 613-26.

5. Epiphanius, "Adversus Gnosticus," Adversus Haereses, PG 41, cols. 331-4. The Greek is only known to me in its Latin rendition. See also Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," p. 615. "Truly, they say [the heretics] she longed to be with Noah in the ark but she was never permitted, for the author who created the world wanted to destroy her with all the rest in the flood. Therefore she was envious of the ark and set fire to it, not once or twice, but oftener, and even up to a third time. That is why the building of the ark continued for very many years, because it was often burnt by her."

6. O. Dähnhardt, Natursagen, I, 258. Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," pp. 617-8 and n. 22 quotes Dähnhardt extensively. The former does not give a date for the "late Russian redaction," but on the basis of his apparent chronological treatment of sources Mill suggests that Dähnhardt may have regarded the redaction as being of the C13 antedating Jansen Enikel's Weltchronik, ed. Ph. Strauch, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Vol. III. This work dates from c. 1270, see NDB 10 (1974) 338.

7. Dähnhardt, Natursagen, I, 258, 271. Dähnhardt lists several variants of this story. The animal which prevents the ark from sinking is sometimes a snake, hedgehog, toad (Enikel's Weltchronik, p. 50, l. 2577) or hare, See Natursagen, I, 276-9.

8. Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments, EETS Suppl. Text 1, pp. 25-31. The estimated date of the play is found on p. xlvii.

9. In a letter of December 22nd 1982, Dr. John Anderson of the department of English Language and Literature of Manchester University confirms my opinion that the Newcastle Noah play probably consisted of two plays as at York (see below p.53). According to him there is nothing in the Newcastle town records to suggest that there was more than one Noah play. Yet in the extant play all the most important parts of the story - the embarkation and the sailing - are missing so that a second play is needed for completeness.

10. Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings Mainly Before 1500, eds. B.J. and H.W. Whiting, p. 132, no. B. 219; LL2: "devel," 6b, p. 1054.

11. The Caedmon Manuscript of Anglo-Saxon Biblical Poetry: Junius XI in the Bodleian Library, ed. I. Gollancz, p. 66. The MS "... belongs to the last quarter of the tenth or the early years of the eleventh century." (p. xviii). Care must be taken not to read a belligerent wife into this picture. No devil involvement can be noted. For a slightly later dating of the LS, c. 1025, and the dating of the drawings of the first two illustrators, c. second quarter C11 see A.N. Doane, Genesis A, p. 18. B. Raw, "The Probable Derivation of Most of the Illustrations in Junius 11 from an Illustrated Old Saxon Genesis," Anglo-Saxon England, 5 (1976) 134 dates the MS to the "second quarter of the eleventh century" on the basis of some Scandinavian elements such as, for example, the ark as a dragon ship.

12. Raw, "Derivation of Illustr. in Junius 11, "pp. 138-48. Raw does not discuss the embarkation scene. See also Doane, Genesis A, p. 21.

13. Doane, Genesis A, p. 22 and n. 50.

14. L. Réau, "Iconography de la Bible: Ancient Testament," Iconographie de l'Art Chrétien, Vol. II, prt. I, 107. A. Lindblom, "Den Apokryfa Noahsagan I Medeltidens Konst och Litteratur," Nordisk Tidskr. (1917) p. 359 quotes Male as having said in a private communication on the topic of Noah's wife that "C'est un sujet que l'art français ignore."

15. Queen Mary's Psalter, ed. G. Warner. For the date of the MS: Old and Middle English Poetry to 1500, ed. V.H. Beale p. 238.

16. The first quotation is from C. Davidson and D.E. O'Connor, York Art, Early Drama, Art and Music Reference Series 1 (1978) 25. A photograph of the York window appears on p. 26. The second quotation is from M.D. Anderson, Drama and Imagery in English Medieval Churches, p. 108. This author reproduces in addition to a photograph of the York window a photograph of Malvern Priory in pl. 14a.

17. Lindblom, "Apokryfa Noahsagan," pp. 358-68. He reproduces illustrations of Edshult, Villberga and Risinge. Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," pp. 622-4. Mill does not reproduce any illustrations. Ingalill Pegalow of the Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm, Sweden informed me about the dates of the paintings in a letter of March 24th 1982. She also pointed out that the Edshult painting is on wood and is on the chancelceiling. The paintings, however, are paintings of paintings which no longer exist. This explains their rather Romantic/Victorian look.

18. The first fresco is reproduced by Lindblom, "Apokryfa Noahsagan," p. 364.

19. Lindblom, "Apokryfa Noahsagan," p. 365.

20. Lindblom, "Apokryfa Noahsagan," p. 365. He reproduces the same pre-restoration drawing, p. 366, as the tail-motif is not present after the restoration.

21. Neither Lindblom nor Hall reproduce the faded Örberga paintings. Lindblom, "Apokryfa Noahsagan," p. 387, reproduces Risinge 2-4, whereas Risinge 5, the sailing of the ark, is just about visible in the bottom righthand corner of my reproduction.

22. I owe my gratitude to Marianne Poulsen of the Danish Nationalmuseet for information on, and date of, the Fjelie church wall-painting. The data concerning the Lagga and Estuna churches have been provided by Ingalill Pegalow of the Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm, Sweden.

23. H. Rydbeck, "Senromansk Absiddekor I Fjelie Kyrka Anpassad Efter Gotiska Målningar," Fornvännen, 44 (1949) 98-102.

24. Rydbeck, "Senromansk," p. 99.

25. A Bridgettine abbey for this double order of nuns and priests was founded in 1415 at Twickenham, Middlesex, moved to Syon, Middlesex, in 1431 and was abolished in 1539. See D. Knowles and R. Hadcock, Medieval Religious Houses, p. 202.

26. See nn. 6 and 7 above and Dähnhardt, Natursagen, I, 271-6.

27. The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N. Robinson, 2nd edn. pp. 51-2. It is not clear whether this refers to a non-dramatic source or not, but as there is another reference to cycle plays in the Miller's Tale, l. 3384, one is probably here too. This disposes of the idea, which the LC might otherwise have given us, that only the northern cycles had the recalcitrant Uxor. (Note that Absalon in the Miller's Tale plays on a scaffold not a wagon).

28. As far as Ch. is concerned we have to be careful. All MSS are rather late, see Ch. edn. p. ix, so that it is possible that Ch. incorporated successful elements from other Noah cycle plays. See also Chapter One n. 55 above.

29. This is not to say that Uxor is not physically present anymore. It looks as if we have to assume that she has been somewhat chastened by the Flood.

30. This is a puzzling detail. As the text of the cycle now stands God has said nothing about it being his will that Uxor be kept ignorant. Noah's secrecy, however, is in accord with the legend as found in e.g., the Revelation of Pseudo-Methodius and Enikel's Weltchronik.

31. I have dealt with Augustine's theme of pride and sin in Chapter One pp. 2-4 above.

32. This relationship is emphasized at several instances in the play: "Noe thi servant, am I..." (l. 65); "To Noe my seruand, ..." (l. 110); "Noe, my freend,..." (l. 118); "to me trew as stele," (l. 120).

33. Augustine, De Civitate Dei, PL 41, bk. XV, ch. XXVI, cols. 472-3: "Quod arca quam Noe jussus est facere, in omnibus Christum Ecclesiamque significet." The City of God, tr. M. Dods. Hereafter cited as Dods. Dods, II, 98-100: "That the ark which Noah was ordered to make figures in every respect

Christ and the church." See also: Middle English Sermons, EETS OS 209, p. 243, ll. 32-3.

34. See for example Biblia Germanica, I, fol. VII^{V} printed by Antonius Koburger at Nurenburg with woodcuts by Peter Quentell in 1483.

35. Uxor's link with Eve is established through her spinning. Eve's spinning is referred to in a medieval poem The Pointless Bride of Man, attributed to the C14, which starts "When Adam delf,/And Eve span," (ll. 1-2): Medieval English Lyrics, ed. R.T. Davies, p. 143-6. M. Rickert, Painting in Britain: The Middle Ages, reproduces pls., all from the C13, illustrating a digging Adam and a spinning Eve, see pls. 100, 102, 105. It is worth noting that another evil woman, Gyll of the second shepherds' play (play XIII), is also engaged in spinning (XIII, l. 298).

36. It is worth noting that the York and Towneley plays are the only Noah plays to employ a plumbline (ll. 199 and 438 resp.). It occurs as a naturalistic detail in Mary Magdalene in The Digby Plays, EETS ES 70, l. 1440. Despite the known dependence of Towneley on York it is not possible to determine whether Towneley borrowed this idea or not. On the other hand, York was a seafaring town in the Middle Ages and the Noah play as we find it today was performed by guilds closely associated with the sea: the Shipwright and the Fishers and Mariners. These guilds are likely to have been familiar with plumblines. Wakefield was not a seafaring town in the Middle Ages, nor is it today, due to its geographical position. It had a "fysher pagent" (play XXVII: Peregrini), but this is likely to have been a fishmongers' pageant rather than a fishers' pageant. No craft guild has been associated with the Towneley Noah play. On these grounds a borrowing from York may not be ruled out.

37. Chastising Uxor is obvious enough, but Noah is not without imperfections either. He experiences physical hardship when constructing the ark (ll. 264-70), and fights with Uxor using gross abuses. He seems therefore to be the best of a bad lot only just good enough to be worth saving since he is the only one to ask for mercy (l. 64).

38. A Dictionary of Birds, ed. A.L. Thomson, p. 166.

39. From a sermon in M. Engl. Sermons, EETS OS 209, p. 243, ll. 30-9 and p. 244 ll. 1-10 we learn that if the ark can be seen as the ship of the Church, the dove can be seen as a prayer for grace sent out of that ship.

40. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. XIV, ch. XXVIII, col. 436. Dods, II, 47: "... two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glorifies in itself, the latter in the Lord."

41. Civ. Dei, PL 41, bk. XIX, ch. XVII, cols. 645-6; Dods, II, 326-8.

Chapter Three

The Shepherds' Plays

More than any other plays in the Towneley cycle, the shepherds' plays, commonly known as the Prima Pastorum (PP) and Secunda Pastorum (SP),[1] are enriched with folklore material, descriptions of and allusions to contemporary medieval life and other non-biblical matters. Together these account for the buffoonery and horseplay witnessed in the two plays. The apparent incongruity of these elements in plays concerning the otherwise traditionally pious Nativity needs some explanation, since it reflects traces of contemporary Christian revelry at Christmas which itself had partly unconscious pagan echoes.

The pagan Germanic and Roman world reveals in separate traditions that the winter season was the time of year when most feasts were celebrated and rites observed.[2] To the Germanic peoples an enormous banquet characterized by an abundance of food and drink was part of their tradition and marked the high-point of the fertility rites. Its sheer copiousness was the "Vorbedingung für das reichliche gedeihen der Ernte."[3] The Roman world seems to have known a period of "continuous carnival" between the latter half of November and the beginning of January. The Saturnalia and Kalends tradition is interesting in that it involved revelries which made fun of everything serious. Social restraints were forgotten and one could see not only an inversion in the traditional position between those high and low in the social pecking order, but also a reversal in attitudes towards pious matters. It is noteworthy that the midwinter celebrations of the Germanic and Roman peoples coincide with a great feast of the new Christian religion: Christmas. The change, in the fourth century, in the date of the major Christian feast from January 6th to December 25th, a shift in

emphasis from the Epiphany to the Nativity, was a tactically shrewd move on behalf of Christianity as it fixed the birthday of Christ "...in the very heart of the pagan rejoicing and upon the actual day hitherto sacred to Sol Invictus."[4] Thus the new religion had a means of persuading the wildly feasting pagan people to connect their celebrations with the celebrations of Christmas. By substituting the day of the Nativity for the day of solstice the pagan cult was gradually erased.

From the above it will be obvious that the people used to associate what is nowadays called the Christmas season with eating, drinking and merry-making. This spirit of the season is found again in the contemptuous revels held by the inferior clergy in medieval cathedrals and churches. These festivities, which were also popular with the bourgeoisie in the late Middle Ages, were in England commonly known as "Feast of Fools," "Boy Bishop," "Feast of the Triduum" or under their generic name "libertas Decembrica." Characteristic features of these celebrations are a procession and mockery and inversion of status. It was not uncommon for "Pastores" to be performed on Christmas day,[5] but the foolery in this was purely incidental, if present at all. At any rate, it is understandable that apart from a festive spirit a spirit of foolery associated itself with Christmas and the Christmas season.

To an author familiar with the basic organisation of the shepherds' plays this seasonal spirit may have offered considerable scope for the introduction of new material or addition of a personal touch to these plays. Since the shepherds' plays took place principally in two fictional loci, the field and the stable (or manger), insertions could take place before the shepherds' adoration, as any burlesque treatment of the Nativity proper would have been

regarded as heretical. This is exactly what happened. The noisy first part of each of the plays, with the argument about the sheep and the elaborate meal, which incorporates traces of medieval Christmas revelry, in the PP, and the mock-nativity plus horseplay connected with it in the SP, contrasts significantly with the air of piety and serenity of the second part.

Although the shepherds' plays hark ultimately back to Luke 2:8-20, their place in a contemporaneous medieval society and moral setting makes them ambiguous in time and place. Thus the message of the Nativity receives local and universal importance. The number of the shepherds, three, is not vouched for in Scripture and may find its provenance in a parallel with the Magi (Matt. 2:1-13) whose number, three, in turn is probably inferred from their number of gifts (Matt. 2:11). Origen is the first Church Father to suggest that the Magi are three in number:

> Possunt quidem isti tres, qui pacem requirunt a Verbo Dei, et praevenire cupiunt pacto societatem ejus, figuram tenere magorum, qui ex Orientis partibus veniunt eruditi paternis libris, et institutionibus majorum, et dicunt: Quia videntes vidimus natum regem, et vidimus quia Deus est cum ipso, et venimus adorare eum[6]

It is also possible to see the three shepherds as paralleling the three women at the tomb of Christ in the Easter "Quem Quaeritis."[7] This is feasible since the early Pastores tropes are more closely related to the Sepulchre trope than to the Stella trope of the Magi.[8] In addition, early pictures sometimes show two shepherds as in, for example, the missal of Robert of Jumièges, Winchester, early eleventh century, and the gospels of St Bertin, English or French, c. 1000.[9] If the three shepherds were on the analogy of the Magi, there is no reason why they should not have become standard much earlier, the more so as Robert of Jumièges has three Magi.[10] If, however, the number of the shepherds became fixed at three because of the influence

of the Bethlehme trope, the date of the iconographic change would have to be about or just after the time, c. eleventh century, when the Pastores trope became popular, which seems to be the case.

From the opening passages of the PP one learns that Christ's birth is to take place in difficult times. The first shepherd, Gyb, conjures up a gloomy picture of his social situation. In order to keep his head above water he has to beg and borrow as he has "...nerehand nothyng..." (l. 31) due to the fact that his main source of income, his sheep, has been swept away by the "rott" (l. 26). A medieval audience familiar with this situation would have understood that he is gravely afflicted, so that they would have become immediately and emotionally involved in the play. After all, the shepherd is one of them.

Despite his discomforts and a cash-shortage he decides to go to the market to buy some new livestock to alleviate his lot. He invokes God to send him grace (l. 41). In his complaints against the times he is assisted by the second shepherd, John Horne, who sympathizes with him against brigands who prey on them. In particular, the purveyors are being attacked since their conduct was a burden on the mass of the people. It involved the "right of king and his servants to buy provisions at the lowest rate, to compel owners to sell, and to pay at their own time - which often meant never."[11] Even personal labour at the height of ploughing or harvest could be insisted upon.[12] Everyone in the social pecking-order was at the mercy of the purveyors: "Every old woman trembled for her poultry, the archbishop in his palace trembled for his household and stud, until the king had gone by."[13] No wonder John grumbles:

Sich wryers and wragers/gose to and fro
ffor to crak.
ooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo
Both ploghe and wane
Amendys will not make.
ooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo
If he hask me oght/ that he wold to his pay,
ffull dere bose it boght/if I say nay;
(ll. 58-9, 62-3, 73-4)

He ends his monologue with an ironic invocation addressed to God to "help that thay [purveyors] were broght/ to a better way/ffor thare sawlys" (ll. 76-7), wishing that they may die soon. The two monologues clearly provide the background for the play as they describe the world into which Jesus is born. It is a world infested with social evil and badly in need of change, a change which may be brought about by the Nativity. The shepherds look forward to a redemption of their plight, yet instead of working actively towards such a goal they start bickering about grazing rights for non-existent sheep. This type of quarrel is likely to have been commonplace to a medieval audience in view of the monstrous number of sheep kept in England at the time. This caused severe social problems as much land was converted into pasture, pushing husbandmen out of jobs, plunging them and their families into poverty.[14] Although the shepherds find themselves in dire straits they blow their situation up out of all proportion by quarrelling about something they do not possess: sheep. The problem would have been acute if they had had sheep, but since they have not got any there is no immediate problem, hence no reason for a quarrel. Yet their imagining having sheep has become so ingrained in their minds that they think they possess them. Their faith in their imagination leads them like children into an illusory world away from the real one.[15] Their foolish irrational behaviour is pointed out by Slow-pace who tells them:

ye fysh before the nett,
And stryfe on this bett,
sich folys neuer I mett
.....
thay fyght and thay flyte
ffor that at comys not tyte;
(ll. 139-41, 148-9)

and compares their day-dreaming to Moll's. Moll is overjoyed with her pitcher of milk and starts speculating on future prosperity which the sale of the milk will bring her. At the height of her delusion the pitcher breaks and she finds herself in the harsh reality of life once more.[16] Like Moll, Gyb and John Horne build castles in the air and stake their future on it, not realizing that they are deluding themselves. Slow-pace equates their wits with a sack of meal which he has just emptied, prompting them to "Geder vp/And seke it [wits] agane" (ll. 174-5). As we shall see later, the second pastor appropriately calls this search for his wits "Wysdom to sup" (l. 178).

Illuminating as Slow-pace's comparison may be, emptying the sack of meal is, ironically enough, his own undoing since it questions the validity of his own wits. This point is underscored by Iak the boy who features as the objective outsider. Overlooking the situation he comes to the conclusion that he has never seen "...none so fare/bot the foles of gotham," (l. 180) suggesting that to him they are the crowning folly. This short and cryptic mention of the "foles of gotham" must have been familiar to the audience as the quarrel about the non-existent sheep is apparently taken from a Gothamite story. In this particular story a man on his way to the market to buy some sheep encounters a man who refuses to let him bring his sheep home over a bridge. A quarrel ensues "as there had been an hundred sheepe betwixt them." A third person on horseback appears with a sack of meal which he empties into the river, comparing

the amount of wit of the two others to his empty sack:

> Now, neighbours, said the man, how much meale is there in my sacke now? Marry, there is none at all, said they. Now, by my faith, said he, euen as much wit is in your two heads, to striue for that thing you haue not.[17] (My italics)

The main difference seems to be the bridge, but its non-occurrence in the play may be put down to its almost negligible importance. Also, staging a bridge might have caused more problems than its importance warranted. The short reference to the "foles of gotham" redresses the balance in that it underscores the play's dependence on the tale. It reinforces the suggestion that the shepherds have to be regarded as fools. Any audience familiar with the tale and therefore with the moral point which the third man tries to make[18] (see my italics above) would have noticed the recurrence of this theme at two levels in the play. On the first level we get the "much ado about nothing" comedy of the shepherds, but on the second we find a far more serious implication, namely, that man in general makes a fuss about unimportant matters while neglecting the fundamental issues of his existence.

The comedy continues as Iak plays along with Gyb's fantasy, informing him that his sheep are doing fine (l. 189). This is most confusing since we know that Gyb does not have any sheep (ll. 24-6) and that the sheep he was quarreling about do not exist either. Slow-pace has already made this point, but Iak throws everything into a new light by suggesting that Gyb's illusory sheep do exist. In other words, Iak turns illusion into reality. He suggests that this fictitious reality can be seen, but only if one wants to and, by implication, only by fools. He aptly underscores his point by remarking that "If ye will ye may se..." (l. 190). The shepherds' preoccupation with their social situation makes them see a false reality.

The grotesque meal which follows the arguments looks at first sight rather out of place. As far as the ingredients such as a boar's brawn and mustard, a goose's leg and partridge are concerned one gets the impression that the shepherds are enjoying an upper-class Christmas meal,[19] and this while shepherds are generally regarded as being low on the social ladder. The curious mixture of aristocratic dishes mentioned above, and dishes such as, e.g., "...a foote of a cowe..." (l. 215), "Two blodyngis..." (l. 217) and "...moton/Of an ewe that was roton,/ Good mete for a gloton;" (ll. 220-2) suggests that they are satirizing the upper classes who make pigs of themselves at Christmas while the lower classes have to make do with far less, especially now that through land enclosure many husbandmen are reduced to poverty (see above p. 71). The shepherds, however, do not escape unscathed from their satire, for their aping of their impression of an aristocratic feast implies that they make pigs of themselves as well.

Since the mystery cycle including the shepherds' play was performed at the Feast of Corpus Christi, and not at Christmas, it is probable that a more sacramental interpretation is also aimed at. In medieval liturgical commentaries, homilies and poems one can trace the concept of Christ being identified with bread, wine or as our spiritual nourishment in general.[20] The dogma goes back to John 6:51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world," and is also found in the Resurreccio Domini (XXVI, ll. 324-33) where Christ reminds men that He will feed those on His body in the form of bread who refrain from sin and ask for mercy. The relation Christ - bread - meal (=flour) is clear and ties in very well with the story in the PP. Having emptied his sack of meal, Slow-pace

advises his two colleagues to "...seke it agane" (l. 175). John Horne, as one will remember, interprets this as meaning that he has "tysdom to sup" (see above p. 72). This is what the meal is all about. The rich meat is the body of Christ the King, whereas the "holsom ayll" (l. 248) is His blood. The same comparison between meat and Christ's body is expressed in Festivals of the Church:

> His fleissh fedip more and lesse,
> And fondip vs from feendis fere;
> þe kirnell sprang at Cristemasse
> þat now is crist in a cake clere,
> þe preest drynkep blessyd bere,
> Goddis blood in sacrament.[21]

which also shows the same substitution of "bere" for wine as in the play, so that "ayll" need not be regarded as 'odd' since it is appropriate for the time of year associated with the Nativity. Apart from this, the "ayll" is called "...boyte of our bayll," (l. 247) a commonplace medieval term for Christ. In fact, the third king refers to Christ as "Our boytt of bayll..." (XIV, l. 539).[22]

Another reference which indirectly points to Jesus is the "veryose" (l. 236) normally used in aristocratic English cooking. This mixture of crab-apples and unripe grapes eaten with lamb comprised the passover meal which under the New Covenant symbolized the sacrifice of Christ:

> Ete 3oure lambe with soure vergeous;
> Sowre saws make þe sowle glad,
> Sorowe for synnes oures;
> þat vergeous makep þe fende a-drad,
> And fer flep fro goddis spous;
> And bere a staaf and stonde sadde,
> Whan flessche þe fedip in goddis hows,
> þis staf is crystis crouche;[23]

Later in the same poem one learns that every shepherd needs a staff,[24] implying that those who carry a staff and consume verjuice as in the quotation above are the precursors of shepherds in general. This immediately links the quotation with our medieval shepherds since they have just consumed "the lamb" with "veryose". Yet

verjuice can hardly have been the sauce of real English shepherds, so that one should not interpret the shepherds literally, but symbolically, that is, as pastors or priests. The playwright seems to suggest that Christ *is* present in the meal, that the meal provides not only physical but also spiritual nourishment for the shepherds. That this is the case is almost immediately substantiated by their remarkable metamorphosis after their sleep. Yet the volte-face from foolish shepherds to prophecy-quoting men is not as drastic a change if one reviews the dramatist's skilful manipulation of images.

In the part discussed so far, the shepherds try to escape from the harsh realities of life by creating, like Moll, a reality of their own which only they can see. Their belief in their imagination is apparently stronger than their faith in God whose grace and help they had initially implored to alleviate their plight(ll. 40-1; 75-7). In other words, their self-created reality detracts from the True Reality, God, and the reflection of His Reality the Creation. By opting for an imaginary world, the shepherds try to impose their will on the world as they see it to change it. Yet the visible world is created by God and any change can only be brought about by Divine intervention. Initially the shepherds fail in securing this intervention in the form of His grace because of their faith in their fictitious reality, but they are on the road to success when they indulge in a sumptuous meal the significance of which has already been discussed. Redemption of their plight seems imminent when they recognize that the "holsom ayll" (l. 248), which may symbolize Christ, is a panacea. Like the ale, Jesus is the redeemer ("boyte of our bayll," l. 247) of their misery. The shepherds have now been prepared to receive God's grace in the form of Christ's birth.

Apart from being foolish earth-bound shepherds, they stand collectively as stereotypical men. As erring mankind they show how

man tries to come to grips with his world, not realizing that this can only be achieved by "taking in" God. By becoming wise men the shepherds show that through God's grace man becomes knowledgeable of his world so that by implication they persuade all men to let God take care of their lives. Seen in this light, the shepherds may be regarded as "quasi-prophets." Consequently, the collection of left-overs after the meal for the "Poore men..." (l. 284) gains significance. Evidently, the shepherds do not regard themselves as poor men since they give away their food. If one considers their prophetic role together with the sacramental overtones of the meal then one may regard them as the distributors of the news of Christ's advent, his message and Christ Himself. The shepherds of sheep become the shepherds of mankind.[25] On a more literal level the gathering of bread for the poor seems to be a combination of a scriptural and topical joke. The gathering is highly allusive to the story of the feeding of the Five Thousand (Matt. 14:20-1, Mark 6:42-4, Luke 9:14-7, John 6:10-3). One can imagine that five thousand people have an enormous amount of leftovers, but that three shepherds can make such pigs of themselves as to have such a mass of scraps left over that they can distribute it amongst the poor is, of course, farcical. It suggests that they are not much better than the upper class people they are ridiculing. The "...hungre begers ffrerys" (l. 286) then turn out to be the friars of the mendicant orders, widely regarded as the vultures of late medieval society.[26]

When we encounter the shepherds after the angel's annunciation, their change has been subtly prepared. The playwright no longer presents them as fools, but rather straightforwardly as wise men quoting and explaining the message of the prophets. The thirteen prophetic witnesses who are recalled to testify of Christ's advent, are the same as those in a sermon spuriously attributed to St. Augustine: Sermo Contra Judaeos, Paganos et Arianos,[27] which was

the main source of the Processus Prophetarum, except that in the SP Simeon is left out.

As has been implied before, the shepherds themselves have seen the "light." This is evident from the first shepherd's statement:

> Nothing is impossybyll
> sothly, that god wyll;
> It shalbe stabyll
> That God wyll haue done.
> (ll. 373-6)

So the shepherds finally realize that their plight can be alleviated by God because nothing is impossible for Him. An attentive audience noticing the change in the shepherds will undoubtedly have grasped the significance of this statement. The fact that the shepherds now understand the significance of God, i.e., the Christ child, for their lives makes them superior to the prophets. The latter had desired to see "that Wyght" (l. 443), but did not have the opportunity, whereas the shepherds are the first ones to witness the Incarnate God (this is made explicit in SP ll. 692-6). On top of this, the shepherds in their uncertain belief need to see the Christ baby to be convinced that He can change the world, whereas the prophets who were already filled with zeal of Christ had less need to. Moreover, the shepherds now become heralds themselves when they leave the stable determined to spread the word of the Incarnation.

Since it is possible, as shown, to interpret the shepherds symbolically as "pastors," it is equally possible to see their gifts in the same way. At first sight the "spruse cofer" (l. 466) "ball" (l. 471) and "botell" are typically homely gifts which one might expect to have been carried around by poor rustics. In a practical sense they could be seen as travelling gifts for the Holy Family on their way to Egypt, the "spruse cofer" being a container for food and/or other belongings, the ball a toy for the Christ child, and the gourd as a flask with liquid to sustain them when on the run.[28]

On second thoughts, however, the "spruse cofer" may have a more spiritual, i.e., Christian significance. Gyb hails the babe as "kyng...perpetuall!" (ll. 458, 461)[29] and donates the "spruse cofer." The "cofer" may refer to Christ's grave but since it is made of spruce, an evergreen, it may also suggest regeneration if not resurrection. Christ dies, is buried and revives. He is perpetual. John Horne gives a ball after greeting the child as "god hede" (l. 470). As God, Christ is both king and Creator so that the ball may be seen as an orb, representing His royalty, or as a globe representing Him as the Creator of the World.[30] The bottle, given by Slow-pace, could be an indirect allusion to the "holsom ayll" (l. 248) which the shepherds consume with their meal. Since both meal and drink are symbols for the Transubstantiation, the bottle may refer to this as well in the sense that it contains the sacramental wine: Christ's blood. Extending the allusion, the bottle would signify the Passion and Death on the Cross. If these significances are intended, then we may also argue that they have a parallel significance to the gifts of the kings in play XIV Oblacio Magorum. The gifts of the kings, gold, incense and myrrh (ll. 545, 551, 557) go back to Matt. 2:11, while their symbolic value may be as old as Irenaeus' second century interpretation:

> Myrrham quidem, quod ipse erat, qui pro mortali humano genere moreretur et sepeliretur; aurum vero, quoniam Rex, cujus regni finis non est; thus vero, quoniam Deus, qui et notus in Judaea factus est, et manifestus eis qui non quaerebant eum.[31]

The myrrh (mortality) would parallel the coffer, the gold (kingship) the ball, and frankincense (godhead) the bottle. The same significance may be argued for the different gifts in the SP (see below p. 96), yet in neither the PP nor SP are the gifts in the same order as with the Magi, but rather as with the order of

representation of Irenaeus.

The intentions of the playwright may now be obvious. His is clearly an emphasis on adjustment. No matter the hardship, life on earth is but a transitory stage on the road to God. Imagination, which features largely in the PP, is a pitfall which leads to a foolish escape from earthly reality in the attempt to attain unobtainable material goods. Through the shepherds' foolish behaviour it is made clear that man can be sidetracked from the road to Salvation through illusions unless he realizes that there is a Reality transcending the mundane one: the everlasting Reality of God. God, however, is not approachable with the imagination, but with Faith. It is then that one may find alleviation from all adversities. Since this holds good for the shepherds it is equally applicable to the audience. The conversion of the shepherds, a movement from dark to light, represents an exemplary exhortation directed at the audience to adjust their lives. Folklore material is brought in not only to refresh and appeal, but also to underscore the Christian truths of our existence. In addition, concrete objects such as birthday gifts are given a spiritual meaning, suggesting that God can be found everywhere if only one looks beyond the apparent reality.

The SP sets off in much the same way as the PP, namely with three monologues venting grievances against the times. Coll's address, highly reminiscent of John Horne's in the PP, focusses mainly on the taxation and oppression by the "gentlery men" (l. 18) while the adverse weather conditions only aggravate his misery. His speech includes an ambiguous reference to oppressed "husbandys" (l. 22), implying that not only husbandmen, but also husbands experience bad times. Especially the pun on husbands is interesting

since it runs like a continuous thread through the play. The second pastor takes up the theme of the pun and elaborates on the "mekyll wo" that wedded men have to suffer. Henpecked, he warns young men to be "...well war of wedyng..." (l. 92). His complaints clearly suggest that the world is in disarray for contrary to the medieval concept of the subordination of women, men do not prevail over their wives, but vice versa.[32] This point is ironically emphasized by the Mak story in which Mak takes heed of his wife's advice to hide the stolen sheep in a cradle. Gyll's remark "Yit a woman avyse/helpys at the last" (l. 342, my italics) seems to indicate that in general female opinion was not highly valued. As the Mak story teaches, it is in a disordered world that thieves and beguilers can pull off a big coup.

Outside the marital bond, however, one also encounters situations which are against the proper order of things. The two shepherds who complained about oppression generate a genuine sense of pity for their plight until their servant Daw arrives. It then becomes crystal clear that they themselves are hypocritical petty tyrants who deny their servant proper wages and a decent meal.

Daw's monologue could be taken to allude to the injustice and evil in the world. As he explains, it is all "...wars then it was" (l. 119), and one wonders whether the floods which had not been so big since Noah's time are not suggestive of a new purgation. At the same time this allusion may express the common idea that each age is worse than the preceeding one. Included in his speech one also finds an allusion to shepherds seeing strange things at night. It serves as a forward linking agent in that it is suggestive of Christ's miraculous birth announced by an angel to sleeping shepherds in the fields. Challenging Christ's superhuman abilities is Mak, who

by practising folk-magic tries to steal a sheep. The allusion may be anticipatory of the two nativities.

From the moment Mak appears in the play it is made clear that he has the propensity to deceive. Wearing a gown with wide sleeves,[33] he pretends to be an aristocratic southerner and wants to be revered. It is not improbable that he pretends to be a king's purveyor because he possesses this gown, intending to cheat the shepherds out of their sheep. If this is the case, then his pretence falls flat almost at once, for he is almost literally dressed down by Daw who knows Mak too well: "Is he commen? then ylkon/take hede/ to his thyng." (l. 200) In other words, Mak's reputation as a "great pretender" is already known. It takes the threat of physical retaliation to make him give up his farce.

In his bid to acquire a sheep, Mak resorts to magic to make the shepherds sleep till noon. Ironically enough, he draws the circle around the shepherds in such a manner that they are within its circumference while he stays without. This is significant, for the circle is commonly known to protect the people within from demonic malevolence, not those without.[34] It suggests that Mak is susceptible to evil influences if he is not the devil himself.

According to St. Augustine who bases his argument on 2 Cor. 11:14, "...satanas...transfigurat se velut angelum lucis, ad tentandos eos quos ita vel erudiri opus est, vel decipi justum est;..."[35] warning that one should not make friends of demons in disguise. As Satan can conceal his deeds under a shape-shifted guise, so can his instruments. This ties in with Mak's disguise as a yeoman and more importantly with Daw's dream of Mak as a wolf in sheep's clothing (l. 368). "Syr gyle" (=Mak, l. 408) apparently lives in an illusory world for he maintains that despite the fact that his yeoman-like disguise did not work he is "...true as steyll..." (l. 226) and

"...true and leile..." (l. 321). His desire to play the shepherds a nasty trick is self-deceiving for in his overweening pride he thinks that everything goes well for him: "Thus it fell to my lott/ gyll, I had sich grace." (l. 314). This line, however, is rather ironic not to say ambiguous. On one level, i.e., Mak's, "grace" may be interpreted as "lucky" or as "fortunate," on the other, "grace" may point forward to Grace or Mercy, that is, the Incarnation. Since Grace or Mercy has to be deserved, it is arguable whether Mak with his malicious intentions is really as "lucky" as he thinks he is.[36]

It is likely that an attentive audience familiar with the magic connotation of the circle noticed Mak's misapplication of magic lore, namely, that Mak is not protecting himself, but the shepherds. So, if Mak is the devil in disguise then he is a bungling devil as well. As a matter of fact, he casts some doubt on the protective properties of the circle himself. Having cast the spell, he deems it wise to "...make better shyft," (l. 285) and hurries home with his loot running the risk that, as his wife points out, the shepherds may give chase (l. 344). Despite the uncertainties about the circle's effectiveness, Mak abides by his illusion that he can delude the shepherds.

The ravages of winter may in a way add to the ghostly atmosphere of illusion, magic, shape-shifting and changelings, for demons it was believed, could cause havoc by storms destroying crops and causing floods unless God intervened.[37] The allusion to demons and demonology in the SP is not as strange as it may seem for in many folklore tales one finds a particular activity of, for example, fairies at Christmas.[38] Twilight, midnight and full moon, the times at which these creatures could allegedly be seem, add to the mysterious atmosphere of the Holy Night. One senses that something extraordinary is about to happen. The fact that God does not

intervene immediately when Mak steals the sheep may be a dramatic allusion to the sinfulness of those Christ came to save. It suggests that a form of divine chastisement is intended so that the shepherds may appreciate future joys more thoroughly; one must not forget after all that the shepherds are not entirely good nor entirely bad.

To give himself a credible excuse, Mak tells he has dreamt that Gyll has given birth to a son so that he must go home. His annunciation after the dream parallels the angel's one after the shepherds' sleep. In this respect, Mak, Gyll and the sheep parallel Joseph, Mary and the Lamb whereas the shepherds' movement to Mak's abode parallels the visit they are going to pay to the stable. The two situations, however, are strikingly different. Mak and Gyll's mock-nativity is noisy and boisterous while Christ's is marked by dignity, serenity and piety.

The shepherds, who are mainly concerned about their lost sheep, do not bother looking into the cradle in which they would have found the swaddled sheep. Mak is glad when they go for the situation was getting tricky. Since his deceit has been successful he has reason to revel, but his world is soon to become a shambles, for the shepherds suddenly realize that they have forgotten to leave the child a present.[39] Their concern for the baby pays off in that on returning to Mak's hut they find the "...hornyd lad..." (l. 601). Mak's illusory world is shattered. No matter how he and his wife argue that the sheep is a changeling, he has been found out. From the point of view of folklore their argument is not entirely illogical as children with birth defects, like theirs with a "broken nose" (l. 612), were often suspected of being changelings.[40]

The various parallels to the proper Nativity and the insistence on the recovery of the sheep lead to the assumption that the mock-nativity may have, apart from its farcical layer, a more symbolic if

not metaphysical meaning. The shepherds can only think of their earthly goods and chattels and do not look any further. Mak is much the same in that respect, but he reaches further as he tries to establish a direct cause-effect relationship between his magical act and the desired event. Mak's action is understandable in so far as he tries to protect himself from the caprices of Nature. In resorting to magic he excludes himself from the protection against supernatural powers, falls victim to them and has to conjure up a world of delusion to make providence turn his way. That this is not rewarding is no surprise since he is selfish. The shepherds undergo a change from selfish creatures to caring beings. It is only when they express care for the baby that they retrieve their sheep. To put if differently, charity, or altruism, pays off, selfishness does not.

The metaphor lamb-Christ is rather obvious, but is nevertheless underscored by calling the "child" as well as Christ "lytyll daystarne" (ll. 577, 727). The child can arguably be regarded as the devil or the offspring of the devil, especially in conjunction with "hornyd lad" (l. 601). It is far likelier, however, that the image of the bandaged sheep in the cradle was intended as another symbol for Christ. This likelihood is pointed out by L. Réau: "L'agneau aux pattes liées signifie le sacrifice de Jésus."[41] This theological interpretation fits very well in the context since Mak and Gyll have expressed their desire to sacrifice the lamb. Sacramental overtones cannot be denied, for if the lamb is Christ then Christ manifests himself in flesh and blood, which ties in with the meal Mak and his wife intend to have. Their theft of the "sacrament", however, equals sacrilege and does not therefore pay off. In contrast, the shepherds set out to look for the sacrament and find it. Of course they have no consciousness of this, nor have Mak and

Gyll., it is a symbol only for the audience. Anyhow, theirs is the true Christian spirit, whereas Mak's is its very antithesis.

Mak's punishment, the tossing in canvas, seems very appropriate for his crime. Since he tried to swindle the shepherds out of their sheep with a mock-nativity, they take revenge by staging a mock-abortion. C. Chidamian has pointed out that tossing in a canvas, or a blanket for that matter, was used as an abortifacient in the Middle Ages.[42] It was not only used to hasten a delivery, but also to expel a dead foetus. The world depicted by the shepherds is a "stillborn" one and badly in need of change. The tossing is highly suggestive of removing this obstacle.

A serious objection to this view is that Mak and not Gyll is being tossed. The reversal has invariably been explained away by seeing Mak as the instigator of the crime, the sin of which has to be tossed out. Mak's being lowered to a female position, and treated accordingly, must mean a gross affront to his male dignity. Th. Jambeck explains the tossing by comparing it with winnowing, i.e., a form of judgement.[43] There is, however, nothing in the SP which would explain why one would have to see the tossing as winnowing.

As far as I have been able to establish, critics have never suggested a folklore origin for the tossing.[44] It is therefore interesting to note that something very similar occurs in a painting called Children's Games (1559) by the Flemish painter Pieter Bruegel the Elder (c. 1525-1569). Near the bottom righthand corner (pl. 18) one can see seven children involved in playing "bounce the baby" in which three children lift the victim's arms and three his legs bouncing his behind several times on the ground. This game still exists nowadays and is frequently played to punish a misbehaving or unpopular child. Iona and Peter Opie have officially recognized that the game survives in modern day English

children's birthday celebrations.[43] The person whose birthday it is, is taken hold of by hands and feet and bumped or swung up and down according to the number of years he has reached that day. It is noteworthy that Mak's punishment coincides with his "child's" birthday. The game is obviously very old and may already have had a very long international tradition before it was painted by Bruegel. If this is so and the Wakefield author knew it, then he has found a particularly apt way of punishing Mak, the "child's" father, for a crime which could be punished by death (ll. 308, 315, 621-2). Admittedly, the blanket is absent in the children's game, but it would seem to be a mere variant of a popular treatment few children escape. Mak, however, is punished in a way a child would be; how degrading for an adult. This kind of punishment does not only fit in the context of the play, but it is also typical for the Wakefield cycle in general.

Having punished Mak, the shepherds lie down to sleep, but are woken up by an angel announcing that "God is made youre freynd/now at this morne" (l. 641). Contemplating the angelic message and the prophecies of the prophets the rustics go to Bethlehem, yet as in the mock-nativity, they are not totally reassured that they will find the lamb, Christ:

> When I se hym and fele,
> Then wote I full weyll
> It is true as steyll
> That prophetys haue spoken.
> (ll. 697-700)

In contrast with the unfulfilled faith of the prophets the shepherds approach the stable like doubting Thomases and offer the newborn babe three gifts, two of which are rather extraordinary: "a bob of cherys" (l. 718), "a byrd" (l. 722) and a tennis ball (ll. 734-6). Apart from the last gift none of them can be seen as practical, as in the case of the PP, so that a symbolic significance may be

suspected. Compared with the other two gifts, the intricate symbolic interpretation of the cherries justifies the comparatively long exposition below.

The unseasonable donation of cherries in the middle of winter has invariably been regarded by scholars as a symbol of mid-winter fertility, linking the nativity story back to pagan mid-winter fertility rites. There is also the old folklore belief that all of nature blossoms at the hour of Christ's birth, of which the cherries may be symbolic. The gift of cherries, however, seems to be the continuation of a standing medieval tradition which associated cherries with Christmas, as can be seen from a few literary examples.

In the Ludus Coventriae (LC)[46] Joseph and Mary, who is pregnant, travel towards Bethlehem when Mary wonders what kind of tree she spots on a hill:

> A my swete husbond . wolde 3e telle to me
> What tre is 3on standynge vpon 3on hylle.
> (ll. 23-4)

Joseph's answer that it is a cherry-tree which in the proper time of the year may bear enough fruit to satisfy one's appetite, implying that the tree is barren now, is met with another request to:

> Turne A-geyn husbond and beholde 3on tre
> how þat it blomyght now so swetly.
> (ll. 27-8)

and to help his wife to some cherries. Reluctantly and morosely, remarking that he would rather "...lete hym pluk 3ow cheryes . begatt 3ow with childe" (l. 38) Joseph makes an abortive attempt to get some cherries. Her husband having failed, Mary prays to have her cherries nevertheless and she acquires them when the tree bows down.

Nearly similar versions of this cherry-tree miracle were very popular in the Middle Ages. A comparison in appendix II of the main elements of the story in manuscripts known to me shows that all

versions, with individual deviations, are based on the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew.[47] A quick survey of columns B,C,D,E, reveals that the LC and Towneley plays are exceptional in various ways. Among the MSS mentioned, LC and Towneley are the only ones with a connection to Bethlehem rather than Egypt. They are also the only ones to mention cherries, the others mention dates, apples, and unspecified fruit. The LC play is the only one which mentions a sudden blossoming. All the other MSS, except Townely where it is not relevant, have tree episodes in which the tree is already in leaf and bearing fruit, due to the hot weather, before the Holy Family arrives.[48] LC and Towneley have changed the climate to a cold one. The LC is exceptional in that Christ has not been born yet. If one takes column G into consideration, one may come the tentative conclusion that the authors of both the LC and Towneley plays have reworked the Pseudo-Matthew episode into "homelier" ones, that is to say, the climate has been reworked into one with which the audience could identify, thus the story has been rendered less esoteric.

It is probable that cherries were substituted for esoteric fruits for similar reasons, firstly to bring the story even closer to the people, and secondly to underscore symbolically the fact that Christ is the fruit of the immaculate white flower Mary.[49] The white of the cherry-blossom would refer to Mary's purity, i.e., virginity and the red of the cherries to Christ's blood shed on the Cross. This substitution, however, also involves a change in symbolism, for the palm is symbolic of victory whereas the cherries are a sacrificial symbol.

The LC story has an undeniably close similarity to the Cherry-tree carol.[50] This carol may be derived from "an ur-ballad known in the early fifteenth century or before."[51] Since this date is conjectural, a hypothesis about the carol's connection with the LC has to be based on internal evidence. The contents of the carol

are the following: walking through a garden where fruit is growing in plenty, Mary who is pregnant asks Joseph to pluck a cherry for her because she is "with child" (st. 4). Joseph, however, retorts: "Let him pluck thee a cherry/that brought thee with child" (st. 5). Upon this, the unborn Christ child commands from Mary's womb that a tree bow down so that Mary can pick some cherries herself. Joseph, repenting his coarse words, says "I have done Mary wrong;/ But cheer up, my dearest,/ and be not cast down" (st. 8). As this incident happens before Christ's birth, we may assume that it took place on the road to Bethlehem, although this is never stated explicitly.

Comparing the play with the carol we may note the following. In the carol, Mary develops a craving for cherries when walking through a blossoming garden. In the play, Mary, on her way to Bethlehem, develops an appetite for cherries as soon as the tree blooms. Joseph refuses to pick the cherries and says:

> ...lete hym pluk 3ow cheryes . begatt 3ow with childe.
> (l. 38)

In the carol this reads:

> Let him pluck thee a cherry
> that brought thee with child.
> (st. 5)

The similarities are striking, but we can extend the parallel by considering the scenes in which Joseph confesses rude behaviour:

> ...I know weyl I haue offendyd my god in trinyte
> Spekyng to my spowse these vnkynde wurdys
> (LC ll. 43-4)

> I have done Mary wrong;
> (st. 8)

Also, the miracle of the tree bowing down happens before Christ's birth in both the LC and the carol as against after his birth in the Pseudo-Matthew. The only new element is that Christ speaks from Mary's womb. Thus, Christ takes the initiative for the miracle to happen out of Mary's hands. This brings the carol in line again with

the Pseudo-Matthew miracle, namely that Christ asks for the miracle to happen, not Mary. So in this respect the carol is nearer to the Pseudo-Matthew than the LC. The sudden blossoming of the tree in the LC is not found in the Pseudo-Matthew or the carol and would be another argument in favour of the carol's antedating the LC. These facts might lead to the postulate that the LC derived its material from the carol, especially since the LC episode is an interpolation into the cycle.[52] This assumption is too restricted as it does not explain where the "sudden blossoming" element comes from, nor does it take into consideration that the miracle of the bowing tree in the Pseudo-Matthew happened after Jesus' birth. In addition, the number of correspondences is rather small due to the brevity of the LC episode. It would therefore be more reasonable to suggest that both the carol and the LC episode are independently derived from a common source.[53]

Sir Cleges, a metrical romance of the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, may be considered as a typical Christmastale in which a miraculously budding cherry-tree features prominently.[54] Every year round Christmas, Sir Cleges, who is "full of plenté" (l. 24) gives a feast for the rich and poor alike "in the worschepe of Mari myld/And Hym þat dyed on the rode." (l. 56-7) until he runs out of finance. Despite this he gives a party, and after visiting the Church on Christmas eve he thanks God for his "dysese and hys poverty," (l. 191) in an orchard. Suddenly a cherry-tree blossoms and bears fruit which helps him to regain his fortune for now he can present these fruits to the king and get rewarded for it. Three of the king's servants coerce Cleges into giving them a share of his fortune in order to be admitted to the king. Cleges asks twelve blows[55] as a reward for his cherries, metes them out to the servants and is restored to fortune by the king.

As with the LC, the miracle of the tree happens round Christmas and is therefore connected with the Nativity; the blossoming is likewise sudden. Moreover, there is a vague indication that the tree bowed down to him:

> As he knelyd on hys knee
> Vndorneth a chery-tre,
> Makyng hys preyere,
> He rawȝt a bowe ouer hys hede
> And rosse vpe in that stede;
> Ne lenger knelyd he there.
> (ll. 193-9)

As with the LC and the cherry-tree carol, cherries bring relief to a person in distress. Basically, however, Sir Cleges seems to be more superstitious than his wife, because he interprets the fruit-bearing cherry-tree as a "...tokynnyng/Of more harme that ys comynge;" (l. 220-1). This borders on Ph. Warning's remark that:

> ...fruit trees which bud and flower out of their normal time presage sickness or death. Another superstition maintains that if plants of any kind flower out of season in large numbers in any one district, then there will be a hard winter followed by much sickness and death.[56]

Dame Clarys is more steadfast in her belief in Divine Providence. According to her, it is a "...tokenyng/Off mour godness þat is comyng;/ We schall have mour plenté" (ll. 223-5). Again, the cherry-tree may be given a symbolic interpretation. Psalm 55:22 "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved" is particularly applicable. Sir Cleges goes to his potential benefactor in the knowledge that this person can save him. With him he takes a token of his belief, the cherries. This token of belief is accepted and he is restored to wealth. The miracle revolves round the cherries apparently ascribing to them symbolical meanings such as faith, sustenance and salvation.

Another interpretation of the cherries may perhaps be derived from a popular medieval proverb "this world (lif) is but a cheri-feire"

which according to the [illegible] expresses the temporal nature of the joys of the world.[57] John Gower's Confessio Amantis reads:

> That noman schall his soul empeire,
> For al is bot a chirie feire
> This worldes good, so as thei telle;[58]

The same interpretation of the transience of worldly joys is found in many medieval works of which I will only mention two others. The fifteenth century Speculum Misericordie reads:

> All is but veyne and vanitee
> This worlde is but a cherie feyre[59]

whereas another fifteenth century poem has:

> This lyfe, I see, is but a cheyre feyre;
> All thyngis passene...[60]

The tales, legends and poems mentioned above are backed up by pictorial evidence from about the same time which often includes cherries. E. Panofsky reproduces a Rest on the Flight to Egypt in which a tree bows down while Mary picks roundish fruits. He also reproduces two plates called the Holy Family which amongst other fruits include cherries.[61] Carlo Crivelli's Madonna and Child (c. 1488) shows an arrangement of fruits surrounding Christ; the cherry can be found in the right bottom corner.[62] The Italian painter Titian has a so-called Madonna of the Cherries (c. 1515) in which both Christ and Mary have a bunch of cherries in their hands.[63]

J.P. Cutts has drawn attention to Bosch's Adoration of the Magi (c. 1490-1510) in which one finds a simultaneous depiction of the cherries, bird and ball. (pl. 19).[64] This painting is of particular importance since it shows that Bosch, who was a member of the Brotherhood of Our Lady which frequently staged dramatic performances, and the Towneley author "...are working with a convention which associated ball, bird, and cherry with mortal man's gifts to the Christ child."[65] So the occurrence of cherries in the SP is not an isolated instance on the international medieval scene. It is

remarkable, however, that all the pictorial evidence has to come from the continent, although the germ for tales about unseasonable growths was present in the British Isles. C.G. Loomis[66] has investigated a group of Celtic legends involving miraculous growths and fruit-bearing incidences, but all the legends attest is that the saints involved were virtuous men, that cherries were not involved and that the contexts were incompatible with the Christmas season. He concludes that "Perhaps cherries were not native to Celtic regions,"[67] a conclusion justified by the OED remark that there is no native Celtic, nor for that matter Teutonic, word for cherry. Nevertheless, the fact remains that there was a word in Old English, only known in compounds, which one could have used to describe cherries: ciris-; cyrs-.[68] Since this did not happen, or else documentary evidence must have been lost, one may conclude that cherries were relatively unknown in England, hence no significance was attributed to them, that saint legends involving cherries do not now survive or that they did not reach England at all. As other saint legends did reach England the last of the three possibilities seems less probable. Perhaps cherry-trees were imported into England at a later stage. The relatively sudden occurrence and persistence of cherry-tree legends from the fourteenth century onwards suggests that the cherry as a tangible object had gained in importance.

Although the cherries in the SP do not suddenly blossom, their appearance within a Christmas context suggests that as a symbol they are probably an offshoot of the cherry-tree miracle. Their occurrence in winter is highly suggestive of the Resurrection. The red colour allows an easy association with blood, sacrifice, and martyrdom, which all befit Christ. Indirectly these four concepts point towards the Crucifixion and, eventually, the Redemption. From the Cherry-tree carol mentioned above we learn of a link between cherries and

blood:

> Where as cherries and berries,
> so red as any blood.
> (st. 2)

which allows the connection cherries - sacrifice. A similar connection is found in the Dispute between Mary and the Cross:

> To bye hys chaffare þe child payed erres,
> Dropes rede as ripe cherrees,
> þat fro his flesshe gan lave.[69]

which makes the point that through the Incarnation and Circumcision Christ humiliated himself, but at the same time gave grace to man which is meant to save him. So, already at a very young age He sheds his blood for man's Salvation, thus ushering in a life of sacrifice.

In the same poem, we find yet another passage suggestive of fruit = blood = sacrifice: "þi fruyt me florysschiþ in blood colour."[70] Once again, a reddish coloured fruit, particularly a cherry, is very appropriate to capture the sense of sacrifice. Its sweet flesh, resembling Christ's, also points to a sacramental significance, for it is through the Eucharist that one consumes His flesh and blood. Thus the cherries emerge not only as a comprehensive symbol of sacrifice, but also as one of faith, sustenance and possibly also of the transience of human life.

In contrast with cherries, the bird often occurs in art associated with high-points in Christ's life such as the Annunciation, Baptism, Ascension and Pentecost. In general the Holy Spirit is represented as a dove (John 1:32) and may be indicative of the "winged soul." As a symbol the dove may stand for birth (Annunciation), rebirth, peace (especially after Noah), sacrifice and purity (Luke 2:24) and defencelessness and innocence (Matt. 10:16).[71] Also, the dove may be indicative of Christ since he brings up "the young of others" like a dove.[72] Since the bird is unspecified it is likely that it was meant as a general image for

matters spiritual as opposed to material.[73] A medieval audience steeped in such a tradition would certainly have grasped the concept of the gift.

The third gift, the ball, is highly reminiscent of the second gift in the PP, which is also a ball, and may therefore be of the same importance. In one respect the ball may reflect, as the third shepherd implies, Christ's "godhede" (l. 728), i.e., His creative powers. Yet the very reference to "tenys" (l. 736) may indicate an emphasis on His majestic role, for in the Middle Ages tennis was regarded as a pastime for noblemen only which was forbidden to be played by the population.[74] Since a spherical object was very commonplace in medieval art in relation to Christ, the mention of a ball need not have surprised the audience since they would have been familiar with both the pictorial arts and the royal game of tennis.

The likelihood that the shepherds' gifts in the SP may be interpreted symbolically is great. This probability is based on the fact that the shepherds donate the same gifts as found in Bosch's painting (pl. 19) where they are given by one of the Magi. Although different in the painting, the gifts of the Magi were historically interpreted in this way (see above p.79) and since there is no reason to assume that this custom was suddenly dropped the gifts in the painting may also be interpreted symbolically. In view of the similarity of gifts, there seems to be no reason why the gifts of the shepherds should be interpreted differently. As a corollary of this argument the analogous gifts suggest that since the gifts of the Magi have a biblical warrant (Matt. 2:11), whereas those of the shepherds have not, the shepherds' presentation of gifts may historically have been modelled on that of the Magi. This does not contradict my earlier statement that the number of shepherds

need not have been based on that of the Magi (see above p. 69). After the presentation of the gifts the shepherds go home, expressing their good fortune at having found "grace" (l. 751) and promising like the shepherds in the PP to relay the message of Christ's birth.

It will have become apparent that the shepherds' plays are meant as moral teachings. Man's stay on this earth is dominated by his love for the creation rather than the Creator. To escape temporal woe he indulges in illusions which, he assumes, bring him bliss or alleviation of troubles. Yet as both plays teach, man only beguiles himself to find that nothing changes unless he turns to God who is the only Reality, and the only Truth. Reliance on Him opens the eyes, for it then becomes obvious that the perceptible world is a world full of injustice. God's world is the Real and Just one which beguiles the beguilers. Aiming for God's City should be the main purpose of life, for only that brings Salvation in its wake.

The didactic method of establishing this point of view makes use of folklore elements which, quite probably, were ingrained in the minds of the people. These elements serve a dual purpose; superficially they add a touch of "something different" to the plays, make them more appealing, more spectacular. To an enquiring mind, however, they appear to have been placed in such a context as to suggest sacramental importance. The fixation on meal and sheep and sheep as meal adumbrates Christ's passion, which is subsequently alluded to in the birthday presents. Thus the Wakefield author forges seemingly unrelated tangible and intangible objects into an organic unity, the play, suggesting that everything is symbolic of God.

Footnotes to Chapter Three

1. Their names reflect the resp. position in the MS. Officially they are known as Pagina Pastorum and Alia Eorundem, plays XII and XIII in the EETS edn.

2. For a more elaborate discussion of these traditions see E.K. Chambers, The Mediaeval Stage, I, ch. XI, 228-48.

3. J. de Vries, Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte, I, 423, see also p. 422.

4. Chambers, Med. Stage, I, 238, italics mine. It must be remarked that the birthday of the sun or Sol Invictus was no folkfestival, p. 235. K. Young, Drama of the Medieval Church, II, 25 (hereafter called DMC) mentions Pope Liberius as having instituted this change in emphasis in 354 A.D.

5. Chambers, Med. Stage, I, 343. For an extensive discussion of the so-called December Liberties see pp. 274-371. The Feast of Fools met with quite some opposition and was eventually banned, p. 322. Aberdeen and Shrewsbury apparently continued the tradition as they had "lords of misrule" until the C15, p. 383.

6. Origines, In Genesim Homilia, PG 12, ch. XIV. 3, col. 238. Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen, tr. R.B. Tollinton, p. 192; "It may be that those three men who seek peace from the Word of God, and desire to secure his friendship by a covenant, represent the Magi, who come from the east, being taught by their ancestral books and by the instructions of their elders, and say, We saw plainly that a king was born; we saw that God is with him and we are come to adore him." For the traditions about the names and numbers of the Magi: Young, DMC, II, 30-2. See also R.J. Blanch, "The Symbolic Gifts of the Shepherds in the Secunda Pastorum," TSL, 17 (1972) 26, n. 17.

7. R. Axton, European Drama of the Early Middle Ages, p. 70

8. Cf. the wording of the Easter trope, Christmas trope and Stella trope in Young, DMC, I, 202-17; II, 4-8, 29-101 resp.

9. S. Mitchell, Medieval Manuscript Painting, pls. 30, 55, show resp.: Robert of Jumièges The Annunciation to the Shepherds and the Flight into Egypt; St Bertin's The Annunciation to the Shepherds and the Nativity.

10. Mitchell, Med. Manuscript Painting, pl. 31, The Magi Before Herod.

11. F.W. Maitland, The Constitutional History of England, p. 183.

12. W. Stubbs, The Constitutional History of England, II, 567.

13. Stubbs, Const. Hist. Engl, II, 423.

14. For a description of the social effects that pasturing huge numbers of sheep had see Utopia, eds. E. Surtz and J.H. Hexter, 4th edn., The Complete Works of St Thomas More, 4, 65-71; and "The Decaye of England by the great multitude of shepe," A Supplicacyon for the Beggers, EETS ES 13, pp. 95-102.

15. On the ironic use of the "illusory in reality": B.B. Zunmalt, "Irony in the Towneley Shepherds' Plays," RSSCW, 26 (1958) 37-53.

16. It appears that the Moll story is an offshoot of an internationally known medieval folktale. Its short treatment in the PP suggests that it must have been a household name for the audience, otherwise the allusion would have been lost on them. For its dissemination in medieval literature: G.H. Gerould, "Moll of the Prima Pastorum," MLN, 19: 8 (1904) 225-30.

17. Both quotations are taken from the 1630 edn. of "Merry Tales of the Mad-men of Gotham," Shakespeare's Jest Book, ed. W.C. Hazlitt, III, 4-5. The similarity between the two renditions was first pointed out by H.A. Eaton, "A Source for the Towneley 'Prima Pastorum'," MLN, 14, no. 5 (1899) cols. 265-8. A 1526 version of the tale also appears in Shakespeare's Jest Book, ed. H. Oesterley, pp. 45-6. Hazlitt printed the tale again, but then from an edn. somewhat later than 1526: Shakespeare Jest-Books: I "A Hundred Merry Talys," II "Merry Tales and Quicke Answeres" (1881) pp. 42-3. This edn. is slightly imperfect compared with Oesterley's, but it is verbally almost the same. However, these two edns. differ from the 1630 one. Neither mentions a number of sheep, but both men actually come to grips "...eche one knokkyd other well about the heddys w^{t} theyre fystys." (Oesterley, p. 45). In the 1630 edn. the two men refrain from fighting and only "... beate their staues against the ground,... (p. 4). The number of sheep is "an hundred" (pp. 4-5).

18. The third man's moral point is not the same as that of the tale itself. The tale ends with the question "Which was the wisest of all these three persons judge you?" (p. 5) Of course all three men are fools, but that does not negate the fact that all three have lost sight of the major issue, the quarrel about nothing. Oesterley's and Hazlitt's (second) tale end in a similar vein: "... some man takyth vpp$\tilde{o}$ hym to shew other men wysdome when he is but a fole hym self." (Oesterley, p. 46) So a fool teaches fools. The vexing question now remaining is whether fools (the three men) are not being employed to teach fools (the audience), for after all the third fool had a valuable point to make.

19. The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle, ed. A.C. Cawley, p. 101, n. to ll. 211ff. See also Cawley, "The Grotesque Feast in the Prima Pastorum," Speculum, 30 (1955) 213-7. He points out that the food in the play resembles that found in John Russell's "Boke of Nurture," Manners and Meals in Olden Time, EETS OS 32, pp. 140-66. For another list of ingredients of an aristocratic meal see Reliquia Antiquae, ed. Th. Wright and J.O. Halliwell, I, 88.

20. A few of the many examples that can be given are: "De Festo Corporis Cristi," The Minor Poems of the Vernon MS., EETS OS 98, prt. 2, pp. 168-97; Festivals of the Church," Legends of the Holy Rood, EETS OS 46, pp. 210-221; Medieval English Lyrics, ed. R.T. Davies, poems 39 and 101; Old English Homilies, EETS SS 53, pp. 27, 97-9. For the sacramental interpretation of the Eucharist see W.F. Dewan, "Eucharist (as Sacrament)," and E.J. Kilmartin, "Eucharist (as Sacrifice)," in New Catholic Encyclopedia, V, 599-615. On Christ as sacrament see the discussion by L. Sinanoglou, "The Christ Child as Sacrifice: A Medieval Tradition and the Corpus Christi Plays," Speculum, 48 (1973) 491-509.

21. Legends of the H. Rood, EETS OS 46, p. 211, ll. 37-42.

22. Phrases of the same tenor occur elsewhere in the Towneley cycle with reference to Christ: VII: 23; X: 10; XVI: 486. See also Sinanoglou, "The Christ Child as Sacrifice," p. 506.

23. Legends of the H. Rood, EETS OS 46, p. 203, ll. 175-82.

24. Legends of the H. Rood, EETS OS 46 p. 203-4.

25. It is interesting to observe how well this corresponds with chs. 40-55 of the Book of Isaiah. The chapters reveal God's plan to send his people on a mission to all nations who will be blessed through Israel. This is very appropriate for in medieval times the OT book read during the Advent-Christmas season was the book of Isaiah, the most important prophet of the Incarnation. See Th. P. Campbell, "The Prophets' Pageant in the English Mystery Cycles: Its Origin and Function," RORD 17 (1974) 108 and n. 3. It also corresponds with Mary's last remark in the PP "He [Jesus] gyf you good grace, Tell furth of this case," (ll. 490-1, my italics).

26. For an excellent example of the reputed greed and covetousness of the friars see Chaucer's Summoner's Tale.

27. PL 42, cols. 1117-30. On the author's knowledge of the Sermo see Chapter Five on the Processus Prophetarum.

28. E. B. Cantelupe and R. Griffith, "The Gifts of the Shepherds in the Wakefield 'Secunda Pastorum': An Iconographical Interpretation," MS, 28 (1966) 330-1. "The gourd was used by pilgrims as a flask to carry water.": G. Ferguson, Signs & Symbols in Christian Art, p. 31. For pictorial evidence see E. Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting: its Origin and Character, II, pl. 82 fig. 191: Rest on the Flight into Egypt in which Joseph is seen filling a flask.

29. On the possibility of regarding the hail lyrics as remnants of Christmas lyrics of the time see G.C. Taylor, "The Relation of The English Corpus Christi Play to the Middle English Religious Lyric," MP, 5 (1907/8) 1-38. In app. I I have tabulated some striking verbal similarities between the hail lyrics of the PP and SP. The close correspondence suggests that either a common source was used or that some subtle revision has been carried out. A few other similarities between the two plays have been included as well.

30. The sheer wealth of medieval iconographical representations showing Christ holding a spherical object in the sense of ball/orb/globe suggests that we are dealing here with a commonplace depiction. For photographic samples, see for example, L.J. Ross, "Symbol and Structure in the Secunda Pastorum," Medieval English Drama eds. J. Taylor and A.H. Nelson, pp. 177-211.

31. Irenaeus, Contra Haereses, PG 7, cols. 870-1. The Writings of Irenaeus, eds. A. Roberts and W.H. Rambaut, Ante-Nicene Christian Library 5, I, 279,: "... myrrh because it was He who should die and be buried for the mortal human race; gold, because He was a King, "of whose kingdom is no end;" and frankincense, because he was God, who also "was made known in Judea," and was "declared to those who sought Him not." See also Young, DMC, II, 32. The symbolic significance of the gifts is often found in medieval homilies: O. Engl. Homilies, EETS OS 53, p. 45.

32. Woman was generally regarded as man's subsidiary, a conviction which carried Biblical authority because of such verses as Genesis 3:16 where God tells Eve: "... and he your husband shall rule over thee." Similar statements are found in the Pauline epistles where it is held that "... the head of the woman is the man;" (1 Cor. 11:3) or that "... the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man." (1 Cor. 11:8). Neither the Fathers of the Church nor the Medieval Church, under the influence of monastic theology, and popular preaching held her in high esteem. She was regarded as a physically and sociologically inferior being who, if she did not obey her husband and was weak, submissive, modest, charitable and virtuous posed a constant threat to the stability of society and the Salvation of Mankind. See: E.T. Healy, Woman According to Saint Bonaventure, pp. 46-51; E. Power, "Medieval Ideas about Women," Medieval Women, pp. 14-6. G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, index under "wives," "women."

33. At l. 396 Mak invites the shepherds to search his "slefe" to convince them that he has not hidden anything in it. It is possible that he is wearing a so-called Houppelandes, a dress popular at the end of the C14 and throughout the C15. It was worn by men and women and had "very wide sleeves pendant from a closed wrist, and forming a huge hanging pouch, often used as a pocket." See A Dictionary of English Costume, ed. C.W. Cunnington et al., pp. 7-8, 110. See also Wakefield Pageants, ed. Cawley, p. 107 n. on stagedirection before l. 190. The dress may be regarded as too high-class for Mak, but it certainly helps him in pretending to be a yeoman of the king.

34. J.A. MacCulloch, Medieval Faith and Fable, pp. 71-72. S. Thompson, Motif-Index of Folkliterature, VI, "Circle": K 218.1, "Devil cheated by having priest draw a circle about the intended victim;" F 451.3.2.3., "Dwarfs cannot harm mortal with circle around him;" D 1318.11 "Magic circle protects from devil who cannot enter;" G 303.16.19.15 "Magic circle keeps devil out." For another description and pictorial representation of magic circle see H.D. Traill et al, The Building of Britain and the Empire, II, prt. 2, 517. For saint legends and the magic circle see C.G. Loomis, White Magic, p. 100.

35. De Civitate Dei, PL 41, bk. XIX, ch. IX, col. 636. Augustine, The City of God, tr. M. Dods, II, 313: "...Satan...sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light, to tempt those whom it is necessary to discipline, or just to deceive,..."

36. Notice that in the Chester Cain and Abel play, l. 611, Cain also misinterprets the meaning of "grace." See Chapter One p. 5 above.

37. MacCulloch, Med. Faith and Fable, p. 63. This author also points out that it was a popular belief that when God expelled the rebellious angels from Heaven, they fell into the air, the waters, the earth and turned into demons, see p. 28.

38. K.M. Briggs, The Fairies in Tradition and Literature, p. 106. See also I.and P. Opie, The Lore and Language of School-children, p. 285.

39. It is likely that the gift of "...sex pence..." (l. 579) reflects a local custom known as "han(d)selling." The custom is that a little gift, often a luck penny, is given at the beginning of a new year to ensure good luck, or upon entering any new condition such as the birth of a baby. The gift is apt in two respects: it points forwards to the gifts which will be given to the Christ-child; the shepherds' generosity is Mak's downfall. The custom is still observed nowadays. See also Wakefield Pageants, ed. Cawley p. 111, n. to l. 579.

40. Briggs The Fairies in Trad. and Lit., p. 117; MacCulloch, Med. Faith and Fable, p. 36.

41. L. Réau, Iconographie de l'Art Chrétien, II, prt. 2, 234.

42. C. Chidamian, "Mak and the Tossing in the Blanket," Speculum, 22 (1947) 186-90.

43. Th. Jambeck, "The Canvas-tossing Allusion in the Secunda Pastorum," MP, 76: 1 (1978) 49-57.

44. This is as far as the tossing is concerned. Various analogues to the sheepstealing have been tabulated by R.C. Cosbey, "The Mak Story and Its Folklore Analogues," Speculum, 20 (1945) 310-7. See also Wakefield Pageants, ed. Cawley, p. 107, n. to l. 190ff.

45. Opie, Lore and Lang. of Schoolchildren, p. 301-2.

46. Play 15, pp. 136-7, ll. 23-42.

47. C. Guilfoyle, "The Riddle Song and the Shepherds' Gifts in Secunda Pastorum: with a Note on the Tre Callyd Persidis," YES, 8 (1978) 218-9 has drawn attention to a passage in: Jacobi a Voragine, "De Innocentibus," Legenda Aurea, ed. Th. Graesse, 3rd edn., ch. X, p. 64 which is based on Cassiodorus' Historia Ecclesiastica (Tripartita). It relates how a tree bows down to worship Christ on the flight to Egypt. Since Cassiodorus lived between A.D. 490-585, this episode antedates the earliest Pseudo-Matthew MS that has survived by about 400-600 years and may have served as a source for it. See also footnote g to appendix II. An early and distant relative of the cherry-tree miracle is found in The Koran, tr. N.J. Dawood,

Suma 19, p. 33 in which Mary, about to give birth to Christ, lies down under a palm-tree. A "...voice from below [Christ?]" informs her of a little brook with which to quench her thirst and to shake the trunk of the tree for dates. The tree does not bow of its own accord nor is its growth unseasonable.

48 Strictly speaking, one cannot talk about the miraculously unseasonable growth of the tree in the other texts since the trees blossom in season there. See app. II.

49. See also "Prologue of the Prioress's Tale," The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N. Robinson, 2nd edn., p. 161 ll. 461-2: "... white lylye flour [Mary] /Which that the [Christ] bar,..."

50. The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, ed. F.J. Child, II, no. 54, pp. 1-6. References are to the A version.

51. H.D. McCabe, A Critical Study of Some Traditional Religious Ballads, ch. 4, p. 61.

52. This is evident from the use of the mid-line point, see the introd. to the LC edn. pp. xxvi-xxvii, the episode is not referred to in The Proclamation and Joseph's doubts about Mary's fidelity are rather incongruous since they were taken away in both Joseph's Return (play 12) and The Trial of Joseph and Mary (play 14). S.T. Carr, "The Middle English Nativity Cherry Tree the Dissemination of a Popular Motif," MLQ, 36 (1975) 133-47, esp. 144, argues unconvincingly that the carol was derived from the play and that the "womb-speaking" child was introduced at a later date to avoid accusations of Mariolatry. She overlooks the possibility, which I discuss below, of an independent derivation from a common source.

53. The ed. of The Middle English Stanzaic Versions of the Life of St Anne, R.E. Parker, EETS OS 174, suggests, p. lii, that the LC episode is based on a "popular poem" which McCabe, Critical Anal. Trad. Rel. Ballads, p. 67, thinks was "... probably the ur-ballad of the cherry tree,..." The latter lists, pp. 73-4, the features which were probably part of the common source ur-ballad.

54. The text is extant in two MSS, the Edinburgh MS 19.1.11 (National Library of Scotland, formerly the Advocate Library) and MS Ashmole 61 (Bodleian). As printed version I have used: Middle English Metrical Romances, eds. W.H. French and C.B. Hale, pp. 877-95.

55. This is a common folktale element. See S. Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk-Literature, IV, 253, K 187 "strokes shared." Giving a share of fortune to gain access to the king is also found in the Old Norse tale Auðunar þattr (c. 1220) in which Auðunar has to promise a half-share in his precious bear to the king's herald, Aki, to see king Sveinn. The blows, however, do not appear and the herald is punished directly by the king. See E.V. Gordon, Introduction to Old Norse, pp. 130-1.

56. Ph. Warning, A Dictionary of Omens and Superstitions, p. 37.

57. MED "cheri-feire" sense 2a. See also: Proverbs, Sentences and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings Mainly Before 1500, B.J. and H.W. Whiting, p. 672, no. C 662.

58. The English Works of John Gower, EETS ES 81, I, p. 17, ll. 453-5.

59. R.H. Robbins, "The Speculum Misericordie," PMLA 54 (1939) p. 942, ll. 71-2.

60. "Farewell, this World is but a Cherry Fair," Religious Lyrics of the XVth Century, ed. C. Brown, p. 236, ll. 8-9.

61. Panofsky, Early Netherl. Painting, II, refs. are resp. to pl. 82 fig. 191 and pl. 333, figs. 494-5. The latter two have been attributed to Joos van Cleve (c. 1485-1540) who often depicts Christ in association with cherries. For random examples see: Joos van Cleve, Jan Provost, Joachim Patenier, ed. M.J. Friedländer, Early Netherlandish Painting, Vol. IX, prt. I, pls. 61/46, 73/58; 78/63a; 86/67. See also Cantelupe & Griffith, "The Gift of the Shepherds," pp. 331-2.

62. Cantelupe & Griffith, "The Gifts of the Shepherds," p. 332 Ferguson, Signs & Symbols in Chr. Art, pl. III.

63. The Paintings of Titian, I, 99 and pl. 4. C. Guilfoyle, "The Riddle Song," p. 213, notes that Titian's cherries are a later addition to his painting.

64. J.P. Cutts, "The Shepherds' Gifts in the Second Shepherd Play and Bosch's Adoration of the Magi," CD, 4 (1970) 120-4.

65. Cutts, "The Shepherds' Gifts," p. 121.

66. C.G. Loomis, "Sir Cleges and Unseasonable Growth in Hagiology," MLN, 53 (1938) 591-4.

67. Loomis, "Sir Cleges," p. 594.

68. The English word cherry is a prehistoric loan from Latin. See A. Campbell, Old English Grammar, par. 501, 522, 541(6).

69. Legends of the H. Rood, EETS OS 46, p. 217, ll. 218-20. For the date of the MS, MS. Royal 18 A X, see Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collection, eds. G.F. Warner and J.P. Gilson, II, 267 "First half of the XV cent." See also Ross, "Symbol and Structure," p. 197.

70. Legends of the H. Rood, EETS OS 46, p. 201, l. 127.

71. For an interpretation of various bird images see B. Rowland, Birds with Human Souls.

72. The Book of Beasts, ed. T.H. White, p. 144.

73. For the extensive use of blind symbolism in connection with the development of spiritual life see Ancrene Wisse, EETS OS 249, prt. 3, pp. 63-92, and the discussion in Janet Grayson, "Regulation of the Inward Feelings," Structure and Imagery in Ancrene Wisse, pp. 57-79.

74. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed., 7, 871b.

Sharon Rowe

Pilate and the Processus Talentorum

The polarity of the forces of good and evil which we saw personified in the Mactacio Abel (II) and the Processus Noe Cum Filiis (III) also makes itself felt in the Processus Talentorum (XXIV). It may be argued that in the play Pilate's egotism is plotted against the self-sacrifice of Christ who died in the previous play, Processus Crucis (XXIII), whereas it is also possible to regard it as emphasizing caritas through its opposite cupiditas. This ambivalence is explicable in Augustinian terms. According to St. Augustine the earthly city is the slave of base passions which may lead to death:

> ...ideo civitas adversus se ipsam plerumque dividitur litigando, bellando, atque pugnando, et aut mortiferas, aut certe mortales victorias requirendo. Nam ex quacumque sui parte adversus alteram sui partem bellando surrexerit, quaerit esse victrix gentium, cum sit captiva vitiorum. Et si quidem cum vicerit, superbius extollitur, etiam mortifera...[1]

Being divided against itself, the earthly city comprises two parties, Pilate on the one hand and the three torturers on the other, both of which are concerned with the self. Within the earthly city there are various degrees of commitment to earthly possessions and it is against this background that the play will be examined.

The Processus Talentorum features Christ's antagonist, Pilate, as a villain in contrast with the account in the Bible where he is treated sympathetically,[2] at least to some extent. This tradition of the good Pilate is reflected in the Ludus Coventriae and Chester plays where Annas and Caiaphas try to frame Christ with some "subtlety" while Pilate defends Christ.[3] In contrast, the York and Towneley Passion sequences are based on a tradition which establishes Pilate not only as a criminal, but also as a participant

in, and driving force behind, the conspiracy. Apart from this similarity a close scrutiny reveals that both sequences have a few curious traits in common which go a long way to suggesting that the Towneley Processus Talentorum is a York-derived play.

Although Towneley XXXV is the only extant cycle play which deals with the division of Christ's coat, it is in fact a twice-told tale within the same cycle since the division of the coat has been played before in the Processus Crucis (XXIII) ll. 501-15. This suggests that the Talents play is an interpolation into the cycle. The most obvious differences between the two renditions are that in play XXIII Pilate is not involved and that four soldiers draw lots, whereas Pilate is involved in play XXIV where three soldiers play at dice. A similar situation is encountered in the York cycle (MS. c. 1430-50)[4] where a brief allusion to three soldiers talking about Pilate's meddling in the distribution is found in play XXXIV ll. 322-33. York XXXV ll. 289-300 has four soldiers drawing lots and no Pilate. From Burton's list of 1415 we can see that at that time the York cycle had a play in which three soldiers drew lots.[5] His second undated list mentions a separate play "Particio vestimentorum christi," supported by the Milners.[6] From an entry in the York A/Y Memorandum Book for 1432 we learn that in the time of Henry Preston [1422] four separate plays were merged including one which showed "...vbi pilatus & alij milites ludebant ad talos pro vestimentis Iesu & pro eis sortes mittebant & ea partiebantur inter se..." (my italics).[7] The most important inference is that between 1415-22 York had a meddling Pilate involved in a game of dice (and lots) which was subsequently excised. The present situation in the MS may reflect the situation after 1422 when parts of plays and entire plays themselves had been redistributed over the various guilds and pageants. The 1415 situation is reflected in play XXXV. and the post 1422 situation in play XXXIV.

The sudden change in Towneley from lots to dice and from no-Pilate to a meddling Pilate seems to be York-inspired.[8] Even the number of soldiers in Towneley changes from four to three, although there is a hint in play XXIV that originally there were four soldiers as in play XXIII: "ffor it [Christ's gown] fallys to vs *four* fyrst will I frayn you" (l. 253, my italics).

Another point of similarity is the brief allusion in both cycles to a medieval legend of Pilate, the synopsis of which is as follows:

> Pilate is the illegitimate son of King Tyrus by a miller's daughter called Pila, daughter of Atus, whence his name. When taken to court at a very early age, he plays with the king's legitimate son whom he kills out of envy and wrath. Although sentenced to death he is sent to Rome as a hostage where he meets and kills the son of the French King. Consequently, he is sent to the isle of Ponthus, whence the third part of his name, not only to subject the people there, but also to be cured of his wickedness. On Herod's initiative he is made procurator of Judea, a post which he secretly secures for life. Enmity between Herod and Pilate ensues when Pilate is found out. Some time after Christ's death the Roman emperor falls ill, and, ignorant of Christ's decease, wishes to consult Him for his healing powers. Volusianus, his messenger, learns from Veronica that although Christ is dead her veil with His imprint can cure the emperor. Both travel to Rome and the emperor is cured. Pilate is summoned to Rome to account to the converted emperor for the miscarriage of justice. Wearing Christ's coat, Pilate is protected from the emperor's anger because it makes the latter's temper subside. Once his deceit is unveiled and the coat removed he is quickly sentenced to death, but in a pre-emptive move he commits suicide.[9]

Of this legend a substantial number of versions were known during the Middle Ages. The ones most readily available in England were those found in the Legenda Aurea, South English Legendary, the Polychronicon, Mirk's Festial and the Stanzaic Life of Christ, a compilation from the Legenda Aurea and the Polychronicon.[10] It is not known how popular this legend was in the British Isles, but from the fact that it was included in the Legenda Aurea and the

Polychronicon, two well-known works in the Middle Ages, and the fact that it appears in many versions of the South English Legendary, one may infer that it enjoyed a widespread reception. To this one may add that the simplicity and clarity of Mirk's Festial, intended for priests in sermons and written in the vernacular, suggests that the contents of this work may have been known to some medieval congregations.

The dramatists' knowledge of the legend is obvious

> Pounce Pilatt of thre partis
> þan is my propir name;
> (Y. XXVI, l. 15)

> And my modir hight Pila þat proude was o pight,
> O Pila þat prowde and Atus hir fadir he hight.
> This pila was hadde in to Atus,
> Nowe renkis, rede yhe it right?
> For þus schortely I haue schewid you in sight,
> How I am prowdely preued Pilatus.
> (Y. XXX, ll. 13-8)

> Stemate regali/kyng atus gate me of pila;
> (T. XXIV, l. 19)

The brevity of these quotations does not reveal whether the audience knew the legend or not although it is likely that they did. The references are short and unexplained, probably to make no distraction from the main movement of the play, so that if the audience did not know the legend it would have caused a serious disruption of the flow of the play. It is interesting to note, however, that Towneley has a slightly different version of the legend from the one found in the six works mentioned above by making Atus the father of Pilate himself. The reason for this may be four-fold. Firstly, it is possible that Towneley makes use of an off-shoot of a legend which turns Atus into Pilate's father (see n. 10). This would indicate that two slightly different versions concerning Pilate's descent were known in England, the sole indicator of this second version being the reference in Towneley. Secondly, but contrary to the

first reason, we may argue that since part of the Processus Talentorum was probably derived from York this element may also come from York where it was popularised and then circulated in a slightly corrupted form in which the Towneley dramatist came to know it. Thirdly, the element may have been borrowed from York in its original form and have been subject to scribal errors at Wakefield. Fourthly, and to be discussed on pp. 117, the story may have been corrupted deliberately. In short, several reasons can be advanced to suggest that the Processus Talentorum has a York cycle provenance.[11]

The close relation between the York and Towneley cycles justifies an exposition of Pilate's role in the former.[12] The multiple authorship of both cycles as a result of constant revision makes a single characterization hazardous, but since the MSS of both cycles are thought to be official registers it is not impossible that at a given point in time a medieval audience saw Pilate as we see him today in the surviving MSS. The discussion shows that the revision of the York cycle especially has left a clear mark on Pilate as a character.

In the first of his several opening speeches,[13] all of which are brimful of self-glorification, Pilate establishes the tenor of his character for the Passion sequence. As a "perelous prince" (XXVI, l. 16), a term frequently used throughout the Passion plays to describe him,[14] he is "regent of rewle" (XXVI, l.2) who demands obedience from everyone whether "busshoppis" (XXVI, l. 3) or "bolde men þat in batayll makis brestis to breste," (XXVI, l. 4). Boasting that "...all youre helpe hanges in my hande" (XXVI, l. 28), there is no question but that he is in overall command. Annas and Caiaphas, and later in the Passion sequence their accomplices the soldiers, find themselves confronted by a judge who not only counsels temperance as far as groundless accusations are concerned, but who

also turns their main allegation that Jesus is God's son (XXVI, l. 52) satirically against them:

> And frendis if þat force to hym fall,
> It semes noȝt ȝe schall hym consume.
> But þat hymselfe is þe same
> ȝe saide schulde descende,
> ȝoure seede and ȝou þen all for to seccure.
> (XXVI, ll. 55-8)

Thus their charges brought forward to "...mayntayne oure ryght" (XXVI, l. 98) are dismissed. Pilate resists being cajoled, planning to see for himself whether Christ is innocent or not (XXVI, ll. 41-6). As a logically and psychologically understandable consequence of the allegation that Christ claims kingship, Pilate consents to His capture, though he reiterates his earlier remark of setting Christ free if innocent (XXVI, l. 288). Yet the reasonableness and impartiality of Pilate which may be inferred are superficial, as he only approves of Christ's arrest when his <u>own</u> position is but faintly threatened. As we have seen, he could not care less for the power of the high priests. That there is more than meets the eye is also substantiated by his calling Judas "...a just mane," (XXVI, l. 225).

From a realistic point of view it is believable that an impartial judge can lead a lustful life when out of the limelight, yet it is even more plausible for a less venerable man, or <u>ostensibly impartial</u> judge, to do so within, as Pilate does in play XXX. He defends Christ once more in this play but veers round (XXX, l. 466) when Caiaphas reiterates the allegation of Christ's royalty. Nevertheless he insists to "...semy-selffe what he [Christ] sais (XXX, l. 467) His impartiality, though, is called in question when he condescendingly calls Christ "boy" (XXX, l. 365) even before He has been heard. Preconceived ideas abound after the first hearing when Christ is once more called "boye" (XXX, l. 479), and in addition "warlowe" (XXX, l. 525) and "traytoure" (XXX, l. 528).

Pilate's active involvement in cheating a squire of his land without giving due reward (XXXII) is the first sign of a definite malicious inclination. This active ill will seems to be at odds with the Pilate who by opposing the high priests is by and large a reasonable man despite some undertones to the contrary. There are no justifiable logical or psychological reasons why his malice should suddenly escalate to downright criminality. A similar incongruity occurs in play XXXIV where Pilate's altruism is questioned by the third soldier when he and his colleagues are discussing the division of Christ's garments:

> 3aa, and sir Pilate medill hym,
> Youre parte wol be but small.
> (XXXIV, ll. 327-8)

This contributes to the suggestion that Pilate is not impeccable, but hints at some form of greed and corruption. Yet there are no overt signs in the plays discussed which suggest this, nor is Pilate's meddlesomeness previously described. As we have seen above, this part of play XXXIV is likely to have been interpolated so that we perhaps have to assume that the two incongruities are the results of revision.

The intervening play XXXIII contains the last confrontation in the power struggle between the high-priests on the one hand and Pilate on the other. Pilate dismisses their false witnesses (XXXIII, st. 11), but reconsiders his stance when Caiaphas accuses Christ of perfidiously claiming the crown (XXXIII, ll. 329-333). The claim undermines his political position and this alleged touch of treason is enough to condemn the prisoner. This may seem paradoxical, as Pilate has resisted the high priests twice before, but it is a credible paradox. Since Pilate has been outmanoeuvred in power by Christ who made him bow for Him (XXXIII, ll. 275-6, 279-85) he has to reestablish his credibility as a judge by condemning Christ if he is not to lose face in front of the high

priests.[13] In other words, Pilate is anxious to maintain his power even if he has to back down temporarily; he may lose a battle, but not the war.

A further incongruity within the cycle may be found by juxtaposing plays XXXVI and XXXVIII. When Christ's sentence is being carried out Pilate shows regret for the crucifixion:

> Of Jesu I holde it vnhappe,
> .....
> His blocde to spille,
> Toke ye you till
> þus was youre wille
> Full spitously to spede he were spilte.
> (XXXVI, ll. 33, 36-9)

which contradicts his unyielding stance in play XXXVIII:

> By our assente sen we dyd dye
> Ihesus þis day;
> þat we mayntayne and stand þerby
> þat werke all-way.
> (XXXVIII, ll. 9-12)

The last quotation, although at first glance paradoxical, is in itself psychologically believable. Knowing that he has been overruled by Christ and in a way by the high priests, Pilate now sticks by his sentence not only to conceal the crime of having killed an innocent man, but also to convince his subordinates that he was not coerced into his judgment by anyone but himself. Similarly, we may explain why he has no scruples about twisting the truth of Christ's resurrection. Instead of having Christ's body "stolen" by one person (Christ Himself) which would discredit Pilate's claim of power, he dreams up an excuse to explain his failure, and by having 10,000 men steal the body he implies that that is too much for a mighty man, even for Pilate. Thus Pilate's lust for power is clearly established. His last remark in the cycle underscores this point "Thus schall þe sothe be bought and solde,/And treasoune schall for trewthe be tolde," (XXXVIII, ll. 449-50). It will be clear that Pilate is motivated by his

exhibition and self-indulgence in power. An innate sense of self-preservation makes him fend off infringements on his prerogatives as a judge up to the point where he has to yield momentarily for the sake of securing power for future events. It may be argued that his selfishness, or malicious inclination, is present very early in the Passion sequence and develops as the cycle progresses. A few paradoxes can be explained by referring to his self-protective attitude, others cannot and make him slightly ambivalent. Pilate only supports his own cause and in this sense his malicious side ties in with the legend to which he refers (XXVI, l. 15; XXX, ll. 13-8). His manoeuvering to maintain his position is interesting to observe, but various revisions seem to have left their stamp on him as a result of which he compares unsatisfactorily to his alter ego in the Towneley cycle.

The likelihood of the Wakefield Passion sequence having undergone revision is great,[16] but does not seem to have affected Pilate's character. As a "leyf leder of lawes" (XX, l. 7) he plays fast and loose with justice by supporting deviants:

> Bot all fals indytars
> Quest mangers and lurers
> And all thise fals out rydars
> Ar welcom to my sight
> (XX, ll. 24-7)[17]

and expressing a desire for personal gain which can only be achieved by taking the two sides of a case into consideration and deciding which is most lucrative for him (XXII, ll.14-9). He gloats over his subtlety and guile which help him to carry out his intentions while he approves of backbiting and slandering. His deceitful nature becomes particularly apparent when he describes his line of approach to frame Jesus:

> I shall sownde to be his freyndytrard, in certayn,
> And shew hym fare countenawnce and wordys of vanyte,
> Bot or this day at nyght on crosse shall he be slayn,
> Thus agans hym in my hart I bere great envyte
> ffull sore.
>
> (XXII, ll. 31-5)

This clearly establishes Pilate as an unscrupulous double-dealing character making him significantly different from the reluctant scriptural judge.

Contravening the law left, right and centre himself, he finds two staunch allies for collaboration in Annas and Caiaphas who also condone legal irregularities. Caiaphas, for example, claims that all lawyers, and indirectly himself, make more profit from their legal profession than from the possession of estate property (XXI, ll. 159-62), and does not shrink from taking the law into his own hands to kill Christ "with knokys" (XXI, l. 207). Knowing Pilate's inclination to accept bribes, Caiaphas grudgingly sends Jesus to him fearing that the former may be bribed to acquit the prisoner (XXI, ll. 434-5). Indeed, before long the high priests' accomplices, the three torturers, have to resort to a form of bribery, extortion, to prevent Christ's trial from going the wrong way. Being threatened to:

> ...dam to deth ihesus
> Or to sir Cesar we trus,
> And make thy frenship cold.
> (XXII, ll. 212-4)

Pilate feels compelled to protect his self-interests, so he submits and legally endorses the death penalty.

Pilate's perverse sense of justice is once more underscored in the crucifixion play (XXIII) when in a bid to silence the mob he threatens to hang on the gallows those who do not obey. In other words, one is reminded of his propensity to use force to achieve what he wants. Since this threat is uttered just after he had to back down in an argument with the torturers, we are left with the

impression that justice as presented in the Passion sequence exists for those who have the means to enforce it, not as a right. Thus we see the exponents of ecclesiastical and common law, in short the earthly city, close ranks against Jesus, the exponent of the Heavenly City, who is denied His rights. When the fourth torturer and his comrades are reproached for commenting on the inscription on the cross, the theme of enforcing justice is taken up again. Pilate does not allow any of their meddling, prompting the fourth torturer to say: "Sen that he is man of law/he must nedys haue his will;" (XXXIII, l. 558).[18]

As a corrupt judge, Pilate is also found in the context of a sermon:

> By unjuste dred, on word acombers the jugges, whan an erthly man is more drad than God, othur the right. Such a jugge was Pilate, demyng Crist to dethe, dredynge, 3iff that he had saved hym, that the Jewes wold have peched hym to the Emperour. And so he preferred mans drede, afore the drede of God... And trewly, so many men, as I wene, verely in arbitrement, in juggement and on questes, thei preferre the drede of othur grett men in the world byfore the drede of almyghty God; nothur thei drede not to be wittyngly forsworne... Sewerly, thise pepull seweth ther maister Pilate here; and so shall thei in hell eternally.[19]

From this it follows that the judicial corruption depicted in Towneley's Passion sequence was probably familiar to the audience and was a mere dramatic echo of normal everyday opinions, yet placed in a different context. It makes Pilate's behaviour more understandable and places his remark that he can break a man "as men of cowrte now can" (XX, l. 20, my italics) in a new perspective. It is as if he wants to make absolutely sure that the audience comprehends the contemporary significance of his misdemeanour. Yet by its very occurrence in a religious context, earthly justice gains a universal dimension in that it shows its own insignificance as opposed to the

Heavenly one. Pilate's unscrupulous attitude ties in with the legendary Pilate too, so that if the audience was familiar with this legend it would have grasped the short statement about his provenance (XXIV, l. 19, see also above).

Now that we have a clearer understanding of Pilate it is easier to understand his role in the play of the Talents. The play is a violent contrast to the serene high-point of the entire cycle, Christ's death. After a play about the culmination of self-sacrifice we turn to its opposite, namely, self-indulgence in material goods. In his typical style, Pilate opens the scene bragging in Latin-cum-English about his power. Since one knows from the previous plays that Pilate is corrupt at heart one should not be too surprised that he claims "Stemate regali/kyng atus gate me of pila;" (l. 19). It would come up to expectation that someone who claims to be the most powerful and exalted does not accept a blemish on his reputation. Since Pilate was born illegitimately according to the medieval legend, his changing his provenance may be a deliberate attempt to remove this blot. An audience familiar with the legend would immediately have recognized that he was lying, but, as remarked before, a mistake over the legend, or the existence of a different legend, may not be ruled out. Apart from this, Pilate claims in the same opening speech that he is "...regi reliquo quasi dauid," (l. 30). The Latin is ambiguous here. It may either mean that he claims to be "the offspring of a king <u>like</u> David" or that he is "<u>like</u> David the offspring of a king," but David was not. In either case he claims to be the offspring of a pedigree as reputable as Christ's. As we know from the medieval legend, Pilate's provenance is far from reputable. If we therefore regard his ambiguous claim as a lie, then it would tie in with the first one while also anticipating the one in the <u>Resurreccio Domini</u> (XXVI) where he alleges that

Christ's body has been stolen by 10,000 men. At any rate, his assertions add an extra dimension to his discreditable reputation.

The corruption of justice which is apparent in the Passion sequence is again put into the pillory. As the personification of the earthly city, as opposed to God's Heavenly Kingdom, the desire of the four villains centres around material comforts, in this case Christ's coat. Pilate's threat to hang anyone disobeying his laws (ll. 49-50) is as hollow as his power, which merely rests on physical reprisals. The first signs of erosion of his power come when his counsellor values his own opinion as much as Pilate esteems his own:

> Thoug ye be prynce peerles withoutt any pere,
> were not my wyse wysdom youre wyttys were in waght.
> (ll. 217-8)[20]

Superficially, the counsellor is saying that without him Pilate would not be as knowledgeable, but by implication Pilate's power is founded on the fact that he has subordinates. If his subordinates refuse to be bullied he is in effect powerless.[21] Pilate's authority or, rather, feigned authority, is further undercut by the statements of the three torturers who all claim that they are "the most shrew" (ll. 74, 122, 154 resp.). In other words, his claims and threats to be the most cunning and powerful person around are challenged.

The main plot of the play, casting lots for Christ's seamless coat, goes back ultimately to John 19: 23-4,[22] although the strained relation between Pilate and his subordinates and Pilate's part in the coat story must be later inventions. The Gospel of John is most explicit about the number of soldiers: "... the soldiers...took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part;" (John 19:23). By reducing the number of soldiers from four to three one can create room for an extra person like Pilate while still staying within the Biblical limit of four people gambling for Christ's clothes.

The soldiers cannot settle their quibble about the division of the coat and decide to ask Pilate for arbitration. From the remarks:

> Bot this gowne that is here, I say you for-thy,
> By myghty mahowme I wold not he had.
> .....
> Bot syrs, bi my lewte, he gettys not this gowne;
> (ll. 163-4, 167)

one may deduce that they are aware that Pilate must "nedis haue his will" (XXIII, l. 558). When the torturers consult him, Pilate's greed is immediately roused prompting him to claim the coat. His desire for the coat is rather ironic for he sentenced Christ to death having heard evidence about the latter's "wychcraft," (XXI, l. 103), but now he apparently wants the coat for the magical properties ascribed to it by the torturers:

(1st tort.) ffor whosoeuer may get thise close,
he ther neuer rek where he gose,
ffor he semys nothyng to lose.
(ll. 105-7)

(2nd tort.) This cote I wold I had;
.....
Then wold I both skyp and lepe,
And therto fast both drynke and ete,
(ll. 140, 142-3)

Since the coat has magical powers,[23] the play seems to bear some relation to the medieval legend of Pilate in the sense that it explains, contrary to the legend, how he came into its possession. Although unique for English medieval drama, an acquisition scene is also found in two medieval continental examples. The fourteenth century Passion Selon Gamaliel "...version en prose d'un ancien poeme..." (my italics)[24] records how Malcus, one of the soldiers, complains to Pilate that his companions want to divide "la belle gonelle" (Christ's seamless coat). Pilate decides in Malcus' favour that the coat should not be divided, but that lots should be cast. Malcus wins the coat and sells it to Pilate. The fifteenth century Donaueschinger Passionsspiel[25] reads as follows:

> Nu sitzent sy all vier [Jesse, Mosse, Israhel, Malcus] nider under das crütz un werffent mit würfflen das loss, und den nimpt ISRAHEL den rock un gat zů Pilato und spricht:
>
> Pilate, wie gefält dir nu der man?
> hond wir im recht oder vnrecht getan?
> wir vier sind meister ein ze hencken!
> disen rock wil ich dir *schencken*:
> der is des öden mans gesin.
> se hin, lieber here min,
> er hat kein nat, das gloub du mir.
> geschow den man, wie gefalt er dir?
> (ll. 3387-94, my italics)

Contrary to Towneley, neither of these examples records that Pilate acquired the coat by cheating, nor do they assign any magical properties to Christ's coat apart from it being seamless (Donaueschingen l. 3379). The summary of the French acquisition version (see n. 24) is too short for a comparison with the other versions, but we learn from the Donaueschingen context that there is no reason why Pilate should get the coat. He is not depicted as an egoistic ruthless judge, but rather as the biblical judge who is forced to condemn Christ. Also, neither his prosecution nor death are enacted or recorded. Towneley does not record the last phase of Pilate's life either, but here the depiction of a criminal Pilate throughout the Passion sequence helps to suggest why he should get away with the spoils. In other words, while the coat scene is incongruous in the Donaueschingen play, in Towneley it underscores Pilate's character. It seems improbable that the continental examples influenced the Towneley play, but all three may mirror the knowledge of a lost legend which was adapted to local circumstances thus accounting for the differences between them. If he knew this legend, the Donaueschingen author was for the above stated reason less competent than his English colleague. Yet the suggestion of a lost legend is fallible since not even the earliest version of the Pilate legend, the Legenda Aurea, records how Pilate acquired the

coat. Mutually independent developments related to the Pilate legend may therefore not be excluded.

The one example close to home which could have been known in one way or the other to the author of the Processus Talentorum providing him with a suggestion to invent a coat story is found in the fifteenth century Cornish Ordinalia. This cycle of three plays contains in its Resurrexio Domini Nostri the only play known to me to dramatize Pilate's death.[26] Having been ordered to Rome to face the emperor, Pilate wears Christ's coat as a result of which the emperor's anger subsides the moment Pilate walks in. Veronica exposes Pilate's cheating after which he pleads with the emperor not to accept the coat as it is squalid and not worthy of his attention. Relentless, the emperor has Pilate thrown in jail where he commits suicide with a knife. The cycle has a short scene in which the soldiers divide Christ's garments by lot, but nothing is said about Pilate's acquiring the coat.

Knowing all about Pilate's "impartiality," the torturers of the Processus Talentorum decide to dice for the clothes "ffor at the dysyng he [Pilate] dos vs no wrang," (l. 306) effectively curtailing Pilate's say in the matter. The decision is left to the fickleness of Fortune, of which the dice are symbolic. Now that Pilate is symbolically cut down to size by a game in which everyone has equal chances it should not be surprising that he loses the coat. However, he quickly regains control of the situation by threatening the winner, the third torturer, into granting him the coat. Seeing that even Fortune can be cheated by Pilate, the torturers recant their reliance on dicing and, as a result, Fortune, making it abundantly clear that they no longer believe in earthly "justice." Thus the division with the earthly city (see Augustine's quotation p. 106)

becomes a clear cut shift. Pilate's power is now prone to collapse, since one cannot wield power in a vacuum. The soldiers realize that Fortune can only give temporary and temporal satisfaction since it turns matters "...vp-so-downe,/And vnder abone," (ll. 382-3), making misery an imminent prospect. Instead it is much safer to rely on the everlasting love, security and justice of God. The third torturer sums it all up:

> I red leyf sich vayn thyng/ and serue god herafter,
> ffor heuens blys;
>
> (ll. 398-9)

The soldiers' change of heart, however, is sudden and inexplicable since there are no previous indications that they may terminate their allegiance with Pilate. One way to explain it is to assume that stanza 56 in which the change occurs is interpolated into the play.[27] On the other hand, their change may indicate a stepping out of character involving a certain disassociation from the play to explain in a more expository style the play's significance. This change in character, however, is difficult to parallel in contemporary medieval drama. The York Birth of Christ (XIV) depicts Joseph and Mary as human beings with emotions rather than as scriptural types. Yet although their "human" role is out of character with its Biblical source, they are consistent and do not show a sudden change of heart. In Mankind[28] ll. 901-14 Mercy steps out of character to speak the epilogue in which he explains that although Mankind is wretched and the world but a "vanité" (l. 909), God may grant mankind His mercy. In the Digby Mary Magdalene[29] the priest abandons his character and addresses the audience in an epilogue (ll. 2132-40) announcing the end of the play and wishing that God may bring them to His bliss. Yet neither here nor in Mankind is the change of character as drastic as in the Towneley Talents' play, nor does it happen several stanzas before the end of the play, but in the very last stanza. So although the audience may have been familiar with

the change in role of one of the characters into a more oppository one, Towneley's situation is unique and unprecedented.

Whether one regards the soldiers as stepping out of character or not, Pilate remains unchanged. From his praising and offering of power and friendship to the torturers after their recantation it follows that he is so bigoted and steeped in self-indulgence that he misinterprets the change of his underlings. By offering favours to people who no longer obey him, he ironically underlines his own position.

One of the puzzling aspects of the Processus Talentorum is the title itself which seems to announce a play of the talents rather than a play of dice. It is of course possible that the author confused the gen. pl. of "talentum" "talentorum" (n.sg. a talent) with the gen. pl. of "talus" "talorum" (n. sg. a die), but this seems to contradict two explicit statements in the MS: "Incipit processus talentorum" and "Explicit processus talentorum."[30] Unless the scribe made the same mistake consistently, of which we have no knowledge, we must assume that he explicitly refers to a play of "talents." Yet there are no obvious reasons why the play should be regarded as a play of talents. R.A. Brawer interprets the parable of the talents (Matt. 25: 14-30) allegorically, stating that it "...illuminates by analogy the meaning of the play as a dramatic exemplum or parable."[31] While it is possible to see Pilate and the torturers collectively as the lazy servant who tries to reap where he has not sown, there is, I think, no need to go far afield to explain the title. The titles of all the plays of the cycle are straightforward and need no extra explanation. Although the Processus Talentorum may be the exception to the rule in this case, it is possible that the title is much simpler than expected. From

the OED "talent" it becomes clear that in Medieval Latin "talentum" means "inclination of mind, leaning, wish, desire, appetite, longing." Chaucer's Parson's Tale reads:

> Now comth the remedie agayns Leccherie, and that is generally chastitee and continence, that restreyneth alle the desordeynee moevynges that comen of flesshly talentes
>
> (emphasis added)

His Pardoner's Tale has:

> To fulfille al thy likerous talent![32]
>
> (emphasis added)

In the Towneley Cesar Augustus play (IX) we find "yis, lord, I am at youre talent" (l. 157 emphasis added). From these examples it will be clear that "talent" in the meaning "wish, desire, longing" was commonplace. Transferring this interpretation to the title of the play, we may read "play of the desiring, longing" or even "greedy men." It would exactly describe the nature of the play, namely the insatiable desire to acquire Christ's coat.

Despite the multiple authorship of the Towneley cycle, Pilate manifests himself as a remarkably consistent character. As a typical representative of the earthly city he is like Cain (in the Mactacio Abel) out for personal gain and blinded by his exultation in it. As a result he fails to perceive the frailty of his power and "justice." By focussing on the excesses of temporal justice, attention is also automatically drawn to its opposite: Heavenly justice. Whereas the champions of mundane law noisily attest their cause, Christ is quiet about His, for those who possess justified power do not have to boast about it. Victories for earthly law, based on cupidity as personified by Pilate, are illusory, hollow, self-deceiving and will not stand the test of time. The forces of caritas are constantly at work, and victories scored by them, symbolized by the conversion of the torturers, occur no matter the malevolence of one's past.

For his framework the author did not only rely on scriptural sources, but also on material available in legends, sermons and common medieval everyday experiences. At any rate, it seems reasonable to infer that the audience was familiar with the material he presented in one way or the other. These common experiences will have contributed to both the universal and contemporary significance of the play. By putting earthly justice into the pillory the audience is taught how foolish it is to indulge and believe in earthly power and possessions which are temporal and which have no significance whatsoever in the world to come that judges one's merits towards Christ and mankind.

Footnotes to Chapter Four

1. De Civitate Dei, PL 41, bk. XV, ch. IV col. 440. Augustine, The City of God, tr. M. Dods, II, p. 53: "... this city is often divided against itself by litigations, wars, quarrels, and such victories as are either life-destroying or short-lived. For each part of it that arms against another part of it seeks to triumph over the nations through itself in bondage to vice. If, when it has conquered, it is inflated with pride, its victory is life-destroying."

2. See Matt. 27:19 where Pilate's reluctance to sentence Christ is reinforced by his wife's dream (Cf. Y. XXX and LC play 31). In Mark 15:2-15 Pilate gives in to satisfy the people; in Luke 23:7, 14-5 he tries to avoid condemning Jesus by referring Him to Herod's jurisdiction; in John 19:12 the Jews threaten to undermine Pilate's relation with Caesar which makes him yield.

3. p. 245, l. 402 and p. 266, l. 378 resp.

4. York Plays, p. xxviii.

5. York Plays, p. xxv. and Records of Early English Drama:York, eds. A.F. Johnston and M. Rogerson, I, 21.

6. REED: York, I, 26.

7. York Plays, p. xxv; REED:York, I, 48.

8. M.G. Frampton, "The Processus Talentorum (Towneley XXIV), "PMLA, 59 (1944) pp. 646-54 makes the same point but argues in addition that the metrical and stanzaic organisation of this play is the same as found in York XXXII-XXXIV, but unique in Towneley.

9. The summary is based on the story as found in: Jacobi a Voragine, Legenda Aurea, ed. Th. Graesse, 3rd edn., ch. LIII, pp. 231-4. Various scholars have drawn attention to the dissemination of, and differences between, versions of this legend in medieval Europe: E.K. Rand, "Mediaeval Lives of Judas Iscariot," Anniversary Papers by Colleagues and Pupils of George Lyman Kittredge, pp. 305-16; P.F. Baum," The Mediaeval Legend of Judas Iscariot," PMLA, 31 (1916) 481-632, esp. 484-9; W. Creizenach, "Legenden und Sagen von Pilatus," Beiträge, 1 (1874) 89-107; H.F. Massmann, Der Kaiserchronik, III, 594-621. M.É. du Méril, "Légendes de Pilate et de Judas Ischariote," Poésies Populaires Latines du Moyen Age, pp. 315-68, esp. 343-68.

10. Legenda Aurea, pp. 231-4; The South English Legendary, EETS OS 236, II, 697-706 (hereafter called SEL); Ranulphi Higden Polychronicon, ed. J.R. Lumby, bk. IV, ch. IV, 318-25; Mirk's Festial, EETS ES 96, pp. 120-1; A Stanzaic Life of Christ, EETS OS 166, pp. 219-31. The most interesting difference between the versions known in England and those C14 and C15 texts as described by du Méril (see n. 9; Massmann and Creizenach quote and/or refer to du Méril without mentioning any dates of MSS) is that the former have a king called Tyrus and a miller called Atus (as in LA) whereas the latter have a king called Atus and an unnamed miller. The LA version (c. 1255-70, M. Görlach, The Textual Tradition of the South English Legendary,

Leeds Texts and Monographs NS 6, p. 22) differs from Jansen Enikel's Weltchronik, ed. Ph. Strauch, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Vol III. (c. 1270, NDB, 10 (1974) p. 338) which has Atus as king (p. 379, l. 19854). Although both texts date from about the same time, the LA is more likely to be nearer to the original version. To his account of Pilate de Voragine has added, p. 231, "in...historia...apocrypha legitur" which may refer to such a source as Vatican MS. Palatinus 619, fol. 19^{v}, dated "saec. XII-XIII," which he is also likely to have used as a source for his Judas legend. See my chapter on Suspencio Iude, n. 11. According to Codices Palatini Latini Bibliothecae Vaticanae, eds. H. Stevenson, I.B. de Rossi, I, 222, the MS starts: "De Pylato; inc, Fuit quidam rex nomine tytus qui quandam puellam nomine pyla" which apart from Tytus for Pygus is also found in the Legenda Aurea. There are two small differences between the legend as rendered in the Polychronicon and the other texts. In Higden's version Pilate is sent to the king when 4 years of age and he kills himself by his own hand (no weapon mentioned). In the other versions Pilate is 3 years old and commits suicide with a knife. Mirk also notes a different account of Pilate's death: "Thus dyde Pylat...he wyth a payre of scherys þat he borowde forto kytte hys naylys wyth, smote hymselfe to þe hert." (p. 194, my italics). In the EETS edn. of the SEL Pilate's life is appendixed to MS Harley 2277 and MS Corpus Christi College Cambridge 145, for dates of the MSS and appendices: Görlach, Text Trad. SEL, pp. 77-9, 84-5. The account of Pilate's life was apparently popular for it appears in a number of MSS, see p. 90, and Index of Middle English Verse, eds. C. Brown and R.H. Robbins, no. 2755. The SEL account is interesting as it includes two features not found in the other accounts. The first one is the mention of a letter which Pilate sent to the emperor Tiberius excusing himself for sentencing Christ (ll. 157-64). The messenger and letter were intercepted by "Vaspasion of Galile" (ll. 162-3) and never arrived at Rome. This part of the legend is not found in Legenda Aurea ch. LIII but in ch. LXVII, p. 299 where Pilate dispatches Albanus to excuse him in Rome. The latter is caught by Vespasianus of Galatia. No letter is mentioned, but may perhaps be inferred. The second point of interest is that Pilate commits suicide with a knife which he had borrowed to peel an apple (ll. 236-8).

11. M. Stevens, "The Composition of the Towneley Talents Play: A Linguistic Examination," JEGP 58 (1959) 423-33 argues that the "... linguistic evidence... establishes that the source of the Towneley Talents was not the lost York play or any play deriving from the Northern dialect belt" (p. 432). This seems to be at odds with the literary evidence. Stevens bases his argument on a survey by S. Moore et al, "Middle English Dialect Characteristics and Dialect Boundaries," ESECL, University of Michigan Publications in Language and Literature, 13 (1935) 1-60, the validity of which was challenged by A. McIntosh, A New Approach to Middle English Dialectology (1959). In a letter of March 9, 1982 Prof. McIntosh is of the opinion that the "Processus had to be 'fully northern' in origin or else Wakefield area, or just possibly, Lincs. But I see no obvious Lincolnshire forms. What seems most likely is that this, as it stands, was shaped in Wakefield itself, and that it was put into its present form rather late, since it is dialectally somewhat dilute. But a Yorks original of say, 2nd ¼ of 15C could be dilute dialectally anyhow." His colleague Dr. Michael Benskin is of the impression

that the Stevens article "... is misleadingly ill-informed." More obvious similarities between the two cycles are, of course the incorporation of 5 York plays in the Towneley cycle, viz. XI (T.VIII), XX(T.XVIII), XXXVII (T.XXV), XXXVIII (T.XXVI), XLVIII (T.XXX).

12. Two significant contributions to the study of Pilate must be mentioned: R.A. Brawer, "The Characterization of Pilate in the York Cycle Play," SP,69 (1972) 289-303; and A. Williams, The Characterization of Pilate in the Towneley Plays, pp. 1-77 which also includes a survey of sources and traditions. I agree essentially with Brawer, but differ in that I take possible interpolations into account. Brawer omits this possibility as a result of which he comes to a single straightforward but hazardous characterization of Pilate. Linking Pilate's cheating of the squire (XXXII) with his claim to Christ's coat (XXXIV ll. 327-8, almost certainly an interpolation) he claims that both show "...Pilate as essentially self-serving" (p. 296), but neglects to attribute any significance to their inconsistency with Pilate's character description in previous plays. Brawer does not include a discussion of the discrepancy between the beginning of plays XXXVI and XXXVIII at all (see discussion below, p. 113). These omissions place part of his plausible analysis on a less certain footing. Some criticisms against Williams may also be advanced. In chapter III, pp. 37-51, he demonstrates that corruption was rife and argues that Pilate may be a reflection of this, but he does not point out that the corruption was particularly worse than at other times so that we have to give more nuance to his assertion. A second critical note involves Williams' view of the York Pilate who is "almost completely opposed in spirit and tone" (p. 69) to the Towneley one despite the close relationship between the two cycles. In my discussion I show that although the York Pilate is different in tone his malignant spirit is present and may have provided Towneley with suggestions for Pilate's characterization.

13. For Pilate's opening speeches see York Plays, XXVI, XXX, XXXII, XXXIII, XXXVI, and XXXVIII. It is worth noting that the first three lines of plays XXXII and XXXIV are almost identical.

14. See plays XXX ll. 38, 266, 457; XXXII ll. 25-6, 34; XXXIII l. 320; XXXVI l. 5.

15. Pilate's change has been made credible. But even if it had <u>not</u> been the case he would have had to condemn the prisoner since he cannot step outside the limits set by the Bible narrative.

16. This is inferred from a passage in play XXII, <u>Fflagellacio</u>, where the first torturer enters saying "I haue ron that I swett/ from sir herode oure kyng," (l. 53) but the cycle does not feature a "trial before Herod" like York so that the allusion hangs in mid-air unless an excised play is assumed. In the same play, l. 99, one finds another reference to Herod who could find nothing wrong with Jesus. Again it looks as if this refers to a previous play which no longer exists.

17. This statement is reiterated almost verbatim in play XXII, <u>Fflagellacio</u>, p. 244, ll. 23-6.

18. Apart from interpreting this as a confirmation that the decision of a man of law stands, however wrong he is, we may also regard it as an ironic anticipatory reference to the Day of Judgment when Christ shall come as the Judge.

19. MS Royal 18 B xxiii, fol. 135^{r} as quoted by G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, p. 344. The passage should also occur in the EETS edn. of the Middle English Sermons, EETS OS 209, since it makes use of the same MS as Owst. The passage, fol. 135^{r}, however, does not occur in its expected place, p. 241, but in the notes on p. 366. The EETS ed. has lifted it out of sequence, making the text of fol. 135^{v} follow fol. 134^{v}, conjecturing that the text of fol. 135^{r} had become misplaced in the MS and actually belongs elsewhere. Owst, p. 339, also quotes another example from a sermon which equates English justice with that of Pilate's. In the SEL story of Judas, EETS OS 236, p. 695 we find an allusion to Pilate's misapplication of judicial powers: "Vor he was mayster & iustise . he mi3te do vnri3t ynou3" (l. 93).

20. Due to the fact that the Talents play is an interpolation the counsellor's announcement that Christ is dead (ll. 202-8) is superfluous since Pilate already knows about Christ's demise - Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus ask Pilate for Christ's body in play XXIII. On the other hand, this superfluity itself suggests that the Talents play is an interpolation.

21. A clear example is, of course, the moment when the torturers force Pilate to condemn Christ.

22. The parting of the clothes is also mentioned in Matt. 27:35, Mark 16:24 and Luke 23:34.

23. Maybe all the traditions about power in Christ's coat go back to Luke 8: 43-4 where a woman is healed by touching His garment.

24. Le Mystère de La Passion en France du XIVe au XVIe Siècle, ed. É. Roy, p. 343. The coat story is summarized on p. 337. For the date: p. 325. Williams, Characterization of Pilate, p. 11.

25. In: Das Drama des Mittelalters, ed. E. Hartl, IV, 227. For date of the MS see Die Handschriften der Fürstlich-Fürstenbergischen Hofbibliothek zu Donaueschingen ed. K.A. Barack, pp. 136-7: "Papierhandschrift des XV Jahrh." Williams, Characterization of Pilate, p. 12.

26. The Ancient Cornish Drama, ed. and tr. E. Norris, II, 120-79, ll. 1587-2360. For description and date of the MS: The Cornish Ordinalia, tr. M. Harris, p. vii: "...first half of the fifteenth century."

27. Frampton, "Processus Talentorum," p. 647.

28. In: Medieval Drama, ed. D. Bevington, pp. 901-38

29. The Digby Plays, EETS ES 70.

30. The Towneley Cycle: A Facsimile of Huntington MS 1, eds. A.C. Cawley and M. Stevens, fols. 92[r] and 97[r]. The headings are abbreviated according to custom, but "talentorum" cannot be misread.

31. R.A. Brawer, "Dramatic Craftsmanship in the Towneley Play of the Talents," ELH (March 1976) p. 81, n. 6. Brawer also refers briefly to the same passage of St. Augustine's as quoted above.

32. Both quotations are from The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N. Robinson, 2nd edn., p. 238 vs. 914 and p. 150, l. 540 resp.

Chapter Five

The Sibyl and the Processus Prophetarum

To appreciate the appearance, function and medieval common knowledge of the pagan Sibylline prophetess in Towneley's Processus Prophetarum (VII) it is imperative to resort to the development of the continental prophets' plays. Their evolution may be indicative of the development of the English ones evidence of which, with the possible exception of the Anglo-Norman Adam play (see below pp. 144-46) is not known to exist. Since the inheritance of the liturgical material from which these plays developed is basically the same for the continent and England it is only natural to infer a possible English development of the prophetic procession from what is known to have happened elsewhere.

Before the Sibyl appears in the pseudo-Augustinian Sermo Contra Judaeos, Paganos et Arianos Sermo de Symbolo,[1] to which she and the prophets' play are generally traced back, she has already had a long history in both Greek and Latin traditions. Mentioned as early as the third quarter of the sixth century B.C. in a fragment of Heraclitus, and also in Plato's Phaedrus,[2] she seems to have originated in the Hellenic folklore of c. 600 B.C. which knew many itinerant prophets. Collection and handing down of their prophecies gave rise to the Sibylline tradition, of which the Erythraean Sibyl became gradually known as the oldest and most prominent exponent. The number and names of these seers differ in the various traditions, but Varro seems to have enumerated one of the longest lists by naming ten of them.[3]

Of the Roman Sibylline tradition, which had a negligible bearing on the Christian, only Virgil with his Fourth Eclogue, a poem announcing by the mouth of the Cumean Sibyl the advent of a new age and a blessed birth, has had a lasting influence. As we

shall see later, several of the Church Fathers knew this particular work and interpreted it as prophecying Christ's birth.[4]

The only Sibylline books now extant are the Oracula Sibyllina[5], a collection of twelve books of Jewish-Christian origin. Book III, probably written by an Alexandrian Jew round about 160-140 B.C., uses the authority and belief in the veracity of the statements of the pagan Sibyl against the Gentiles (non Jewish people) by putting words of a strong monotheistic nature in her mouth as proof that evidence of the truth of the new religion existed amongst them:

> O Greece, why hast thou trusted mortal men
> As leaders, who cannot escape from death?
> And wherefore bringest thou thy foolish gifts
> Unto the dead and sacrifice to idols?
> Who put the error in thy heart to do
> These things and leave the face of God the mighty?
> Honor the All-Father's name, and let it not
> Escape thee. It is now a thousand years,
> Yea, and five hundred more, since haughty kings
> Ruled o'er the Greeks, who first to mortal men
> Introduced evils, setting up for worship
> Images many of gods that are dead,
> Because of which ye were taught foolish thoughts.
> But when the anger of the mighty God
> Shall come upon you, then ye'll recognize
> The face of God the mighty. And all souls
> Of men, with mighty groaning lifting up
> Their hands to the broad heaven, shall begin
> To call the great King helper, and to seek
> The rescuer from great wrath who is to be.
> (III, ll. 691-710)

Thus the Greeks are strongly exhorted to adopt moral lives and recognize the one God. This conviction that the monotheistic faith is the only one conducive to salvation is continued in book VIII, generally assumed to date from c. A.D. 180 or earlier, which contains a 34-line acrostic reading in Greek "IESOUS CHREISTOS THEOU UIOS SOTER STAUROS"[6] (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour, Cross) and is found in a hell-fire and damnation oration on Christ's Second Coming to judge all mankind. It emphasizes the ravages of the calamities accompanying the Day of Judgment affecting the entire universe. Only those who have lived by faith in the one God have nothing to fear. In short,

the acrostic urges the people to turn to the true religion forsaking such iniquities as vanity and idolatry. It is easy to see how nascent Christianity found copious food for thought in these Sibylline poems, for not only do they advocate a moral life and belief in monotheism, but also a conviction in the end of the world which will lead to the founding of a spiritual kingdom, ushered in by the Redeemer.

The early Fathers of the Church reveal their knowledge of, or dependence on, this Sibylline tradition by frequent citation. Justin Martyr, died c. 165, seems to have been the first to realize the potential of the Sibyls for the Church by aligning them with the Scriptural prophets:

> ... you may in part easily learn the right religion from the ancient Sibyl, who... teaches you... truths which seem to be much akin to the teaching of the prophets[7]

Lactantius, c. 240-c. 320, uses the Sibylline prophecies profusely in all matters concerning Christ's life without distinguishing between the Sibyls. "All these Sibyls" he writes "proclaim one God..."[8] Eusebius, c. 260-339, however, is the first to combine the above mentioned Sibylline acrostic with a prophecy about Christ taken from Virgil's Fourth Eclogue. Virgil, he explains, had to obscure the obvious meaning of his prophecy to avoid contravening national laws. Thus "Iam redit et uirgo, redeunt Saturnia regna;" stealthily referred to the Virgin Mary pregnant with Christ the long expected King. Likewise, "iam noua progenies caelo demittitur alto" was interpreted as foreshadowing Christ's birth.[9]

Book XVIII chapter XXIII of St. Augustine's De Civitate Dei shows Augustine's reliance on Varro and Lactantius. He reproduces in a Latin translation from a Greek source a 27-line acrostic which reads in Greek: "IESOUS CHREISTOS THEOU UIOS SOTER" (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour). This is highly reminiscent of the acrostic

as found in Eusebius and the Oracula Sibyllina, only "STAUROS" (Cross) is missing. For linguistic reasons the initials of the Latin lines do not exactly match the initial letters of the Greek:

Ἰ Judicii signum tellus sudore madescet.
Η E coelo Rex adveniet per saecla futurus:
Σ Scilicet in carne praesens ut judicet orbem.
Ο Unde Deum cernent incredulus atque fidelis
Υ Celsum cum sanctis, aevi jam termino in ipso.
Σ Sic animae cum carne aderunt, quas judicat ipse:
Χ Cum jacet in cultus densis in vepribus orbis.
Ρ Rejicient simulacra viri, cunctam quoque gazam:
Ε Exuret terras ignis, pontumque polumque
Ι inquirens, tetri portas effringet Averni
Σ Sanctorum sed enim cunctae lux libera carni
Τ Tradetur, sontes aeterna flamma cremabit.
Ο Occultos actus retegens, tunc quisque loquetur
Σ Secreta, atque Deus reserabit pectora luci.
Θ Tunc erit et luctus, stridebunt dentibus omnes.
Ε Eripitur solis jubar, et chorus interit astris.
Ο Volvetur coelum, lunaris splendor obibit.
Υ Dejiciet colles, valles extollet ab imo.
Υ Non erit in rebus hominum sublime vel altum.
Ι Jam aequantur campis montes, et caerula ponti
Ο Omnia cessabunt, tellus confracta peribit.
Σ Sic pariter fontes torrentur, fluminaque igni.
Σ Sed tuba tum sonitum tristem demittet ab alto
Ω Orbe gemens facinus miserum variosque labores:
Τ Tartareumque chaos monstrabit terra dehiscens.
Η Et coram hic Domino reges sistentur ad unum
Ρ Recidet e coelis ignisque et sulphuris amnis[10]

As will be seen eschatological elements abound in the poem. In fact the Latin poem is nothing but a shortened literal translation of the poem as we first found it with the Sibyl. Like Eusebius before him, Augustine attributes the acrostic to the Erythraean Sibyl, contrary to the Oracula Sibyllina which do not specify the Sibyl of the acrostic, yet he soon modifies this to "...Sibylla sive Erythraea, sive...Cumaea..."[11] indicating that already in his days confusion existed as to which prophetess the poem was attributable.

Virgil's Fourth Eclogue too was known to St. Augustine. In book X chapter XXVII of De Civitate Dei, advancing Christ's cause, he quotes the eclogue saying about the verse in general "...Salvatore..., de quo iste versus expressus est."[12] It is perhaps on the basis of

this joint appearance of the acrostic and the Fourth Eclogue in both De Civitate Dei and the Sermo, which dates from the fifth or sixth century, that the latter was persistently though erroneously attributed to St. Augustine in the Middle Ages.[13]

So from a very early date Christian authors understood the scope offered by the ancient and pagan Sibylline tradition employing its authority as an agent to propagate the new religion. This is worked out to a very high degree in the Sermo, where the preacher harangues against the Jews for their insistence on evidence of Christ's Lordship, examplified by their question: "Quousque animas nostras suspendis? Si tu es Christus, dic nobis palam." (Vulg. John 10:24). The preacher's reaction is: "Vos, inquam, convenio, o Judaei, qui usque in hodiernum diem negatis Filium Dei...Vos autem non agnoscentes Salvatorum, qui operabatur salutem in medio terrae vestrae,... (Vulg. Ps. 73:12)."[14] He then proceeds to show with Scriptural examples that Christ is the Redeemer. In accordance with the Jewish law, and partly to refute possible allegations that he has not provided enough witnesses (Vulg. Deut. 17:6, 19:15 and partially Vulg. John 8:17), he summons thirteen biblical prophets to bear witness of Christ's Messiahship. Using "dic tu... [name] ...testimonium Christo" as a cue, the preacher invokes them to deliver their message. None, however, has more than three lines, nor are there any signs of impersonation. Since all prophecies except those of Simeon, Zacharias and Elizabeth, and Virgil and the Sibyl contain the word "inquit" ("he says") it seems likely that no dialogue took place (but see below pp.140-41). All that may be suggested is that the preacher perhaps employed voice modulation to distinguish between the summons and response and thus broke the monotony of the lengthy sermon.[15] At the end he reminds the Jews that the evidence presented should suffice "Sufficiunt vobis ista, o Judaei, sufficiunt vobis tanti testes,"[16] but he proceeds to

quote from the Gentiles. He quotes Virgil's "Iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto,"[17] Nebuchadnezzar (Vulg. Dan. 3:25) and the Sibyl's messianic prophecy as we know it from Augustine's De Civitate Dei. This explains why the Sibyl has most lines.

According to the Sermo, the joint statements of the biblical and pagan prophets denounce the Jewish attitude and do not leave them any grounds to doubt the validity of Christ or for that matter Christianity. The new element, however, is the latent possibility of dramatizing and impersonating the prophets' exhortations. That these new factors should be exploited in later times should therefore not be surprising.

Traces of the sermon and Sibylline poem have not been found between the fifth/sixth century and the ninth century, when the Sibylline verses reemerge independent of the sermon in MSS which record it as a song with musical accompaniment.[18] MS.B.N.1154 (Limoges) renders the poem as found in the Sermo, but interspersed it with a refrain "Judicii Signum," (the first two words of the Sib. Poem) which may perhaps indicate some form of distribution of the song between, say, two parts of a choir or between cantor and choral group.[19] This is clearly not the case in MS.B.N. 2832 (Lyon) which has no internal divisions in the Sibylline song. The text of the Sermo, including the Sibylline verses, reemerges in the eleventh century in MS. B.N. 1139 (Limoges) and is accompanied by musical notation and found in connection with the Christmas liturgy.[20] Although this version of the sermon is clearly dependent on the Sermo it deviates from it in a few important details. The prose form of the Sermo has been recast in a metrical form and the prophecies are, on the whole, free adaptations of the ones in the Sermo.[21] The prophet Zacharias has been excluded, but Israel has been added, quoting lines from (Vulg.) Genesis 49:10, 18. The Sibyl's prophecy

has been curtailed to the first three lines of her acrostic, so that her text is no longer than those of any of the other prophets (but see below p. 143). The names of the prophets are clearly indicated in the MS as are their responses to their summons. This has led K. Young to postulate that a cantor took the role of expositor as in the Sermo.[22] Together with the music, the summons and response formula indicates that the text was chanted alternately either by parts of a choir or by a cantor and vocal group. Whether the occurrence of a prophet's name means that a prophet appeared in person to sing his testimony, as Young believes,[23] or whether it merely indicates a new singing part is difficult to assess and any judgment would perhaps better be deferred. At any rate, it seems reasonable to infer that some form of role distribution took place. There are, however, no indications of impersonation.

It is not known when the adaptation into the liturgy of Christmas took place, nor is it known when or where the custom arose of singing the poem or the sermon. As for the singing of the Sibylline verses, this may have been an early and natural development. The poem existed earlier than the Sermo in the works of Eusebius and Augustine and is therefore likely to have been susceptible to liturgical influences other than those which caused it to be read as a poem in the Sermo. Once its appropriateness as a prophetic poem about Christ had been fully realised and accepted it may have been influenced by other prophecies about Christ, especially Isaiah's, which were sung in the Christmas season at an early date, as we know from the Liber Antiphonarius and Liber Responsalis of Gregory the Great (540-604).[24] This would explain its occurrence as an individual song in the ninth century, circa two centuries before evidence of a chanted Sermo-derivative, and may mean that if the tradition of singing prophecies did not prompt the Sermo to be sung,

the Sibylline poem may have contributed towards the chanting and/or recitation of the individual prophetic messages of the Sermo. S. Corbin attributes a similarly important role to the Sibyl:

> ...il me semble difficile de croire que sa présence [Sib. poem] dès le Xe siècle soit suggérée par un ordo prophetarum qui, je crois, n'existe pas encore. Au contraire, il semble tout naturel qu'une cérémonie faisant intervenir les prophètes dérive à la fois du sermon vos inquam et du poème sibyllin; la sibylle, rôle central, imposait nécessairement le cortège de ses collègues de tous les temps evoqués d'ailleurs par le sermon.[25]

The assumed twofold development described above would also explain such versions as the one at Arles (see below) in which all other prophecies are spoken, but the Sibylline poem sung.

The Sermo-Christmas connection is also a matter of conjecture, but may have been established through Isaiah, whose prophecy "Ecce Virgo concipiet et pariet filium" (Vulg. Isa. 7:14) is not only found in the Sermo and Gregory the Great's Liber Antiphonarius and Liber Responsalis, but also in eleventh century Pastores tropes.[26] In the same way as the prophecies about Christ may have influenced the chanting of the Sibylline poem, Isaiah may have encouraged the adoption of the Sermo into the Christmas liturgy which may in turn explain the eventual appearance of the prophets in the English shepherds' plays. Of course the nature of the Advent and Christmas liturgy will have facilitated this inclusion, as this liturgy shares with the Sermo a sense of anticipation and fulfillment of this anticipation in Christ's birth.[27] When the Sermo, or its derivatives, are found in the eleventh century and later, they are found in various positions within the Christmas season. Frequently they occupy the place of a liturgical lesson in Matins, whether this is the Matins of Christmas Day, the day before Christmas, the fourth Sunday of Advent, Ferial Matins of weekdays or Matins on the feast of the Circumcision (January 1st).[28]

A twelfth century MS of a lectionary of the diocese of Arles is a case in point.[29] It contains as the sixth lesson of Christmas Matins the entire Sermo in its prose version. It is noteworthy that apart from a musical notation for the Sibylline verses no music is known to have survived for the rest of the lectio. This is not to say that the rest of the lectio could not have been chanted, we simply do not know. It suggests at least that the chanted Sibylline poem may reflect an older practice of singing the Sibylline poem on its own, as in MS. B.N. 1154 mentioned above.[30] Both Sepet and Young note that the Arles MS. has red marks in the margin which coincide with the invocation of each prophet.[31] In the case of Isaiah and Jeremiah, their names have been repeated in the margin. Sepet assumes that the scribe has forgotten to complete this repetition for the other prophets and tends to regard the marginal signs as rubrics by concluding that:

> ...il a été d'usage,...de lire le sermon de saint Augustin avec des modifications de ton et des flexions de voix indiquant le changement d'interlocuteur...[et que] on a fini, à un moment donné, par compléter les flexions de voix en leur donnant pour organes des lecteurs différents, et qu'alors chaque ton, c'est-à-dire chaque prophète, a eu son interprète, le dialogue demeurant cependant toujours enchâssé dans le récit.[32]

Yet although it looks as if he is saying that a dialogue between separate persons is taking place he later changes his mind, arguing that this is not the case since the repetition of names occurs at the heads of their invocations and not at the heads of their responses.[33] In other words, we are still dealing with a summons and response type of lectio with one single speaker (the lector or expositor) for all speeches. In addition, the retention of the word "inquit" does not seem to imply interpersonal dialogue.[34] There are no signs of impersonation.

Despite the reasons advanced by Sepet and Young against having more than one speaker, I think that it is not improbable that the various prophecies were spoken by separate persons. There are two reasons for this assumption. Firstly, "inquit" in, for example, Isaiah's prophecy "Ecce, inquit, virgo in utero concipiet..."[35] although referring to Isaiah is probably spoken by the lector or expositor, but it does not necessarily follow that everything after "inquit" is spoken by the expositor too. It may well be that after "inquit" a separate person completes the prophecy. This sudden change of speaker in the middle of a text could easily be carried out and is as a matter of fact a not uncommon phenomenon as we learn from the Visitatio Sepulchri from the tenth century Winchester Troper:

> Angelicae vocis consolatio: [rubric]
>
> Non est hic, surrexit sicut praedixerat; ite, nuntiate quia surrexit, dicentes:
>
> Sanctarum mulierum ad omnem clerum modulatio: [rubric]
>
> Alleluia, resurrexit Dominus,...
>
> (my italics)[36]

Judging by the text we would expect the angel to tell the women what they would have to say. This does not happen for there is a sudden change of speaker and the women say what the angel was supposed to tell them. On the basis of this example a similar thing may have happened at Arles.

The second reason is perhaps more important . R.B. Donovan has shown that Spanish texts ranging from the fourteenth to sixteenth century exist which attest that in Gerona, Palma and Valencia an Ordo Prophetarum was presented at Christmas Matins according to the text in their lectionary.[37] This text did not start with the prophecies as at Arles, but with part of the beginning of the pseudo-Augustinian Sermo starting with "Inter pressuras atque angustias... susceptus est..." which was then followed by the prophecies.[38] The

significance is that not only was an Ordo Prophetarum presented during a lectio, but also that the problem of "inquit" was overcome, not to say neglected, as it was still retained in the speeches of the prophets. That the prophets speak their own prophecies is suggested by their rubricated names, a suggestion reinforced by the occurrence of the word "lector" before the other parts of the sermon. The fact that the prophetic names are printed in red before their responses may help to explain the nature of the "unusual" rubrics of the Arles MS, namely, that its marginal signs may have served as cues for the performing clerics.[39] The evidence presented against too restrictive an interpretation of "inquit" seems to suggest that it is not improbable that dialogue took place at Arles. This hypothesis may even affect the Sermo although there is in that case no supporting evidence from, for example, marginal inscriptions. Presenting an Ordo Prophetarum according to a text which is in all respects similar to the one of the original Sermo would seem to be a more natural thing to do than to recast the entire Sermo in a metrical/musical form as at Limoges.[40] The corollary of this argument would be to suggest that the representation of an Ordo Prophetarum based on a prose version of the Sermo is older in time and idea than one based on a metrical version. Of this, however, we lack evidence. Arles may reflect a very old tradition, but we have no indications as to the age of this tradition. Similarly, we have no indications as to the age of the metrical tradition underlying the Limoges text. This being the case, we may only conclude that there were two traditions of presenting the procession of the prophets.

A text from the cathedral of Salerno[41] continues the prose tradition of the Sermo. As at Arles and in the pseudo-Augustinian lectio the Sibylline poem is quoted in full, but nothing is known about its being sung. The lector's address has been significantly reduced, although it is still a vital part of the lectio. Rubrics clearly

indicate the names of the prophets, suggesting that the lines were recited by separate persons, yet there are no signs of impersonation. It is worth noting that contrary to Arles and the Spanish examples mentioned above, the word "inquit" has been removed from all the prophetic speeches. The lector only uses it once to quote some lines from David's prophecy.[42] The obliteration of "inquit" from the testimonies shows that whoever excluded the word may have understood its incongruity or, otherwise, its superfluity, and it strongly supports the impression of dialogue.

A thirteenth century MS from the cathedral of Laon[43] presents its Ordo Prophetarum in the same metrical fashion as Limoges. Although no music is attached to it, it was probably sung, as indicated by the occurrence of rubrics such as "Duo cantores" and "Chorus." This is perhaps underlined by its metrical rendition which as we saw at Limoges was chanted. Moreover, "Dic tu...[name]..." need not preclude chant since the same words were sung at Limoges. The text, which incorporates only the first five lines of the Sibylline acrostic, begins with a short description of the dramatis personae of which the Sibylline description is interesting: "Sibilla: ueste feminea, decapillata, edera coronata, insanienti simillima."[44] Her description and that of her "colleagues" clearly suggests impersonation, and the clear rubrications indicate dialogue. In other words, this is a clear example of a dramatized Ordo Prophetarum. The Laon Ordo shows an expansion beyond the Sexmo in that the prophet Balaam sitting on an ass is introduced at the very end of the play. Since he is the only prophet not coming from the Sexmo, both Young and Chambers regard him as an interpolation into the Ordo "...as an attempt to turn the established presence of the ass in the church to purposes of edification, rather than of ribaldry."[45]

The fourteenth century Festum Asinorum of Rouen does not

feature the normal thirteen prophets, but twenty-eight; an expansion inherent in the Sermo, where the interlocutor says: "Quod si velim ex Lege et ex Prophetis omnia quae de Christo dicta sunt colligere facilius me tempus quam copia deserit."[46] As at Limoges and Laon this Ordo is presented in a metrical form which is likely to have been sung. There is clear rubrication, the role of expositor has been taken by "vocatores" and each prophet apart from Ezekiel and Malachi is briefly described. These descriptions and the mention of props characterize the Rouen performance as a play. The Sibyl, described as "coronata et muliebri habitu ornata,"[47] only utters the first line of her prophecy. Since this makes hardly sense as a prophecy, we may wonder whether she did not utter more, if not all, of her prophecy. In other words, it is not unlikely that the first line is merely used as a cue after which the rest was supposed to follow. This practice would stand to reason for it is not improbable that since the ninth century the Sibylline verses had gained so much in popularity that the scribe or copyist could allow himself the liberty, and save time on the side, by referring to her prophecy with a mere hint, as most people would know what was being referred to. A similar practice is, for example, not only found in the Benediktbeuern Christmas Play (see below pp. 146-47), but also in the above mentioned ordinaria of Gerona and Palma which indicate that the "Iudicii Signum" was sung without specifying the rest of the text.[48] As the Rouen Ordo is also found in an ordinarium it is probable that a similar convention was followed there. This assumption need not have any implications for the Sibylline prophecies of Limoges and Laon which are found in troparia[49] for although their Sibylline verses are short, three and five lines respectively, they can be regarded as little self-contained prophetic messages.

The six centuries between MS. B.N. 1134 and the Rouen text show that two traditions of presenting the prophetic messages evolved from the Sermo. Texts such as the one from Arles, which follows the prose nature of the Sermo, have their own distinctive prophets as against the metrical versions of Limoges, Laon and Rouen. Zacharias is found only in the Arles lectio (and the Sermo), Israel in the Limoges version, Balaam in the Laon and Rouen plays, and Rouen has fourteen prophets who do not occur in any of the other texts.[50] Comparing all these texts with the Sermo we notice a development away from expository comment towards impersonation and expansion of text. This is not to say that the impersonation of the prophets which we first encounter in Laon is the earliest example of its kind, for we find a dramatized procession of prophets embedded in the twelfth century Anglo-Norman Ordo Representacionis Ade and in the thirteenth century so-called Benediktbeuern Christmas Play.[51]

As a tripartite play the play of Adam enacts three OT episodes: Creation - Fall (ll. 1-590), Cain and Abel (ll. 591-744) and a procession of prophets (ll. 745-942). Often regarded as "transitional" for its Anglo-Norman French text with Latin stage directions, it is also described as semi-liturgical for its apparent detachment from the liturgy as an outdoor play, although we find occasional liturgical responses. Stage props, such as flowers, costumes and the behaviour of the actors to "Speak properly and make appropriate gestures" (opening rubric) are clearly described. The prophets are probably summoned by a cleric acting as expositor, following the Sermo which is read "in choro" (rubric after l. 744).[52] There are no indications as to how much of this lectio was read, but when the prophets appear it becomes clear that the author does not always toe the Sermo line. Of the eleven prophets who are enumerated, Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Habakkuk and Nebuchadnezzar appear in the Sermo,

Aaron in the Rouen and Benediktbeuern plays, but not with the same prophecies, Balaam with the first line of a prophecy which is also found at Benediktbeuern as against his prophecies at Laon and Rouen, while Abraham and Solomon do not appear anywhere else. The prophecies of Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, Habakkuk and Nebuchadnezzar are based on the Sermo, whereas those of David (Vulg. Ps. 84:12-3) and Jeremiah (Vulg. Jer. 7:2-3) are not. Abraham's is based on (Vulg.) Genesis 22:17-8, Aaron's on (Vulg.) Numbers 17:5-8, Balaam's on (Vulg.) Numbers 24:17 and Solomon's on (Vulg.) Book of Wisdom 6:5-7.[53] Although it is impossible to tell whether the playwright knew the Sermo directly or indirectly the play clearly relies ultimately on the Sermo. It is equally difficult to tell in how far he was original in presenting impersonated prophets or to what extent he relied on such a tradition.

The prophetic recitals derived from the Sermo have all been expanded beyond their normal length and focus on the play's all-pervading theme of redemption. From this we may infer that the prophets' play was adapted to suit the larger framework of the play. This is especially the case with the new prophets Abraham and Solomon. Adam who fell from God's grace in episode 1 shall be delivered by Christ who is of Abraham's lineage. This is essentially the reason why Abraham appears as a prophet. Solomon prophesies Christ's passion and death on the cross which will lead to the downfall of those who have not administered God's law justly, and to the recovery of Adam. In short, the prophetic messages, which range from Christ's advent to His redemption of Adam, deal with the major events that will affect Adam's progeny and therefore all mankind. Since the play breaks off during Nebuchadnezzar's speech it is a moot question whether the Sibyl, who is now conspicuously absent but who is normally immediately preceded by him, was intended to follow, or

whether she was purposely left out as advocated by L.R. Muir.[34]

There can be no doubt but that the prophets were impersonated as is clearly borne out by their individual descriptions. Whether the prophecies were chanted or spoken is less obvious. The rubric after l. 744 indicates that the prophecies were "clearly and distinctly pronounced" which does not exclude chant. The opening rubric of the play mentions speaking actors, but this may apply to the Creation - Cain episodes only as they belong to one lectio whereas the prophets belong to another (cf. opening rubric and the one after l. 744). In addition, the rubric to each prophecy contains a conjugated form of the verb "dicere" ("to say, tell") which at Winchester and Limoges appears in a context which was chanted. Only the rubric to Daniel's prophecy which contains besides a form of "dicere" a form of "loqui" ("to speak") indicates speech. An expositor is lacking although he may have been present to introduce the prophets. It will thus be obvious that of all the prophetic processions discussed the prophets' section of the Adam play is most advanced. Yet in how far this play reflects older traditions of impersonating the prophets is impossible to determine.

The Benediktbeuern play is a composite play written in Latin verse consisting of a prophets' play, annunciation scene, nativity scene and Herod play. A proper play with rubrics, impersonation and devoid of exposition, it is also a play of considerable freedom and originality as far as the Sibyl is concerned. The prophetic messages, which have now been affixed as a prologue to a larger play, have been adapted to fit a larger framework. The play evolves around a debate between Augustine and Archisynagogus about the latter's disbelief in the Virgin Birth. The prophets, Isaiah, Daniel, Sibyl, Aaron and Balaam, support Augustine not only in the debate, but also with their elaborate prophecies which focus on Mary and the

Virgin Birth. Yet apart from parts of Isaiah's and Sibyl's message none of their expanded prophecies go back to the Sermo. Especially the Sibyl is found in an entirely new role, for before she sings[55] the familiar lines of her Last Judgment prophecy she prophecies Christ's birth in what resembles Virgilian diction "E celo labitur.../ nova progonies..." (ll. 20-1). The rest of her four stanza advent prophecy resembles, sometimes verbally, the Christmas hymn "Beata viscera."[56] Her Judgement prophecy was according to the rubric sung: " [Sibylla] cantet hoc versus" (rubric after l. 31), but it is unknown how much of it was chanted, for as at Rouen (see above p. 143) only part of the first line: "Judicii signum:tellus" (l. 32) is recorded in the MS. The number of prophets in the play has been reduced from the original thirteen in the Sermo to five, but it does not impair the play as its intent is still the same: bearing witness of Christ's advent and the consequences of continued disbelief in Him. The connection of the prophets' episode with Christmas, not with a liturgical context for of that we have no proof, is established through the fulfillment of the prophecies in the immediately following Nativity play. The play presents the same problem as the Adam play, namely, that it is unknown how old the custom of impersonating the prophets is, although it is obviously an older tradition than its first attestation at Laon.

Assuming, as suggested before, that the English prophets' plays developed analogous to the continental ones, one can explain why prophets, or a prophets' play, are found in the Christmas context of the mystery plays of York, Towneley, Chester and the Ludus Coventriae. Their appearance reflects not only the older tradition which featured the prophetic messages as a part of the Christmas liturgy, but also the tendency to combine a prophets' play with other plays as in the Adam play and the one from

Benedictbeuern. The prophets' plays of the mystery cycles, however, are all considerably different from each other and the Sibyl appears only in two of them.

With its twenty-seven prophetic messages the Ludus Coventriae prophets' play (play 7) is the simplest of all cycle prophets' plays, further removed from the Nativity than any of the other prophetic processions and not intentionally a prophets' play but a "tree of Jesse" play.[57] This is obvious from both the end of the play ("explicit Jesse") and the proclamation which reveals the Marian emphasis of the prophecies:

> Off þe gentyl Jesse rote
> þe sefnt pagent for sothe xal ben
> .....
> Kyngys and prophetys .....
> ...xal prophecye of a mayde
> All ffendys of here xal be Affrayde
> here sone xal saue us...
> (ll. 105-6, 109, 114-6)

The connection with Mary explains the position of the play in the cycle, that is, it focusses on both Mary's and Christ's birth.

The prophets alternate with thirteen kings, found in Matthew 1:2-11, but not all prophecies contribute significantly to the play and if it had not been for the rubrication most of the speeches would have been indistinguishable from each other. With the exception of "Ysaias" and "Radix Jesse" the speeches of prophets and kings defy identification because of their general nature. Part of Isaiah's speech "...virgo concipiet/ et pariet filium//nomen emanuel" (ll. 9-10) is virtually the same as in the Sermo and stems ultimately from (Vulg.) Isaiah 7:14. Part of Radix Jesse's speech "Egredietur virga de radice jesse/ Et flos de radice eius ascendet" (l. 17) stems from (Vulg.) Isaiah 11:1 and is not found in the Sermo, but appears, together with the prophecy from Isaiah 7:14, as a chant of Advent in Gregory the Great's Liber Responsalis.[58] This joint occurrence is in drama first found at Rouen. The brevity of

these two quotations and the generality of the others makes it impossible to decide whether the author relied for his quotations on the Bible, the Sermo, which has only one of the prophecies so that the second one must come from somewhere else, on a combination of the Sermo and Liber Responsalis, on the Liber Responsalis only, or on some other version known to him which he copied or modified. The most likely possibility, however, is that the author conceived his idea of prophets and kings from pictorial representations of trees of Jesse for "Kings and Prophets had been admitted into Trees of Jesse long before the date of the MS. of the Ludus Coventriae."[59] This would explain the general nature of most of the prophetic messages: the author may have had to invent them, whereas the use of Isaiah's prophecies might be regarded as natural since OT readings for the Advent and Christmas liturgy were commonly taken from the book of Isaiah. Although the prophetic procession in this cycle follows the presentation of the Sermo only in general, it is not unlikely that the author, consciously or not, knew of some form of association between prophets and Christmas, for in The Adoration of the Shepherds (play 16) the three shepherds talk about the prophecies of Balaam,[60] Moses, Amos and Daniel. Only Balaam's prophecy (ll. 27, 39) can be identified with certainty (Num. 24:17) whereas the others, of whom Moses and Daniel appear in the Sermo, cannot. Since all these prophets appear either in the Sermo or in one of its derivations we know that they are all typical of the Ordo Prophetarum, so that we may wonder where the idea of their inclusion in a Christmas play comes from if it had not been prompted by an Ordo Prophetarum at some stage. Thus we get the impression that the Ludus Coventriae incorporates two traditions which may have had mutual influence: one probably based on a Tree of Jesse concept whereas the other may be a relic of an older tradition which associated an Ordo Prophetarum with Christmas.

That the York Spicers' play, play XXII, is a separate derivation from the Sermo will be obvious. It resembles the Sermo in having a "Prologue" who cites prophetic forecasts and spells out their significance not only in the light of what happened earlier in the cycle (ll. 1-2, 5), but also for future events. The prophets themselves do not appear and the prophecies cited are, apart from Isaiah's (ll. 61-4, 76-8), quite different from the Sermo.[61] The earliest description of the play, in Burton's list of 1415,[62] indicates that already at that date the prophets' play was performed in a contracted form: "doctor declarans dicta prophetarum de nativitate Christi futura..."[63] This treatment of the play is typical of York's tendency to abbreviate plays and use as few characters as possible, as is borne out by an entry in the A/Y Memorandum Book for 1422[64] in which the Painters and Stainers offer to combine two plays and to perform in one play not only the matter of the surviving play, but also "the matter of the speeches" of the play which is to be dropped. Since the plays in general were under pressure of time this may have led to the preference for an expositor/narrator rather than showing the action directly. Although the York procedure is untypical, the introduction of an expositor is in keeping with medieval dramatic tradition and, perhaps incidentally, with the Sermo. Ultimately, the presentation of a number of prophets goes back to the Sermo, whereas the connection with Christ's Advent, which is the fulfillment of the prophecies, is established through its preceding the Annunciation in the same play.

The chronologically misplaced and incomplete Towneley Processus Prophetarum (play VII) [65] has only four prophets, Moses, David, the Sibyl and Daniel, and opens with a prologue spoken by Moses:

> Prophetam excitabit deus de fratribus vestris;
> Omnis anima, que non audierit prophetam illum,
> externimabitur de populo suo;
> Nemo propheta sine honore nisi in patriâ suâ.

which is an almost straightforward repetition of this prophet's speech in the Sermo. The first three lines go back ultimately to (Vulg.) Deuteronomy 18: 15, 18-9 and (Vulg.) Acts 3:22-3, whereas the fourth one is from (Vulg.) Matthew 13:57. Translated, they are found in Moses' speech in stanzas 2, 3 and 5. His speech is directed to the people of Israel and is basically meant to be full of the joy and relief which the Redemption will bring:

> herkyn to me! I will you tell
> Tythyngis farly goode;
> (ll. 2-3)

Redemption, necessary because of Adam's sin, will be brought about by God's prophet (Christ) who will save from hell all those who believe in him.

David's opening speech at l. 90 "Omnes reges adorabunt eum, omnes gentes servient ei" is also found in the Sermo although it goes back ultimately to (Vulg.) Psalms 71:11. As with Moses' speech this Latin quote is translated in his speech (ll. 127-8). This is also the case with his second Latin quote "Ostende nobis domine misericordiam tuam, et salutare tuum da nobis" (after l. 150) which is translated in lines 151 and 155. This quote from (Vulg.) Psalms 84:8 does not appear in the Sermo, but the entire psalm in which it occurs is frequently found in association with the Advent or Christmas liturgy.[66] David's prophecy, which may have been chanted,[67] is an exhortation to moderate temporal merriment and to wait and think of Him who will come to save what has been lost. This is the prospect which the people will have to envisage while in hell, waiting for His arrival.

David's prophecy about Christ's First Coming is supplemented by the Sibyl's which deals with the Second Coming. As with the two previous prophets, her introduction, the first three lines of her Latin acrostic, is found in the Sermo. The gist of these lines

appears in translation in lines 172, 175, and 178. In stanzas 31-5, passages little more than a medieval English translation of the Sibyl's Latin prophecy, she depicts a götterdämmerung which according to an earlier remark should not be regarded as something frightful, but as "...tythyngis glad" (l. 163); it is a transitional stage to achieve something better and higher. She focuses more on the meaning of Christ's Judgment and the relief it brings from earthly misery than on the dreadful signs which usher in the final moments. This, however, is a shrewd educational manoeuvre. Like Moses she brings the people into the proper joyful and expectant mood by reassuring them that the prophecy is only agreeable to those who live according to God's law. Violators face permanent residence in hell. So, by alternating reassurance with threat the people are urged to convert to the right life. In this respect, however, it does not really matter whether they are Israelites, as Moses entitles them, or a medieval audience. God's redemption is for all people of all ages without exception.

Daniel's introductory line "Cum venerit sanctus sanctorum cessabit vnctio vestra" is also found in the Sermo.[68] After a brief summing up why God should send his Son, he prophesies that He shall be born to "...saue all that are forlorne,/Euermore withoutten end" (ll. 233-4). After these lines the text breaks off and nothing more can be said of his speech.

The relevance of the prophets' play to a medieval audience could easily have been emphasized by gesticulation. For example, at two points in the play this could have enforced the speeches' contemporary importance. In l. 91 David's address to "...al that here may," is ambiguous in that it may refer to both Moses' audience, the Israelites, and the medieval audience which is actually listening.[69] To annul the ambiguity the speaker would only have needed to make an all-embracing gesture to the audience to make himself understood.

Similarly, the Sibyl could easily have pointed at several individuals in the audience to make her message count for "...ilk a man" (l. 211).

Although the four prophets appear in the Sermo, it is by no means certain that the author had direct knowledge of it. Since Wakefield belonged to the York diocese, the author may have known an earlier and slightly more elaborate version of the York Breviary (1493)[70] in the sense that if he had used this version it might explain Moses' lengthier prophecy in the play and the appearance of the Sibyl. Moses' introductory speech hardly differs from the one in the Sermo, and neither does David's. The Latin quotations of the Sibyl and Daniel appear verbatim in the Sermo, whereas the "Ostende nobis" verse (after l. 150) has no relation with the Sermo at all, but frequently appears in breviaries in an Advent or Christmas context.[71] Since both the prophets and the "Ostende nobis" verse appear in the breviaries of York and Sarum (see nn. 28, 66) it is plausible to suggest that the Towneley author may have used a breviary as his source in which he could have found all his material conveniently together.[72] As we shall see below, there is an additional reason for suggesting that a breviary may have been used.

The close relationship between the prophets and Advent or Christmas is further borne out by the mention of prophets in the two shepherds' plays. Of the thirteen prophets of the Sermo, twelve appear in the first shepherds' play (XII, ll. 341-87), the thirteenth prophet being Elijah (l. 377) instead of Simeon. The significance of this substitution is rather obscure as Elijah, although twice mentioned in the Sermo,[73] is not associated with any prophecy in either the Sermo or the play. Yet he was a famous prophet because of his contest with the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18) and two stories of him seem to prefigure Christ's Resurrection and Ascension - his raising to life of the widow's son (1 Kings 17:23) and his own ascension (2 Kings 2:11). Either of these could be taken

as prophecies "of fact" rather than "of word."[74] Elijah's role as either prefiguring Christ or precursor of Him is also suggested by his appearance in the Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36). From Gregory the Great's Homiliarum in Evangelia[75] we learn that as John the Baptist comes before the first Advent, Elijah comes before the second (Doomsday; Mal. 4:5).[76] St. John, according to the homily, is not only the new Elijah, but also Elijah in spirit (Luke 1:17). The Wakefield author may have known this homily either directly or indirectly as it appears in abbreviated form in the York Breviary and in a more elaborate form in the Sarum Breviary. It is perhaps significant that in both breviaries this homily immediately follows their prose rendition of the Sermo.[77] So if the dramatist had used a similar breviary he would have found all his material in one source.

To resume, the two shepherds' plays have between them two different prophecies of Isaiah, firstly, "Exiet virga/De radice iesse" (XII, ll. 348-9) a prophecy not found in the Sermo, but as "Egredietur..." in, for example, the two breviaries mentioned above,[78] secondly, "Citè [Ecce] virgo/Concipiet..." (XIII, ll. 681-2). These two prophecies are also found in the Adam play, the Ludus Coventriae and the York Play (see above pp.145 n.53, 148, 150 n.61) which indicates that it was commonplace to include them although the dramatist might have found them in a breviary. Virgil's prophecy "Iam noua progenies celo demittitur alto" (XII, l. 387) which is also found in the Sermo has been expanded with a line from the Eclogue: "Iam rediet virgo, redeunt saturnia regna" (XII, l. 387) which in the poem immediately precedes the "Iam noua" line.[79] This line is not found in the Sermo nor in any of its derivatives discussed above and may mean that the dramatist found it in his source, yet it may also reflect his personal acquaintance with Virgil's work since he was well-known in the Middle Ages.[80] From the above it will be clear

that the dramatist stays in nearly all respects very close to the Sermo. Although the possibility of a direct knowledge of the Sermo with an infusion of details from other sources may never be discarded, it seems more likely that he used an intermediate source, such as a breviary, in which he might have found all the necessary material.

From the mention of the prophets, especially in the first shepherds' play, it seems to follow that the audience was familiar with the concept underlying the prophets' play. Of the thirteen prophets listed in play XII only seven-Moses, Daniel, David, Sibyl, Isaiah, Nebuchadnezzar and Virgil-have been furnished with a prophecy in either this play or in play VII. The prophecies of Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Elijah, Elizabeth, Zacharias and John the Baptist are all casually alluded to, suggesting that the dramatist assumes the audience's familiarity with them, or else that further examples could be given but do not matter individually. In order for the allusions to be comprehensible the author must have had a limited number of statements in mind which he knew his audience was familiar with such as the allusion to Elijah in the York Breviary discussed above.[81] Elizabeth and Zacharias have no joint statement in the cycle as they have in the Sermo,[82] but the reference to Elizabeth might be clear to the audience as she paraphrases in play XI Salutacio Elezabeth (ll. 31-42) her Biblical/Sermo statement to Mary. The allusion to St John (XII, l. 380) is an accidental prefiguring of his appearance as a character in play XIX Johannes Baptista, consequent upon the Ordo Prophetarum preceding the Nativity which in turn must precede the play of John the Baptist. In play XIX St John repeats not only his Biblical/Sermo statement of being unworthy to untie Christ's shoe (ll. 49-50), but also paraphrases (ll. 27-8) his Sermo statement about the "Agnus Dei" and acknowledges (ll. 125-6), as in the Sermo, that he is the Lord's servant. Since

the allusion to St John's prophecy is only by coincidence anticipatory of his appearance in play XIX, I am inclined to believe that it refers to his prophecy as belonging to that small body of statements known to the audience as suggested above. In both Elizabeth's and John's case common knowledge of their prophecies may come from the Bible, but since both are found in a context which is very close to the Sermo, it is probably a reference to their prophecies in the Sermo-based text. At any rate, comprehension of all allusions would be greatly enhanced if the audience was familiar with the prophecies as found in the Sermo, or in our case, a Sermo-based text. Additional evidence for a Sermo-based text may perhaps be obtained from the fact that apart from Elijah no prophets are introduced either in addition to the original thirteen of the Sermo or as substitutes for them, as in the continental examples discussed above. In other words, the author seems to be a traditionalist who stays very close to his source.

Comparing play VII with its ultimate source the Sermo we notice that the static character of the latter is preserved as the prophets still reiterate in turn their call for repentance. Despite the fact that the play is incomplete it looks as if only a limited number of prophets was presented (but see n. 65) probably to make the performance crisper. Obviously, impersonation and expansion of the text contributed to this; impersonation with its direct admonition accounting for the homily-like adresses. The intention is still to undermine psychologically the people's resistance to conversion and make them more receptive to the Christian religion, but the focus has shifted from the Jews, and earlier on the pagans, to a medieval audience. The emphasis on conversion is no longer concentrated on adopting a new religion, but on adopting and maintaining a new, moral, style of life within the Christian religion.

This is also the meaning of the cycle in general, to stage the whole Christian Salvation history with its ups and downs for an audience which is used to the all-pervading influence of the Church and which, when gone astray, is set an example by the cycle as a whole as to what kind of results a devious life leads. At the same time the cycle indicates the road to Salvation. So, the prophets' play is essentially a miniature cycle play. It looks back on how sin originated with Adam and Eve, and it looks forward to the Judge and Redeemer. Man lives between these two extremes, his salvation depends on his choice and is therefore a challenge.

Of the several MSS of the Chester cycle, only MS. Harley 2124 printed in appendix I B and dated 1607, contains a procession of prophets.[83] The ten commandments are not read out by Moses as in Towneley, but by God.[84] Moses' explanatory speech on the commandments preceeds the Balak - Balaam argument which is immediately followed by prophetic forecasts about Christ's Incarnation (Balaam, Isaiah, Ezekiel), Passion (Jeremiah), Resurrection (Jonah), Ascension (David), Sending of the Holy Ghost (Joel) and the significance of Bethlehem (Micah).[85] Except for Isaiah's, each prophecy is preceded by a quote from the Vulgate which is them paraphrased in English. The procession of the prophets is situated between Balak's recalcitrance and his ultimate recognition of God's omnipotence and the play focuses therefore automatically on Balak's resignation.

The inclusion of a number of prophets indicates that the author of MS. Harley 2124 was familiar with the concept of a prophets' play although it is difficult to determine his source. If he relied, quite apart from his own inventiveness, on a single source as the backbone for his prophets' play, then this is not likely to have been the Sermo for although this would explain the appearance of Isaiah, Jeremiah and David, Isaiah has no prophecy while the other

two are accompanied by prophecies which are not their original ones. Conversely, the prophets Balaam, Ezekiel, Jonah, Joel and Micah are traditionally associated with the Ordo Prophetarum, they all appear in the Rouen Festum Asinorum, but do not appear in the Sermo. It is therefore probable that he used a source which goes back ultimately to the Sermo. The author's faithfulness to his source is as impossible to assess as the amount of creativity he brought towards presenting the prophets' play in the manner discussed above. His awareness of the tediousness of presenting more prophets than he has already enumerated seems obvious: "Hoe prophetes, lordinges, we might play,/ but yt wold tary much the daye." (ll. 409-10). This line, however, seems to be a mere paraphrase of the Sermo in which we read: "Quod si velim ex Lege et ex Prophetis omnia quae de Christo dicta sunt colligere facilius me tempus quam copia deserit." (see p. 143 and n. 46 above). An expositor who has elucidated the prophetic messages provides in his concluding speech the connection between the prophets' play and the Nativity (VI) in which the theme of conversion is continued.

The Sibyl who appears in play VI is not the Erythraean one usually associated with the "Judicii Signum", but the Tiburtine one. This Sibyl does not concentrate on Christ's second Advent, but on his first. Her role is to foretell Christ's birth, to disprove Emperor Octavian's bragging claim that he is the ruler of the world (ll. 195-6). Octavian's conversion as the consequence of some miracle in the sky to which the Sibyl draws his attention (ll. 644-58) is in keeping with a widespread medieval legend.[86] According to this legend the emperor consults the Sibyl to discover if there is anyone more powerful than him. The Sibyl points at the sky where Mary appears with Christ on her arm. A voice descends saying "...haec est ara coeli" which instantly converts the emperor. After this miracle

a church is called "Sancta Maria Ara Coeli." This legend was popularised in England by the Legenda Aurea, Polychronicon and the Stanzaic Life of Christ. In 1387 John Trevisa finished his English translation of the Polychronicon which had also been translated by an unknown scribe of the fifteenth century in MS. Harley 2261.[87] A prior of Lilleshall, Shropshire, John Mirk, familiar with de Voragine and Higden, includes the legend in a sermon-like homily "De Nativitate Domini Nostri Ihesu Christi et Eius Solempnitate" in his Festial.[88]

Chester's dramatization of the Octavian legend is not new as it was treated much earlier in a similar way in France and Spain.[89] That the Sibyl, whether Erythraean or Tiburtine, was well-known on the continent is further underscored by the many pictorial representations that have survived.[90] Yet as far as England is concerned pictorial evidence seems rather scarce. C. de Clercq states: "En Grande Bretagne la situation est toute différente de celle du continent. Nous n'y connaissons pas de représentation de sibylles avant la réforme protestante,"[91] but overlooks the Devonshire rood screens at Ugborough (c. 1525), Heavitree (Exeter), Bradninch, Ipplepen (c. 1450) and the one at Coughton, Warwickshire, which depict between one and twelve Sibyls.[92] This scanty late medieval evidence appears to be limited to the west country, or in the case of Coughton the Midlands, and one feels inclined to suppose that more representations may at one time have existed. The relatively late erection of these screens and a more widespread popularity of Sibylline depictions in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century does not necessarily contradict this assumption as it is possible that due to the Reformation few examples survive of what was once popular. The absence of early examples, however, seems significant. The little evidence we have would suggest an introduction of the Sibyl into

Church art towards the end of the fifteenth century, during the heyday of the mystery cycles, and that subsequently her popularity increased to such an extent that she is eventually found devoid of Church or play content as domestic decoration where iconoclastic religious views did not affect her. So although it is difficult to establish whether a partially illiterate play-watching audience such as Towneley's could have known the Sibyl through pictorial representations this may nevertheless have been the case. At any rate, they will have been familiar with her through the plays and other forms of religious instruction such as Mirk's sermon mentioned above.

Geoffrey of Monmouth may have known something about a Sibylline tradition, for he twice refers to a Sibyl in his Historia Regum Britanniae; but both references are vague, to unidentified Sibyls and have no apparent religious connection.[93] If the popularity of names is anything to go by then the "...prominence of Sibylla as a Christian name about Geoffrey's time..."[94] may show a certain knowledge or interest in Sibylline matters. In any case, one of the oldest MSS to attest knowledge of the Sibylline predictions is the twelfth century MS. Cotton Vespasian B xxv which includes the Sibylline prophecy in twenty-seven hexameters. The popularity of this prophecy is further suggested by eight MSS, ranging from the twelfth-fourteenth century, which all have "...the same text as that in Vespasian B xxv."[95] Other MSS. such as MS. Royal 1 A XVII contain the prophecy by itself. The fact that all are written in Latin suggests a popularity in clerical and religious circles.

Written in the vernacular for the "...laud and Inglishman" ("the unlearned English") in the first half of the fourteenth century, the Cursor Mundi includes two accounts of Sibyls. The first one is found in its account of the Judges of Israel where four Sibyls are mentioned: the Persian, Libyan, Delphian and Babylonian.[96] Unlike

the Erythraean or Tiburtine Sibyls mentioned above, these serve no educational purpose and are mainly included for time-reference. Since no further explanation of the Sibyls is given it seems that the matter-of-course mention assumes either knowledge on the part of the reader and/or audience to whom it was read, or that the writer tries to mask the fact that he himself knew nothing more about them. The second account is more interesting. It is found in the part of the Cursor Mundi dealing with the legend of the Holy Rood. This legend traces the history of the Cross before the Crucifixion and narrates how at one stage, in the days of King Solomon, the Jews used it, when still a tree, as a bridge over a brook. One day a Sibyl walks across barefooted, delivering a prophecy about Doomsday:

> And prophecies þer-of sco tald,
> And namlikes o domes-dai,
> Hu all þis werld sal wite awai[97]

Although the Sibyl is unspecified, we may perhaps infer from her association with Doomsday that she is the Erythraean one normally associated with this prophecy. Several manuscript versions of the Northern Passion, written for the religious instruction of the laity,[98] also include the Holy Rood legend and record nearly similar prophecies to the one in the Cursor Mundi. Of these MSS. only MS. Cambridge Gg 5.31 is explicit about the Sibyl's prophecy:

> Scho the Sibyl...
> ...went lawely to þe bryg onone
> In prophetes voice sayand ful mekely
> Lord ihesu of me þou haf mercy
> Iudicii signum tellus sudor madescet etcetera[99]

for in the last line of the quote we recognize the first line of her Latin acrostic verses.

From the wealth of references to the Sibyl we may infer that she must have been a rather powerful, influential and well-known person. Originally not intrinsically related to the Christian religion she became an important part of it as the combination of

her hell-fire and damnation oration with the biblical prophets not only strengthened the Church's argument, but also reinforced the testimony of the other prophets. Inclusion of the Sibyl in at least two of the extant cycles of mystery plays would seem a concrete reflection of the dissemination and popularity which she enjoyed in the Middle Ages. Since the medieval population lived in constant fear of damnation, the Sibyl's visual description of Doomsday delivered on stage may have evoked an emotional public response. It is this subjective reaction which the entire cycle tried to arouse in educating and motivating the audience to lead a Christian life.

Footnotes to Chapter Five

1. PL 42, cols. 1117-30. The sibyl is first mentioned in ch. XVI, col. 1126. The most relevant parts of this sermon for our discussion are chs. XI-XVI which will be referred to as Sermo. The Sermo is nowadays attributed to Quodvultdeus, bishop of Carthage, see R.B. Donovan, The Liturgical Drama in Medieval Spain, Studies and Texts 4 (1958) p. 17, n. 34 and p. 165, hereafter cited as LDMS.

2. For the references to Heraclitus see parallel tr. "The Oracles at Delphi no Longer Given in Verse (De Pythiae Oraculis)," Plutarch's Moralia, tr. F.C. Babbitt, The Loeb Classical Library, 5, 272-3 § 6. On Plato see Justin Martyr, Cohortatio ad Graecos, PG 6, ch. 37, cols. 307-8. The Greek is only known to me in tr. Justin Martyr, Hortatory Address to the Greeks, eds. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, The Ante-Nicene Fathers, I, ch. XXXVII, 289.

3. Lactantius quotes Varro in his Divinarium Institutionem, PL 6, bk. I, ch. VI, cols. 138-48. The ten Sibyls are: The Persian, Libyan, Delphian, Cimmerian, Erythraean, Samian, Cumaean, Hellespontian, Phrygian and Tiburtine. Other authorities mention far fewer Sibyls, see the authors and works cited by F. Piper, Mythologie der Christlichen Kunst, I, 472-83.

4. W. Warde Fowler in "The Child of the Poem," Virgil's Messianic Eclogue, eds. J.B. Mayor et al., pp. 79-85 argues in favour of a son (never born) to Octavianus and Scribonia. Future refs. are to this edn. It is likely that as a result of this assumed prophecy of Christ Virgil was promoted to the ranks of the Biblical prophets of Christ's Birth. This would explain his appearance in the Sermo and several prophets' plays, see D. Comparetti, Vergil in the Middle Ages, pp. 99-102.

5. The Greek text is available in Die Oracula Sibyllina, ed. Joh. Geffcken. The oracles are only known to me in an English tr. The Sibylline Oracles, tr. M.S. Terry. All refs. are to these two edns.

6. Oracula Sib, ed. Geffcken, pp. 153-7, ll. 217-50. The "CH" in "CHREISTOS" and the "TH" in "THEOU" count as one character in Greek thus accounting for 34 lines and not 36. The general sense of the acrostic is shown in Sib. Oracles, tr. Terry, pp. 171-3. ll 284-330, here reproduced in app. III.

7. Hortatory Adress, p. 288.

8. Div. Inst, PL 6, bk. I, ch. VI, col. 146: "Omnes igitur hae Sibyllae unum Deum praedicant." For an English tr. see The Works of Lactantius, eds. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, Ante-Nicene Christian Library 21, I, 17.

9. Constantini Oratio ad Sanctorum Coetum, PG 20, chs. XVIII-XIX, cols. 1285-94. The Greek version is only known to me in an English tr. Eusebius, The Oration of Constantine, eds. H. Wace and Ph. Schaff, A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, NS I, 574-6. The virgillian quotes are from Virgil's Mess. Ecl. ed. Mayor et al, p. 2, ll. 6-7.

10. PL 41, col. 579. English tr. Augustine, The City of God, ed. M. Dods, II, 242-3, here reproduced in app. IV, hereafter cited as Dods.

11. PL 41, col. 580. Dods, II, 243 "... this sibyl, whether she is the Erythraean, or ... the Cumaean,..."

12. PL 41, col. 305. Dods, I, p. 421 "...Saviour of whom this verse speaks."

13. See K. Young, The Drama of the Medieval Church, II, 125 (hereafter cited as DMC) and my comment in n. 1 above.

14. Both quotations are from PL 42, ch. XI, col. 1123. "How long do you keep our souls in suspense? If you are Christ, tell us openly." "You, I say, I summon, O Jews, who until the present day deny the Son of God...You, also, not acknowledging the Saviour who worked salvation in the midst of your land,..."

15. Apart from the fact that this would be a natural thing to do we must take into consideration that it may also have been traditional to do so as Fathers like Augustine grew up in an educational system based on the classical principles of rhetorical argument. As a typical example of a classical treatise on rhetoric, Quintilian's Institutionis Oratoriae, tr. H.E. Butler, The Loeb Classical Library, Vol. IV, bk. XI, 154-349 holds that "vocis flexus" ("voice alternation") is an important oratory device to avoid monotony and keep the audience's attention alive. For a more general discussion see e.g., M. Fabii Quintiliani, Institutionis Oratoriae: Liber I, ed. F.H. Colson, pp. ix-lxxxix; M. Testard, "Cicéron dans la Formation de Saint Augustin," Saint Augustin et Cicéron, pp. 1-352; R.D. Sider, Ancient Rhetoric and the Art of Tertullian.

16. PL 42, ch. XV, col. 1125. "This is sufficient for you, oh Jews, sufficient for you so great proof."

17. PL 42, ch. XV, col. 1126. Virgil's Mess. Ecl., ed. Mayor et al, p. 2, l. 7. Virgil, although quoted, is not mentioned by name. He is merely referred to as "poeta facundissimus," "the most eloquent poet."

18. E. de Coussemaker, Histoire de l'Harmonie au Moyen Age, pls. IV-VI reproduces facsimiles of MSS. B.N. 1154 (Limoges) and B.N. 2832 (Lyon) which are the oldest MSS of the Sibylline poem with musical annotation. Although MS. B.N. 1154 dates from the tenth century, the author assigns both of them to the ninth, the former on the basis of musical composition. See also Bibliothèque Nationale Catalogue Général des Manuscrits Latins, I, 421-2 and III 128-32 resp.

19. This is the case in a mid-C14 MS. from Palma where six clerics sing the Sibylline verses alternating two by two while the choir sings the refrain. See Donovan, LDMS, pp. 120-1. K. Young, "Ordo Prophetarum," Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, 20 (1921) 12-4 prints an abbreviated lectio from a C14 breviary from Carcassonne. Like MS. B.N. 1154 (Limoges) the Sibylline poem has a recurring refrain "Iudicii," although there is no musical accompaniment.

All we can infer in this case is that some form of role distribution of prophecy and refrain was practised. Both examples are younger than Limoges but may well be continuations of much older traditions.

20. Coussemaker, Histoire, pls. XVIII-XXIII repreduces MS. B.N. 1139 which contains the entire sermon with musical notation. Young, DMC, II, 138-42 reproduces the text. See also S. Corbin, "Le Cantus Sibyllae," Revue de Musicologie 34 (1952) 1-10. Comparetti, Vergil in the M. Ages, p. 309, n. 2 remarks that "Already in the 5th century the versos of the Sibyl were recited in churches on Christmas Day." He does not substantiate this but refers to É.du Méril, Origines Latines du Théâtre Moderne, p. 185, n. 2 who merely states without mentioning sources, "Dès le Ve siècle, on récitait dans les églises, le jour de la Nativité, les vers attribués à la Sibylle d' Érythrée."

21. Young "Ordo," pp. 33-6 lists the textual differences between the Sermo and the Limoges text. For a more comprehensive list including MSS from Rouen, Tours (= Mystère d' Adam, the Mystère itself almost certainly comes from England: Le Mystère d' Adam, ed. P. Studer, pp. xxxiv, lvi; future references are to this edn.), Laon and Munich (= Benediktbeuern, but see n. 51 below) see A. Watson, The Early Iconography of the Tree of Jesse, app. II, pp. 151-61.

22. Young, DMC, II, 138-42.

23. Young, DMC, II, 144.

24. PL. 78, resp. cols. 643, 645; 725-36.

25. Corbin, Cantus Sibyllae, p. 9.

26. See resp. PL 42, ch. XI col. 1123; PL 78, cols. 643, 645; col. 730 and Young, DMC, II, 6-17. See also The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle, ed. A.C. Cawley, p. 113 n. to ll. 680-2. Note that Isa. prophecy in the Sermo is closer to (Vulg.) Matt. 1:23 than to (Vulg.) Isa. 7:14 because of the inclusion of "in utero". This, however, has no implications for the discussion since both prophecies are frequently cited in the same breath, see Lib. Antiph, PL 78, col. 643.

27. Th. P. Campbell, "The Prophets' Pageants in the English Mystery Cycles," RORD, 17 (1974) 107-21.

28. Young, DMC, II, 131 and "Ordo," pp. 12-5. In England the Sermo is found as the fourth, fifth, and sixth lectio in the second nocturn of Matins of the fourth Sunday of Advent in the Breviarium ad Usum Insignis Ecclesie Eboracensis, Surtees Soc., 71, I, cols. 60-1 (hereafter called York Breviary). It is, however, an abbreviated version with part of the original introduction and the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Moses and David. The Breviarium ad Usum Insignis Ecclesiae Sarum, eds. F. Proctor and C. Wordsworth (hereafter called Sarum Breviary) I, cols. cxxxv-cxliii contains the entire Sermo as the fourth, fifth and sixth lectio of the second nocturn of Matins of the fourth Sunday of Advent. The Sermo was also

known in Scotland. The Breviarium Aberdonense (pars hyemalis, hereafter called Aberdeen Breviary) contains a shortened version of it with only three prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel as the fourth, fifth and sixth lectio of the second nocturn of the fourth Sunday of Advent.

29. The text of this lectio was first printed by M. Sepet, "Les Prophètes du Christ: Étude sur les Origines du Théâtre au Moyen Age," Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes, 28 (1867) 3-8. For discussion see pp. 1-27, 211-64. The text has also been printed by Young, "Ordo," pp. 5-10 and DMC, II, 126-31.

30. Donovan, LDMS pp. 46-7, 64-5, 110-5, 121-3 mentions a number of Spanish cases, ranging from the 14th to 16th century, in which the Sibylline prophecy was sung even if the Sexmo was not read, chanted or performed.

31. Sepet, "Prophètes," p. 13, Young, "Ordo," pp. 5-10.

32. Sepet, "Prophètes," p. 13.

33. Young observes, DMC, II, 133 n. 1, that Sepet already early in his discussion ("Prophètes," p. 9) seems to suggest that dialogue took place in the Arles lectio. Sepet relinquishes this view on p. 23.

34. Sepet, "Prophètes," p. 23. Young, DMC, II, 133 n. 1, also thinks that "inquit" is conclusive proof against a dialogue between separate speakers. Young's comment, "Ordo," p. 18 n. 5, on the marginal signs of the Arles MS is: "Although they are undoubtedly significant as indicating divisions in the content of the lectio, they in no way prove that the several prophecies were assigned to separate speakers."

35. Young, DMC, II, 126.

36. I have used the text as printed in D. Bevington's parallel Latin-English tr. in Medieval Drama, p. 29:

> The consolation of the angelic voice: [rubric]
>
> He is not here, he has risen as he had predicted; go, announce that he has risen, saying:
>
> The song of the holy women to all the clergy: [rubric]
>
> Alleluia, the Lord has risen,...
> (my italics)

37. Donovan, LDMS pp. 111, 121 and 146 resp. For a partial summary of his findings see p. 155. The younger date of some of the texts with respect to Arles need not hamper the argument below, since the texts may reflect an older tradition.

38. Donovan, LDMS pp. 147-54 reprints the sixteenth century Valencian text of which a few peculiarities will be noted. Jeremiah who in the Sexmo (col. 1123) speaks Baruch's prophecy (Vulg. 3:38) has been replaced by Baruch. St Peter is introduced.

Virgil has not been given a rubric and is only alluded to by the lector. The Sibylline verses are in Spanish, with a refrain probably indicating chant, and are much shorter than the original Latin ones. The Sibyl was definitely impersonated as she was dressed "coma dona" ("as a woman").

39. This is also suggested by the marginal inscriptions of two MSS of the C12 and C13 to which Young has drawn attention (DMC, II 126 n. 5 cont. from p. 125 and nn. to pp. 126-30). The C12 MS version of the Sermo repeats the names of the prophets in the margin opposite their names in the text. Although these rubrics are according to Young of the C15, they suggest that they may have served as cues. The C13 version encircles all prophecies with red lines, except Habakkuk's second prophecy (p. 128) and the Sibylline one, numbering only the first testimony of each prophet, except the Virgillian quote and the Sibylline prophecy, in the margin. Since the marginal numerals seem to indicate divisions in the text, it is possible to infer that, despite the word "inquit" in the responses, dialogue took place in the form of a summons part spoken by a lector and a response part spoken by different speakers.

40. Donovan, LDMS, p. 155.

41. Young, DMC, II 133-7. The text is from 1594, but may have had a long tradition.

42. Young, DMC, II, 134.

43. Young, DMC, II, 145-50.

44. "The Sibyl: in female dress, bald, ivy crowned (and with an expression) most resembling insanity."

45. E.K. Chambers, The Mediaeval Stage, II, 57: Young, DMC, II, 169-70 and "Ordo," p. 70 and n. 154 agrees with Chambers that the idea of the inclusion of the ass may have been borrowed from the Feast of Fools to divert the attention of the people from ribald festivities to religious celebrations. See also Chambers, Med. Stage, I, 332.

46. The Rouen text is printed by Young, DMC, II, 154-65. For the quote see PL 42, ch. XIII, col. 1125, Young, DMC, II, 167. "If I were to collect out of the Law and the Prophets all the things that have been said about Christ, time would easier desert me than the abundance of these things."

47. Young, DMC, II, 165. "Crowned and dressed in female attire."

48. See the ordinaria as printed by Donovan LDMS, pp. 111, 121.

49. Young, DMC, II, resp. 154 n. 1; 138 n. 1, 145 n. 1.

50. These prophets are: Aaron, Samuel, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah (Abdias), Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah (Sophonias), Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. See also Watson, Early Iconography, app. I, p. 148.

51. Most critics date the "play of Adam" between 1125-1175. See Mystère ed. Studer, p. lvi and The Play of Adam, ed.

C.C. Odenkirchen. For the Benediktbeuern play see Young, DMC, II, 172-90 and Carmina Burana, eds. A. Hilka and O. Schumann, 1:3, no. 227, pp. 86-104 to which all references are made. The latter point out, pp. XI-XII, that the CB was probably written for Bishop Karl (1218-31) or Bishop Heinrich (1232-43) of Seckau. See also: Thirty Poems from the Carmina Burana, ed. P.G. Walsh, p. 1: "Around 1230 the manuscript was written in the southern border region of the Bavarian-speaking area not far from Italian influence, perhaps Carinthia, perhaps in Tyrol .... Benediktbeuern must definitely be abandoned as its place of origin." For the sake of convenience the name Benediktbeuern will be maintained.

52. If the play is, as is generally assumed, an outdoor play then "in choro" presents problems if we take it to mean "in the choir" for we may doubt if an audience outside the church would have heard the lectio. Perhaps we may interpret it as "in choral manner" which would resolve the ambiguity of place in the sense that the lectio could have been read in chorus outside the church. A similar interpretation of "in choro" is suggested by its context in Puer Nobis Nascitur a carol in a C15 MS. of Trier: "Cum cantibus in choro,...." ("with the songs in choral manner"), The Oxford Book of Carols, ed. P. Dearmer et al, p. 201. L.R. Muir, Liturgy and Drama in the Anglo-Norman Adam, pp. 25-9, discusses the problem and the suggested interpretations.

53. Notice that Isa. has two prophecies in this play. On p. 45 l. 916 he quotes the same prophecy from Isa. 7:14 and Matt. 1:23, but on p. 43 after l. 876 he quotes from Isa. 11:1-2. The fact that OT readings for Advent and Christmas were commonly taken from the Book of Isa. may account for this juxtaposition. See Campbell, "Prophets' Pageants," p. 108. The juxtaposition is also found in Gregory the Great's Liber Responsalis, PL 78, cols. 730-1.

54. Muir, Lit. and Dr. in the Anglo-Norman Adam, 13, 112; Mystère, ed. Studer, pp. xix-xxi.

55. The messages of the five prophets are according to the rubrics spoken or sung, but even if the text is spoken according to the rubrics it is provided with musical notation, see Young, DMC, II, 172, n. 3. See CB, eds. Hilka and Schumann, pp. 102-4 on the parts of the text which were sung and also A. Machabey, "Remarques sur les Mélodies Goliardiques," Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale: Xe-XIIe Siècles, 7 (1964) 277.

56. CB, eds. Hilka and Schumann, p. 103 and A. Wilmart, "Poèmes de Gautier de Châtillon dans un Manuscrit de Charleville," Revue Benedictine, 49 (1937) 159-60 for text.

57. For a relation between this cycle and the pictorial arts see J.K. Bonnell, "The Source in Art of the So-called Prophets' Play in the Hegge Collection," PMLA, 29 (1914) 327-40; for the relation prophet drama and tree of Jesse see Watson, Early Iconograpy.

58. P. 78, cols. 730, 731 resp.

59. Watson, Early Iconography, p. 36

60. On Balaam and his association with Christmas see n. 85 below.

61. As in the Adam play and the LC, Isaiah has two prophecies, one taken from Isa. 7:14, the other from Isa. 11:1.

62. Records Of Early English Drama: York, eds. A.F. Johnston, M. Rogerson, I, 18.

63. REED: York II, 704, "A learned man declaring the sayings of the prophets concerning the future birth of Christ..."

64. REED: York I, 37-8.

65. According to Scripture, Moses received his tables after he had left Egypt, i.e. after he had dealt with the pharaoh. Yet in play VII Moses announces the ten commandments before he has dealt with the pharaoh (play VIII), i.e. while he is still in Egypt. On these grounds play VII should come after play VIII. It must be realised, however, that Moses and his tables appear in Laon, Rouen and in the play of Adam (the tables may be inferred at Chester, play V MS. Harley 2124, app. I B). So Moses reading the ten commandments may be a natural expansion of an older tradition which merely had him carry the tables. To an inquiring mind this suggests that the play may have been misplaced, but the medieval author may not have interpreted it in the same way. Assuming that play VII is misplaced we can explain the blank on both sides of fol. 20 which accounts for the play's incompleteness. That the play had more prophets in its original form is likely. From the facs. edn. The Towneley Cycle: A Facsimile of Huntington MS HM 1, eds. A.C. Cawley and M. Stevens, we learn that apart from fol. 17^{v}, fols. 18^{r-v} and 19^{r} have 36, 37 and 36 lines resp. so that 19^{v} lacks 3 or 4 lines. From the symmetry of the play, Moses has 90 11, David 72, the Sibyl 54 and Daniel 18, it looks as if Daniel should have had 36 lines. Supplementing 19^{v} with 3 lines, one is left with 18-3 = 15 lines of Daniel's speech for 20^{r} (now blank). This leaves at least 36-15 = 21 lines on 20^{r} for another prophecy which, if the proportional reduction is no coincidence, had 18 lines. This point is underscored by the erasure of "Incipit Pharao" on 20^{v} (faintly visible) indicating that when the poet/scribe discovered the misplacement of play VII and had left 20^{r} blank for filling-in at a later stage he may have come to the conclusion that just when he had started "Incipit Pharao" he might do with some more room for the previous play as a result of which he erased it and started 21^{r}.

It is pure conjecture which prophet could have been the incumbent of the "missing 18 lines". M. Stevens who first observed the above mentioned symmetry of the play in "The Missing Parts of the Towneley Cycle," Speculum, 45 (1970) 254-65 suggests Isaiah, for not having appeared in the cycle before he suddenly emerges side by side with Moses and David in Extraccio Animarum, play XXV, who appear in the Proc. Proph. Isaiah's statement "Thus is my poynt proved in hand,/ as I before to fold it kende" (ll. 51-2 my italics) is ambiguous. It may refer to play VII where he was intended to have appeared or it

may refer to the CC. His prophecies, however, are also found in the first and second shepherds' plays: XII, ll. 348-9 and XIII, ll. 681-2 resp. Magnus Herodes, play XVI, contains an allusion to Isa. 7:14 as well, ll. 213-5. Isaiah is also mentioned in play I, Annunciacio, with six other prophets:

> "My prophetys shall be funden leyle;
> As moyses sayd, and Isay
> King Dauid, and Ieromy,
> Abacuk, and daniell,
> Sybyll sage,...."
>
> (ll. 46-50)

Of the seven prophets listed here, four appear in the prophets' play so that it is at least odd to mention seven of them if only four have actually contributed to the cycle, unless, of course, all prophets enumerated have appeared in the cycle before. Apart from Isaiah, then, we have two other prophets, Jeremiah and Habakkuk. The latter two might in that case have occupied 20^{v}.

66. See Lib. Antiph, PL 78, cols. 641-3, and Lib. Resp, PL 78, col. 734, cue words: "Benedixisti Domini." Many examples from medieval breviaries can be given. Only three will be mentioned: Aberdeen Breviary, fol. v^{r} where the verse is chanted; York Breviary, I, cols. 17, 54, where the verse is chanted, col. 79 "Benedixiste Domini" where the entire psalm is chanted; Sarum Breviary, col. clxxviii "Benedixisti Domini" for the entire psalm. Although the breviaries are slightly younger than the Towneley MS. - 1491, 1493 and 1531 resp. - there is no reason to assume that similar breviaries were not known earlier.

67. See l. 104 "shall I now syng you a fytt" and l. 157 "Now haue I songen you a fytt." These lines need not necessarily mean that he was chanting his prophecy. David is traditionally portrayed with a harp which could suggest a minstrel so these phrases may be a characterization of him as a medieval minstrel. Line 91 "herkyn, all, that here may," could be another minstrel tag.

68. The origin of this line is sometimes traced to Daniel 9:24, but it does not occur literally in the Vulgate. "Possibly this non-Vulgate text had its origin from an earlier time than that of the Sermon," Watson, Early Iconography, p. 163.

69. See n. 67 for comment on l. 91.

70. Surtees Soc, 71, I, cols. 60-1. The entire Sermo is found in the Sarum Breviary of which the dramatist may have known an early copy despite the fact that it does not belong to the York diocese. See also n. 28 above.

71. See n. 66 above. The "Ostende nobis" verse is nowadays also found in the introit of Mass and may also have had this position in the Middle Ages although certain preparatory prayers for the introit of Mass did not have a fixed position until the C16, Young DMC, I, 21-2.

72. M. Görlach, The Textual Tradition of the South English Legendary, Leeds Texts and Monographs NS 6, pp. 6-38 shows that breviary texts are also important sources for the South English Legendary.

73. PL 42, ch. XII, col. 1124, and ch. XIII, col. 1124.

74. For the underlying theory see Bede's discussion of "asteismus" in "De Allegoria," De Schematis et Tropis Sacrae Scripturae Liber, PL 90, cols. 184-6.

75. PL 76, no. VII, cols. 1099-1100.

76. This is enacted in the Chester play of Antichrist (XXIII) in which Elijah and Enoch are sent to resist and prove the insignificance of Antichrist's miracles. This play immediately precedes the Judgement play.

77. York Breviary, I, cols. 62-3; Sarum Breviary, cols. cxliv-cxlv. This is also the case in the Aberdeen Breviary in which a shortened version of the homily (fol. xix^{v}) follows the Sermo-rendition. Elijah appears together with other biblical prophets in a Tree of Jesse window of c. 1310-20 in the nave of York Minster and may have been known to the Wakefield author: C. Davidson, D.E. O'Connor, York Art, Early Drama, Art and Music Reference Series, 1 (1978) 33.

78. York Breviary, I, col. 60, Sarum Breviary, col. cxlviii.

79. Cf. parallel tr. Virgil's Mess. Ecl, eds. Mayor et al, pp. 2-3, ll. 6-7; Wakefield Pageants, ed. Cawley, p. 103 n. to verses between ll. 387-8.

80. A second reference to Virgil, and one to Homer, is found in play XVI Magnus Herodes, l. 202. This line, however, is a passing reference to these authors and does not reveal the playwright's intimate knowledge, if any, of works of these authors.

81. See n. 65 for the possibility that Jeremiah and Habakkuk were originally in play VII. Habakkuk's Sermo prophecy, PL 42 ch. XIII, col. 1124, about Christ being found between two animals may be echoed by ll. 303-4: "ye shall fynde hym beforne/ Betwix two bestys."

82. PL 42, ch. XIV col. 1125. Their joint statement (Luke 1:76) is paraphrased by St John himself in play XIX (Iohannes Baptista) ll. 27-9, but need not reflect any Sermo or Sermo-based influence.

83. Play VIII (Magi) contains a series of prophecies which are normally associated with Epiphany ll. 269-345. Of these prophecies Daniel's "Cum venerit sancta sanctorum cessabit unctio vestra," which is normally associated with Advent, must have been borrowed from the Sermo, PL 42 ch. XII, col. 1124, or a Sermo-based text, since this quote is not found in the Bible, but in the Sermo only.

84. It is worth noting that Moses is said to have horns (Chester MS. Harley 2124, l. 45). This detail goes back to Vulg. Exodus 34:29: "Cumque descenderet Moyses de monte Sinai, tenebat duas tabulas testimonii, et ignorabat quod cornuta

esset facies sua ex consortio seymonis Domini." (my italics; "... and did not know that his face was horned..." AV:"... Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone..."). The only other appearance of this description in medieval drama is found in the Rouen Festum Asinorum, Young, DMC, II, 156. Moses was frequently depicted with horns in medieval art: Watson, Early Iconography, pp. 26-7 and Davidson, O'Connor, York Art, p. 27 for reference to Moses with horns in York Minster.

85. Notice that although Balaam and Micah appear in this Advent play, their prophecies are historically associated with Epiphany. On Balaam's association with Epiphany see Young, DMC, II, 152 and the many examples of Officia Stellae printed by him. From his discussion it follows that Advent borrowed Balaam from Epiphany. This is perhaps not surprising for his prophecy is potentially employable in both. The Ass, which did not feature in the Officium Stellae, was introduced in the Advent play and serves as his identifying feature amongst the other prophets, undoubtedly enhancing the spectacle of the otherwise monotonous prophetic recitals. The borrowing suggests that two traditions came to coexist: one with Balaam, his prophecy and ass for the Advent season, and one solely consisting of Balaam's prophecy for Epiphany. The first is found as early as the Adam play and the one from Benediktbeuern. In the LC York and Towneley plays Balaam is only represented by his prophecy (Num. 24:17) which appears either in the shepherds' play or Magi play as a reflection of its use in the Officium Stellae. See LC play 16, ll. 26-9, 38-9; Y. XV ll. 14-5, XVII ll. 159-60, T. XIV ll. 205-10. The Chester cycle seems to combine the two traditions: Balaam, his prophecy and ass, appear before the Nativity; on its own the prophecy is found in play VIII (Magi) ll. 6-8 or alluded to: VIII ll. 50, 83.

Micah's prophecy (Vulg. Matt. 2:6) is also found in numerous versions of the Officium Stellae: Young, DMC, II p. 55 for example. In the Towneley cycle his prophecy is found exclusively in an Epiphany context: XIV ll. 445-9; ll. 219-221. Chester employs it also in its proper place: VIII after l. 310.

86. S.B. Hemingway, English Nativity Plays, pp. xxi and 220-34; F. Piper, Mythology, I, 480-3, H.F. Massmann, Die Kaiserchronik, III, 553-6.

87. Jacobi de Voragine Legenda Aurea, ed. Th. Graesse, 3rd edn, ch. VI, p. 44. The speech of the voice from heaven mentioned above is taken from the Legenda Aurea, Ranulphi Higden Polychronicon, ed. J.R. Lumby, IV, ch. III, pp. 298-300. It is worth noting that Higden came from Chester and that C17 tradition often attributed the cycle to him. It is difficult to evaluate this tradition but it is not impossible for Higden to have had a hand in the origins of the Chester cycle. See the Chester ed. of REED, ed. L.M. Clopper, pp. 3-4, 511. Stanzaic Life of Christ, EETS OS 166, pp. 20-1, ll. 593-644. The tr. of Trevisa and the unknown scribe appear as parallel translations in the Polychronicon ed. mentioned above.

88. Mirk's Festial; EETS ES 96, p. 25. For Mirk's references to Higden and de Voragine see p. 81, l. 33 and p. 252 l. 5. For

an enumeration and description of the MSS: N.F. Blake(in, "The Manuscripts of John Mirk's Festial," Leeds Studies in English, NS, I. (1967) pp. 93-118.

89. Donovan, EDMS, p. 162 refers to an expense account from Barcelona of 1418 which mentions a representation of the Sibyl and the emperor together with the expense for 210 candles needed for the "Ave Coeli." Sometimes the traditions of the two Sibyls appear together as in the Rouen Mystère de l'Incarnation et de la Nativité which according to Donovan, p. 164 was acted in 1474. The Passion de Semur ed. by E. Roy in Le Mystère de la Passion en France du XIVe au XVIe Siècle, also contains two Sibyls, pp. 32, 60, 11. 1615-45 and 2980-95 resp. Roy pp. 81*-2* also refers to the Octavian legend in the Rouen play mentioned above. Higden, Polychronicon, IV, ch. III, p. 299 mixes up the two traditions by putting the words of the Erythraean Sibyl in the mouth of the Tiburtine Sibyl. This seems to be a significant difference between Higden and Chester play VI which cannot therefore in its present form be the work of Higden.

90. Piper, Mythology, I, 483-507. and the following illustrated articles by C. de Clercq: "Quelques Séries Italiennes de Sibylles," Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome, Fasc. XLVIII-XLIX, 1978-1979, pp. 105-27; "Les Sibylles dans des Livres des XVe et XVIe Siècles en Allemagne et en France," Gutenberg-Jahrbuch (1979) pp. 98-119; "Contribution à l'Iconographie des Sibylles, I," Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten-Antwerpen, Jaarboek 1979, pp. 7-65; "Contribution à l'Iconographie des Sibylles, II, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten-Antwerpen, Jaarboek 1980, pp. 7-35; "Quelques Séries de Sibylles hors d'Italie," Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome, Fasc. LI, 1981, pp. 87-116. In this last issue, pp. 112-6, de Clercq summarizes all his descriptions of Sibyls in his five articles in a list of 93 groups of Sibyls and where they can be found. His earliest example, 1022-1023, is found in MS 132 at Monte Cassino abbey, Italy, whereas most others date of the last quarter of the C15 or later.

91. De Clercq, "Sibylles hors d'Italie," pp. 102-3. He lists, p. 114, late C16 and early C17 domestic decorations found at: Cheyney Court, Bishop's Frome, Herefordshire (c. 1615); Chastleton House, Oxon (c. 1620); Alleyn's College, Dulwich (1620); London (c. 1580); Jameson's studio, Aberdeen (c. 1625); Mary Somerville's house, Burntisland near Edinburgh (c. 1621) and Wester Livilands, Stirling (1629). Dr. M. Apted informs me in a letter of August 15th 1982 that there is also a decorated C17 screen at Burton Agnes House, Yorks. See also: Th. Ross, "Notice of Six Paintings on Wood, Representing the Sibyls, Recently found at Wester Livilands, Stirling," Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 33 (1898-1899) 387-403; C.W. Power, "Sibyls of Cheyney Court," Notes and Queries, 4th series, 5 (1870) 243; M.R. Apted, "Two Painted Ceilings from Mary Somerville's House, Burntisland," Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 91 (1957-1958) 144-76.

92. G.E. Keyser, "On the Panel Paintings of Saints on the Devonshire Screens," Archaeologia, 56:1 (1898) 183-222; H.D. Anderson, History and Imagery in British Churches, pp. 132-3. Keyser, p. 204, dates the screens between 1480-1540. He also notes that due to defacement of screens at Berry Pomery, Tor Brian and Wolborough Sibyls cannot be distinguished from saints. For the dates of the Ipplepen and Ugborough screens see N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England: South Devon, pp. 186 and 302 resp.

93. The Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth, ed. A. Griscom, ch. IX, p. 464 l. 11; ch. XII, p. 534, l. 3.

94. J.S.P. Tatlock, The Legendary History of Britain, p. 408.

95. The MSS. are described in Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum, ed. H.L.D. Ward, I, 190-5; Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections, eds. G.F. Warner and J. Gibson, II. Dr. A.I. Doyle, Keeper of Rare Books in the University Library, informs me that when the provenance of the Cottonian or Royal MSS. is not known they are generally assumed to be English.

96. Cursor Mundi, EETS OS 59, 62, II, 404-9, ll. 6999-7052. The quote is from vol. I, EETS OS 57, 99, 101, MS. Cotton Vesp. A iii, p. 22. l. 249.

97. Cursor M., EETS OS 59, 62, II, p. 516, ll. 8966-8, Cotton Vesp. A iii.

98. Northern Passion, EETS OS 147, II, p. 1. The dates of the MSS. are discussed on pp. 9-18. The MSS. are printed in Vol I, EETS OS 145, and in a Supplement, EETS OS 183.

99. N. Passion, EETS OS 145, I, 145, ll. 282-5.

Chapter Six

Suspencio Iude

Although all the cycles include an ointment incident along the lines laid out in John 12:3-6, its relevance for Judas' actions is depicted differently.[1] Ludus Coventriae play 27 ll. 514-21 adheres very closely to the biblical source in that Judas not only considers it "...ryght ylle/To lete þis oynement so spylle..." (ll. 514-5), but also mentions the three hundred pence. Yet he is not so indignant at this waste that he betrays Christ for this reason or for the private financial benefit which he would otherwise have enjoyed. He sells Jesus because he will "...no lenger folwyn his lawe" (l. 611).

Soon after Christ's trial in play 29, one encounters a remorseful Judas in play 30 ll. 229-32:

> I judas haue synyd . and treson haue don
> ffor I haue be-trayd þis rythful blood
> here is 3our mony A-3en All And som
> Ffor sorwe and thowth . I am wax wood.

The result, however, is the same as in Matthew 27:5 where he throws away the money and hangs himself (play 30, rubric after l. 236). This act lands him in hell as the devil declared "I xal to helle for þe to mak redy" (play 27, l. 796). The short moral lesson to be drawn from Judas' behaviour is, according to the banns, to trust "...in godys pete" (l. 371) and not to despair.

In play XIV ll. 289-296 of the Chester cycle, Judas sells Christ in retaliation for being cheated out of "his" money:

> Three hundeth penyes-worth yt [ointment] was
> that hee lett spill in that place.
> Therefore God give me hard grace
> but himselfe shalbe sould
> to the Jewes, or that I sytt,
> for the tenth penye of hit;
> and thus my maister shalbe quytte
> my greefe an hundrethfould.

This reason for Christ's betrayal, although entirely different from the Ludus Coventriae, reflects a widespread medieval tradition. The Bible does not state specifically why it happened, but leaves enough room for anyone who wants to invent a plausible story within the limits set by the Bible narrative. What is more, the Bible even provides all the necessary ingredients: Judas is in charge of the money-bag and a thief at that who occasionally steals from it (John 12:6). Since the price of the ointment was known, three hundred pence (John 12:5), and Christ was sold for thirty pieces of silver (Matt. 26:15) anyone could plausibly have inferred or argued that He was sold for a tenth of the ointment's value. Without specifying the proportional relation between the two, Peter Comestor (c. 1100-c. 1180) links the ointment to the bloodmoney in his Historia Scholastica:

> Illi triginta denarii valebant trecentos usuales, et ita volebat Judas recompensate unguenti perditionem[2]

Later works and collections of saints' lives and legends such as e.g., the Legenda Aurea, South English Legendary, Northern Passion, Southern Passion and the Speculum Sacerdotale[3] make the same connection, adding that Judas betrayed Christ to indemnify himself for the loss of ten percent of the ointment's value. As will be seen below, the York and Towneley dramatists wrote in the same vein. On the basis of the known dependence of the Towneley cycle on the York one it has to be remarked that Towneley may have borrowed the idea from York, but need not have done so in view of its commonplace nature. In contrast with all the other cycles, the Chester cycle does not mention a remorseful and suicide-prone Judas although it is briefly mentioned in Play XXI, l. 28 that he hanged himself.

In the York cycle, play XXVI ll. 127-54, one finds the reason for Christ's betrayal again. Judas is grieved by the loss of his tenth part and resolves to sell his master:

> ... me toned for þe tente parte,-
> þe trewthe to be-holde,-
> That thirty pens of iij hundereth
> So tyte I schulde tyne.
> And for I mysse þis mony
> I morne on þis molde,
> Wherfore for to mischeue
> þis maistir of myne,
> .....
> And selle hym full sone or þat I sitte,
> For therty pens in a knotte knytte.
> (ll. 145-8, 151-2)

However, in play XXXII ll. 127-314 one encounters a remorseful Judas who is held in derision by the high priests for his treachery. Their being adamant in not releasing Christ fills Judas with despair. His only expedient to acquire Jesus' freedom, namely, to attest his own guilt and imply Christ's innocence, falls flat. As a result, Judas is forced to reflect on his abuse of a trusted position. To himself his treacherous act appears so horrific that he does not even wonder if he can make amends. He is of the opinion that he "...thare aske no mercy, for none mon y gete" (l. 302),[4] so he considers suicide and suiting the action to the word he leaves Pilate's hall saying:

> Mi-selffe in haste I schall for-doo,
> And take me nowe vn-to my dede.
> (ll. 314-5)

Through his self-murder, Judas places questionmarks on the nature of his remorse. If he had been truly repentant he would have turned to Christ to seek forgiveness which he would certainly have received. Yet overwhelmed with remorse and convinced of his own vast guilt, he decides to solve the problem of his guilty conscience himself, thus effectually denying God's all-embracing mercy. So Judas' remorse leads away from God to the gallows. In his despair he adds to his

crime of treason that of suicide. Assuredly, such a man who in his despair forgets God is not a true penitent and therefore not worthy of salvation. In other words, Judas' despair is his damnation.

The Towneley cycle seems to have dwelt longer on the Judas episode than any other cycle since Judas is not only mentioned in play XX (Conspiracio) ll. 212-301, but also in a fragmentary survival of ninety-six lines known as the Suspencio Iude (play XXXII). Play XX depicts the already familiar theme of Christ being sold out of revenge for thirty pence. Judas confides to Annas, Caiaphas and Pilate how he "lost" the "tent parte" (l. 274) of the ointment's value which is the reason for his treason. He wants to redress the balance "for onys and ay" (l. 301). Apart from play XXXII, one does not find an emotionally overwhelmed Judas having second thoughts about his deal with the high priests. After the betrayal of his master (ll. 660-3) nothing more is heard of Judas except for a brief allusion to his suicide in play XXV (Extraccio Animarum) where Jesus tells Satan who shall be the permanent residents in hell:

> ... caym that slo abell,
> And all that hastys theym self to hang,
> As dyd Iudas and architophell;
> .....
> And all that will not lere my law,
> (ll. 328-30, 333)[5]

From the last line of this quotation it is evident that Judas did not adhere to one of Christ's most fundamental teachings. It is not immediately clear what this lesson entailed, but this is clarified in play XXVI (Resurreccio Domini) where Jesus addresses the audience or, rather, man in general. Expounding the significance of His life and death. He states:

> If thou [man in general] thy lyfe in syn haue led,
> Mercy to ask be not adred;
> The leste drope I for the bled
> Myght clens the soyn,
> All the syn the warld with in
> If thou had done.
> (ll. 298-303)

Judas' attitude was clearly wrong for He continues:

> I was well wrother with Iudas,
> ffor that he wold not ask me no grace,
> Then I was for his trespas
> That he me sold;
> I was redy to shew mercy,
> Aske none he wold.
> (ll. 304-9)[6]

From this we may deduce that Judas is not damned for his crimes, but for his refusal to ask for mercy. Within the Towneley cycle Cain takes the same attitude after God calls him to account for Abel's murder (play II, Mactacio Abel). In a rather defiant tone he retorts:

> Syn I haue done so mekill syn,
> that I may not thi mercy wyn,
> And thou thus dos me from thi grace,
> I shall hyde me fro thi face;
> ....
> It is no boyte mercy to craue,
> ffor if I do I mom none haue;
> (ll. 358-61; 376-7)

The theological point which the playwright wants to make through Cain and Judas is that man has to change from his erring ways and own up. The basic problem is one of man's unwillingness or reluctance to humble himself and ask for forgiveness. This theme of remission of sins resulting from confession ties in with the Scriptures. In 1 John 1:9, for example, we find "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," which through its wording implies that forgiveness of transgressions is not an act of justice, but an act of mercy. This being the case, mercy cannot be demanded or enforced, but can only be earned by a full acknowledgement. Man, however, rather believes in his own limited power and judgement than in God's omnipotence. Inevitably, this leads, as has been shown, to damnation.

From the discussion above, excluding Towneley XXXII, it follows

that unlike York, Towneley does not explore Judas' character to any great length since it is only towards the very end of the cycle (play XXVI) that one learns something about the intrinsic educational value of the Judas episode. Play XXXII seems to attempt a restoration of this lost opportunity.

The Suspencio Jude which rather obviously deals with Judas' remorse is highly reminiscent of the Greek OEdipus tale. Being pregnant, Judas' mother receives a disastrous prophecy in her dreams which reveals that her unborn child will usher in the destruction of "all Iury" (l. 16). As a result, Judas, once he is born, is laid in a basket cast into the sea and left to the elements. He is rescued, however, by the queen of "skariott" (l. 66, whence his surname) and passed off as the king's own son. Two years later the queen gives birth to her own son... but here the fragment breaks off. It is clear from the outset of the fragment, however, that in a later stage of his life Judas has unwittingly slain his father "ruben" (l. 7) and slept with his mother "Sibaria" (l. 8). He reveals this after having betrayed Christ when he reviews his past life:

> I slew my father, & syn by-lay
> My moder der;
> And falsly, aftur, I can betray
> Myn awn mayster.
> (ll. 3-6)

This version of Judas' life is not warranted by anything in the Bible and reflects, as far as the fragment goes, the dramatist's knowledge of a popular medieval Judas legend. The synopsis is as follows:

> Being pregnant with Judas, his mother dreams that her child will cause the destruction of the Jewish people. To resolve the problem the parents put the newborn baby in a chest and dispose of it in the sea. The baby washes ashore in the isle of Iscariot and is found by the queen who tells the king that the foundling is their newborn heir. After some time

has elapsed, the queen gives birth to her own son. The two boys do not get on very well which culminates in Judas killing his foster-brother. The king is now informed about the real origins of his eldest "son", but before he can take any punitive action Judas has fled. The latter meets Pilate into whose service he enters. In a bid to acquire (= steal) some apples for his new master, Judas kills the owner of the orchard, his unknown father, in a dispute. Pilate has Judas marry the widow (= Judas' natural mother), but on finding out the truth Judas joins Christ's ranks by way of penance. Later he betrays Christ to recover the money of which he feels he has been cheated.

The provenance of the Suspencio Iude is subject to debate since it depends on the date when it was added to the MS. Most critics assign a date of the beginning of the sixteenth century to the fragment without stating the problems involved.[7] On paleographical and codicological grounds play XXXII seems to be older than plays I-XXXI. The Suspencio Iude is the only set of folios (131^{v}-132^{r}) in the MS featuring paragraphmarkers, indicative of an old style, but this style is time and again used in younger MSS.[8] Had the fragment been written on a separate set of folios then we would have been able to deduce whether it was older than the rest or not on the basis of style and whether it had been added rather than inserted. Since the fragment starts on the back of a previous folio it must have been added later and must therefore be younger than the rest of the MS. It is not improbable that although the fragment is younger than plays I-XXXI, it was written by an older scribe who still used a slightly older style of writing. The latest review of the MS known to me proposes a slightly later date for the MS than usual on the basis of linguistic/orthographic evidence - "... certainly not earlier than the 1480s and perhaps not earlier than 1500..."[9] Since the date of the fragment also depends on the date of the bulk of the MS a date of the beginning of the sixteenth century is not inconceivable.

Assuming that the fragment was added at the turn of the fifteenth century, the author of the addition could have used at least four well-known compilations: Jacob de Voragine's Legenda Aurea (c. 1255-70), South English Legendary (early C14), Ranulphus Higden's Polychronicon (c. 1327) and William Caxton's Golden Legend (1483) since all these works include the full story of Judas' life.[10] Comparing the Judas legend as found in Higden's rendition (see app. V) we find verbal similarities suggesting Higden's acquaintance with the Judas legend through the Legenda Aurea. He even parallels de Voragine's opening of the non-biblical story "Legitur enim in quadam hystoria licet apocrypha."[11] Whether "De origine Judae proditoris" represents the title of a source independent of de Voragine or a mere cueline is difficult to assess. De Voragine does not mention a source, which is not to say that he did not have one, and four of the five MSS used for the Polychronicon edition omit the title.[12] As far as the omission of the title is concerned, this leaves open the possibility that the copyist who included it either used an original which contained the title, or else included it as a cueline for readers. On the other hand, Professor Rand has shown that there are MSS older than de Voragine's Legenda Aurea which are known as "Hystoria de Iuda Proditore" or as "de Ortu Iude Scariothis,"[13] so that it is not impossible for Higden to have had a source with a similar title. If that is the case then it might also explain the absence of great detail in his Judas legend on the grounds that he had a less detailed, i.e., simpler, source. Besides this, Higden had no need for great detail as he intended to write a history and not a book of legends which could be used for moralizing purposes. Conversely, it is not improbable that he had a source similar in wording to de Voragine's but excised the details not needed for his purpose. Had the Towneley author used Higden's version then he

would have had to insert details which are not in Higden, but in the Legenda Aurea, South English Legendary and Golden Legend. The tabulated differences between Towneley's version and Higden's in the appendix show by the lack of detail in Higden, corresponding to expansion in Towneley, that the Towneley author did not use Higden as a source. This leaves the Legenda Aurea, South English Legendary and Golden Legend for discussion.

From a comparison between the Legenda Aurea and Towneley version, it can be seen that there are three main differences. Firstly, the change in the mother's name from Cyborea (LA) - Sibaria (T) may be attributed to a different version in the particular manuscript the Towneley author used, or he may have found it in an oral tradition which had corrupted the word. Since no manuscript containing the name Sibaria is known to me, both possibilities are equally tenable.[14] Secondly, Towneley l.77 mentions that God has sent the child, which is not in de Voragine's version and may have been inserted by the author for emphatic or emotional reasons, unless, of course, he found it in a source unknown to us.[15] The third difference is the time lapse between Judas' adoption and the birth of the second child. None of the possible sources known to me mention a period of two years. Again, the Towneley author may have used an unknown source, or, alternatively he may have inserted the word "too" (l. 91) to rhyme with "soo" in the next line. One should never forget that a certain freedom for dramatic purposes must be allowed and that minor textual differences may be put down to that.

A comparison between the South English Legendary and Towneley version brings to light a few differences which suggest that the Towneley author did not rely on the South English Legendary. Again the name of the mother is spelled differently: Tyborie (SEL) -

Sibamia (T), but as in the case of the Legenda Aurea, this discrepancy may be put down to a different reading in the particular MS employed by the Towneley author or to a corrupt oral tradition. More important, though, is that in the South English Legendary the king of Scarioth gives Judas his name (l. 39) whereas in Towneley Judas' parents give him his name (l. 50). In addition, the South English Legendary does not mention a royal retinue nor a feast to celebrate the birth of a "heir" whereas Towneley does (ll. 69, 85, resp.).

Caxton's version hardly differs from the Legenda Aurea, that is, as far as the Townely fragment is covered.[16] Small differences between the Legenda Aurea and the Golden Legend may be attributable to Caxton's freedom as a translator. A comparison between the Golden Legend and the Towneley version shows three main differences, two of which werealso found in the Legenda Aurea, namely the corrupted name of the mother (LA: Cyborea, GL Ciborea, T Sibaria) and the inclusion of "too". The one element which both the Golden Legend and Towneley have in common, and which is not found in the Legenda Aurea is the mention of God. Caxton reads:

> ...O Lord God, how should I be eased if I had such a child,...[17]

whereas Towneley has:

> A child god hays me send,
> (l. 77)

The context, the provenance of the child, is the same, but the semantic implicationsare not compatible. In Caxton's version the quotation reads like a prayer whereas the Towneley one constitutes a statement about a godsend. Since this reference to God is the only reference which links the Golden Legend and the Towneley fragment against the Legenda Aurea it would be possible but not realistic to attribute the Towneley source to Caxton's version.

the evidence, however, shows that in almost all particulars the Towneley addition is very close to both the Golden Legend and the Legenda Aurea. If the Towneley author used neither, which seems unlikely, then he must have used a source very close to either of them. Whatever the case may be, the Judas legend was no doubt popular and widely known.

Apart from the above mentioned works, the dissemination of the legend is probably also due to its inclusion in works for the layman such as the fourteenth century Stanzaic Life of Christ[18] and references in works meant for priests for use in the pulpit for instruction of the lay community, such as Mirk's fifteenth century Festial and the likewise fifteenth century Speculum Sacerdotale.[19] Of these three works the exposition of the legend is shortest in the Speculum Sacerdotale where one reads "Sires, it is redde in storyes that Judas weddid his owen moder and before that deede hadde slayn his fader... was sterid to penaunce and wente to oure lord Ihesu Crist and of hym asked foryeveness of his synnes. And then oure lord toke hym in-to his disciple."[20] It is clear that the inclusion of the most gruesome deeds of Judas life, the patricide and incest, is here used for penitential purposes. Judas went to Christ to confess his sins as a result of which he was made an apostle, suggesting that Christ had forgiven him. To a medieval audience the implication must have been one of confession of all sins, no matter how grave, which could still bring about salvation of the soul. John Mirk uses Judas' crimes for the same purpose as the author of the Speculum Sacerdotale, yet adds the element of despair:

> þat Iudas had befor slayne his owne fadyr, and bylayn hys owne modyr; and so com to Crist, to be won of hys dyscypuls. þen Crist mad hym on of hys dyscypull. But, for he was wont before to stele, and cowþe not leue his old wone, he wex wery of Cristys holy lyuyng; and for heye couetyse

> of money, he sold his Lord Iheau Crist to þe Iewes for thrytty penyes. And so, when he segh þat Crist was demed to þe deth by hys sale, anon he fell yn dyspayre, and 3ode anon, and hongyd hymselfe wyth þe green of a rope.[21]
>
> (my italics)

Once again Judas' acceptance as Christ's disciple suggests that his sins were forgiven whereas his falling in despair is the reason why he ultimately landed in hell. So, Judas knew from personal experience that his sins could and would be forgiven if only he confessed them. Yet he betrays his master twice, first for money, and secondly for not trusting Christ's powers of forgiveness anymore. This inherent address to the audience has an obvious message: repent for the sake of your soul's salvation. Exactly the same conclusion may be inferred from the Stanzaic Life of Christ. In this poem Judas has turned to Christ asking for "...remissioun of his misdede," (ll. 6999-7000, "misdede" refers to his murdering his father and the incest with his mother) as a result of which Jesus accepts him as his disciple. However,

> when he [Judas] had his lord by-trayde
> in wanhope he fell sone in hye,
> to hong hym-selfe sone he assayet
> and had no grace to aske mercy.
>
> (ll. 7045-8)

In other words, despair can only lead away from Christ. In Judas' case the key to his problems resides in his seeking a physical solution for a spiritual problem. By opting for death rather than for life and penitence he found a hollow temporary solution in the sense that his soul, which according to Christian doctrine lives on after death, does not enjoy the same "peace of mind," but has to bear the brunt of his precipitate action. In short, he has not found a way out of his problems at all but aggravated matters. The lesson for the audience seems obvious: whatever your crimes are, it is far better to own up and show remorse than to nurse them and be damned.

With the possible exception of the Speculum Sacerdotale, where Judas' despair after his betrayal is not mentioned, most of the works discussed, including Towneley XXVI ll. 304-9, show possible influence of the Legenda Aurea in the sense that in this work one finds not only that Judas went to Christ to ask Him for mercy and forgiveness for his parricide and incest,[22] but also the idea that even if Judas had confessed his sins, yet without the hope or expectation of mercy, he would not have received the latter:

> Nam etsi Judas peccatum suum confessus fuerit, tamen non in spe veniae, et ideo non est misericordiam consecutus.[23]

This tentative assumption has one implication for the Towneley fragment, namely, that the author of the addition may have used the Legenda Aurea as a source rather than the Golden Legend since play XXVI, in which the if-only-he-had-asked-for-mercy element is alluded to (ll. 304-9), is in the bulk of the manuscript which is allegedly older than the fragment. The postulate above, however, cannot be proved conclusively.

The addition of the Judas legend to the Towneley cycle of plays may now be much clearer. As this addition took place at the beginning of the sixteenth century it happened at a time when several vernacular versions of the Judas legend were known, and would attest a certain popularity. The notion of Judas' predestined and malevolent fate which is striking in this fragment seems incompatible with the Christian belief in divine providence, for it would seem that Christ's betrayal and death is then inherently linked to Judas' fate. From the Bible, however, we learn that Jesus knew who was going to betray him (John 6:64, 70-1) and he may even have forwarned Judas with his comment on the barren fig tree (Matt. 21:21-2; Mark 11:23-4) and with "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). Judas, having

killed his father, committed incest with his mother and betrayed his master, laments his life:

> Alas, alas & walaway!
> warryd & cursyd I have beyn ay;
> (XXXII, ll. 1-2)

showing a degree of remorse and evasion of responsibility, but does not dare ask for mercy.[24] Once again this suggests that Judas was a prisoner of his own mind who did not believe that he would receive mercy.

It is likely that a medieval audience would have taken this point. As to the educated, they were aware of the fallacy of claiming that predestination exists which makes God responsible for our sins and prayer hopeless.[25] That is to say, they were aware that although man was created with an unfettered will, certain things would <u>have</u> to happen such as for example, the Judgement. God does not encroach on man's free will, so that man is not forced to be loyal to Him. As an autonomous being man can actively choose and decide how he wants to spend his life, yet he knows that in the end he will have to account for his actions. It thus follows that turning <u>to</u> Christ or turning <u>away</u> from Him is an active and conscious deed.

On a popular level, the point that freedom to repent remains to the very point of death is repeatedly made in sermon material. In the <u>Gesta Romanorum</u>,[26] for example, one can find exempla of people who refuse to believe they can be saved, and are damned because they will not ask for grace. This point is significant for Judas since he regards his life's events as being prompted by fate ("... cursyd I have beyn ay;" l.2). Yet he forgets that he acted out of free will. From, for example, the <u>Legenda Aurea</u>, we know that he fled to Pilate's court to escape the death-sentence for killing his foster-brother; he could have refused to pick the apples to which Pilate had taken a liking and have avoided killing his father; he

could have declined to marry, but he did not. In other words, we learn how free will is combined with divine omniscience. Thus the Judas episode may have been used to teach the audience that no one is safe and that even an apostle in a trusted position can rebel and commit a gruesome deed.[27] In that respect, one must be especially on one's guard against despair since, as the Speculum Christiani puts it:

> ... dispeire,... is worse than eny othere synne, Ieronimus: Iudas offended god more in that that he henge hym-selfe than in that that he be-trayede Criste...[28]

Of all the plays in the Towneley cycle, play XXXII is unique in that it is the only play which consists of a monologue. From the dramatic point of view this is particularly effective since the audience is not distracted by any stage action and can focus entirely on the expositon of a single man's plight. If the whole play was acted in this manner, which is not improbable, then one may assume that the play was used to present Judas' point of view, as is frequently the case with monologues in general. Thus the audience would have encountered a Judas as the victim of his own passion, buffeted about and ultimately destroyed by it. By playing on the emotional feelings of the audience, the author may have roused feelings of sympathy for Judas, but at the same time have made the subtle point "if you pity him, then do not let this happen to you." Perhaps the monologue may even be interpreted symbolically for having betrayed Christ, and indirectly mankind, Judas is thrown back onto his own resources. He is left alone as a traitor is always left alone, hated by the betrayed and despised by others.

It is debatable whether the monologue form is the author's own engineering or not. Creizenach[29] suspects the fragment of being a "Bänkelsängerballade" in which a single individual sitting

on a little bench narrates a sensational story in the first person singular. Sometimes the narrator tells how he kills himself:

> The empresse then I slewe with bloudy knife,/ And stabb'd the empercur immediatelie,/ And then myself: even soe did Titus die.[30]

It is not impossible that this may have been the case with the Towneley fragment although Creizenach's example is rather late.[31] Similar sensationalism, namely, is found in contemporary medieval drama such as Duk Moraud in which a single individual narrates a gruesome story of incest and murder at the end of which he is killed himself.[32] In other words, the Towneley fragment would not be unique in its kind.

It is not likely that the Towneley fragment reflects in any way a reliance on the now lost Judas play from York. A. Pollard conjectures that since the Suspencio Iude has the same metre, $aaa^4b^2a^4b^2$, as the Resurreccio Domini (play XXVI) which is based on York play XXXVIII the fragment may come from York since it "...would naturally come immediately before the Resurrectio..."[33] The similarity in metre is true, but the Suspencio Iude cannot have come "immediately" before the Resurreccio Domini for the simple reason that it would then follow the Extraccio Animarum (XXV) which contains the lines "And all that hastys theym self to hang,/ As dyd Iudas and architophell;" (ll. 329-30 italics mine). This would mean that Judas was dead before he hanged himself! This contradiction must mean that the fragment must come, if anywhere, before play XXV following the Coliphizacio (play XXI) thus refuting Pollard's hypothesis.

Lucy Toulmin Smith has drawn attention to a now lost York Suspencio Iude.[34] From Roger Burton's first list of 1415 it seems that there was no Judas play at that time.[35] Burton's undated second list mentions a Suspencio Iude being supported by the Sausmakers.[36] By 1417-8 the Sausmakers found it difficult to

support this pageant financially,[37] suggesting that their pageant was introduced between 1415 and 1417-8.[38] From an entry in the York Memorandum Book of 1432[39] we learn that in the time of Henry Preston [1422] mayor of York, the Sausmakers' play and three other plays had been combined into one play for financial reasons.[40] As an independent play the Suspencio Jude had ceased to exist. What the play was like is as unknown as its source, although the phrases "...Iudas Scarioth se suspendit & crepuit medius..."[41] and "...Iudas se suspendebat & crepuit medius..."[42] are reminiscent of the phrase in the Legenda Aurea "... se suspendit et suspensus crepuit medius et diffusa sunt omnia viscera ejus."[43] Also, York play XXXII, ll. 299-315, in which Judas is tormented by his guilty conscience and afraid of asking mercy, is reminiscent of the Legenda Aurea. There is no reference to any murder or incest, but this may be due to a revision carried out after, or when, the (York) Suspencio Iude had ceased to be performed. That the York author knew de Voragine's work is also suggested by Pilate's revelation concerning his name, coined from his mother's (Pila) and grandfather's (Atus), in York play XXX ll. 13-4.[44] If the Towneley author had borrowed the York Suspencio Iude for his addition then it must have lain dormant in Towneley from c. 1422 till c. 1500 before it was used as an addition. This is almost inconceivable. It would rather suggest that both York and Towneley made use of the Legenda Aurea independently of each other.

The parallels between the Judas and Oedipus legend, briefly mentioned above, are so obvious that they cannot be ignored. The Oedipus story was known in the twelfth century in Europe through the Roman de Thèbes, which is based on Statius' Thebaid.[45] Although Chaucer may have known the Roman de Thèbes,[46] his main authority for the story of Thebes in Troilus and Criseyde was Statius' Thebaid.

In Troilus and Criseyde one can find two references to OEdipus,[47] yet neither of these refer to a parricide or incestuous relationship, nor is it clear whether Chaucer knew the story of OEdipus as one could know about the siege of Thebes without bothering with the story of Oedipus.

Lydgate's Siege of Thebes of about 1420-22 enjoyed a widespread popularity judging by the sheer number of MSS that have survived.[48] Since Lydgate used a French prose version of the Roman de Thèbes, he included the full OEdipus legend as well so that he may be regarded as the main source of the dissemination of the legend in England.[49] There is, however, no way to show beyond doubt that apart from a literate minority, whether aristocratic, clerical or ecclesiastical, other layers of English society could have known the OEdipus myth.

It is difficult to establish the origin of the Judas legend since one can always advance reasons which either support a popular origin or an adaptation of the OEdipus story. P.F. Baum, having extensively investigated the individual motifs which make up the legend, the parricide and incest, suggests that both theories are equally tenable. "The fact," he writes, "that an Oedipodean provenance has the appearance of being more probable must not be admitted as an argument; for it means only that the theory of an Oedipodean origin is simpler to comprehend and easier to follow."[50] Unfortunately, the one element to which he does not attribute much value is the exposure of the newborn child. Exposure in a little basket as in Judas' case is a very old form of abandoning a child as we know from Moses' earlier life.[51] Various forms of exposure, too many to enumerate, are known the world over, but what is relatively unknown is that very old references exist to OEdipus' exposure in a little chest immediately after his birth. The oldest reference comes from the Scholia Phoenissa 26 of Euripides (c. 485-c. 406 B.C.) and is later found in Hyginus' Fabularum Liber LXVI:

> Hunc [Oedipum] Periboea Polybi regis uxor cum vestem ad mare lauaret, expositum sustulit.[52]

This particular version of the legend, which was arguably taken by the OEdipus poet from the Perseus story, shows a certain popularity since pictorial representations of OEdipus' salvation from the sea exist in the form of pictures on a clay bowl from the time of Homer (pl. 20).[53] This would bring the Judas legend much more in line with the OEdipus story since all features, the prophecy, exposure, parricide and incest are now found in one story which is much older than the Judas legend itself. It suggests that if the medieval Judas legend was not an independent invention it may have been based on a particular offshoot of the OEdipus legend. The question when this adaptation took place must remain open. Yet it is a fact that the story received a folk popularity through the Legenda Aurea and its many translations.

The discussion has shown that as far as the fragment is concerned the balance of probability tilts slightly into the direction of a Caxtonian derivation, whereas a certain influence of the Legenda Aurea on at least one play (XXVI) of the bulk of the LS may not be excluded. Most of the works cited that deal with Judas' horrific crimes of murder and incest have clearly been used with one purpose in mind, namely, to tell the reader or the audience that Christ can and will forgive even the most appalling of crimes if one shows that one is truly remorseful and asks for mercy. It is likely that the Towneley fragment, had it been complete, was used in the same vein although we can only infer this. Man's reluctance to change is the basic problem which lands him in trouble time and again. Whichever way of life one advocates, a life towards God or a life leading away from Him, it is an active choice. Despair, as in

Judas' case, leads almost certainly to eternal damnation since it leads more often than not to a denial of God's powers of mercy. The message is clear: each of us is creating a place for himself and is going to it. The nature of the place, Heaven or hell, depends on one's life.

Footnotes to Chapter Six

1. The ointment incident is also recorded in Matt. 26:7-9 and Mark 14:3-5, but the detailed differences show that the source for the Judas link here is St. John. Matt. omits the value of the ointment, which is vital to the Judas story, Mark says "more than three hundred pence," and only John names Judas as the objector, besides giving the sum as "three hundred pence."

2. PL 198, ch. CXLVIII, col. 1614. "These thirty denarii were worth three hundred of the usual [ones], and Judas wanted to compensate for the spilled ointment." Notice that the ch. no. in Migne has been misprinted as: CLVIII.

3. Edns. used are resp: Jacobi a Voragine, Legenda Aurea, ed. Th. Graesse, 3rd edn., pp. 185-6; The South English Legendary, EETS OS 236, II, 696-7, ll. 117-8, 127-35 (hereafter called SEL) The Northern Passion, EETS OS 145, I, 21, ll. 31*-42* (MS Harley 4196); N. Passion, Suppl, EETS OS 183, p. 57, ll. 235-48; The Southern Passion, EETS OS 169, p. 2, ll. 30-4; Speculum Sacerdotale, EETS OS 200, p. 34, ll. 12-20. These work depict Judas as a thief who used to steal the tenth part of everything that was given to Christ.

4. This line closely resembles the Wakefield Mactacio Abel (II) ll. 376-7. See also p. 179 below. Nearly identical lines but in the 3rd pers. sg, are found in the N. Passion, EETS OS 145, I, 82-3, l. 825; N. Passion, Suppl, EETS OS 183, pp. 19, ll. 739-40 and 78 ll. 1053-4. The Ancient Cornish Drama, ed. and tr. E. Norris, I, 342-3; "It [Judas' sin] is greater than the mercy of the Father,/ Nor is there a way for me, alas!/ To be saved, on my truth." (ll. 1522-4). On the "accidia" of despair see "The Parson's Tale," The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N. Robinson, 2nd. edn., p. 250, ll. 692-704.

5. It must be remembered that this play is taken from the York cycle. The lines are paralleled on p. 390 of the York Plays.

6. This play is in part parallel to Y. XXXVIII, but the lines of these two quotations are not in the York play.

7. The Towneley Plays p. 393 read in n. 1: "This poem is added in a more modern hand than the others, apparently about the commencement of the sixteenth century." The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle, ed. A.C. Cawley, p. xi "...early sixteenth-century" sides with L. Wann, "A New Examination of the Manuscript of the Towneley Plays," PMLA, 43 (1928) 141 "...early part of the 16th century." The Towneley Cycle: A Facsimile of Huntington MS HM 1, eds. A.C. Cawley and M. Stevens, p. ix "...sixteenth-century hand."

8. I owe this information to Dr. A.I. Doyle, Keeper of Rare Books and reader in Bibliography at the University of Durham.

9. Facs. of Huntington MS HM 1, p. xvii, n. 19.

10. Legenda Aurea, ch. XIV, pp. 183-6; SEL, EETS OS 235, III, ll. 692-7. The story of Judas' life is appended to two of the MSS used for the SEL EETS edn.: MS Harley 2277 and MS Corpus Christi College Cambridge 145. For dates of the MSS and appendices: M. Görlach, The Textual Tradition of the South English Legendary, Leeds Texts and Monographs NS 6, pp. 77-9 and 84-5. For other SEL MSS which include Judas' life see p. 89 and Index of Middle English Verse, eds. C. Brown and R.H. Robbins, no. 1809; Ranulphi Higden Polychronicon, ed. J.R. Lumby, bk. IV, ch. VI, pp. 350-7; William Caxton, The Golden Legend, ed. F.S. Ellis, III, 55-8.

11. E.K. Rand, "Mediaeval Lives of Judas Iscariot," Anniversary Papers by Colleagues and Pupils of George Lyman Kittredge, pp. 305-16, esp. p. 305, refers to a Vatican MS. Palatinus 619 which on fol. 18 begins a "Hystoria de Iuda proditore" dated "saec. XII-XIII." The MS. antedates de Voragine and contains apart from a few "scribal vagaries" exactly the story as found in de Voragine. It is likely that this source was used by the Voragine. To the introduction of the story de Voragine has added "...licet apocrypha,..." For the date see: Codices Palatini Latini Bibliothecae Vaticanae, eds. H. Stevenson, I.B. de Rossi, I, 222.

12. For a possible source of de Voragine's version see n. 11. For the omission of the title in the Polychronicon MSS see Higden, Polychronicon, bk. IV, ch. VI, p. 352, n.4.

13. Rand, "Med. Lives of Judas," pp. 305-6.

14. This argument also holds good for Caxton's version of the legend since there the mother is called Ciborea.

15. See the discussion on Caxton below.

16. Comparing Caxton's ch. on St Matthias, Golden Legend, III, 54-60, with de Voragine's it becomes obvious that Caxton has omitted large chunks of the Matthias legend which are present in the Latin text. Page 186, ll. 31-9, p. 187, ll. 1-17 (Caxton prints the remainder of ll. 17-9 at the very end of his chapter), p. 188, ll. 7-25. The line references are mine.

17. Caxton, Golden Legend, III, 55.

18. A Stanzaic Life of Christ, EETS OS 166, pp. 231-8, ll. 6817-7052. The ed. remarks that the date of composition is difficult to determine since all MSS date from the C15, "... but the poem must have been composed in the fourteenth, since it was known to the Chester playwright..." p. xiv. This argument does not stand up. All the Ch. MSS are rather late, see Ch. edn. p. ix. MS Harley 3909 dates from the "XIV" century: Catalogue of the Harleian MSS in the British Museum, III, 95; MS. Addit. 38666 dates from the C15 see Catalogue of the Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum: 1911-1915, p. 195; MS Harley 2250 dates from the C15 as well, see Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum, I, 690 and 738. There is no evidence that the Chester playwright wrote in the C14, and allegations that Ranulph Higden was the author of the Chester

plays cannot be firmly substantiated, see DNB, 26 (1891) 365-6 and Records of Early English Drama: Chester, ed. J.L. Clopper, pp. 3-4, 511. A late composition of the Ch. cycle does not mean that its author could not have known an earlier work such as the Stanzaic Life.

19. Mirk's Festial, EETS ES 96, p. 79. Mirk, fl. 1403, knew both Higden (p. 81, l. 33) and the Legenda Aurea (p. 252, l. 5). For date of the LS see A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, ed. F. Madan, IV, 181: "Written in the first half of the 15th century." Also: M.W. Bloomfield, The Seven Deadly Sins, Studies in Language and Literature, p. 211: "The collection, written probably just after 1400,..." and M.F. Wakelin, "The Manuscripts of John Mirk's Festial," LSE, NS I (1967) 93: "... before 1415." Spec. Sacerdotale, EETS OS 200, p. 34, For date of the MS see p. xv.

20. Spec. Sacerdotale, EETS OS 200, p. 34

21. Mirk's Festial, EETS ES 96, p. 79.

22. Legenda Aurea, p. 185, ll. 28-9; Golden Legend, III, 57.

23. Legenda Aurea, p. 85. Note that Caxton gives an inverse tr.: "... for if Judas had had very repentance and hope, and had confessed his sin, he had had forgiveness and pardon." I, 39.

24. The latter, of course, could be due to the brevity of the fragment, but his asking for mercy would be totally incompatible with the theological point the author evidently wants to make.

25. See "Boece," The Works of Chaucer, Robinson, bk. V, prosa 3, ll. 144-93 and prose 4 ll. 9-117, pp. 376-8.

26. The Early English Versions of the Gesta Romanorum, EETS ES 33. For a random sample see nos. LXIV, LXXI, LXXXVIII.

27. This of course on the understanding that the now fragmentary play was once complete and acted. If neither was the case, then we may wonder why only part of a play was included in a register which was intended to be used. It would hardly seem the place for a rough draft.

28. Speculum Christiani, EETS OS 182, p. 206, ll. 32-4. See also pp. 72, ll. 19-21; 114, ll. 11-2. For the Latin of this quotation see e.g., Comestor's Historia Scholastica, PL. 198, ch. CLXXI, col. 1625: "Dixit Hieronymus super cviii psal. quia magis offendit Judas Deum, quando se suspendit, quam in hoc quod eum prodidit." and: Hieronymi, Breviarium in Psalmos, PL 26, col. 1157.

29. W. Creizenach, "Judas Ischarioth in Legende und Sage des Mittelalters," Beiträge, 2 (1876) 194.

30. Thomas Percy, Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, ed. H.B. Wheatley, I, 224-9. "Titus Andronicus's Complaint," ll. 114-6.

31. The ballad is later in date than the Towneley fragment, although we have no knowledge how early it was known. General consensus dates the pre-shakespearean prose version on which the ballad depends between 1589-93. See R.M. Sargent, "The Source of Titus Andronicus," SP 46 (1949) 167-83; and Titus Andronicus, ed. J.C. Maxwell, p.xxxiv.

32. Non-cycle plays and Fragments, EETS Suppl. Text 1, pp. c-cxl, and 106-13.

33. Towneley Plays pp. xxiii and xxvi.

34. York Plays p. xxiv, n. 1.

35. Records of Early English Drama: York, eds. A.F. Johnston and M. Rogerson, I, 17-24.

36. REED:York, I, 26.

37. REED:York, I, 30-2.

38. Note that L.T. Smith, York Plays, p. xxiv n. 1, erroneously refers to the fol. page as "fo 48b," whereas it is fol. 60, and also the entry from the memorandum book is not from "probably before 1410," but from 1417-8.

39. REED:York, I, 48-50.

40. L.T. Smith, York Plays, p. xxiv n. 1 dates Henry Preston's mayoralty at 1422. This, however, cannot be deduced from REED:York, I, 48, not even by checking the terminal dates of the mayoralty of each mayor since REED:York, I, 39 misdates the entry of the Plasterers and Tilers needed for such an assessment (1422-3, should be 31st of March 1424). Moreover, the REED:York entry is incomplete. The complete version of the ordinance, including important and correct dates, can be found in York Memorandum Book, Surtees Soc. 125, 2 (1915) 125-8. In a letter of February 16th 1982, the York City Archivist Mrs Rita Freedman points out the mistake made by REED, and confirms that Henry Preston was mayor in 1422.

41. REED:York, I, 31.

42. REED:York, I, 48.

43. Legenda Aurea, p. 186.

44. Legenda Aurea, p. 231.

45. For a list of the surviving MSS of the Roman de Thèbes and its date of composition, c. 1150, see Le Roman de Thèbes, ed. G. Raynaud de Lage, CFMA 94, pp. V and XXVI. For a discussion on the relation Thèbes - Thebaid see B.A. Wise, The Influence of Statius upon Chaucer. It is to be noted that the OEdipus story is found in scattered fragments in the Thebaid, whereas a full account of the story is found in the Roman de Thèbes, see Statius, tr. J.H. Mozley, The Loeb Classical Library, 206, 207.

46. This follows from several passages in the Knight's Tale which are highly reminiscent of the Roman de Thèbes. : Wise, Influ. of Statius, pp. 129-37.

47. The Works of Chaucer, ed. Robinson, TC, II, 402, l. 102: "Thorugh Edippus his sone, and all that dede;" TC, IV, 444, l. 300: "But ende I vold, as Edippe, in derkmesse."

48. Lydgate's Siege of Thebes, Chaucer Soc. SS 46, I, vii-viii.

49. Siege of Thebes, Chaucer Soc. SS 46, I, 17-44, ll. 357-1046.

50. P.F. Baum, "The Mediaeval Legend of Judas Iscariot," PMLA, 31 (1916) 481-632, esp. pp. 585-621. The quotation is from p. 621.

51. The parallels between Judas' life and Moses' are striking. Both are cast adrift, found by a queen/princess, educated at a court and have to flee because of a murder. While both may be regarded as instruments of deliverance, Moses can be seen as the saviour and Judas as its anti-symbol, the destructor. Another OT parallel is the apple which is not only instrumental in the Fall from Paradise, but also in Judas' fall. It is likely that the audience saw these parallels. Whether these obvious parallels deliberately echo OT events is another matter. At any rate, a playwatching audience would have seen the Fall story and Moses as a character in the Prophets' play (VII) and the Pharaoh play (VIII).

52. "[OEdipus] who was picked up by Peribea wife of King Polibus when she washed clothes near the sea." See Hyginus, Fabularum Liber, p. 24. The Fabularum Liber is frequently attributed to the 2nd century scholar C. Julius Hyginus which is according to critics almost certainly wrong. For the Greek reference see "Scholia in Hecvbam Orestem Phoenissas," Scholia in Euripidem, ed. E. Schwartz, I, 251. See also Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie, ed. W.H. Roscher, III, prt. I, col. 707.

53. Dr. O.T.P.K. Dickinson lecturer in the dept. of classics, University of Durham dates the bowl between 3rd cent. B.C. - 1st cent. A.D. He also pointed out that the Perseus story is slightly older than the OEdipus one. As far as he knew, pictorial representations of Danae and baby Perseus watching the fabrication of the chest for their exposure are rare (see pl. 21). K. Schauenburg, Perseus in der Kunst des Altertums, pp. 7-8, mentions that pictures of the enclosure of Danae and Perseus start appearing around 490/80 B.C. In tables 1.2 and 2 he reproduces two slightly different enclosure scenes.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

From an entry in the York A/Y Memorandum Book for 1422 we learn that, apart from their unadmitted value as advertising and in attracting visitors, the Corpus Christi plays in that city were instituted for the cause of devotion, extirpation of vice and the reformation of customs[1] and there is no reason to assume that Wakefield staged its dramatic performances for any other reasons. Indeed, the discussion of Towneley's non-scriptural elements shows that in an overriding concern with salvation the plays were employed as an argumentum ad populum to enhance the cycle's didactic and theological cause.

The non-scriptural elements which serve as baits to prompt the audience to identify with the conversion-invoking stage action, inducing them to make a choice as to how to lead their lives, can be described comprehensively in terms of allusions to, and traces of, folklore customs((Mactacio Abel, II; PP, XII; SP, XIII),[2] folktales and legendary material (resp. PP; Mactacio Abel, Processus Noe cum Filiis, III, Processus Prophetarum, VII; Processus Talentorum, XXIV and Suspencio Iude, XXXII), social criticism and comment (Mactacio Abel, PP, SP), inclusion of fictional characters introduced by the playwright(s) (Pikeharnes, Mactacio Abel; Iak Garcio, PP; Mak, SP),[3] and a vivid portrayal of characters with human dimensions (in all plays except the Processus Prophetarum).

That the Erythraean Sibyl stands out conspicuously by falling into only one category is perhaps not surprising, as any classification of Towneley's non-biblical features is bound to be based on those found in the plays (influenced) by the so-called Wakefield Master. Of the seven plays discussed, five display to a

greater or lesser extent his characteristic 9-line stanza which coincides with the elements referred to above (see Introduction, n. 4). The two plays excluded from his influence are the Processus Prophetarum, for which see below, and the Suspensio Iude which is younger than the rest of the MS.

Through her association with, in particular, the biblical prophets in the pseudo-Augustine Sermo Contra Judaeos, Paganos et Arianos Sermo de Symbolo, the Sibyl lost her folklore character and received all but the same status and authority as these prophets. As a result of this link she maintained her august position throughout history. She is, apart from in the Carmina Burana play in which she prophecies Christ's Birth as well, always found in connection with Doomsday or her Last Judgment prophecy. The text of the Sermo, which narrowly defines the Sibyl's nature and message, is at least partially found in medieval breviaries. Since the Towneley author probably used such a breviary, she appears devoid of any additions in the Towneley cycle.

Like the Sibyl, Towneley's biblical characters bear the stamp of patristic or legendary traditions yet theirs is different in that somewhere along their historical paths they were furnished with human characteristics. That this could happen seems due to the fact that the biblical narrative and discourse are less self-explanatory than the sibylline message, leaving more room for explanation and addition.

In the case of Cain and Abel, their human characteristics are described to explain the Bible as early as the writings of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine. As for Noah, Uxor, Pilate and Judas, their non-biblical case histories are difficult to piece together due to the dearth of evidence from before, roughly speaking, the thirteenth century. However, when we meet them in the Towneley cycle, their

setting and their human characteristics appear to be as much the result of tradition as those of Cain and Abel. As shown, the cycle dramatists could and did modify the basic pattern laid down by the traditions described above although, of course, biblical limits had ultimately to be observed. The shepherds have, apart from setting and adoration, which are biblically limited, and number, which developed historically, no other limitation so that the authors of the mystery plays were relatively free as to how they depicted them on stage. Pilate's torturers of the Processus Talentorum are biblically limited as to setting, number, and tasks such as, for example, torturing and crucifying Christ. Within these restrictions, however, a tradition developed which helped to shape and portray their evil character, a tradition reflected in all the extant cycles, namely, the cruel stretching of Christ's limbs with ropes by the torturers (sometimes called soldiers or Jews) to make Him fit the cross.[4] Their allegiance to Pilate, however, is not recorded in any source and thus the Towneley dramatist(s) could engineer a renunciation of this connection. Turning to the fictional characters we notice that probably all of them, with the possible exception of Mak (see n. 3), are derived from the folklore tradition so that we may infer that the portrayal of characters, whether of biblical origin or not, finds its source primarily in the biblical and non-biblical traditions and to a smaller extent in the inventions of the dramatist(s).

The combination of scriptural and non-scriptural elements contributes to the allegorical interpretation of all the plays except the Processus Prophetarum. On the one hand we have, superficially, the aesthetically pleasing, laughter-attracting scenes of Cain-Pikeharnes, Noah-Uxor, the quarrel about non-existent sheep in the first shepherds' play, the Mak episode and Pilate's

megalomania or the more serious Judas play, scenes which make sense in themselves. On the other hand we have the intellectually enjoyable homiletic and thoroughly serious undercurrent of the plays which shows that all characters, scenes, incidents, objects and allusions are correlated and have been used to underscore or convey, sometimes symbolically, a religious idea or truth.

As pointed out several times, the Wakefield spectators, whether illiterate or not, are likely to have recognised if not understood the contextual significance of many of the non-biblical allusions, actions and agents they heard and saw on stage. This assumption is not only based on the fact that several allusions are so brief that they had to be known if they were to make sense, but also on the fact that the images portrayed, whether intangible or not, were available in folklore and legendary traditions, in sermons, vernacular texts and in pictorial representations.

The fusion of historical past with medieval present, that is the biblical characters presented in a medieval context, is directly relevant to the medieval audience especially when the characters possess clearly recognizable human traits. It suggests that they are of the same mental and spiritual make-up as the audience, implying that the cause and result of the biblical events, which the spectators see depicted in the plays, originate in human nature. Thus, from the psychological point of view, biblical and medieval man hardly differ, effectively suggesting that medieval man, who shares a human and sinful nature with the biblical characters, can be held responsible for Christ's suffering and death on the cross. Mak, as the medieval villain, underpins this relation between medieval man and the sinful biblical characters so that we are justified in saying that the biblical characters in conjunction with Mak function as archetypes to make medieval man see himself.

The characters of the Townley cycle, excluding the Sibyl and the servant types, may be classified as belonging to either of two groups which basically represent the division between good and evil: those who are redeemable and those who are not. To the former group belong Abel, Noah, Uxor, the shepherds and the torturers, and to the latter those who place themselves beyond salvation: Cain, Mak,[5] Pilate and Judas. This categorization, however, is not to suggest that there is no difference between the characters in each group. Of the redeemable characters, Abel and Noah have been singled out by God for immediate salvation, whereas Uxor and the shepherds have to go through a stage of conversion before they are ultimately redeemable. The torturers who substitute an allegiance with God for their allegiance with Pilate after they have killed Christ are also ultimately redeemable, although, of course, we can only infer this. None of the redeemable characters, though, is entirely good as all, except the torturers, have to undergo some form of chastisement before they can be deemed fit to receive grace. Abel, who is depicted as a slow-witted whiner, is drastically cut down by his brother yet he is the one who will ultimately benefit from his murder by receiving grace whereas Cain will not. Neither Noah nor Uxor are without imperfections, yet through painful physical confrontation each recognizes that giving and obeying orders brings harmony and salvation. The shepherds' quarrel in the PP is basically a form of self-chastisement for attributing significance to irrelevant matters, yet their implicit recognition of the redemptive properties of their food renders them suitable to meet grace. The shepherds of the SP are little oppressors who do not care for the social well-being of Daw, their servant. Their mission to retrieve the stolen sheep becomes their own rescue mission when they decide to leave the "child" a little gift. This, and the fact that they do not punish Mak more severely, shows that they have been filled with

grace.

Of the villains, Cain and Judas despair of salvation and thus cut themselves off. Mak (but see n. 5) and Pilate, although this can only be inferred, forfeit salvation by being morally deranged, i.e., corrupt. Like the "good" characters, the villains share one common denominator, namely, that they are all offered the opportunity to repent, for all have at some stage their means of grace before them. Cain, for example, refuses to acknowledge God's authority by not asking for mercy. Mak, although exposed as a thief by the shepherds, does not ask for clemency (but see n. 5), but perseveres in his crime by maintaining that his "child" is a changeling. Similarly, Pilate does not relinquish his plan to frame Jesus when he is confronted with him, whereas Judas, although we can only infer this in Towneley, kills himself in despair despite his knowledge from past experience that Christ would have forgiven him had he asked for it.

All characters, good and bad alike, make the point that man is the plaything of his own passion who carries the seeds of salvation or doom in his commitment to his cause. In all plays studied, except the Processus Prophetarum and Suspencio Iude where it is irrelevant, the commitment to different causes leads to interpersonal friction which in the Mactacio Abel, SP and Processus Talentorum results in a termination of relationships.[6] The evil characters, which to some extent must include Uxor and Pilate's torturers although both parties turn eventually to God, may be described as megalomaniacs, selfish, greedy and materialistic, in short, they focus on the creation rather than on the Creator. Their opposite numbers are of a more altruistic nature.

Instrumental in Abel's murder is Cain's overweening pride; his interest in his goods and chattels clashes with Abel's commitment to

God. Brotherhood, however, is not the only bond at the mercy of Cain's determination to get his own way, for refusing to appreciate authority he alienates himself from God and Pikeharnes his servant, ending up as a solitary figure who has placed himself outside the cosmic order. The concept of order recurs in the Noah play in which Uxor challenges Noah's spiritual authority over her, and through him God's. Noah is subservient to God's every command, but Uxor has to go the painful and wet way of discovering that obedience and salvation go hand in hand. Thus compelled to change her commitment or drown she embarks and from that moment onwards she and her husband live in harmony. In the PP a squabble erupts over whether or not imaginary sheep should be allowed grazing space. The dispute stops abruptly when Slowpace tells the quarrelsome men that they are nitwits: their respective commitments are void since they are fighting for nothing. In the SP, Daw reminds his masters of their commitment to their fellowman, that is himself, by accusing them of keeping him both hungry and poor, prompting him to threaten with retaliation in kind: no money, no work. Yet he does not pursue this cause which is soon to fade in the light of a more important one; the recovery of the sheep. In that case he is as determined as his masters to retrieve their sheep as Mak is resolved to keep it. Theirs is an innocent and just cause which pays off; Mak's is based on pride and deceit which is self-deceiving and self-defeating. Tossing Mak in a blanket, the shepherds terminate their dealings with him.[7] In the Processus Talentorum the torturers' sudden inexplicable change of heart in favour of God must perhaps ultimately also be seen in the light of all conflicts discussed above in which each side tries to impose its view on the other. One of the reasons advanced in our discussion of this play to explain the torturers' change of sides was that stanza 56, in which the change takes place,

is an interpolation by the Wakefield Master. It is by no means certain that he is responsible for this sudden change in plot/allegiance, but if we consider the four other plays mentioned above then it is not only interesting to note that there is nearly always a dispute between someone in authority and a subordinate, but also that all plays, with the exception of the Mactacio Abel which is commonly attributed to the Wakefield Master although it only contains two of his stanzas (see Introduction n. 4), are written in his distinctive metre. In order to find out whether this ostensibly paradigmatic theme of quarrel-cum-commitment is coincidental or whether it may be more closely linked with the Wakefield Master we have to find other instances written in his metre where there is talk of friction between sides which stand in some form of relation to each other and compare these with others not written in his metre yet showing the same features.

Herod in Magnus Herodes (XVI, written in the Wakefield stanza but see Introduction n. 4) is as pretentious and proud of his power as are his women-and-children-fighting knights. Chiding his subordinates for letting the Magi escape, he prompts them to retort that he has, first of all, no serious charges against them, and, secondly, that they disapprove of his abusing them without giving them a chance of speaking in rebuttal (ll. 152-62). Once they get in a word to explain the situation, despite Herod's continued raving and ranting, they are pardoned (ll. 181-95). His unreasonable behaviour, however, seems to have set the tone for the rest of the play for when he calls his "flowre of knyghthede" (l. 272) to allegiance they obey reluctantly: "why shuld we fray?... what, in oure best aray?" (ll. 282, 287). The third knight remarks significantly: "Tarry not for to stand/ther or we haue beyn [to Herod's court]" (l. 290), revealing some disaffection towards Herod as he is implicitly saying that they can still loiter about after they have

received their orders. The strained relation between Herod and his knights is underpinned by his indiscriminate offering of false promises. Towards the end of the play, for example, he promises his underlings a lady each as reward for their bravery during the slaughter of the innocents. Receiving the knights' retort: "So haue ye long sayde/do somewhat thertyll!" (l. 434); he wishes them to hell (ll. 458-9). In other words, there is no real bond between Herod and his subordinates. As a marker of his character he promises to pay everyone of "...burgh and towne [=audience];" (l. 462) one thousand marks: next time!

Froward (Coliphizacio, XXI, entirely written in the Wakefield stanza) is another ill-treated underling who nurses several grievances against his superiors. His masters want to do justice by punishing Jesus to prevent Him from infringing their law (l. 119), but cannot keep it up themselves as exemplified by Froward. He is ordered around to fetch stool and blindfold, getting so fed up that he says; "haue ye none to bud/Bot me? (ll. 373-4). The answer to this rhetorical question induces him to comment on his always being kept short on money and food (l. 381-3). Implying exploitation, he hardly differs from Daw in the SP and basically makes the same point of no money, no work.[8] Both servants are cut short dictatorially by their masters, but whereas Daw then turns to a just cause, Froward indulges in Christ's torture.

In the Flagellacio (XXII, with at least 23 Wakefield stanzas, see Introduction n. 4) there is another threat to a relationship. Afraid that Pilate may drop Jesus' prosecution, the torturers tell him:

> ...dam to deth ihesus
> Or to sir Cesar we trus,
> And make thy frenship cold.
> (ll. 212-4)

This element goes back ultimately to John 19:12 where the Jews tell Pilate that if he acquits Jesus he is not Caesar's friend, an argument which is also found in six MSS of the Northern Passion. Since verbal similarities between the Conspiracio (XX) and the Northern Passion suggest that the latter was known in Wakefield it could also have provided the basis for the Fflagellacio.[9] It is clear, however, that the argument to condemn Christ has been changed deliberately: the Jews who merely refer to the good relations between Pilate and Caesar have been turned into torturers who threaten action against this friendship.

The quote from the Fflagellacio above could be used to explain the torturers' unexpected change of attitude in the Processus Talentorum by arguing that the capacity to terminate an allegiance is a latent force in their characters. Being torturers who need a victim to secure their job they intimidate Pilate, who luxuriates in his power, by threatening to go over his head to get what they want should he discharge Christ. Once they have crucified Christ, they have no reason to serve Pilate anymore so they may as well use the argument over the coat as a pretext for abandoning him. This argument, however, is full of pitfalls and begs many questions. The soldiers had it their way with Christ whereas Pilate evens the score by acquiring the coat, so that to desert him for that reason would be a poor excuse. After all, their threat might work again in another case. Why not simply abandon Pilate, why turn to God? There is no reason in the play itself why their allegiance with Pilate should end. Basing their defection on an idea carried over from another play while the third longest play of the cycle (Processus Crucis, XXIII) intervenes would seem impractical - would the audience not be likely to forget this idea? It is more likely that if there is a connection between these two kinds of "termination"

this link is based on a master theme rather than on an immediate connection between the plays themselves.

Written in the Wakefield stanza, the devil-scenes in the Iudicium (XXX, sts. 16-48, 68-76) are interpolations. This is obvious not only from the change in metre, but also from the York Mercers' play (XLVIII) which otherwise runs partially parallel to this Towneley play.[10] As the probable result of his homiletic origin[11] Tutivillus, the devil-servant, does not share the characteristics of the other subordinates discussed above. He neither picks quarrels with his master "primus demon" nor jeopardizes relationships, yet his role is relevant to our theme.

The doomsday play, which epitomizes the entire cycle, essentially recapitulates a few basic concepts in all the plays, puts them in perspective and presents them in a great denouement: the judgment of good and evil. All devils, but Tutivillus in particular, focus on man's iniquities, especially male and female pride, which earn man a place in hell. Being a devil and therefore unable to dilate upon man's virtues, Tutivillus implicitly contrasts Pride, Wrath, Envy, Covetousness, Gluttony, Sloth and Lechery (ll. 305-58) with the seven redeeming features, i.e. Humility, Patience, Love, Pity, Abstinence, Strength and Chastity in his exposition of the seven sins. This instils the idea that man's commitment to vice and sloth to do God's work (l. 341) renders him fit to receive a "Welcome to my see![i.e. hell]" (l. 358), but that, by implication, the reverse secures him a place in Heaven. The same point is made in a precursor to the Iudicium, namely the Noah play, where Noah relates (ll. 51-9) how man's surrender to vice incites God to vengeance in the form of the Flood. As with its OT counterpart, the Judgment play teaches that assignment to hell (= "endless wo/ ay-lastand pyne;" l. 533) entails dwelling in

misery and a definite separation of man-man and, more importantly, man-God, while assignment to Heaven (a"blis" l. 616) involves living in joy and harmony. Thus we see once again how a subordinate figure has been employed to shed light on a relationship.[12]

In the Annunciacio (X, not written in the Wakefield stanza) there is friction between Mary and Joseph as to whose child Mary is bearing. On top of that, Joseph considers finishing his relationship with Mary by retreating to the wilderness (ll. 321-5). Yet although it looks as if these instances are counterexamples against a theme being solely developed by the Wakefield Master, we cannot accept them as all the other extant cycles contain them.[13] In other words, it would seem only natural to find them in Towneley. Moreover, none of the other cycles pursues the theme of interpersonal friction with any degree of consistency, nor is there to my mind any other play in the Towneley cycle besides the ones mentioned that does so.

It follows that if we encounter the Wakefield stanza, disregarding its relatively isolated occurrence in plays XX, XXIII, XXVII, XXIX (see Introduction n. 4) yet excepting the Mactacio Abel, we find it expressing a concern not merely with interpersonal relationships, but with a strain on these relationships which sometimes leads to their termination. What is more, the theme is not found where the Wakefield stanza is absent. So, this leitmotif would seem the Wakefield Master's per se, a viewpoint which, as far as I know, has not been suggested before.

Of course, one can object that the Noah play and the PP should not really be included in the discussion of the conflict theme since both are based on traditional material; a husband beating Uxor who refuses to embark also appears in York and Chester,[14] while the quarrel over sheep is intrinsic to the Gothamite tale on which the

PP is based. This element, therefore, is not the Wakefield Master's, i.e., if he added anything to these plays it would only be its highly complicated versification. To counter this it may be suggested that the Towneley Uxor is different from those in York and Chester as she is froward from the outset of the play and not merely from the moment she is asked to embark. Chester's Uxor, for example, even helps building the ark! So it could be argued that her unreasonableness in Towneley was extended to cover the entire play up to the moment when she enters the ship, not merely the embarkation scene, an expansion which could have been carried out by the Master to enhance his theme. For the PP one might argue that he could have selected the Gothamite tale because it contained the quarrel element. In fact, it is difficult to see what other relevance the tale has. Even if he did not alter or choose his sources, but merely added his metre, one might argue that he did so because they already contained the elements he was interested in.

Acceptance of my hypothesis would have two consequences. First of all, it would affirm that the Wakefield Master added more to the Mactacio Abel than a mere one or two stanzas in his metre. On the grounds that Pikeharnes is important for the development of the theme of the Mactacio Abel one may now perhaps state more positively that he was introduced by the Wakefield Master, a suggestion supported by the fact that Pikeharnes is as argumentative and impudent as Daw and Froward, servants found in plays written in the Wakefield stanza. Secondly, it throws a different light on the torturers' change of character in the Processus Talentorum. If the Wakefield Master inserted these stanzas merely to add his "theme" to this play, do we then have to assume that he who is so skilful in other places did not realize that he was creating a thematic

anomaly between stanzas 55-6? Would it not be more likely that once his theme was incorporated in the play without creating inconsistencies, subsequent revisions caused the sudden contrast in character?[35] The bewildering number of different metres before stanza 56 seems to underscore my point as does the fact that stanza 60 is a corrupted Wakefield stanza (see Introduction n. 4)

The Wakefield Master shows a predilection for depicting discord in interhuman relations. Based on a difference in commitments, this disharmony is emblematic of the universal experience of man, as the relation between man-man is reflected in the relation man-God. The disorder has not only destructive effects on earthly life, but more importantly, on eternal life. Although we can only infer it for the Suspencio Iude, each play is therefore an exhortation to prepare for the day of Doom. Securing a favourable outcome of the Final Judgment requires conversion to wanting redemption, a desire which can be expressed by turning to Grace asking for mercy.

Man's regard for God is mirrored in his communication with his fellow man. This goes to say that life is about relationships, relations that must be nurtured.

Footnotes to the Conclusion

1. Records of Early English Drama: York, eds. A.F. Johnston and M. Rogerson, I, 37.

2. These abbreviations indicate the first and second shepherds' play resp. See also Chapter Four n. 1. above.

3. Uxor and Pilate's torturers are mentioned in the Bible, the latter as "soldiers" or "Jews," and are therefore regarded as scriptural elements despite their non-scriptural peculiarities. All fictional characters mentioned here are probably based on folkplay/tale types; see ch. I, n. 68 where I also refer to Daw (SP, XIII), Froward (Coliphizacio, XXI) and Tutivillus (Iudicium, XXX) and the discussion below. Mak and the sheepstealing episode may be original inventions of the Wakefield author(s), but the fact that, for example, the story of the PP is based on a folktale about the wise men of Gotham suggests that they may equally be based on a folktale the source of which has not been found (yet). At any rate, the Gothamite tale and the Mak episode were presumably brought into the cycle by the Wakefield Master. See the discussion below.

4. See York XXXV, ll. 105-46; Towneley XXIII, ll. 119-30; LC 32, ll. 740-5; Chester XVIa, ll. 181-200. This tradition is also found in six MSS of The Northern Passion, see N. Passion, EETS OS 145, I, 188-200; N. Passion (Suppl.) EETS OS 183, pp. 38-9, ll. 1501-22; pp. 121-2, ll. 2766-99. For the dates of the MSS involved see N. Passion, EETS OS 147, II, 9-13, 17-8. For an early C14 pictorial representation see The Holkham Bible Picture Book, ed. W.O. Hassall, fol. 31^{v}.

5. Whether Mak places himself beyond salvation depends on the interpretation of ll. 622-3 (XIII): "If I [Mak] trespas eft/gyrd of my heede./ with you will I be left." (emphasis added). Is Mak here asking for mercy for his crime prompting the shepherds to toss rather than kill him, or do the shepherds mete out a mild punishment of their own accord, i.e., because they have changed into caring beings? (see Chapter Three, p.85 above). The argument hinges on the verb "left" the Towneley use of which is not listed in the MED. Cawley in: Wakefield Pageants, p. 112 translates and interprets l. 623 as " 'I will leave myself with you (as the judge),' i.e., I throw myself on your mercy." From his interpretation it follows that Mak asks for mercy with his very last word at the very last moment, a sudden change of heart with which the audience could have been familiar through sermons (see Chapter Six p.188 above). Thus by doing what Cain and Judas refuse to do, Mak not only saves his life, but also his soul. That he would thus be not quite the villain he is generally assumed to be is then perhaps also reflected in his relation to Gyll, for although he wishes her dead initially (ll. 249-52) the two pull together as the plot thickens.

To my mind, however, Mak's words mean "I leave myself in your hands, come what may," i.e., he resigns himself to his fate. Not asking for mercy because of indifference, Mak renders his soul ineligible for salvation, escaping with his life as the

result of the kind-heartedness of the shepherds. Unless Mak knows that the shepherds will not kill him, thus seizing the opportunity of hood-winking them into believing that he asks for mercy, his not clamouring for his life in a more straightforward manner seems to underscore my point that he does not care what happens to him. Whichever interpretation one favours for ll. 622-3, it would not be untypical of the Wakefield Master to have created this ambiguity deliberately. The audience is left to make up their minds.

The differences in attitudes towards punishment between Mak and the shepherds is consistent with the play's movement from an old order towards a new one which will be ushered in by Christ's birth. Mak's attitude towards his punishment typifies the OT view: "And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Exod. 21:23-4), that is, realising that he has been caught out, Mak does not expect anything but an eye for eye punishment. The shepherds' attitude matches the NT one: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Matt. 7:1-2; Luke 6:37-8).

6. In the Judas legend, Judas breaks off his relationship with Pilate to become Christ's disciple when he discovers that he has killed his father and married his mother. This part of the legend is not found in Towneley's fragmentary Suspencio Iude and the play is therefore irrelevant for the theory developed below that a termination of relationships was the Wakefield Master's special concern. Yet even if the entire Judas legend was at one time acted at Wakefield we cannot use the play as evidence against a specific theme being developed by the Wakefield Master only. The Suspencio Iude is younger than the rest of the MS, and therefore excluded from the Master's influence, but the legend it enacts is very old. Since the Judas legend is also found in, for example, the Legenda Aurea it would only be natural to find Pilate's and Judas' separation in a dramatic rendition of the legend.

7. Notice that although Mak wishes his wife dead (XIII, ll. 249-52), the relationship between these two rascals holds. This is an interesting parallel to the Noah play (III) in which Uxor wishes her husband dead (ll. 388-90), but they pull together in the end.

8. Notice that this idea also appears in Mactacio Abel (II) where the plough animals are almost unmanageable because of the lack of food (ll. 41-5). Pikeharnes is responsible for putting stones in their manger and tying them up in such a way that they are unable to reach the food he has placed behind them (ll. 45-7). It looks as if Pikeharnes is here parodying Cain's stinginess towards him. Trowle, the shepherds' boy in the Chester shepherds' play (VII), declines to eat the shepherds' food demanding his wages instead. Like Pikeharnes he is willing to fight his masters, and in fact does so (ll. 218-99). That Trowle resembles Pikeharnes, Daw and Froward need not be regarded as counter evidence against the Wakefield Master developing a unique topic as his disrespect for his masters is paralleled only by Noah's wife in this cycle (play III). In addition, the MSS of the Chester cycle are rather late so that Trowle could have been borrowed; see Ch. edn. p. ix.

9. See for the six MSS of the N. Passion, EETS OS 145, I, 120-1; N. Passion (Suppl.) EETS OS 183, p. 28, ll. 1087-90; p. 91, ll. 1571-6. On the connection Conspiracie - N. Passion see N. Passion, EETS OS 147, II, 86-9. The dates of the MSS involved are found on pp. 9-13, 17-8.

10. Towneley's Judicium is incomplete as it starts in the middle of a speech by Secundus Malus. The loss of the beginning seems due to the cutting out of 12 leaves between Ascencio Domini (XXIX, the play is incomplete at the end) and Judicium. The York judgment play (XLVIII) starts with God's speech followed successively by speeches of two angels, two good souls and two bas souls. The lines of the second bad soul (ll. 145-68) are the same as those of Towneley's Tercius Malus (ll. 17-40). The speech of Towneley's Quartus Malus (ll. 41-72) is not paralleled in the York text. Towneley ll. 73-88 parallel York ll. 169-76. The first of Towneley's devil scenes (ll. 89-385) substitutes York ll. 185-228 where God tells the apostles that the day of Doom is near while three devils (the same no. as in T.) prepare for battle to save their property. Towneley ll. 386-509, 516-31 parallel York ll. 229-372. (T. ll. 510-6 speeches by Tercius and Quartus Malus not paralleled in Y.) Lines 532-612 of h the Towneley play are the second devil scene. These lines are followed by eight lines spoken by primus bonus and are not paralleled in the York text. See also M. Stevens, "The Missing Parts of the Towneley Cycle," Speculum, 45 (1970) 254-65, esp. 258-9.

11. For references to Tutivillus' assumed homiletic origin see Chapter One n. 68 above.

12. Notice that in Mankind in Medieval Drama, ed. D. Bevington, Tutivillus vows to revenge New-Guise, Nowadays and Nought after Mischief, who is called "master" (ll. 429, 662, 671, 679), has informed him that these three were beaten with a spade by Mankind (ll. 499-500). He does not confront Mercy himself but intends to separate Mankind and Mercy (ll. 525-8). As in Towneley Tutivillus has lost his original function as collector of words. See also: L.W. Cushman, The Devil and the Vice in the English Dramatic Literature Before Shakespeare, p. 46.

13. York XIII, ll. 67-300; LC 12, ll. 25-192; Chester VI, ll. 123-76 (in this cycle there is no dispute between Mary and Joseph, the case is presented in a monologue spoken by Joseph).

14. Uxor in the Newcastle Noah play is entirely different. She cooperates with the devil to discover Noah's plan, but there is no marital brawl nor does she refuse to embark. Since the play finishes before Noah even sets sail it is likely that we are here dealing with one of, say, two Noah plays (as in York, see also Chapter Two, n. 9 above), the second of which may have contained her recalcitrance. But even if that were the case, Uxor's recalcitrance would be more in line with York and Chester than Towneley as she is not presented as henpecking her husband.

15. L.G. Brampton, "The Date of the Flourishing of the 'Wakefield Master,'" PMLA, 50 (1935) 631-660 and "The Date of the 'Wakefield Master:' Bibliographical Evidence," PMLA 53 (1938) 86-117 suggests that the Wakefield Master started his activities about 1420 and flourished within the second quarter of the C15. Since our MS was probably written in the last quarter of the C15, there would seem to be sufficient time between the activity of the Wakefield Master and the writing of the MS to allow for these revisions. See also: The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle ed. Cawley, p. xxxi. For date of the MS: The Towneley Cycle: A Facsimile of Huntington MS HM 1, eds. A.C. Cawley, M. Stevens, p. xvii, n. 19.

Appendix I

Similarities between the "Hail" lyrics of the PP and SP (see Chapter Three n. 29)

PP	SP
ayll, lytyll tyn mop" l. 467.	- "hayll, lytyll tyné mop!" l. 724.
aker of man" l. 476.	- "maker" l. 711.
ot oone drop/of grace at my nede;" l. 468	- "...be nere/when that I haue nede" l. 729
f our crede thou art crop" l. 470	- "of our crede thou art crop" l. 725
...in god hede!" l. 470	- "...full of godhede!" l. 728
o play the with all." l. 475	- "...and play tho with all" l. 735
..swetyng!" l. 476	- "swetyng" l. 715
his ball...lytyll is that I haue," ll. 471, 473	- "I bryng the bot a ball" l. 734
e that all myghtys may/the makere of heuen, at is for to say/my son that I neuen, warde you this day/as he sett all on seuen;" ll. 485-7	- "The fader of heuen/god omnypotent. That sett all on seuen,/his son has he sent. My name couth he neuen/and lyght or he went." ll. 737-9
ffare well, fare lorde!/with thy moder so." l. 494	- "ffarewell, lady/so fare to beholde, with thy childe on thi kne!/" ll. 746-7
...bot oone drop...for to drynk of a wrde," ll. 468, 483	- "I wold drynk on thy cop," l. 726 (Unless this is a figurative reference to the sacrament this line looks out of place since no chalice or Sacramental significance has previously been indicated).
lett vs hold oure beheste." (To go to Bethl.) l. 436	- "I haue holden my hetyng;" l. 717 (Which one?) (Wakefield Pageants ed. Cawley prints "I haue holden my hetyng: however, no promises have been made whatsoever On the other hand, one might argue that the 1st shepherd, in acknowledging the divinity of Christ (ll. 710-3) has kept his promise that he will "know" the prophecies have been fulfilled "when I se hym and fele," (l. 697)- a line which seems to echo Doubting Thomas. If one rejects this argument then the inconsistency is presumably due to a detail taken over from the PP, and this becomes another argument in favour of the priority of the PP.)

Similarities between the speeches of shepherd 2 (PP) and shepherd 1 (SP)

ord," l.1 (spoken by shepherd 1)	- "Lord," l.1 (Apart from the PP, no other play starts in this manner. Plays V (Isaac), XVIII (Pagina Doctorum) and XXX (Iudicium) are incomplete at the beginning).
oth bosters and bragers/god kepe vs fro," l. 55	- "with boste and bragance," l. 34
ho so says hym agane,/were better be slane;" ll. 60-1	- "wo is hym that hym grefe/or onys agane says! ..... he must haue if he langyd, If I shuld forgang it, I were better be hangyd" ll. 29, 41-5
oth ploghe and wane/Amendys will not make." ll. 62-3	- "he must borow my wane/my ploghe also," l. 38
hat betokyns yond starne," l. 321	- "That betokyns yond starne." l. 654.

On the relative dating of the plays one may find a clue in SP st. 63 where Mak refers to Gyb and John Horne as the godfathers of his child. "...Iohn horne,.../he made all the garray," (ll. 563-4) may refer to the quarrel of the PP.

Appendix II (See Chapter Three, p. 88)

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Footnote	Text	Date MS	Position in MS	Weather	Type of tree/ fruit	Jesus born	Arguing Joseph	Jesus commands tree to bow	Water from tree	Tree/branch to paradise
a	Laud 108	end C13	WE	"hote" (l. 93)	"apples and oper fruyt" (p. 5)	+	-	+	+	+
b	Cursor M.	½ C14	WE	"hete" (l. 11658)	"palm" (l. 11660)	+	+	+	+	+
c	Harley 3954	C14	WE	"hete" (l. 68)	"freyt" (l. 76)	+	-	+	+	+
d	Harley 2399	C15	WE	"hete" (l. 68)	"frute" (l. 76)	+	-	+	+	+
e	L. of Anne	C15	WE	"hatte" (l. 1494)	"date" (l. 1500)	+	+	+	+	+
f	B.M. Addit. 31,042	Middle C15	WE	"hate" (l. 66)	"froyt" (l. 76)	+	-	+	+ (+ wine)	+
	Ludus C.	3/4 C15	WB	----- (cold)	"chery tre (l. 25)	-	+	- (Mary prays)	-	-
	Towneley	3/4 C15	B	"cold" (l. 1)	"cherys" (l. 718)	+	-	-	-	-
g	Ps. Matthew	C11	WE	----- (hot, XXII)	"palm"	+	+	+	+	+

Note: a) ½ C14 to be read as "first half of the fourteenth century," etc.
b) WE = on way to Egypt
WB = on way to Bethlehem
B = in Bethlehem
c) Column C, ----- (cold), weather inferred from common knowledge about Christ's birth.
----- (hot, XXII) weather inferred from chapter XXII of the Pseudo-Matthew.
d) Column I, in all MSS indicated the tree, or part of it, is commanded to Heaven for its cooperation in the miracle.

Footnotes to appendix II:

a. This MS. preserves the earliest known version in the English vernacular of the Pseudo-Matthew tree. The part of the MS. containing the tree is printed in "Kindheit Jesu," Altenglische Legenden, ed. C. Horstmann, 1875, pp. 5-7. The date is mentioned on p. X, see also The South English Legendary, eds. C. D'Evelyn and A.J. Mill, EETS OS 244, III, 2. The latter point out, p. 2. n. 1., that although Laud 108 furnishes the material for the SEL, the Infancy of Christ is not part of the SEL (see Early South-English Legendary or Lives of Saints, ed. Horstmann, EETS CS 87, pp. v and xiii. He does not print the tree episode in this edn.). For text of the SEL see SEL, EETS OS 235, 236, Vols. I and II resp.

b. Of the nine MSS in which the Cursor Mundi is available, four contain the tree-episode with certainty: MS. Cotton Vespasian A iii (B.M.); MS. Theol. 107 (Göttingen); MS. Fairfax 14 (Bodl.) and MS. Trinity College R. 3.8. (Trinity College, Cambridge). The relevant parts of these MSS are printed in Cursor Mundi, EETS OS 59, 62, II, 668-72, ll. 11660-721. Three other Cursor MSS with more tha 11721 lines may also contain the legend. These three are: MS. Arundel LVII (College of Arms, London) 23898 ll; MS. Addit. 36983 (B.M., formerly Bedford) 22004 ll.; MS. Laud 416 (Bodl.) 23898 ll., and represent together with MS. Trinity College R. 3.8. the southern version of the Cursor M. S.M. Horrall is currently working on an edn. of The Southern Version of Cursor Mundi of which until now only Vol. I has appeared, covering ll. 1-9228 which is approximately one third of the entire poem, and does not contain the tree-episode. Her base text is MS. Arundel LVII with variants from MSS. Trinity College R. 3.8., Laud 416 and Addit. 36983. See Horrall's introd. pp. 11-27; Cursor M. ed. Morris, EETS OS 57, 99, 101, I, pp. 62-8; The Index of Middle English Verse, eds. C. Brown and R.H. Robbins, no. 2153.

c. The relevant part of this MS. is printed in "Kindheit Jesu," Sammlung Altenglischer Legenden, ed. Horstmann, 1878, p. 102, ll. 68-105. The date of the MS. is mentioned on p. 101.

d. The relevant part of this MS. is printed in "Pueritia vel Infancia Christi," Sammlung Altenglischer Legenden, ed. Horstmann, pp. 112-3, ll. 66-109. The date of the MS. is mentioned on p. 111.

e. Three middle English versions of the life of St. Anne are extant, two of which survive in two MSS each. The versions are to be found in: University of Minnesota MS. Z. 822; Trinity College Cambridge 601 (English Poets R. 3.21); Chetham Library 8009, Bodleian 10234 (Tanner 407) and Harley 4012. I have used the Minnesota MS., the only one to contain the tree-episode, printed in The Middle English Stanzaic Version of the Life of Saint Anne, EETS OS 174, pp. 1-89, ll. 1494-1548.

f. I have used the printed version by C. Horstmann, "Nachträge zu den Legenden: 1. Kindheit Jesu aus MS. Addit. 31,042," Archiv., 74 (1885) 327-39, ll. 66-108. The date is mentioned in Catalogue of Romances, ed. H.L.D. Ward, I, p. 928.

3. Use has been made of The Apocryphal New Testament, tr. M.R. James, p. 75. James explains, p. 70, that the "Liber de Infantia, or Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew...is a Latin compilation, possibly as old as the eighth or ninth century, though no manuscript earlier than the eleventh has been hitherto brought to light."

Appendix XXI

Translation of Greek Sibylline acrostic (see Chapter Five n. 6)

JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR, CROSS.

And the earth shall perspire, when there shall be
The sign of judgment. And from heaven shall come
The King who for the ages is to be,
Present to judge all flesh and the whole world.
Faithful and faithless mortals shall see God
The Most High with the saints at the end of time.
And of men bearing flesh he judges souls
Upon his throne, when sometime the whole world
Shall be a desert and a place of thorns.
And mortals shall their idols cast away
And all wealth. And the searching fire shall burn
Earth, heaven, and sea; and it shall burn the gates
Of Hades' prison. Then shall come all flesh
Of the dead to the free light of the saints;
But the lawless shall that fire whirl round and round
For ages. Howsoever much one did
In secret, then shall he all things declare;
For God shall open dark breasts to the light.
And lamentation shall there be from all
And gnashing of teeth. Brightness of the sun
Shall be eclipsed and dances of the stars.
He shall roll up the heaven; and of the moon
The light shall perish. And he shall exalt
The valleys and destroy the heights of hills,
And height no longer shall appear remaining
Among men. And the hills shall with the plains
Be level and no more on any sea
Shall there be sailing. For the earth shall then
With heat be shriveled and the dashing streams
Shall with the fountains fail. The trump shall send
From heaven a very lamentable sound,
Howling the loathsomeness of wretched men
And the world's woes. And then the yawning earth
Shall show Tartarean chaos. And all kings
Shall come unto the judgment seat of God.
And there shall out of heaven a stream of fire
And brimstone flow. But for all mortals then
Shall there a sign be, a distinguished seal,
The Wood among believers, and the horn
Fondly desired, the life of pious men,
But it shall be a stumbling-block of the world,
Giving illumination to the elect
By water in twelve springs; and there shall rule
A shepherding iron rod. This one who now
Is in acrostics which give signs of God
Thus written openly, the Saviour is,
Immortal King, who suffered for our sake;

Appendix IV

Translation of Latin Sibylline acrostic (see Chapter Five n. 10)

Ι Judgment shall moisten the earth with the sweat of its standard,
Η Ever enduring, behold the King shall come through the ages,
Σ Sent to be here in the flesh, and Judge at the last of the world.
Ο O God, the believing and faithless alike shall behold Thee
Υ Uplifted with saints, when at last the ages are ended.
Σ Sisted before Him are souls in the flesh for His judgment.

Χ Hid in thick vapours, the while desolate lieth the earth.
Ρ Rejected by men are the idols and long hidden treasures;
Ε Earth is consumed by the fire, and it searcheth the ocean and heaven;
Ι Issuing forth, it destroyeth the terrible portals of hell.
Σ Saints in their body and soul freedom and light shall inherit;
Τ Those who are guilty shall burn in fire and brimstone for ever.
Ο Occult actions revealing, each one shall publish his secrets;
Σ Secrets of every man's heart God shall reveal in the light.

Θ Then shall be weeping and wailing, yea, and gnashing of teeth;
Ε Eclipsed is the sun, and silenced the stars in their chorus.
Ο Over and gone is the splendour of moonlight, melted the heaven.
Υ Uplifted by Him are the valleys, and cast down the mountains.

Υ Utterly gone among men are distinctions of lofty and lowly.
Ι Into the plains rush the hills, the skies and oceans are mingled.
Ο Oh, what an end of all things! earth broken in pieces shall perish;
Σ Swelling together at once shall the waters and flames flow in rivers.

Σ Sounding the archangel's trumpet shall peal down from heaven,
Ω Over the wicked who groan in their guilt and their manifold sorrows.
Τ Trembling, the earth shall be opened, revealing chaos and hell.
Η Every king before God shall stand in that day to be judged.
Ρ Rivers of fire and of brimstone shall fall from the heavens.

Appendix V

A comparison of the main elements of the Judas legend in the Legenda Aurea (LA), Polychronicon (P), Golden Legend (GL), South English Legendary (SEL), Towneley Plays (T).

All page and line references are to the editions mentioned in the footnotes to Chapter Six.

LA	p. 184	"Legitur enim in quadam hystoria licet apocrypha,..."
P	p. 352	"...in historia quadam, licet apocrypha, sic legitur: De origine Judea proditoris."
GL	p. 55	"It is read in a history, though it be named apocrypha,..."
SEL	l. 66	"...so seyþ þe bok ywis" [a]
T		--

LA	p. 184	"...Ruben, qui alio nomine dictus est Symon de tribu Dan,... de tribu Ysaschar,..."
P	p. 352	Omits the ref. to tribe of Dan, but: "...de tribu Isachar,..."
GL	p. 55	"Reuben, of the kindred of David,...of the tribe of Issachar,..."
SEL		--
T		--

LA	p. 184	place of domicile: Jerusalem
P	p. 352	" " "
GL	p. 55	" " "
SEL	l. 5	" " "
T		--

LA	p. 184	Ruben, Cyborea
P	p. 352	" Ciborea
GL	p. 55	Reuben, "
SEL	l. 4	Ruben, Tyborie
T	l. 7-8	" Sibaria

LA	p. 184	discourse Cyborea's dream "cum gemitibus et suspiriis...
P		--
GL	p. 55	discussion dream
SEL	l. 13-6	" "
T	ll. 11-42	" " "Alas, Alas! sche cryed faste, / with that, on weping owt she braste:" (ll. 25-6).

(cont.)

LA	p. 184	"...parentes...filium abhorrerent occidere, nec vellent destructorem sui generis enutrire, ipsum in fiscella positum mari exponunt, quem marini fluctus ad insulam propulerunt, quae Scarioth dicitur. Ab illa igitur insula Judas Scariotes appellatus est,..."
P	p. 352	"...abhorrerent parentes tam filium occidere quam gentis suae proditorem enutrire, ipsum in fiscella positum mari deponunt; quem ad insulam Scarioth delatum,..." Nothing is said about the provenance of Judas' surname.
GL	p. 55	Parents loath to kill him, put him in a "...fiscello or basket..." cast it into the sea, arrives at Scarioth whence his name.
SEL	ll. 20-7	Parents loath to kill him, construct a "...barel..." (l. 23) set him adrift, arrives at Scarioth, whence his name.[b]
T	ll. 53-66	Parents do not want to kill him, put him in a basket, washes ashore at Skariott, whence his name.[c]
LA	p. 184	"...regina...ad littus maris causa spatiandi, ..." probably with servants, see: "praecepit" which may imply a retinue.
P	p. 352	Queen finds him, no playing or retinue mentioned.[d]
GL	p. 55-6	Queen playing on the beach, no maidens mentioned, but "commanded"
SEL	l. 31	Queen "... & pleide bi þe stronde," no retinue mentioned
T	ll. 68-9	Queen playing on the beach with her maidens
LA	p. 184	"...puerum elegantis formae..."
P	p. 352	Nothing said about features of child.
GL	p. 55	"...the child...which was fair,..."
SEL	ll. 33, 39	child: "...monlich & vayr/...vair & hende..."
T	l. 76	"...I was fayre;"
LA	p. 184	"...o si solatiis tantae sublevarer sobolis, ne regni mei privarer successore." therefore feigns pregnancy
P	p. 352	Feigns pregnancy, but nothing is said about heir
GL	p. 55-6	"...O Lord God, how should I be eased if I had such a child, then at the least should not my realm be without heir." feigns pregnancy.
SEL	l. 35	"...hopede . on him habbe an eyr," feigns pregnancy.
T	ll. 77-8	" A child god hays me send," sche sayd,/"to be myn ayre." and feigns pregnancy.
LA	p. 184	Feast
P		--
GL	p. 56	Feast
SEL		--
T	l. 85	Feast
LA	p. 184	"...non post multum vero temporis..."
P	p. 352	"Post modicum tempus..."
GL	p. 56	"Anon after,..."
SEL	l. 42	"Sone..."
T	l. 91	"Sone aftur with in yer[e]s too,"

(cont.)

LA	p. 184	quarrelling children, natural son killed
P	p. 352-4	" " " " "
GL	p. 56	" " " " "
SEL	ll. 47-58	" " " " "
T		--

LA	p. 184	"Ob hoc capitalem sententiam timens cum tributariis in Jerusalem aufugit seque curiae Pylati, tunc praesidis, mancipavit (et quoniam res similes sibi sunt habiles)..."
P	p. 354	"Judas ...poenam metuens cum quibusdam tributariis usque Jerosolimam profugit, seque curiae Pilati tunc praesidis mancipavit. Et quoniam res similes faciles sibi conveniunt..."
GL	p. 56	"...eschewing the sentence of death he fled anon and came into Jerusalem, and entered into the court of Pilate which then was provost."
SEL	ll. 59-62	Flees to Jerusalem enters Pilate's service.
T		--

LA	p. 185	Judas kills father with a stone to acquire apples.
P	p. 354	" " " " " " " " "
GL	p. 56-7	" " " " " " " " "
SEL	ll. 71-84	" " " " " " " " ", but adds gruesome details: "..smot him .../þat al þe scolle toda3ste . þe brayn veol out þer ate" However, after the killing he leaves with apples and pears (l. 89)
T		--

LA	p. 185	"...tunc Pylatus omnes facultates Ruben Judae tradidit et Cyboream uxorem Ruben conjugem Judae dedit."
P	p. 354-6	"Tunc Pilatus dedit facultates Ruben et Ciboream Judae in [p. 356:] uxorem."
GL	p. 57	"...sent Pilate to seize all the good that the father of Judas had, and after gave his wife to Judas in marriage,..."
SEL	ll. 91-2	"Pilatus wende anoþer day . to þe godemannes house & 3ef Iudas al is good . & made him weddi is spouse"
T		--

LA	p. 185	"Poenitentia igitur ductus suadente Cyborea dominum nostrum Jesum Christum adiit et suorum delictorum veniam imploravit."
P	p. 356	"Igitur suadente Ciborea Judas Christum secutus est, et culpis dimissis, procurator ejus et apostolus effectus est."
GL	p. 57	"...he went to Jesu Christ,...and prayed him of mercy and forgiveness of his sins."
SEL	ll. 109-10	"...to oure Louerd he wende/Repentaunt & wyllyngge he was [.] hys lyf to amende"
T		--

(cont.)

LA	p. 185	"Portabat [Judas] enim loculos et ea, quae Christo dabantur, furabatur."
P		--
GL	p. 57	"...and Judas bare the purse for all the other, and stole of that which was given to Christ."
SEL	ll. 118-9	"Of oure Louerdes god þat he wuste . he stal hyt al to grounde/Bote he my3te mere of ech þyng . þe teoþingge he wolde stele"
T		--

LA	p. 185	Jesus' feet washed with ointment worth 300 denarii by "...dominicae passionis,..."
P		--
GL	p. 57	Jesus' feet washed with ointment worth 300 pence by Mary Magdalene.
SEL		Jesus' feet washed with ointment worth "...hondred panes..." (l. 129) by Mary Magdalene.
T		--

LA	p. 185-6	Judas sells Christ for thirty denarii of which each was worth 10 denarii, to recover the 300 denarii of the ointment
P		--
GL	p. 57-8	Judas sells Christ for thirty pence of which each was worth 10 pence, to recover the 300 pence of the ointment.
SEL	ll. 135-6	"þer vore oure Louerd vor þritte panes . he solde myd vnri3te/þat he þe teoþyngge of þulke boxes . to hym keouere my3te"
T		--

LA	p. 186	"...se suspendit et suspensus crepuit medius et diffusa sunt omnia viscera ejus."
P		--
GL	p. 58	"...and after hung himself in despair, and his body opened and cleft asunder and his bowels fell out."
SEL	ll. 141-2	"His wombe tobarst amydde atwo . .../Hys gottes volle to grounde . ..."
T		--

Footnotes to appendix V

a. It is not clear from the text whether this refers to an actual source of the SEL from which the Judas story was taken or not. Sometimes this type of sentence was employed as a tag phrase. The first half of the verse line is a proverb reading "Vor ech pyng loueþ hys ilyk..." so that "...so seyþ þe bok ywis" may be referring to a book from which the proverb was taken. A similar proverb occurs in Chaucer's Squire's Tale l. 608 see The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F.N. Robinson, 2nd edn. Lydgate uses an almost identical proverb several times: The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, EETS OS 192, p. 479 l. 260: "Ech þing drawith vn-to his semblable:"; p. 792 l. 1: "All thyng in kynde desirith thyng i-like,"; p. 801 l. 8:" Thus every thing drawepe to his semblable." See also Proverbs, Sentences and Proverbial Phrases, eds. B. and H. Whiting, pp. 581-2 no. T 115.

b. Note that the king of Scarioth gives Judas his name.

c. In contrast to the SEL, Judas' parents give him his name.

d. According to the editor of the Polychronicon MS. B has a different version here: "Regina loci illius ad litus maris spaciandi..." This is not in the other MSS of this edition and brings the B version closer to the Legenda Aurea. This does not upset my basic argument that the Towneley version did not use the Polychronicon.

e. There is no biblical warrant that the price was 100 "panes." John 12:5 has "three hundred pence." Consequently, l. 133 "þe teoþingge þerof was prytty panes..." is rather incongruous in this context since "þerof" refers to the 100 pence, the tithing of which is 10 pence. The story continues with Judas' betrayal of Christ for 30 pence (Matt. 26:15) to recoup his "lost" money, ll. 135-6. The conclusion must be that 100 "panes" is wrong.

Plate 1.
Cain and mixed ploughteam
Source: The Holkham Bible Picture Book, ed. W.O. Hassall, fol. 6r

Plate 2
Driving a ploughteam from the front
Source: B.M. Cotton MS. Julius A vi fol. 3 as printed
in M. Rickert, Painting in Britain: the Middle Ages, pl. 34 A

Plate 3
Cain committing murder with jawbone
Source: Great East Window, York Minster
Photocopy by courtesy of D.E. O'Connor, co-author of York Art.

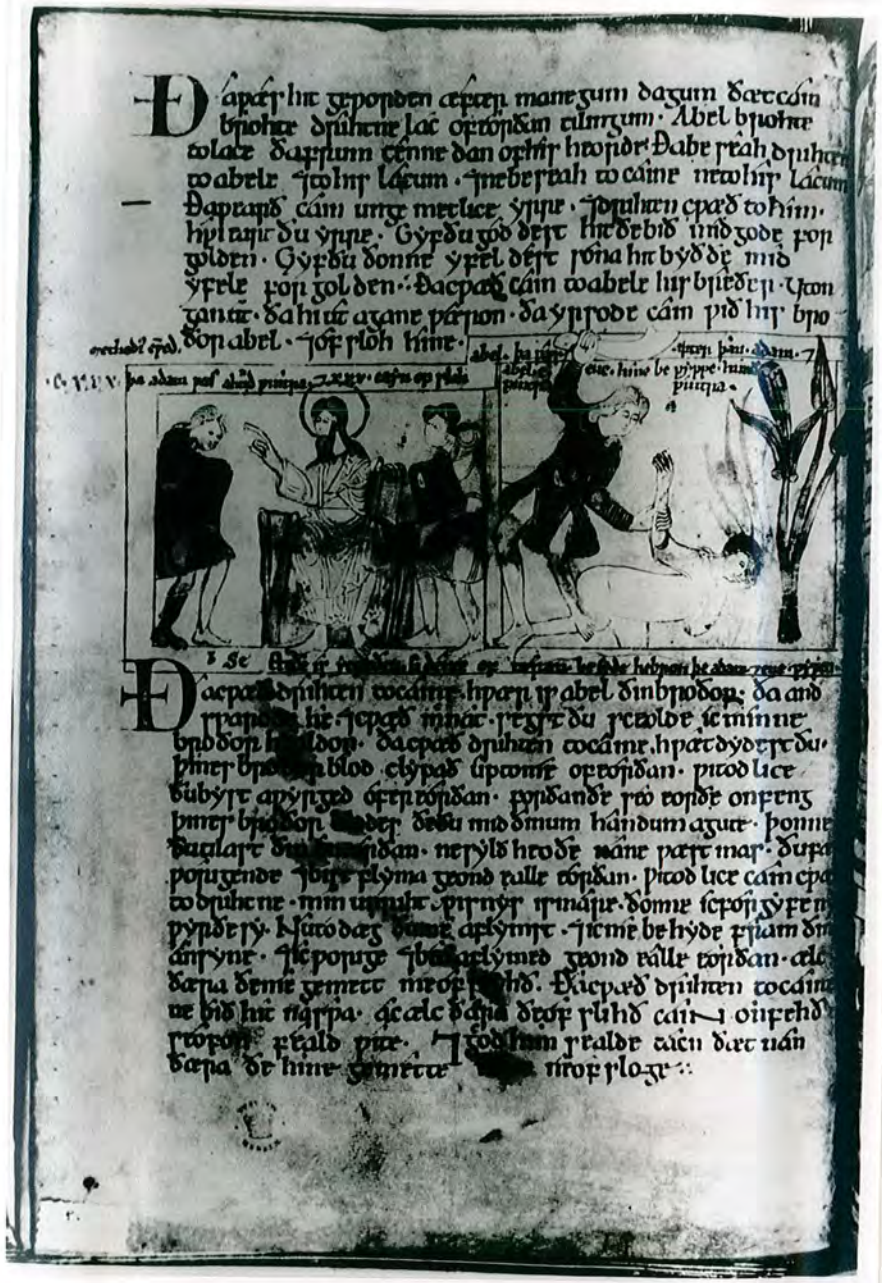

Plate 4
The jawbone murder
Source: B.M. Cotton MS. Claudius B iv fol. 3^{v}: AElfric's Paraphrase of the Pentateuch and Joshua
Photo by courtesy of the Warburg Institute, University of London.

Plate 5
Abbot's Bromley Hobbyhorse
Source: A. Brody, The English Mummers and Their Plays: Traces of Ancient Mystery, fig. 7.

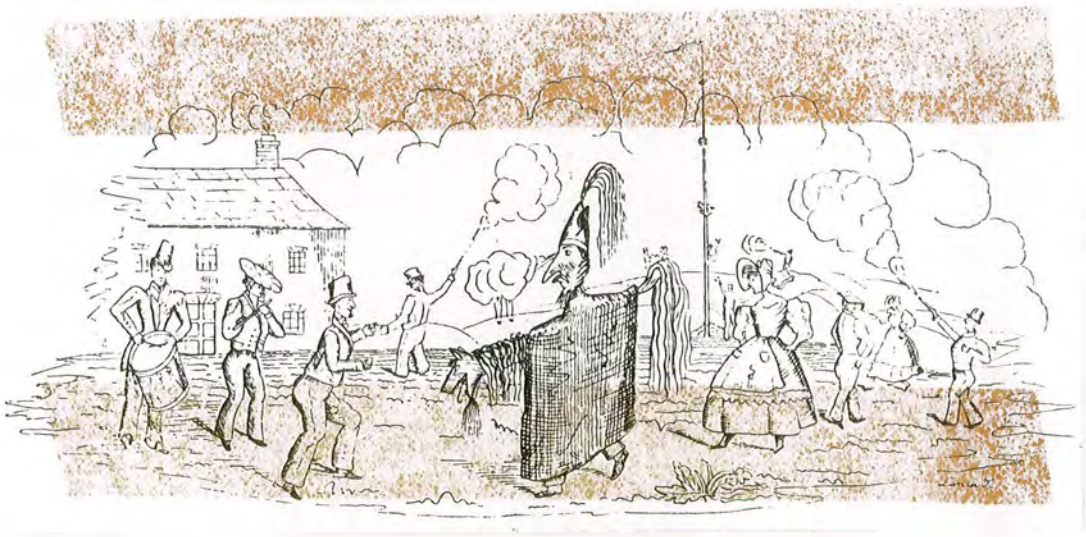

Plate 6
Padstow Obby Oss, c. 1835

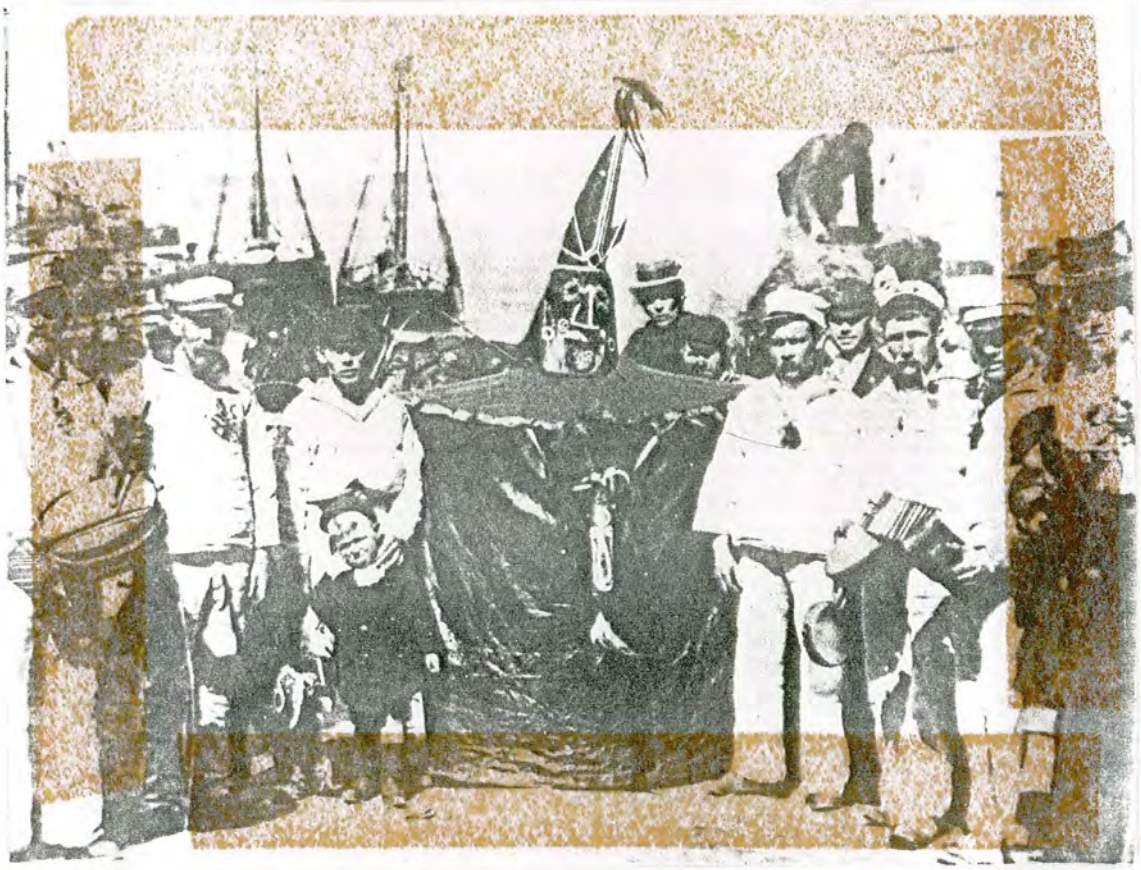

Plate 7
Padstow Obby Oss, c. 1903
Source for pls. 6, 7: D.R. Rawe, Padstow's Obby Oss: and May Day Festivities, p. 11.

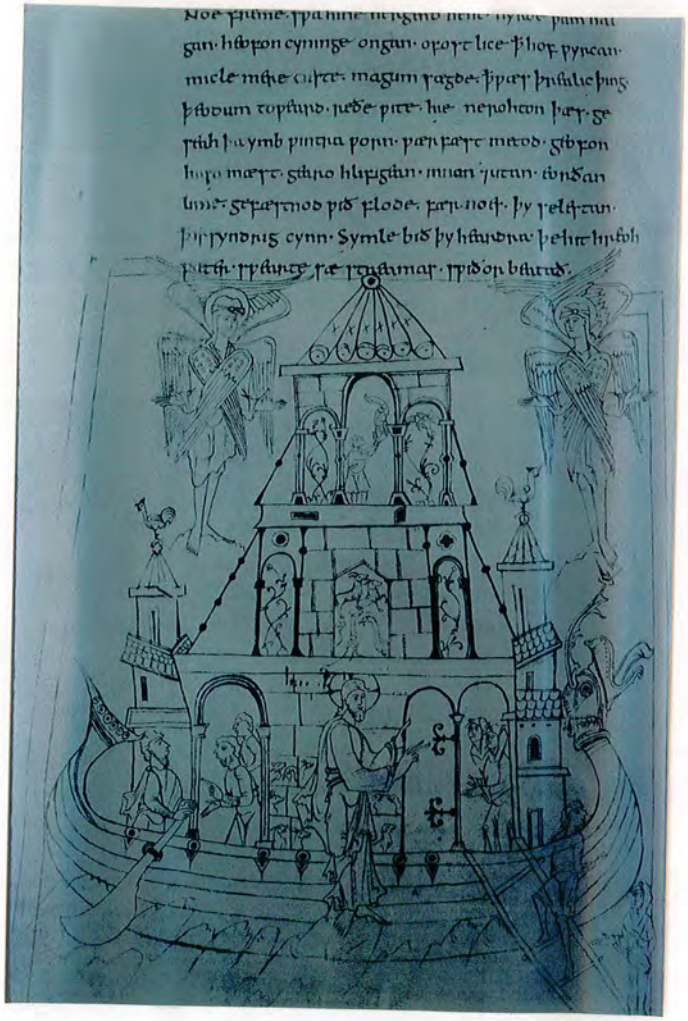

Plate 8
Noah's Ark
Source: The Caedmon Manuscript of Anglo-Saxon Poetry: Junius XI in the Bodleian Library, ed. I. Gollancz, p. 66.

Plate 9
Noah's Ark
Source: Queen Mary's Psalter,
ed. G. Warner, fol. 7r.

Plate 10
Edshult church, Småland
Photo by courtesy of the Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm, Sweden

Plate 11
Edshult church, Småland
Photo by courtesy of the Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockolm, Sweden

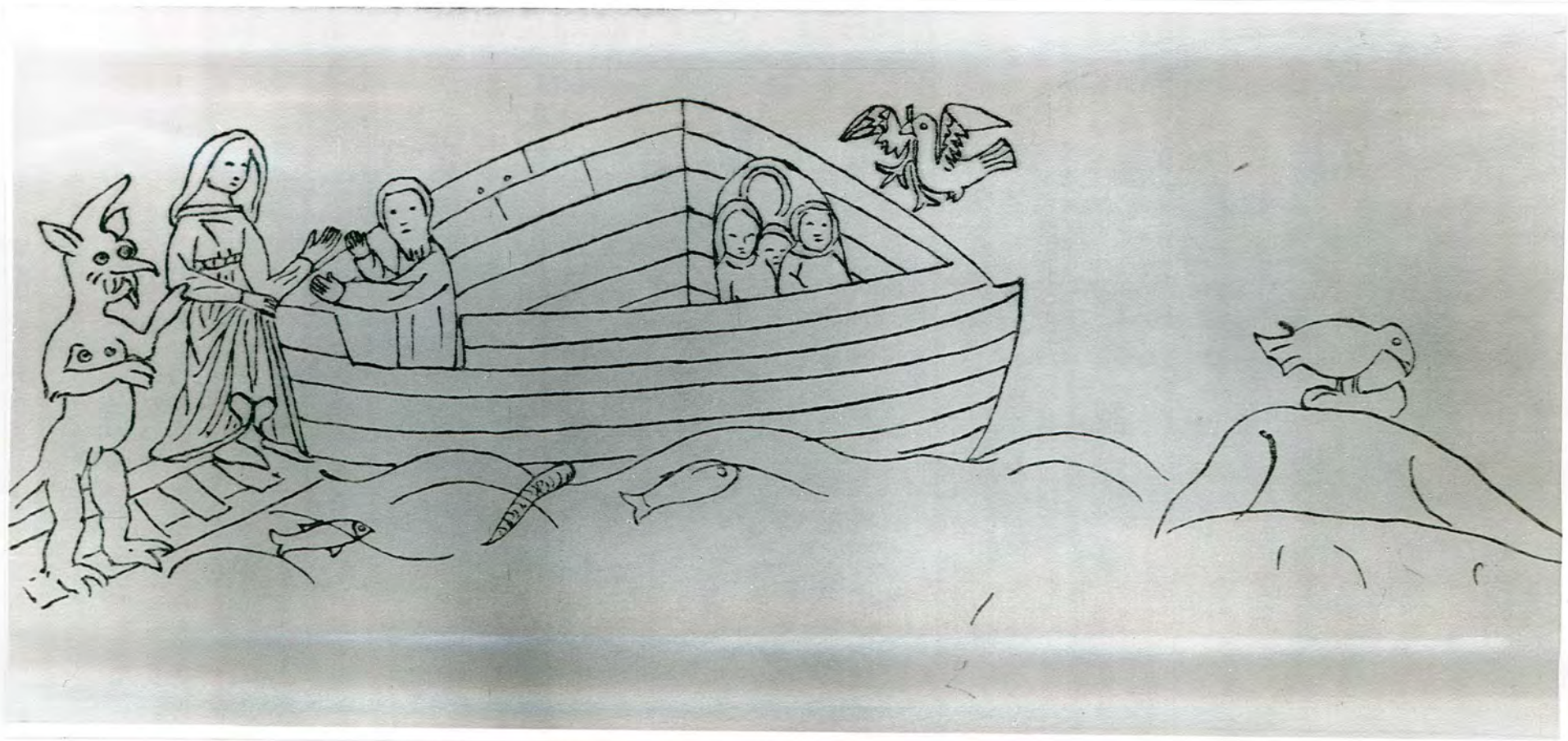

Plate 12
Villberga church, Uppland
Photo by courtesy of the Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm, Sweden

Plate 13
Risinge church, Östergötland
Photo by courtesy of the Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm, Sweden

Plate 14
Örberga church, Östergötland
Photo by courtesy of the Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm, Sweden

Plate 15
Fjelie church, Skåne
Photo by courtesy of the Danish Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, Denmark

Plate 16
Lagga church, Uppland
Photo by courtesy of the Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm, Sweden.

Plate 17
Estuna church, Uppland
Photo by courtesy of the Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm, Sweden

Plate 18
P. Bruegel the Elder
Children's Games (Detail)

Plate 19
H. Bosch
Adoration of the Magi (Detail)

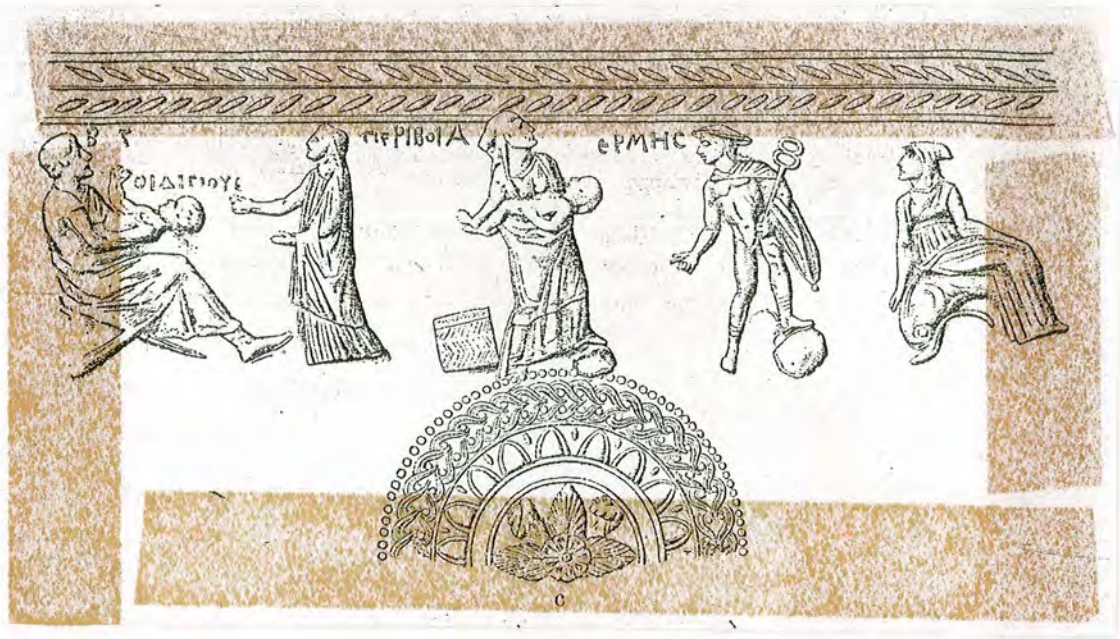

Plate 20
Polibus, OEdipus, Peribea and chest
Source: Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie, ed. W.H. Roscher, Vol. III, prt. I, cols. 705-6.

Plate 21
Danae and Perseus watching fabrication of chest
Source: Athenian Red Figure Vases: The Archaic Period, ed. J. Boardman, pl. 192.

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The works are listed in alphabetical order by the author's surname. Anonymous works are arranged alphabetically by title, i.e., the first word other than a definite or indefinite article.

Unless otherwise specified, the place of publication is London.

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