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THE *SOUTHERN PASSION* AND THE *MINISTRY AND PASSION*: THE WORK OF A MIDDLE ENGLISH REVISER

By O.S. PICKERING

I

The complex of late thirteenth-century poems loosely known as the *South English Legendary* is an inexhaustible source of material for those interested in the processes of revision and adaptation in Middle English literature. The layers of revision within it are now much clearer than they were, thanks particularly to the work of Manfred Görlach;[1] but an understanding of the way in which individual poems were altered or evolved out of one another (not to mention motives for revision) is not so far advanced, and has to be approached by way of detailed case-histories.

Dr Görlach has familiarised us with the idea of successive versions of the cycle of saints' lives, in particular the re-writing of the original "Z" layer into the standard "A" redaction.[2] The associated *temporale* narratives centred on the Life of Christ were also developed out of each other,[3] seemingly in a more haphazard fashion. Some motives, however, are apparent. Thus it is likely that the *Abridged Life of Christ* was written because a poem was required considerably shorter than its sources, the *Nativity of Mary and Christ* and the *Ministry and Passion*.[4] The *Nativity*, again, was seemingly thought by another writer to be insufficiently canonical in content, and so the *Expanded Nativity* was formed by inserting into it a sequence of translations of liturgical gospels.[5]

The *Ministry and Passion* (*MP*) and the *Southern Passion* (*SP*) are also closely related. B.D. Brown noted as much in the introduction to her 1927 edition of the latter poem,[6] but realised that the relationship could not be defined until more texts were available in print. In 1942 Minnie E. Wells, still without the benefit of an edition of *MP*, published her opinion that its author "made direct use of the [*Southern*] *Passion*, rearranging, condensing, and adding new material".[7] This view is understandable if based on a less than full analysis of the two poems, because the Passion and Resurrection section of *MP* is a good deal shorter than *SP*, and a presumption of abridgement by a later writer (being more usual) is natural.[8] Recently, however, the opportunity afforded by the preparation of the first full edition of *MP*[9] has shown without doubt that *SP* is a careful revision of *MP*.

SP begins with the anointing of Christ's feet by Mary Magdalene and ends at the same narrative point as *MP*, the arrest and release of Peter and John after the healing at the Beautiful

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Gate. Its main innovation is the introduction of precise gospel translations in place of *MP*'s more casual paraphrases, as will be demonstrated below, but because of the different forms in which its manuscripts preserve it, it is first necessary to discuss the status of the published version of the poem.

SP is extant in eleven main manuscripts, as follows:[10]

B	Bodley 779, ff.25v-41r, 171r-72v
D	Laud Misc. 463, ff.26r-35v
H	Harley 2277, ff.4r-26r
K	King's College Cambridge 13 Pt.II, ff.3r-32r
N	Egerton 2891, ff.40r-57v
O	Trinity College Oxford 57, ff.7r-22r
P	Pepys 2344, pp.183-237
T	Tanner 17, ff.48v-80r
V	Vernon, ff.19v-27r
Y	Bodleian Library Add. C. 38, ff.84v-96v
Z	Takamiya 54, ff.42v-72r

H is physically defective, lacking 11.595-1502, and many of the other texts have been shortened in one way or another, most commonly by leaving out the first 750 or so lines before the Passion narrative proper begins (BDNOY). Certain texts add material.[11] There is particular divergence in the treatment of the post-Resurrection portion. Y omits 11.1783-2366, i.e. everything except Ascension and Pentecost; N omits everything *after* 1.2366; B omits 11.2169-378; and Z omits 11.1837-2016. In addition, four texts transpose the normal order of this part of the poem. If, on the basis of the printed text (P), the post-Resurrection material were to be divided into sub-sections consecutively numbered 1-14,[12] DT would be found to have the sequence 1-2, 4-5, 7, 3, 10, 6, 8-9, 11-14; N, 1-5, 7, 10, 6, 8-9, 11 (where it ends); and O, 1-3, 9, 4-5, 7, 10, 6, 8, 11-14. In the preface to her edition of *SP*, B.D. Brown comments that she "was originally concerned with the metrical narrative of the Passion and Resurrection only, this material constituting in itself a complete poem with conventional conclusion" (p.v). This "conclusion", however (11.1781-4), is that of the expository *South English Legendary* poem, *Easter*, which is regularly incorporated into *SP* as 11.1733-84. Not surprisingly, no manuscript ends the poem at this point, which before the intervention of *Easter* was occupied with the very moment of Christ's Resurrection. But M.E. Wells followed Mrs Brown's line, commenting on "careless workmanship" when the threads of the narrative are taken up again (p.328), and also suggesting that the subsequent part of the poem may have been "appended as a supplement" (p.329). She admits, however, that "the point of view is unchanged", and that there is no alteration in the handling of the gospels. In the post-Resurrection part of *SP* it is true that HN (and Z) have rubrications which, in B.D. Brown's words, "divide the text into passages appropriate to Easter and the successive days of the week following" (p.xviii); but many non-biblical passages intervene, and two explicit cases of translation of "liturgical" gospels (11.931-1004, 1017-70) are found much earlier in the poem.

In sum, there seems to be no evidence that the post-Resurrection narrative was a later addition to *SP*, nor that the divergent arrangement of some texts is a result of any uncertainty in the original composition of the poem. The divergence is inexplicable from a narrative point of view, and appears merely to be a characteristic of the manuscript group DNOT.[13] Consequently the form of *SP* printed by Mrs Brown can be taken to represent what was originally intended, as regards content,[14] and it is, indeed, the form to which *MP* corresponds.

This is not to say that *SP* is written in the same style throughout. There are four main types of material, which vary considerably in fluency: gospel translation, exposition (including some legendary amplification), devotional apostrophe, and comment on contemporary medieval life. At one extreme lies the careful patience of the gospel renderings, about which Mrs Brown remarks: "The language of this portion of the poem has apparently been transferred directly from the open page of the Vulgate, since it corresponds as a rule, even in minute details, with the Latin text . . . One can sometimes follow his procedure in joining a half-verse from one gospel to a second half-verse in another" (p.lv). At the other extreme is the freedom with which the poet writes when his feelings are engaged, most notably during his remarkable attack on hypocritical masculine attitudes to female behaviour, which brings the narrative to a halt for over ninety lines (ll. 1899-1990). *SP* has recently been called "the product of an individual mind rapt in its purpose, not a professional compiler",[15] but this does not seem quite right, particularly when the lengthy correspondences with *MP* are taken into account. Of the 2588 lines of the printed text of *SP*, some 670 whole lines, or 26%, are paralleled verbally in *MP*; from the point in *MP* at which such parallels with *SP* first appear (1.1409) the proportion of its lines that also occur in *SP* is 41%; and once the Passion narratives properly get under way there is a considerably higher proportion of parallels. In addition, there are many more lines in the two poems that are obviously related. The parallel lines, it may be said, include gospel translation, expository and legendary matter, and devotional apostrophe, but only minimally passages bearing upon contemporary medieval life.

One poem has clearly made use of the other, but which? On the one side, *SP* reproduces the gospels so thoroughly that its narrative is frequently undramatic, particularly during the long account of Christ's acts and teachings in Jerusalem at the beginning of Holy Week. Several of its manuscripts leave out this material, as we have seen, and it is also largely missing from *MP*. *SP* additionally lacks rhythmic flow, both between sections and within many of the gospel translations. Its couplets often seem artificially constructed, as though the writer had only half-succeeded in turning his material into verse. Reading the poem, we seem very close to the process of actual composition.

MP, in contrast, is much quicker-moving. In many places its author at first sight seems to be turning *SP*'s repetitions and longwindedness into a more unified narrative, condensing, rewriting,

and generally concentrating on producing a continuous story.
Easter and the "defence of women" do not appear, and nor does much
other non-narrative material. There are fewer sudden changes in
style and tone. The couplets move easily, and the poem seems
altogether more of a piece. The preceding Ministry section is no
different in style. *SP*, surprisingly for a poem of its length,
leads straight off with narrative without an introduction of any
kind. One might even speculate that it is a continuation of a now
lost companion harmony of the Ministry, and that *MP*'s author drew
on them both.

Nevertheless, a careful analysis of the two poems establishes
without doubt that *SP* is the derivative composition, as the remain-
der of this paper will seek to show. Its procedure with regard to
MP is very similar to the *Expanded Nativity*'s treatment of the
Nativity of Mary and Christ, referred to earlier. Both insert new
biblical translations into an existing composition seemingly thought
to be insufficiently close to the gospels, and both also introduce
new non-biblical matter, usually expository. In making their
changes, *SP* and the *Expanded Nativity* do not simply set their new
passages side by side with existing blocks of verse, but adapt lines
for their own purposes. The *Expanded Nativity* does this only rarely
during its gospel translations (the *Nativity of Mary and Christ* is
so apocryphal that very few of its lines are suitable), but *SP* does
it extensively, *MP* being already predominantly biblical in content.
Sometimes it inserts single lines or couplets from *MP* into an other-
wise original translation, at others it cleverly rearranges existing
words and phrases so as to match the Vulgate more closely. However,
not all *MP*'s gospel paraphrases are rewritten. Some are discarded
altogether, and others are taken over virtually unchanged, with the
result that large sections of the two poems run parallel, most
noticeably during the Crucifixion.

SP's non-biblical material exhibits the same range of relation-
ship to *MP*. Much is retained unaltered, but other passages are
adapted (though to a lesser degree) and a large amount is added.
Some of the new material would not have been out of place in *MP*,
for example short legendary expansions or moralizing comments, but
many of the additions are more outspokenly hortatory or chastising.
Others consist of interpretations of Christ's words, or explain
liturgical and ecclesiastical customs.[16]

It is *SP*'s innovations that result in the stylistic features
of the poem already noticed: contrasting materials, sudden changes
in style and fluency, pedantic care alternating with personal
involvement. Features that seemed to be attributable to an author
working from scratch are now naturally explained as the outcome of
revision.

II

Before proceeding to analyse sections of *SP* to demonstrate its
manipulation of *MP*, it will be helpful to provide a break-down of
its contents showing in very general terms the corresponding

passages in the earlier poem. B.D. Brown provides tables illus-
trating its agreements with the Vulgate (pp.lvi-lx). It will be
seen that some of the passages in *MP* do not follow on sequentially,
being found earlier in the poem, and these are marked below with *.

1-44	Anointing at Bethany	*MP* 1907-38
45-104	Entry into Jerusalem	*MP* 1939-86
105-162	Cleansing of the Temple, and Cursing of the Fig-Tree	*MP* 1987-2008
163-178	The Widow's Mite	**MP* 1593-1604
179-232	Teachings from John xii, including (179-207) the grain of wheat (John xii 24-9)	**MP* 1707-22 (John xii 24-9)
233-344	Parables from Matt. xxi-xxiii, including (233-53, 303-20) the parable of the vineyard	**MP* 1387-1428 (parable of the vineyard)
345-382	Parables from Matt. xiii	——
383-530	Eschatological discourses, including (509-30) readiness for Christ's coming	**MP* 733-44 (readiness for Christ's coming)
531-610	The Wise and Foolish Virgins	**MP* 1769-90
611-674	Parable of the Talents	**MP* 1791-1822
675-748	Doomsday	——
749-794	The Priests' Plot, and Bargain with Judas	*MP* 2033-54
795-914	Last Supper	*MP* 2055-2128
915-930	Prediction of Peter's Denial	*MP* 2129-40
931-1076	Teachings from John, including (931-1004) the pro-mise of the Comforter	**MP* 1723-34 (promise of the Comforter)
1077-1120	Gethsemane	*MP* 2141-74
1121-1174	Betrayal and Arrest of Christ	*MP* 2175-2214
1175-1274	Trial before Annas and Caiaphas, and Peter's Denial	*MP* 2215-76
1275-1386	Trial before Pilate and Herod	*MP* 2277-2362
1387-1412	Death of Judas	*MP* 2363-88
1413-1432	Scourging of Christ	*MP* 2389-2408
1433-1454	Journey to Calvary	*MP* 2409-30
1455-1678	Crucifixion	*MP* 2431-2612
1679-1718	Deposition, Burial, and Setting of the Watch	*MP* 2613-46
1719-1732	Resurrection	*MP* 2647-60

1733-1784	"Easter"	——
1785-1848	The Soldiers' Awakening and the Maries at the Sepulchre	MP 2661-90
1849-1872	Peter and John at the Sepulchre	MP 2691-2704
1871-1898	Appearance to Mary Magdalene	MP 2705-26
1899-1990	"The Defence of Women"	——
1991-2004	Appearance to the Three Maries	MP 2727-44
2005-2016	Appearance to Peter	MP 2745-54
2017-2082	Journey to Emmaus	MP 2755-92
2083-2124	Appearance in the Upper Room	MP 2793-2808
2125-2168	Appearance to Thomas	MP 2809-24
2169-2310	Appearance at the Sea of Tiberias	MP 2825-68
2311-2326	Appearance in Galilee	MP 2869-86
2327-2366	Final Appearance in Galilee	MP 2887-2902
2367-2416	Ascension	MP 2903-34
2417-2466	Choosing of Matthias	MP 2935-66
2467-2496	Pentecost	MP 2967-98
2497-2532	Healing at the Beautiful Gate, and Arrest and Release of Peter and John	MP 2999-3036
2533-2546	Later Preaching of the Apostles	MP 3037-48

The above table obviously makes no attempt to show which lines in *SP* and *MP* exactly correspond, or which are found only in one or other poem.[17] In any case the reviser, as has been said, does not work in terms of whole lines. What can usefully be shown here, however, again very broadly, is the way that *SP*'s dependence on *MP* fluctuates, as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
Not in MP (non-biblical)	Slight use of MP (almost wholly biblical)	Much new translation (but MP a consistent source)	Dependence on MP very marked	Almost complete dependence on MP
		1-162 Anointing at Bethany to the Fig-Tree		
	163-748 Teachings, Parables, Doomsday			
		749-930 The Priests' Plot to the Last Supper		
	931-1076 Teachings from John			
		1077-1274 Gethsemane to Peter's Denial		
			1275-1386 Trial before Pilate and Herod	
				1387-1732 Death of Judas to the Resurrection
1733-84 "Easter"				
		1785-1898 The Soldiers' Awakening to the Appearance to Mary Magdalene		
1899-1990 "Defence of Women"				
				1991-2016 Appearance to the Maries and to Peter
		2017-2416 Journey to Emmaus to the Ascension		
			2417-66 Choosing of Matthias	
				2467-2546 Pentecost to the Preaching of the Apostles

III

There is so much available evidence for *SP*'s use of *MP* that
selection for the present occasion is both necessary and problem-
atic. In what follows I have picked out ten places where the
reviser's demonstrable alterations to his source are especially
interesting. In each example the passage from *MP* is printed first.

(1) *The cursing of the fig-tree (MP 1987-94, SP 139-48)*[18]

     Oure lord was þo sore anhungred - to þe temple he gan gon;
     A fig tre he fond fayre leued, but frut ne bare it non.
     "Ne wexe þer non neuere eft", he seyde, "fig tre, no
          frut of þe,
     For þou woldest now beryn at myn nede no frut to helpe
          me".   1990
     þis figge tre cast anon hi[s] leuys þo he hadde þis
          ibede,
     & wex old as doþ a stoc and loste al his grenehede.
     His disciplis, þo þei þis say3, gret wunder haddyn
          withalle:
     "3if 3e were", seyde oure lord, "of stable þou3t of 3ow
          þus schuld befalle"

     A morwe as þe soneday . Ihesus ne abod namore,
     Ak to Ierusalem wente a3en . þo him hongrede sore.   140
     He sey a fyger by þe weye . yleoued fayre ynow,
     Ak he ne fond no frut þer-on . bote leues & bow.
     "Ne wexe þer neuere eft", he sede, "[figer] no frut on þe,
     For þou ne berest now in my neode . no frut to helpe me".
     þe treo anon for-oldede . as hit were an old ston;   145
     þer by-leuede noþing grene . þe disciplis sede anon,
     For wonder þo hi þis yseye . "lord", hi sede, "how is þis?
     Lo, þis fyger as þou sedest . for-olded is ywis".

In *SP* the reviser starts with a more precise (though not exact)
version of Matt. xxi 18-19, in which he makes use of phrases from
MP 1987-88 which are now expanded into four lines (*SP* 139-42). He
then reproduces Christ's curse almost verbatim from *MP* (*MP* 1989-90,
SP 143-4), before deciding once again to bring his poem closer to
the gospel. Most of *MP* 1991 is therefore omitted (Matthew merely
has "Et arefacta est continuo ficulnea", cf. *SP* 145a), and 1993,
on the disciples, is recast and expanded into *SP* 146b-8. In
between, however, the reviser retains the material in *MP* 1992 (as
SP 145b-6a), but for the sake of his rhymes changes the very
reasonable simile "as doþ a stoc" (i.e. "as does a tree-stump")
into the wholly inappropriate "as hit were an old ston".

(2) *Christ's example in washing his disciples' feet (MP 2119-22,
        SP 904-8)*

     "For to 3eue 3ow ensample", he seide, "þis now haue I do,
     [þat] 3e þat schul maystris ben to oþere 3e don also".   2120
     Lord Ihesu, wyche ensample þou 3eue amon[g] hem for pryte,

Qwan þou wesch þi disciplis feet þat aȝen þe were wurþ lyte!

For ich ȝiue ȝou ensaumple . þat as ich habbe ydo
þat ȝe do in þulke manere . for ich segge to soþe þis   905
þat þe hine nys nouȝt . aboue þe lord ywis".
[Whan þe lord waschiþ her feet þat his seruauntis were   906+1
He ȝaf hem fair ensample vs alle to lere],   906+2
þat we nome ensaumple of him . to beo meok aȝen prute,   908
Whanne he wosch his hynen fet . þat aȝen him were so
    lute.   907

After Christ, at the Last Supper, has washed his disciples' feet,
he explains to them what he has done. *MP* renders this in a single
couplet (2119-20) that does not wholly succeed in conveying
Christ's message, and the reviser replaces it with a close trans-
lation of John xiii 12-16a (*SP* 897-906) of which the last three
lines are given above: *MP* 2119 is in fact substantially preserved
in *SP* 904. The reviser was then still not content with *MP*'s short
exclamatory comment on Christ's words (2121-2), and he expands it
to four lines to make it more explicit.[19] Lines 906+1 and +2 are
new material, and *MP* 2121 is turned into 908. That makes a plaus-
ible three-line passage, but instead of inventing a new line to
finish the couplet the reviser retains *MP* 2122 as *SP* 907. This is
both syntactically awkward and superfluous in merely repeating the
content of 906+1.

(3) *The Arrest of Christ* (*MP* 2183-94, *SP* 1139-56)

Oure lord beheld þese Iewis alle & seyde, "Qwat seke ȝe?"
þei seyde, "Ihesu of Nazareth" - "I it am", seyde he.
þo were þe Iewis so sore adred þat vpryȝt þei felle to
    grounde;   2185
þei wist not qweþer it was day or nyȝt but ley þer a gret
    stounde.
For myraclis þat he oftyn don hadde wol sore þei were
    agryse;
Oure lord hem askyd eft qwat þei souȝtte þo þei were vp
    ryse.
þei seyde, "Ihesu of Nazareth" - "I it am", oure lord
    seyde þo;
"As I seyde ferst, I it am: qwat wil ȝe with me do?   2190
ȝif ȝe seke me, lete my disciplis gon";
þo sterte þe Iewis alle to hym & toke hym faste anon
With swerdis & with battys also, & his disciplis ecchon
Begunne alle to fle for fer but Seynt Peter & Seynt Iohn.

Oure lord stepte a lutel forþ . and þe gywes by-helde echon.
He sede, "whan seche ȝe" . and hi answerede anon   1140
"Ihesu", hi sede, "of Nazareth" . þo oure lord aȝen sede,
"Ich hit am" . and þe gwyes . anon felle adoun for drede.
For miracles þat he hadde ydo . hi felle to grounde
    vpriȝt,
And for drede nuste . whaþer hit was day oþer niȝt,
Ak leyen þer as dede men . so sore hi were agrise.   1145

Oure lord ham axede eftsone . þo hi were arise,
"Whan seche ȝe among ȝow" . þe gywes sede þis,
"We secheþ Ihesu of Nazareth" . oure lord answerede
    ywis,
"Ne sede ich ȝow þat ich hit am . and ich bydde ȝow
    echon
Leteþ, ȝif ȝe secheþ me . my disciples sauflich gon".   1150
þis he sede for þe prophete . longe sede byfore,
"Of þulke þat þou ȝeue me . y nabbe non forlore".
þo wente þe gywes forþ . and nome him faste anon,
And helde him and bounde . ek . and his disciples echon
By-gonne to fleo for fere . þer by-lefte non   1155
Bote hi þat him louede mest . seint Peter & seint Ion.

The reviser begins the narrative by expanding *MP* 2183-84 into four
lines (1139-42) that rather laboriously reproduce John xviii 4-6
more exactly. He then retains the content of the predominantly non-
biblical *MP* 2185-7 as *SP* 1143-5, but rearranges the phrases, partly
to avoid repetition (in which he does not entirely succeed) and
partly, perhaps, to remove the exaggeration of "but ley þer a gret
stounde". In 1146 he next picks up *MP* 2188, but delays Christ's
question until the following line which begins a fresh passage of
translation (1147-52 = John xviii 7-9). *SP* 1148-50 nevertheless
roughly correspond to *MP* 2189-91, and after *SP* 1151-2, which have
no equivalent in *MP* (they are inserted between two lines that in *MP*
form a couplet), the reviser makes use of *MP* 2192-4 when describing
the physical arrest of Christ in 1153-6 (which are only loosely
biblical). *MP* 2192a is modified into the more straightforward 1153a
(cf. Matt. xxvi 50), and 2193a, which anticipates Matt. xxvi 55, is
replaced by a half-line (1154a) which adds little to 2192b/1153b.
But the reviser's main concern here is to expand *MP*'s three lines
into four, because his 1153 corresponds to the second line of a
couplet, 2192, in his source. He achieves the expansion by insert-
ing two new half-lines, 1155b-6a, between 1155a and 1156b, which
together correspond to *MP* 2194. It is very neatly done.

(4)   *The Trial before Annas* (*MP* 2219-26, *SP* 1193-1204)

Anna askid oure lord anon qwy he was lad so,
& qwat he hadde aȝen here lawe mysseyd or mysdo.   2220
"Aske at hem", seide oure lord, "þat han herd of me,
ȝif I haue onyþing mysspoke opynlych or in priuyte".
þer stert a Iew & smot oure lord a buffat vnder þe ere,
& askid qwy he ansueryd so here byschop & mayster þere.
"[Bere] witnesse of euele", oure lord seide, "ȝif I haue
    [mys]spoke or [mys]do,
& ȝif I speke wel & do non euele, qwy smytyst þou me so?"

[Anna] accusede oure lord . and axede what he were,
And what his techinge was . þat he gan þe gywes lere.
"Ich habbe", quaþ oure lord þo . "al open and aperteliche 1195
Y-speke in þe temple and ytauȝt . and noþing priueliche.
Ech of ham þat hurde me . hi witeþ al my lore".
þo hupte þer forþ a gadelyng . and smot him wel sore

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Vnder þe ere a boffet . and þo he hadde þat ydo,
He axede him whi he answerede . hare bisschop so.   1200
"3if ich habbe", quaþ oure lord . "ou3t yspeke amys,
Ber þanne wytnesse . of þing þat vuel is;
And 3if ich habbe wel yspeke . whi smytestou me so?"
O . Ihesu lutel was þi gult . and lutel haddestou mysdo.

In *SP* 1193-7 the reviser virtually replaces *MP* 2219-22 with a fresh
translation designed to reproduce John xviii 19-21 more exactly.
This, however, ends in the middle of a couplet, and so he expands
MP 2223-4 into three lines, *SP* 1198-1200. This time he elaborates
the non-biblical element (1198a). The extension is managed by
delaying *MP* 2223b until 1199a, and then filling out the rest of that
line with "and þo he hadde þat ydo". The reviser then reverts to
close gospel translation, with the result that two lines in *MP* (2225-
6) again become three (*SP* 1201-3 = John xviii 23). He is left with
one line to supply to close his couplet, and he produces for the
occasion an apostrophe (1204).

(5)   *St Peter's denials (MP 2265-76, SP 1239-58)*

Seynt Peter beheld oure lord faste; a Iew hym vndernome: 2265
"Man", he seyde, "þou art with hym þat 3under schal han
    his dome".
Seynt Peter forsok & seyde, "Nay" - he hadde so gret
    drede;
Anoþer Iew þer cam also; "Nay", eftsonys he sede.
A woman seyde, "þou art with hym; men moun wel sen be þe,
For þi speche schewith wel † þou art of Galile".   2270
þo swor Peter gretlyche þat he dede hym not knowe;
Anon ry3t with þat wurd þe cok began to crowe.
Oure lord caste his y3en on hym anon with þat dede;
Seynt Peter hym beþou3t anon of þat Ihesus hym sede,
þat he schulde hym þry3is forsake - he gan to wepe sore; 2275
Wepynge he wente out at þe dore [&] he cam þer no more.

Peter stod by þe fur . and ysey al þis wo.
He nadde nou3t so hardi flesch . muche neer him to go,   1240
And naþeles he byheold him faste . a gyw hit vndernom.
He sede, "þou art wiþ him þer 3end . þat haþ þulke dom,
þou ne mi3t hit nou3t forsake . for þi speche sheweþ þe
And þou art of his countre ek . of þe lond of Galilee".
Seint Peter sede þat he ne knew him nou3t . & grete
    oþes swor þer-to,   1245
Ak me þinkeþ þat oure lord . ne ley nou3t for him þo.
On of þe bisschopes men . þat was Malcus mey ywis,
Whas ere was y-smyte of . by seint Peter sede þis,
"What, ne sey ich þe nou3t . myd him in þe orchard?
Ich wot wel þat þou art wiþ him" . þo peter þou3te þat
    tydyng hard,   1250
And swor and mansede him . 3if he him dude knowe,
And anon wiþ þat word . þe cok by-gan to crowe.
Oure lord caste on him his eyen . anon wiþ þulke dede.
Peter þou3te anon . on þat oure lord to him sede,

þat he sholde him forsake . þries . he gan to wepe sore,   1255
And al wepyng wente him out . and ne com þer namore.
In-to an old put he wente . wepyng þer he lay,
þat is þe put of cokkes crowe . ycluped ʒut to þis day.

After the Arrest of Christ *MP* has the sequence: Trial before Annas,
Trial before Caiaphas, the Scourging, and Peter's denials, but the
reviser, influenced by St John, interposes the first denial (John
xviii 15-18) before either of the trials, at *SP* 1181-92. When he
returns to the subject of St Peter at 1239-58 he therefore has only
two denials to narrate, as against the three in the corresponding
passage *MP* 2265-76. After an introductory couplet (*SP* 1239-40) he
combines into 1241-4 the first two lines of *MP*'s first denial
(2265-6) and a version of the first two lines of its third (2269-
70). The lines omitted (2267-8) contain, in *MP*, Peter's first and
second actual denials, with the result that *SP* 1241-4 become the
preamble for what is in *SP* only the second actual denial (1245) but
in *MP* already the third (2271). The reviser then puts aside *MP*
2272 (for he is not yet ready for the cock-crow) and completes his
couplet with a filler, *SP* 1246. For his third denial he returns to
St John (*SP* 1247-52 = John xviii 26-7). There is no equivalent in
MP, whose denials rely on the synoptic accounts, but the reviser at
last picks up *MP* 2272 (= *SP* 1252) when Christ's prophecy is ful-
filled. To close the passage he adopts *MP* 2273-6 without change
(*SP* 1253-6), and adds a final non-biblical couplet of his own
(1257-8).

(6)   *Christ before Herod* (*MP* 2307-8, *SP* 1311-14)

At þe laste Herodis sent hym aʒen, cloþed al in qwyʒt
      cloþ;
þo were Pilat & he goode frendys þat long tyme had be
      wroþ.   2308

þo sente Herodes him aʒen . ycloþed in white cloþe.
By-fore þat herodes & pilatus . hadde longe y-beo
      wroþe,   1312
Ak þo bycome hi goede freondes . and al of one wille,
For more wraþþe oure lord hadde power . to make beo
      stille.

The reviser is content to accept *MP*'s version of this story without
change (*SP* 1303-11 = *MP* 2299-2307), except at the very end where he
for once moves further away from the gospel so that he can the more
easily add a couplet of his own. *MP* 2308 is faithful to the order
of clauses in Luke xxiii 12 ("Et facti sunt amici Herodes et
Pilatus in ipsa die: nam antea inimici erant ad invicem"), but the
reviser wishes to comment on Christ's part in creating friendship,
the first element. Consequently he expands *MP* 2308 into two lines,
reversing the ideas (*SP* 1312-13), and adds the new *SP* 1314.

(7) *The end of the Trial before Pilate* (MP 2361-4, SP 1377-88)

He wesche his handis & seyde, "I am giltles of his blood;
Takiþ hym qwan 3e wil [non oþer] and doþ hym on þe rood". 2362
þo Iudas say þat he was demed, gret sorwe to hym he nom;
He went hym forþ & lete hym wurþe þo he had herd his dom.

He wosch his hondes and sede . "ich am gulteles of his
        blode.
Nymeþ him whanne 3e nolleþ non oþer . and doþ him on þe
        rode".
"3e, let þe wrecche", quaþ þe gyewes . "of his blod beo
        ydo,
Vpon vs-selue among vs . and vp oure children al-so".   1380
As who-so seiþ 3if we mysdoþ . ne care nou3t of oure dede,
Ak let vs and oure ofspryng . abygge oure shrewhede.
And hare bone is yhurd fol wel . for to soþe ich wot þis,
þat an eorþe so muche shame . of no manere folk þer nys,
For hi beoþ y-harled her and þer . as houndes foule ynow. 1385
þey hare owene bone beo ycome . me þinkeþ þer nis no wow.
Pilatus hem let al yworþe þo he hadde y3iue his dom.
Iudas þo he was y-dampned . gret deol to him nom.

The two poems run parallel during Pilate's final struggle with the
Jews (*SP* 1367-78 = *MP* 2351-62), reproducing first John xix 12-15
and then, when Pilate washes his hands, Matt. xxvii 24. *MP* 2362 is
an expansion of "vos videritis", and appears naturally to conclude
the passage. The reviser accepts this line (*SP* 1378), but then
returns in 1379-80 to a close rendering of Matt. xxvii 25, which
acts as a cue for six hostile lines on the Jewish race that have no
counterpart in *MP* (*SP* 1381-6). There then follows a 26-line
passage on the repentance of Judas in which the two poems again
closely correspond, but the reviser first reverses the opening
couplet (*MP* 2363-4, *SP* 1387-8). His reason for doing so may have
been either that *MP* 2364 is non-biblical and might have been
thought to delay the narrative, or that he considered a reminder
about Pilate's decision to be necessary after the digression of
1381-6. The effect of his alteration is to turn "He (Judas) went
away and left him (Christ) alone when he had heard his sentence"
(*MP* 2364) into "Pilate left them all alone when he had given his
judgement" - an unprecedented narrative detail, for Pilate should
by now have dropped out of the story. The account of Judas's
repentance may as a result follow on more smoothly, but, in addition,
it has now to begin in mid-couplet.

(8) *The angel alighting at the Sepulchre* (MP 2661-8, SP 1789-1804)

Fro heuene þer ly3t an aungel doun þorw3 oure lordys
        grace;
His cloþis weryn as qwy3t so snow3; wunder red was his
        face.
þat lyde he ouerturnede anon, þervpon he satt adoun;
þe kny3ttys wokyn euerychon al þorw3 his grete soun.
þei say þe aungel so grislyche and [þe] cloþis also
        tosprad   2665

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þat oure lord was inne wounde; wol sore þei weryn adrad
þat þei lay as þei were ded – siþþin þei rysen atte laste
& runne to telle here lord[ys] þerfore how þei weryn
        agaste.

þe niȝt after þe Saterday . as in þe dawenynge
þe Soneday [in] þe Ester . as þe sonne bygan to springe,   1790
[þis] Marie Magdaleyne . and þe oþere al-so
Come to seo þe sepulcre . hare smeryynge to do;
Ak þe eorþe-quakynge was . ymad wiþ gret soun,
And oure lordes aungel . fram heuene aliȝte a-doun
And to þe sepulcre he wende . and ouer-turnde þe ston   1795
þat was þe lyd and þer-vppe . sat a-doun anon.
His lokyng and his face was . as red so eny fur is,
And as liȝtynge and his cloþinge . whyt so snow ywis.
Hi þat kepte þe sepulcre . hadde so gret drede
Of þis angel þat hi seye . þat hi leye riȝt as dede.   1800
For hi seye þe aungel so grislich . wel sore hi were
        a-drad.
And þe cloþ þat Ihesus was on ywounde . hi seye ek al
        to-sprad,
And lygge wiþoute al a-brod . and suþþe hi arise
And ȝorne and tolde hare souereynes . how sore hi were
        agrise.

In *MP* the angel descends and frightens the soldiers immediately
after the Resurrection itself (2647-60), but the reviser, conscious
of St Matthew, places the incident in the context of the visit of
the three Maries to the Sepulchre, delayed in *MP* until 2673ff. *SP*
1789-1800 are a fairly close translation of Matt. xxviii 1-4, but
1793-1800 also correspond to *MP* 2661-4, and it is noticeable that
the reviser has incorporated certain phrases from the older poem
as extra narrative details. In 1795-6 he describes the "ston", as
in Matthew (where it is rolled away), as also being the "lyd", as
in *MP*, though these derive from separate iconographic traditions.[20]
In the next couplet the angel's face is said to be both "red"
(1797), as in *MP*, and "as liȝtynge" (1798), as in Matthew. After
the end of the translation *SP* 1801-4 match *MP* 2665-8 much more
closely, but the reviser makes changes to *MP* as a result of what
he has already narrated. Thus *MP* 2667a is removed, in the light
of *SP* 1800b, and to fill the gap in 1803 the reviser recasts the
preceding couplet, *MP* 2665-6. In effect he transposes 2665b and
2666b so that his couplet 1801-2 concludes with the subject of the
clothes, which he then expands (without adding to the sense) in
1803a.

(9)   *The Maries at the Sepulchre* (MP 2673-84, SP 1811-20)

These þre Maryis, as I seyde er, Marie Magdaleyn
& oure ladyis susteris tweyȝe, of þat dawnyng were wol
        fayn.
Betymys þei arysen þe Soneday & here oynement with hem
        nom;   2675
As sone as þe sunne aros to þe sepulchre þei com.

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Betwen hem þei tolde as þei ȝede, "How schal we þis ende,
& þe lyde þat þervpon lyþ ho may it ouerwende?"
þese wymmen were so sore adred þei wist now how it was
    þere,
And euere þei awayted þerto but þei durst not come nyȝ
    for fere.   2680
þei ȝeden oftyn boþe fer & nyȝ: þei wist not ho he[m]
    radde;
þei say þis aungel gryslyche sitte – þo were þei sorere
    adradde.
þei say þe lyde eke ouerwent; þo doutted hem þe more
þat here lord was away led; wo was hem for sore.

Marie Magdaleyne . and hure felawes tweye
To seo oure lord as ich sede . dude ham in þe weye.
So sore hi dradde þat hi nuste . how hit ferde þere,
And a-waytede fer and to . and ne durste go [forþ for
    fere],
Ak ȝeode abak and stode stille . and suþþe ȝeode for[þ]
    softe.   1815
Ofte hi ȝeode softe forþ . and suþþe wiþ-drow ham ofte.
þo sede hi ham bytwene . "who may awey bringe
þe ston þat is at þe dore . of his buryynge?"
þo by-heolde hi þiderward . and yseye anon
þe lyd yturned vp þe doun . and hit was a wel gret ston. 1820

MP takes four lines to set the scene for the Maries' visit to the
Sepulchre (2673-6), but the reviser, returning to the subject,
needs only two (1811-12). The older poem then has a couplet in
which the Maries talk on the way to the Sepulchre (2677-8), followed
by three lines describing their fear and hesitation (2679-81). The
reviser reverses these elements, very likely so that their question-
ing about the stone (*SP* 1817-18) should immediately precede their
sight of it rolled away, as in Mark xvi 3-4. Their doubts and
fears therefore come first, *SP* 1813-15a being virtually parallel to
MP 2679-81a. In the latter poem the sight of the angel at once
follows (2682). The reviser does not want this, and so he fills
out the remainder of his couplet with three half-lines each repeat-
ing the idea of the Maries' timidity (1815b-16). The literary effect
is not unsuccessful - one can picture the women alternately advanc-
ing and retreating - but the couplet is nonetheless clearly the
result of expediency. *SP* 1817-20 are then taken afresh from Mark,
except that the reviser still retains a dual conception of the
nature of the Sepulchre. In 1817-18 "awey bringe / þe ston" gets
away from *MP*'s "þe lyde . . . ouerwende" (2678), but the effect is
spoiled in 1820, not least by the second half-line's rather hasty
and desperate qualification of the first. *MP*'s corresponding 2683a
does not in its extant form preserve "yturned vp þe doun", but it
is possible that the latter was the original wording, by which the
reviser let himself be influenced.

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(10) *The necessary qualities of a priest* (MP 2855-68, SP 2235-54)

Qwat were þo schep but mennys soulis þat he muste kepe
     nede?   2855
Qwy bad he hym more þan oþere his schep for to fede
But for he schulde be hed of holy cherche & also Pope
     of Rome?
þry3is he bad hym fede his schep, qwy bad he hym so ylome?
- For hoso is mayster of holy cherche, as pryst & parsoun
     is,
þre þingis he muste with hym haue to reule soulys iwis: 2860
Wurd & dede with ensample - but he haue + þese [goodys]
     þre
He may not trewe wardeyn of holy cherche in no maner be.
Good wurd he must haue to reule wel, and clene holy dede,
[&] fayr beryng to 3eue ensample alle oþere to goode lede.
Sekyr be euery man of holy cherche but he haue alle þre   2865
þat hym were better at domysday a schepperde to haue be;
For 3if he fayle ony of þese, and men mysdon þerfore,
He schal ansuere at domysday for euery soule þat is forlore.

What were sheep and þe lomb . þat he bad him wisse and
     rede   2235
Bote [manes] soules here . þat he moste wissi neode?
þer-fore more þan anoþer . he bad him [so] y-lome,
For he was suþþe as 3e witeþ . Pope ymad of Rome,   2238
[& hadde al holi churche in his warde to guye,]   2238+1
þer-fore he bad him soules to wityte . ak whi [bad he]
     him þrie?   2239
For who-so is [maister] of holy chirche . as preost and
     persoun is   2241
þreo þinges he mot haue . to wissi þe soules ywis, -
Word, dede and ensaumple . & bote he habbe alle þeos þreo
He ne may wardeyn of holy chirche in no manere beo.
Of goede wordes he moste beo . þat folk wel to wisse   2245
To preche and to shewe þe manere . to deserue heuene
     blisse.
Of goede workes he mot beo . and of holy dede,
Of berynge to 3iue ensaumple . oþer men to goede lede,
For 3if þer fayleþ eny of þeos . and man mysdo þer-fore
He shal answerie at domes-day . of eche soule for-lore.   2250
And so him hadde beo betere . habbe ywist by-fore
A fold fol of fale sheep . þey hi were half y-schore,
Oþer skabbede in þe pokkes . oþer hare ryg al to-tore,
And bydde crist at one word . þat he were him-sulf vnbore.

The final example of the reviser's adaptation of *MP* is a passage of
exposition following Christ's charge to Peter to "Feed my sheep".
The biblical dialogue occupies *MP* 2849-54 and *SP* 2221-9, the latter
being principally a new translation of John xxi 15-17. *MP* then asks
(and answers) three questions: what were the sheep? (2855); why did
Christ ask Peter? (2856); and why did he ask him three times? (2858).
The reviser inserts his own additional explanation before taking up
these points. When he does so, at *SP* 2235, he expands *MP* 2855 into

two lines, making the message more explicit but spoiling the meta-
phor by replacing "fede" with "wisse and rede", which merely
anticipates the answer. SP 2237-8 then correspond to MP 2856-7,
after which the latter poem closes its couplet with the single-line
third question (2858), which is answered separately in 2859-62.
The reviser, wishing to preserve these last four lines (see SP 2241-
4), first has two lines to fill, and as the third question itself
is not susceptible of expansion, he extends the answer to the second
from 2238 into 2238+1 and 2239a, without adding to the sense.[21]

MP 2859-62 / SP 2241-4 explain that Christ asked Peter three
times because a "mayster of holy cherche" needs three qualities.
The reviser is not, however, content with MP's next couplet (2863-
4), which briefly explains why each quality is necessary, but turns
it into four lines. MP 2863a (good words) is expanded didactically
into SP 2245-6; 2863b (good deeds) becomes SP 2247; and 2864 (good
example) is retained as SP 2248. MP 2865-8 then conclude the
passage by arguing that unless a priest has all three qualities it
were better at Doomsday for him to have been an actual shepherd
(2865-6); because if he is deficient, and men sin in consequence,
he will answer for it (2867-8). The reviser, in contrast, places
the second couplet first (SP 2249-50 = MP 2867-8), which gives him
space to develop the idea of MP 2866 into four lines of surprising
intensity: it were better for the priest to have been looking after
real sheep even if they were ugly, diseased and injured (2251-3),
and better, finally, if he were to ask Christ to make him "unborn"
(2254).

Once the reviser's refashioning of MP is pointed out it is
possible to discern him at work in SP almost continuously. One
misleading reason for at first assuming that his was the original
composition is the fact that SP's readings frequently appear
superior to MP's where the two poems run parallel. This, however,
is attributable to the early fifteenth-century date of St John's
College Cambridge MS B. 6, the sole witness for most of MP. The
best manuscripts of SP are, it seems, at least a hundred years
older, and thus much closer to the date of composition of the two
works.

Corruption or deliberate scribal alteration in the textual
tradition of the St John's College MS in all probability also
explains the omission from the extant form of MP of two passages
in SP which seem to be original, at least in substance. In the
first case, an apostrophe on Christ's sufferings on the Cross (SP
1603-24, following MP 2558), a similar passage occurs in the
Abridged Life of Christ (447-72), an independent derivative of MP.[22]
The second omission comprises two lines on the Jews' continuing
belief that Christ's body was removed from the Sepulchre by his
disciples (SP 1809-10, following MP 2672). In this case a couplet
with very similar content is found additionally not only in the
Abridged Life (551-2), but also in the account of the Resurrection
in the Harrowing of Hell and the Destruction of Jerusalem (43-4),
another poem that draws independently on MP.[23] It is likely that
the survival of a complete early manuscript of MP, presumably

containing these passages, would have demonstrated *SP*'s derivative-
ness even more clearly.

IV

Earlier in this article was mentioned the similarity in method
between *SP*'s revisions of *MP*, and the *Expanded Nativity*'s revisions
of the *Nativity of Mary and Christ*. In each case the reviser makes
an earlier poem more canonical by introducing new gospel trans-
lations, and in such a way that the existing text is often subtly
modified. In conclusion I would like to present evidence from other
newly-introduced material in *SP* and the *Expanded Nativity* to support
the natural suspicion that the two revisions are in fact the work of
the same poet.

My earlier study of the revisions in the *Expanded Nativity*
(*EN*)[24] drew attention to non-biblical lines written in a poetic
style and with an individual voice different from those normally
found in the *South English Legendary* collection. The same voice is
discernible in parts of *SP*. In these passages one is aware in both
poems of a personal involvement by the writer which at times takes
the form of a lyrical gentleness and at others of what is almost
ferocity. The first characteristic is most evident when the poet
is occupied with the Infant Christ, the Virgin, and Mary Magdalene,
and the second when he is criticising contemporary medieval mis-
behaviour (or stupidity), including that of imperfect clergy.
General features of the style are a repeated rhetorical questioning;
direct address to the audience (or reader) in a conversational,
colloquial manner; comparisons drawn from medieval life; and an
ability to close a passage with a telling and memorable line or
half-line.

I first give two examples of the style from *EN*'s account of the
birth of Christ. The first reflects on the lack of kingly pomp in
the stable, and on the painlessness of Mary's childbearing; the
second communicates the poet's sense of wonder at the behaviour of
the ox and ass:[25]

Whar was as al þe nobleye, . þat fel to a quene,   315
At a kinges burþtime, . whar was hit isene?
Ledies and chamberleins, . scarlet to drawe and grene,
To winden ynne þe ȝonge king? . al was lute, ich wene.
Non help of wommon . þe riche quene ne fond;   (595)
Bote þo þe child was ibore, . hire selue heo it wond,   320
And bar hit to þe cracche . and leide it in a wisp of
      heiȝe.
Hire wombe ne ok nouȝt sore, . heo ne dradde noȝt to
      deiȝe;
Heo bar a betere burþone . þan wymmen now do,
Heo hedde elles igroned sore . and nouȝt ascaped so.   (600)

Now was þis a wonder dede . and aȝe kunde inow;   331
Vor wel ichot þat oxen kunne . bet now drawe ate plow,
And asses bere sackes . and corn aboute to bringe,

þan to make meri gleo . and knele bi fore a kinge   (610)
. . . .
How couþen heo here legges bowen . & here knen so to
      wende,   337
To knele bifore a king? . who made hem so hende?
Now weren hit wonder gleomen to, . who brou3te hem such
      mod?   (615)
Ac whan we habbeþ al ido, . þat child ibore was god.   340

My third example from *EN* illustrates the other facet of the style,
in this case the writer's impatience with those who believe that St
Anastasia could have been present at the Nativity:[26]

þe lesinge of mani foles . telleþ of seint anastase,   355
þat heo scholde wiþ oure ledi beo; . hit nis bote þe
      mase:
Vor heo ne sei3 neuer oure ledi her, . vor to hundred
      3er bifore
And more, ar heo come an erþe, . oure lord was ibore.
Som wrecche bifond þis lesinge . wiþ onri3te,   (635)
Vor as muche as me makeþ of hire munde . a midewinter
      ni3te.   360

In *SP* the poet allows himself much more freedom in making
personal observations, but the most remarkable passage, on which I
wish to concentrate, is undoubtedly the long "defence of women",
mentioned earlier. First, however, I give two examples from else-
where in the poem. One compares medieval merchants unfavourably
with Judas, but still attacks him, with both a curse and the
imagined audience response (785), for the bargain he made with the
Jews:

Goed chep þe shrewe him grauntede . þat him so solde;
He ne axede nou3t a ferþing more . þan þe gywes him
      tolde.   780
He ne lowede him nou3t to deore . as þis chapmen wolleþ
      echon
þing þat is deoreworþ . ak he axede ham anon
'What wolleþ 3e for him 3iue' . as who seiþ 'beode 3e
And as goed chep ich wolle him 3iue . as 3e wolleþ bydde
      me'.
Now luþer þrift vp-on his heued . Amen seggeþ alle,   785
For luþer chapman he was . and al-so him is byfalle.

The other example illustrates the poet's ability to identify
sympathetically with biblical characters. It is a passage which
describes the Joseph who failed to get elected as the apostle to
take Judas's place, and which then goes on to reflect about his
mother:

And Iosep þey he a goed man were . by-leuede as he er was,
For a man nys neuere þe wors . þey an-oþer habbe
      betere cas,
And al-so beo betere þan he . as me seoþ ofte by wone.

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þis goede man Iosep was . oure lady suster sone   2460
And seint Iacob his broþer . and seint simon & Iude;
þe wyf þat suche sones bar . miȝte beo a goed brude
And ne of-þinche nouȝt þe tyme . þat ȝeo yspoused was.

The "defence of women" is inserted into *SP* after Christ's
first post-Resurrection appearance, which was to Mary Magdalene.
By appearing first to a woman who had been sinful, says the poet,
Christ honoured all women and all sinners. In this the reviser is
developing a short passage in *MP* on the same theme (2723-6), and
so here again we see him adapting his source. But he then takes
Mary Magdalene as an example of the faithfulness of women (she
stayed at the empty Sepulchre, unlike the apostles), and *MP*'s four
lines become ninety-two (1899-1990), such is his involvement. From
reflecting on Mary's faithfulness and love (1907-24) he passes to
attacking the conventional view that it is women who are fickle and
lecherous:

And how ⁺ is þanne of wymmen . þat me blameþ ham so   1925
In songes and in rymes . and in bokes eke þerto,
To segge þat hi false beoþ . and vuele to leoue,
Fykel and luþer and vntruwe . many man to greue?
Whar is eny womman . who-so wole segge soþ
þat byddeþ men by ham lygge . ak al day men ham doþ   1930
And ȝiueþ ek to fol wymmen . to don hare lecherye
Seluer, gold and oþer mede . to don hare folye?
Whar woldestou so stable man fynde . þat ȝif a fayr
    womman come
Gentyl and hende . and by-souȝte him of folye ylome,
þat he nolde turne his þouȝt . to do folye atte fyne?   1935
For ȝif he ne dude me wolde him holde . worþy to lygge
    in schryne!

Most women, on the contrary, will not yield to blandishments; but
if one does she is blamed a thousand times more than a man, although
it is men who are normally the instigators of lechery. The poet
bitterly exposes this hypocritical double standard, and vividly
attacks the masculine habit of slandering women when drunk:

Whanne men [sitteþ] in hare hayt . vp hare ale-benche,
And habbeþ þe pycher & þe coppe . & þe botyler to
    schenche,   1960
þanne is hare iangle & hare game . to deme som sely
    wenche,
þat god ȝeue þat some of ham miȝte . in þe ale-fat
    a-drenche!

This is impassioned invective; but after giving further examples of
men's tendency to condemn all women (and all priests) on the
strength of the misdeeds of occasional individuals, the poet returns
at the end, with great tenderness, to describing the unparalleled
faithfulness and love of truly good women:

Whi ne mot on bere his gult . and anoþer his?
Bote ʒif on mysdoþ . hi beoþ yblamed alle ywis.   1980
For þe loue of Ihesu crist . ʒe þat conne resoun,
Ne blameþ noþing þe gulteles . bote ʒe seo enchesoun.
And whanne ʒe habbeþ al ysed . god ʒiue ham alle schame
þat wiþoute enchesoun . eny goed womman blame,
For more myldhede and goednesse . in non eorþlich best
     nys,   1985
Ne more milce & truwenesse . þan in a goed womman is.
ʒe seoþ Marie Magdaleyne . oure lord souʒte al-one
þo þe apostles þat wiþ him were . lete him lygge echone.
Whare was a-pertour loue . seggeþ þat ʒe ne lye,
Whar was eny stablour . þan was þe holy Marie?[27]   1990

Even though he can manage such effects, the poet whom we have
distinguished is not the most skilled of craftsmen. In both *EN* and
SP he can be seen to handle his source-poems clumsily as well as
ingeniously, and his expositions and gospel renderings can be labor-
ious. But when he lets his own voice sound, on a subject that
engages him, he stands out as a writer to be taken seriously. It
is likely that his voice is also to be heard in other parts of the
South English Legendary, and this wider activity will, I hope, be
the subject of a future study.[28]

NOTES

1   *The Textual Tradition of the South English Legendary*, Leeds Texts and
     Monographs n.s. 6 (1974), and *An East Midland Revision of the South English
     Legendary* [editor], Middle English Texts 4 (Heidelberg, 1976). See also
     O.S. Pickering, "The Expository *Temporale* Poems of the *South English
     Legendary*", *Leeds Studies in English* n.s. 10 (1978) pp.1-17.

2   The "A" redaction is represented by *The South English Legendary*, ed.
     Charlotte D'Evelyn and Anna J. Mill, EETS, OS 235, 236, 244 (London, 1956-
     59).

3   See O.S. Pickering, "The *Temporale* Narratives of the *South English
     Legendary*", *Anglia* 91 (1973) pp.425-55.

4   Pickering, "*Temporale* Narratives", p.447, and *The South English Nativity
     of Mary and Christ* [editor], Middle English Texts 1 (Heidelberg, 1975)
     p.32.

5   O.S. Pickering, "Three *South English Legendary* Nativity Poems", *Leeds
     Studies in English* n.s. 8 (1975) pp.105-19.

6   *The Southern Passion*, ed. Beatrice Daw Brown, EETS, OS 169 (London, 1927)
     p.viii and fn.6.

7   "The Structural Development of the South English Legendary", *JEGP* 41
     (1942) pp.320-44 (p.332). *MP* has been shown to be one constituent part
     (the other is the *Nativity of Mary and Christ*) of what Wells and Brown
     speak of as the "Long Life of Christ" and the "Life of Christ": see *The
     South English Nativity of Mary and Christ*, ed. Pickering, pp.20-3.

8   Miss Wells's view that *MP* is derived from *SP* was restated in Pickering,
     "*Temporale* Narratives", pp.445-6, which therefore now needs correction.

9   Forthcoming (1984) in the Middle English Texts series, edited from
     St John's College Cambridge MS B.6, ff.35r-69v. A long fragment of the
     poem is also preserved in MS Laud Misc. 108, ff.1r-10v, and a short
     extract in Trinity College Cambridge MS R.3.25, f.270r-v.

10   Described by Brown, *Southern Passion*, pp.xvii-xxiii, with the exception
     of Z, for which see O.S. Pickering and Manfred Görlach, "A Newly-
     Discovered Manuscript of the *South English Legendary*", *Anglia* 100 (1982) pp.
     109-23. A twelfth manuscript, Cambridge University Library Ff.5.48, ff.
     87v-92v, contains an altered extract, edited by J.Y. Downing, "A Critical
     Edition of Cambridge University MS Ff.5.48", Ph.D. thesis (Washington,
     1969) pp.238-48. For the freely rewritten extracts in the *Cursor Mundi*
     manuscript, Cotton Vespasian A. III, see Pickering, "*Temporale* Narratives",
     p.444 fn.38.

11   For details, see *Southern Passion*, ed. Brown, pp.xvii-xxx and pp.93-101;
     Görlach, *Textual Tradition*, p.157; and, for Z, Pickering and Görlach, "A
     Newly-Discovered Manuscript", p.115.

12   The numbers broadly correspond to the following passages in Brown's
     edition: 1, ll.1785-1848; 2, ll.1849-72; 3, ll.1873-2016; 4, ll.2017-88;
     5, ll.2089-2124; 6, ll.2125-68; 7, ll.2169-2220; 8, ll.2221-74; 9, ll.
     2275-2310; 10, ll.2311-26; 11, ll.2327-66; 12, ll.2367-2416; 13, ll.2417-
     66; 14, ll.2467-end.

[13] See the stemma in *Southern Passion*, ed. Brown, p.xxx (her sigils LETyT).

[14] i.e. the arrangement and scope of the narrative. In the matter of textual variants Mrs Brown's copy-text, P, belongs to a manuscript group removed from the main textual tradition, and P's individual readings are often not as close to *MP* as those of some other manuscripts. See further fn.18 below.

[15] Derek Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry* (London, 1977) p.105.

[16] Passages of devotional apostrophe occur in both poems but to a greater extent in *SP*. They are discussed in O.S. Pickering, "Devotional Elements in Two Early Middle English Lives of Christ", *Leeds Studies in English* n.s. 14, *Essays in Memory of Elizabeth Salter* (1983) pp.152-66.

[17] My edition of *MP* (fn. 9 above) contains a detailed table of shared lines.

[18] *MP* is quoted from my forthcoming critical edition of the text in St John's College Cambridge MS B.6 (fn. 9 above): editorial additions or substitutions are indicated by [ ], and editorial omissions by +. *SP* is quoted from Brown's edition, with some modification to her system of capitalisation, and the mid-line mark changed for convenience from ꞏ to . . At times I have emended her text by adopting or substituting readings from her textual apparatus (taken from MS H or T, and here enclosed within square brackets) where these seem more likely to be original in the light of *MP* and the sense of the passage. Mrs Brown's printed text does not amount to a critical edition of *SP* (which is still needed), and her base manuscript, P, belongs to the less central manuscript group, π (Brown, p.xxiv). MSS HT belong to the opposing group τ, and it is clear from Mrs Brown's textual apparatus that their readings are frequently closer to those of *MP*.

[19] The printed text of *SP* is clearly corrupt at this point, preserving only the third and fourth lines and these in reverse order. Lines 906+1 and +2 above are taken from MS T, as printed by Mrs Brown among her textual variants. These also make clear that 908 precedes 907 in MS T.

[20] See the next paragraph for another instance of the same phenomenon.

[21] Line 2238+1 is taken from Mrs Brown's textual apparatus (MS H), the printed 2240 (not in H) being clearly a filler to compensate for a missing line. It reads: "3e shulleþ yhure after . for y nelle 3ow nou3t lye". It may also be noted here that 2237 "þer-fore" may conceal an originally interrogative "wher-fore" (although H supports the printed text), and that 2239 ("witye") is like 2235 ("wisse and rede") in failing to preserve Christ's metaphorical "feed".

[22] The passage is discussed in "Devotional Elements" (fn.16 above), pp.154-6. For the *Abridged Life*, see Pickering, "*Temporale* Narratives", pp.446-8.

[23] This matter is treated more fully in my edition of *MP*. For the *Harrowing*, see Pickering, "*Temporale* Narratives", pp.448-9. It has now been edited by C.W. Marx, "The Devil's Rights and the Deception of the Devil: Theological Background and Presentations in Middle English Literature, with an edition of *The Devil's Parliament*", D.Phil. thesis (York, 1981) I, pp. 449-75 and II, pp.233-59.

[24] Pickering, "Three *South English Legendary* Nativity Poems".

[25] Quotations from *EN* (MS Egerton 1993, ff.30r-40r) are from *Altenglische*

Legenden, ed. Carl Horstmann (Paderborn, 1875) pp.81-109. Horstmann's lineation is given in parentheses.

[26] This passage is in fact adapted from four lines at the end of the *South English Legendary* poem, *Anastasia*, and it is apparent how the reviser has intensified the sentiment. I quote from *The South English Legendary*, ed. D'Evelyn and Mill, Vol. II, EETS, OS 236 (1956) p.590:

> Lesinges me seiþ manion . þat heo mid oure Leuedi was
> þo oure Louerd was ibore . ac neuere soþ it nas
> Ac som fals man ferst yuond . þulke lesinge wiþ vnri3t
> For me haþ of hure a munde . eche 3er þulke ni3t.

(Lines 115-18, from Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 145, f.172r.)

[27] With the distinctive colloquialism of 1983a may be directly compared "Ac whan we habbeþ al ido" in *EN* 340, quoted above.

[28] A partial version of the present paper was given to Sheffield University Medieval Society in November 1981.