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

By O.S. PICKERING

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; 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. The associated temporale narratives centred on the Life of Christ were also developed out of each other, 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. 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.

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, 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". 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. Recently, however, the opportunity afforded by the preparation of the first full edition of MP 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
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

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<th>Manuscript</th>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Bodley 779, ff.25v-41r, 171r-72v</td>
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<td>Z</td>
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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 DN0T. Consequently the form of SP printed by Mrs Brown can be taken to represent what was originally intended, as regards content, 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.1v). 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", but this does not seem quite right, particularly when the lengthy correspondences with MP are taken into account. Of the 2508 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 remainder 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 otherwise 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 relationship 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. 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 illustrating 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 *.

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<td>Parables from Matt. xxi-xxiii, including (233-53, 303-20) the parable of the vineyard</td>
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<td>1785-1848</td>
<td>The Soldiers' Awakening and the Maries at the Sepulchre</td>
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<td>1849-1872</td>
<td>Peter and John at the Sepulchre</td>
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<td>1871-1898</td>
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<td>1991-2004</td>
<td>Appearance to the Three Maries</td>
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<td>2017-2082</td>
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<td>2125-2168</td>
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<td>2169-2310</td>
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<td>2311-2326</td>
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<td>2467-2496</td>
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<tr>
<td>2497-2532</td>
<td>Healing at the Beautiful Gate, and Arrest and Release of Peter and John</td>
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<tr>
<td>2533-2546</td>
<td>Later Preaching of the Apostles</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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. 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:
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<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in MP (non-biblical)</td>
<td>Slight use of MP (almost wholly biblical)</td>
<td>Much new translation (but MP a consistent source)</td>
<td>Dependence on MP very marked</td>
<td>Almost complete dependence on MP</td>
</tr>
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1-162 Anointing at Bethany to the Fig-Tree

163- Teachings, Parables, 748 Doomsday

749- The Priests' Plot to 930 the Last Supper

931- Teachings from John 1076

1077- Gethsemane to Peter's 1274 Denial

1275- Trial before 1386 Pilate and Herod

1387- Death of Judas to the 1732 Resurrection

1733- "Easter" 84

1785- The Soldiers' Awaken- ing to the Appearance 1898 to Mary Magdalene to Mary Magdalene

1899- "Defence of Women" 1990

2017- Journey to Emmaus to 2416 the Ascension

2417- Choosing of 66 Matthias

2467- Pentecost to the 2546 Preaching of the Apostles
There is so much available evidence for SP's use of MP that selection for the present occasion is both necessary and problematic. 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)

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 seye, "fig tre, no frut of þe,
For þou woldest now beryn at myn ende no frut to helpe me".
þis figge tre cast anon hi[s] leuys þo he hadde þis ibede,
& wex old as dop 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 þouȝt of 3ow þus schuld befalle"

A morwe as þe soneday . Ihesus ne abod namore,
Ak to Ierusalem wente aȝen . þo him hongrede sore.
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;
þer by-leuede nobing grene . þe disciplis sede anon,
For wonder þo hi þis yseye . "lord", hi sede, "how is þis?
Lo, þis fyger as þou spedest . for-oldeed 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 dop 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 þeue 30w ensample", he seide, "þis now haue I do,
[pat] 3e þat schul maystris ben to opere þe don also".

Lord Ihesu, wyche ensample þou þeue amon[g] hem for pryte,
Qwan þou wesch þi disciplis feet þat ægen þe were wurp lyte!

For ich giue þou ensaemple. þat as ich habbe ydo
pat þe do in þuike manere. for ich segge to sope þis
þat þe hine nys nouȝt. aboue þe lord ywis".
[Whan þe lord waschip her feet þat his seruauntis were
He ȝaf hem fair ensample vs alle to lere],
þat we nome ensaemple of him. to beo meok ægen prute,
Whanne he wosch his hynen fet. þat ægen him were so
lute.

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 translation 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. Lines 906+1 and +2 are new material, and MP 2121 is turned into 908. That makes a plausible 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 þe?"
pei seyde, "Ihesu of Nazareth" - "I it am", seyde he.
þo were þe Iewis so sore adred þat vpriȝt þe felle to
grounde;
þe wist not queweþer 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.
pei seyde, "Ihesu of Nazareth" - "I it am", oure lord
seyde þo;
"As I seyde ferst, I it am; qwat wil þe with me do?"
3if þe seke me, lete my disciplis gon";
þo sterte þe Iewis alle to hym & toke hym faste anon
With swerdys & with battys also, & his disciplis ecchon
Begunne alle to fie for fer but Seynt Peter & Seynt Iohn.

Oure lord stepte a lutel forþ. & þe gywes by-helde echon.
He sede, "whan seche þe". & hi answerede anon
"Ihesu", hi sede, "of Nazareth", þo oure lord ægen sede,
"Ich hit am". & þe gywes. anon felle adoun for drede.
For miracles þat he hadde ydo. hi felle to grounde
vþriȝt,
And for drede nuste. whaþer hit was day oper nijȝt,
Ak leyen þer as dede men. so sore hi were agrise.
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 inserting 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 aṣen here lawe mysseyd or mysdo. 2220
"Aske at hem", seide oure lord, "þat han herd of me, 3if I haue onyþing myspoke 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, "3if I haue [mys]spoke or [mys]do, & 3if 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", quab oure lord þo . "al open and aperteliche 1195 Y-speke in þe temple and ytaut , 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
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 bo he hadde bat 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: "Man", he seyde, "pou art with hym pat 3under schal han his dome".

Seynt Peter forsok & seyde, "Nay" - he hadde so gret drede;

Anchez Iew þer cam also; "Nay", eftsonys he sede. A woman seyde, "pou art with hym; men moun wel sen be þe, For þi speche schewith wel þou art of Galile".

þou swor Peter gretlyche þat he dede hym not knowe; Anon ryyt with þat wurd þe cok began to crowe.

Oure lord caste his y3en on hym anon with þat dede; Seynt Peter hym þeþou3t anon of þat Ihesus hym sede, þat he schulde hym þryþis forsake - he gan to wepe sore; Wepynge he wente out at þe dore [&] he cam þer no more.

Peter stod by þe fur . and ysey al þis wo. He nadde nouȝt so hardi flesch . muche neer him to go, And napeles he byheold him faste . a gyw hit vndernom. He sede, "þou art wiþ him þer þend . þat hæp þulke dom, þou ne miȝt hit nouȝt forsake . for þi speche shewep þe And þou art of his countre ek . of þe lond of Galilee".

Seint Peter sede þat he ne knew him nouȝt . & grete oþes swor þer-to,

Ak me þinke þat oure lord . ne ley nouȝt 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 nouȝt . myd him in þe orchard? Ich wot wel þat þou art wiþ him". þo peter þouȝte þat tdyng hard,

And swor and mansede him . þif 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 þouȝte anon . on þat oure lord to him sede,
pat he sholde him forsake. pries. he gan to wepe sore, 1255
And al wepyng wente him out. and ne com per namore.
In-to an old put he wente. wepyng þer he lay,
þat is þe put of cokkes crowe. ycluped ȝut 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 fulfilled. 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 aȝen, cloped al in qwyst clop;
þo were Pilat & he goode frendys þat long tyme had be wrop.

þo sente Herodes him aȝen. ycloped in white clope.
By-fore þat herodes & pilatus. hadde longe y-beo wrope,
Ak þo bycome hi goede freondes. and al of one wille,
For more wrabpe 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.
The end of the Trial before Pilate (MP 2361-4, SP 1377-88)

He wosch his hondes and sede . "ich am gultele of his blode.
Nymeib him whanne 3e nolleb non ober . and dop him on pe rode".
"3e, let be wrecche", quap be gyewes . "of his blod beo ydo,
Vpon vs-selue among vs . and vpoure children al-so".

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.

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

Fro heuene per ly3t an aungel doun borwʒ oure lordys grace;
His clobʒis weryn as qwʒt so snowʒ; wunder red was his face.
ʒat lyde he ouerturnede anon, pervpon he satt adoun;
ʒe knyʒtys wokyn euerychon al ʒorwʒ his grete soun.
ʒai say ʒe aungel so grislyche and [ʒe] clobʒis also tospread
The Maries at the Sepulchre (MP 2673-84, SP 1811-20)

These pre Maryis, as I seye er, Marie Magdalenyn & oure ladyis susteris twey3e, of pat dawnyng were wol eayn.

Betymys þe aysen þe Soneday & here oynement with hem nom;

As sone as þe sunne aros to þe sepulchre þei com.
Between hem þei tolde as þei 3ede, "How schal we þis ende,
& þe lyde þat þervpon lyp ho may it ouerwende?"
þese wymmen were so sore adred þei wist now how it was
here,
And euere þei awayted þerto but þei durst not come ny3
for fere.
þei 3eden oftyne boße fer & nyȝ: þei wist not ho he[m]
rade;
þei say þis aungel grislyche sitte - þo were þei sorere
adradde.
þei say þe lyde ëke ouerwent; þo doubte þem þe more
þat here lord was away led; wo was hem for sore.

Marie Magdaleyne . and hure felawes twewe
To seo oure lord as ich sêde . duke 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 3eode abak and stode stille . and supþe 3eode forþ
softe.
Ofte hi 3eode softe forþ . and supþe wiþ-drow ham ofte.
þo sêde hi ham bytwene . "who may awye bringe
þe ston þat is at þe dore . of his buryynge?"
þo by-heolde hi þiderward . and yseye anon
þe lyd ytturned 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 "ytturned vp þe doun", but it
is possible that the latter was the original wording, by which the
reviser let himself be influenced.
What were sheep and pe lomb. pat he bad him wisse and rede
Bote [manes] soules here. pat he moste wissi neode?
per-fore more pan anober. he bad him [so] y-lome,
For he was subbe as 3e witep. Pope ymad of Rome,
[& hadde al holi churche in his warde to guye,]
per-fore he bad him soules to witye. ak whi [bad he]
him brie?
For who-so is [maister] of holy chirche. as preost and
persoun is
preo þinges he mot haue. to wissi þe soules ywis, -
Word, dede and ensaumple. & bote he habbe alle þeos preo
He ne may wardeyn of holy chirche in no manere beo.
Of goede wordes he moste beo. þat folk wel to wisse
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. ober men to goede lede,
For jif per paylep eny of þeos. and man mysdo per-fore
He shal answere at domes-day. of eche soule for-lore.
And so him hadde beo betere. habbe ywist by-fore
A fold fol of fale sheep. þey hi were half y-schore,
Ober skabbede in þe pokkes. ober hare ryg al to-tore,
And bydde crist at one word. þat he were him-sulf vnbose.

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 2239+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 translations, 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) 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:

Whar was as al be nobleye, . ŕat fel to a quene, 315
At a kinges burptime, . whar was hit isene?
Ladies and chamberleins, . scarlet to drawe and grene,
To winden ynne pe yonge king? . al was lute, ich wene.
Non help of wommon . pe riche quene ne fond; (595)
Bote ŕo ŕe child was ibore, . hire selue heo it wond,
And bar hit to ŕe cracche . and leide it in a wisp of heȝe.
Hire wombe ne ok nouȝt sore, . heo ne dradde nouȝt to deîȝe;
Heo bar a betere burybone . ŕan wymmen now do,
Heo hedde elles ignoned sore . and nouȝt ascaped so. (600)

Now was ŕis a wonder dede . and aȝe kunde inow;
Vor wel ichot ŕat oksen kunne . bet now drawe ate plow,
And asses bere sackes . and corn aboute to bringe,
pan to make meri gleo . and knele bi fore a kinge
How coupen heo here legges bowen . & here kene so to wende,
To knele bfore a king? . who made hem so hende?
Now weren hit wonder gleomen to, . who brouhte hem such mod?
Ac whan we habbep al ido, . pat child ibore was god.

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:

be lesinge of mani foles . tellep of seint anastase,
pat heo schole wip oure ledi beo; . hit nis bote be mase:
Vor heo ne sei3 neuer oure ledi her, . vor to hundred jer bfore
And more, ar heo come an erpe, . oure lord was ibore.
Som wrecche bifond pis lesinge . wiþ onrjte,
Vor as muche as me makep of hire munde . a midewinter nijte.

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 elsewhere 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 pe shrew he graunteped . pat him so solde;
He ne axede nou3t a ferþing more . pan pe gywes him toldo.
He ne lowede him nou3t to doore . as pis chapmen wollep echon
þing pat is deoreworþ . ak he axede ham anon
'What wollep 3e for him 3iue' . as who seip 'beode 3e
And as goed chep ich wolle him 3iue . as 3e wolleþ bydde me'.
Now luper prift vp-on his heued . Amen seggeþ alle,
For luper 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 good man were . by-leuede as he er was,
For a man nys neuer þe wors . þey an-þeþer habbe betere cas,
And al-so beo betere þan he . as me seop ofte by wone.
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:

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:

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 anocher his?
Bote 3if on mysdop . hi beob yblamed alle ywis.
For þe loue of Ihesu crist . ȝe þat conne resoun,
Ne blameþ noping þe gulteles . bote þe seo enchesoun.
And whanne þe habbeb al ysed . god ȝiue ham alle schame
þat wipoute enchesoun . eny good womman blame,
For more myldhede and goednesse . in non eorþlich best
nys,
Ne more milce & truwenesse . þan in a goed womman is.
ȝe seob Marie Magdaleyne . oure lord souȝte al-one
þo þe apostles þat wip him were . lete him lygge echone.
Whare was a-pertour loue . seggeþ þat þe ne lye,
Whar was eny stablour . þan was þe holy Marie? 27

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).


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.127or-v.


See the sterna in *Southern Passion*, ed. Brown, p.xxx (her sigils LETYt).

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.


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.

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

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 i 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, II (Brown, p.xxiv). MSS HT belong to the opposing group T, and it is clear from Mrs Brown's textual apparatus that their readings are frequently closer to those of MP.

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.

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


Quotations from *EN* (MS Egerton 1993, ff.3Or-4Or) are from *Altenglische
Legenden, ed. Carl Horstmann (Paderborn, 1875) pp.81-109. Horstmann's lineation is given in parentheses.

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 seip manion . þat heo mid oure Leuedi was
þo oure Louerd was ibore . ac neuere sop it nas
Ac som fals man ferst yuond . þulke lesinge wip vnri3t
For me hap of hure a munde . eche 3er þulke nijt.

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

With the distinctive colloquialism of 1983a may be directly compared "Ac when we habbep al ido" in EN 340, quoted above.

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