

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NOAH:
FOUR PLAYS IN ONE

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A Thesis

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TO MY WIFE

PREFACE

Many scholars have found in the origin of the Old Testament plays well-known Biblical stories to which they attributed the Bible as a major source. However, medieval writers have investigated this area in an attempt to interpret fully how such a source might be used throughout the individual cycles. As a result of their endeavors, it is now possible to approach the plays with a more direct and intermediate source, the Roman Breviary, rather than with the Bible itself. Since there is no way in which to date the plays with complete accuracy, chronology as a source is abandoned.

In order validly to compare the plays, the Romano-Breviarium, extant in medieval days, was used. This important repository of Old and New Testament stories was transmitted to the people through the Church. I have therefore adopted, for ready reference, the lectiones and responsoria of this collection contained in the Appendix.

In this study, I have chosen to devote Chapter One primarily to the Breviary as the liturgical origin of the Noah plays. The remaining chapters have as their

purpose a thorough investigation of the Noah play in its extant forms as it appears in the Chester, York, Towneley, and Hegge cycles.

This comparative study was undertaken in order to demonstrate the belief that only one anonymous play of Noah exists in a theological sense, but that it may be analyzed in its four independent stages of development in each cycle. My purpose to such an end has been to determine to what extent the changes in the development of the Noah play reflected the individual cycle from which it came; and to suggest in what direction the Church's teachings has made the independent plays liturgically one. One can no longer ignore the role of the Roman Breviary nor its pattern of influence in the evolution of the medieval play.

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CHAPTER I

THE LITURGICAL ORIGIN OF THE NOAH PLAY

The liturgical influence on medieval religious drama is fundamental to the study of the medieval mind and, consequently serves more than as a source for the existence of art, literature, and life. The basic tenets of Salvation and Redemption, the moral philosophy by which man transcends earthly endeavors, and the infinite union with a Supreme Being are but a few vital beliefs. While the subject is vast and detailed, it is not without boundaries. Liturgy was a way of life on one hand, and a divine answer to the condition of man on the other.

In a general sense, the individual plays were based directly on the liturgy or grew up with it, whichever the case may be, inasmuch as in content and form they show a resemblance.¹ One does not mean to imply, however, that all of the extant medieval plays

¹Paul Edward Kretzmann, "The Liturgical Element in the Earliest Forms of Medieval Drama," Studies in Language and Literature, Series No. 4 (December, 1916), 87-88.

had a liturgical play as a major source.² One theory of source is that the liturgical drama came into its own through pieces of Scriptural accounts, rather than from a direct text of the Gospels.³ Another theory suggests that the liturgical play was created by the Church to promote its own teachings.⁴ One can recognize these theories and others by acknowledging that these plays are deeply-rooted in the Church, that they drew upon its liturgy, and that they combined its elements of piety and common sense in the process.⁵ In this manner, the plays served as the word of the Church, particularly since the Bible was not available to the laity. Even so, few could read.⁶

It is known that English Scripture was withheld

²Walter W. Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles, p. 77.

³Mary Marshall, "Dramatic Tradition Established by the Liturgical Plays," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LVI (December, 1941), 962-963.

⁴Harold C. Gardiner, Mysteries' End: An Investigation of the Last Days of the Medieval Religious Stage, p. 5.

⁵Karl Young, The Drama of the Medieval Church, I, 75.

⁶Sidney M. Clarke, The Miracle Play in England, p. 5. see also Joseph Hermans Beckmann and Ingeborg Schroth (eds.), Picture Bible of the Late Middle Ages, p. 4.

from the people on the assumption that, if they read a portion of it, they would, then, want it all in English.⁷ Fortunately, other means were available to relate the liturgical material to the people. One major means is the sermon, which interpreted the Holy Scripture in light of daily events and in a manner understandable to the public.⁸ Here, the sermons were incorporated into the various pageants as the producers worked closely with the preachers, even using the sermons as part of the general Prologue.⁹ These "dramatic sermons" are proof that both the preacher and producer were familiar with most of the Bible.¹⁰ Thus, from a liturgical standpoint, they worked together in teaching the Church's doctrines to the people. Moreover, the influence of the sermon was not confined to the churchyard and the pageants, its influence spread throughout the town.¹¹ There were many, of course, who did not attend sermons, which conduct prompted sharp criticism, but for most their service was

⁷William Hone, Ancient Mysteries Described, p. 201.

⁸Henry Osborn Taylor, The Medieval Mind, II, 85.

⁹G. R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, pp. 478-479.

¹⁰George Macaulay Trevelyan, England in the Age of Wycliffe, p. 128.

¹¹Owst, op. cit., p. 479.

invaluable.¹² Hence, there is evidence to suggest that the roots of realism had their beginning within the popular sermon.¹³ In fact, one writer has suggested that the legend behind Noah's wife originated in the pulpit in an effort to reach the public.¹⁴ More important, however, the sermon aided the plays, endowing them with a native influence and a degree of popularity.¹⁵

One must consider, at this point, the significance of the Roman Breviary, which is a liturgical source used in the sermons, and one of the most important single influences in the medieval religious drama, for reasons to be made apparent. The word, breviary (lat. breviarium), in its primary sense refers to an abridgment, or a compendium.¹⁶ In liturgical parlance, Breviary means a large book containing the regulations for the celebration of Mass or the canonical

¹²Ibid., p. 480 (John Bromyard, prominent Dominican theologian, spoke out against such absenteeism.)

¹³Hans-Jurgen Diller, "The Craftsmanship of the Wakefield Master," Anglia, LXXXIII (1965), 288.

¹⁴Mary Desiree Anderson, Drama and Imagery in English Medieval Churches, p. 53.

¹⁵owst, op. cit., p. 479.

¹⁶"Breviary," Charles G. Hebermann (ed.), The Catholic Encyclopedia, II, 768-769.

office throughout the year.¹⁷ The oldest manuscript of the canonical office, compiled in the year 1066, is found in the Monte Cassino, the monastery of St. Benedict.¹⁸ Under Innocent III (1198-1216), the popular use of breviaries spread outside Benedictine jurisdiction, principally through the efforts of the Order of Friars Minor or Franciscans, who were not a strictly monastic order like Benedictines, but an active secular order.¹⁹ The unification and simplification of the services into one book in its typical form took place in England about the eleventh century.²⁰ This form of the Breviary (Brev. Sine Ordo-Officiorum or Portiforium) was the book "carried" by the priest on "trips abroad," the latter of which represents a smaller and more portable version of the former.²¹

The Roman Breviary, extant in medieval times, is divided into five parts: (1) The Psalter is the most ancient and respected portion, containing 150 psalms,

¹⁷Loc. cit.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 773.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 774.

²⁰"Worship," James Hastings (ed.), Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, XII, 771.

²¹Loc. cit.

and is the primary source of Christian prayer. (2) The Proper of the Season contains the office of the different seasons of the Church year. It is arranged as follows: Advent, Christmastide, Septuagesima, Lent, Holy Week, Paschal Time, and Time after Pentecost.

(3) The Proper of Saints consists of the lessons (lectiones), psalms, antiphons, and the liturgical formularies, commemorating the saints. (4) The Common contains all the lessons (lectiones), Gospels, antiphons, responsories, and versicles which relate to no special feast. (5) The Special-Offices consists of private prayers, such as hours and lauds.²²

The lectiones or lessons of the Matins for the period from Septuagesima Sunday to Passion Sunday cover the greater part of Genesis and Exodus; while the responsory, or the reply to the lessons, contains the stories of the Creation and Fall, Cain and Abel, and Noah and the Flood.²³ Within this Lenten Season, the specific division of the Breviary relating to the Noah play is Sexagesima Week, which is the week following

²²Hebermann, op. cit., pp. 769-771.

²³Adeline M. Jenney, "A Further Word as to The Origin of the Old Testament Plays," Modern Philology, XIII (May, 1915), 59-60.

Septuagesima, or sixty days before Easter.²⁴ Thus, the liturgy of the Lenten season forms the basis of the Old Testament plays found within the lectiones and responsory of the Roman Breviary.²⁵ Although the Bible antedates the Breviary, liturgy was available and gave to medieval man a source from which, rather than from the Bible in its entire form, were drawn the materials for the religious drama.²⁶ Consequently, the elements within the liturgical cycle of the early Latin plays, together with their episodic structure, are found in the corresponding seasons of the Breviary.²⁷ It might be significant to mention that Young examined more than two hundred breviaries from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries and found little variation.²⁸ Hence, Craig notes that the Old Testament plays, as a group, are derived from "one principal source, or at least

²⁴Hardin Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 65.

²⁵Ibid., p. 63.

²⁶Ibid., p. 29. This subject is fully considered later but is now briefly mentioned to preclude erroneous ideas at the outset.

²⁷Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 10.

²⁸Karl Young, "Some Texts of Liturgical Plays," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XXIV. (1909), 310.

introduced to conform to a definite pattern."²⁹

Further, these plays, then, are joined with the Easter series and, eventually, with the Christmas group, to complete the season.³⁰

One cannot discount the essential role of Church liturgy in the development of the religious services, nor can the Church's liturgy be separated from the subject matter of the Roman Breviary.³¹ In this connection, the Scriptural lessons contained in the responses of the Breviary, together with the accompanying lectiones, created detailed elaborations of the traditional stories.³² It is, therefore, possible to see how from these early Church exercises there evolved the rudimentary elements of drama, including action, effect, and dialogue.³³ For example, the Precentor or Leader recited a passage from within the lectiones, or lessons, and the other monastic members repeated this

²⁹Hardin Craig, "The Origin of the Old Testament Plays," Modern Philology, X (April, 1913), 481-482.

³⁰Ibid., p. 485.

³¹George Raleigh Coffman, A New Theory Concerning the Origin of the Miracle Play, p. 35.

³²Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 78.

³³Clarke, op. cit., pp. 10-11; R. S. Loomis and G. Cohen, "Were There Theatres in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries?" Speculum, XX (January, 1945), 92. Obviously, there were no theatres for purposes of dramatic performances, as Loomis and Cohen attest in full.

passage from Scripture.³⁴ Further, attempts were made to involve the laity in the dialogue, as these "hours" were extended throughout the parish churches.³⁵ But since the dialogue of both these services and "plays" was in Latin, the clergy had to devise a method by which these elements would be understood.³⁶ Although the exact process is unknown, it would seem probable that the early Latin plays were interpreted from the Breviary by the clerics and acted in a manner that promoted the well-known teachings of the Church. Hence, these clerics served the Church until 1589, at which time, Rome prohibited them from acting in the plays, but it was not until 1603 that they were removed from the drama altogether.³⁷ It should be obvious that additional problems arose as the Church services could no longer be effectively combined with the plays.³⁸

The transfer of performances from inside the

³⁴Hebermann, op. cit., p. 772. The text of Sexagesima Week, contained in the Appendix, illustrates Noah and this closely associated service.

³⁵Hastings, op. cit., p. 771.

³⁶Clarke, op. cit., p. 5.

³⁷Ibid., p. 13.

³⁸Claude H. Williamson, "Early Religious Drama," The American Catholic Quarterly Review, XLVI (January, 1921) 228.

Church to its various localities, affected the form, and necessarily changed the use of language.³⁹ At least, in the more "advanced" plays, Latin was taken over gradually by vernacular elements.⁴⁰ This process may, in part, explain why there are preserved no Latin plays on Abraham and Isaac, Moses and the Exodus, and Noah, which some feel came into existence independently and were incorporated later into the Old Testament group.⁴¹ However, that these major plays were put directly into the vernacular is doubtful, since they still show signs of Latin tags.⁴² It may, therefore, be valid to assume that the Latin tags are remnants of a well-known source, probably the Breviary, and indicate the author-cleric's familiarity with such a text. For the most, the vernacular influence had already replaced Latin before the craft guilds came into control of the various plays.⁴³

³⁹Glynne Wickham, Early English Stages, I, 119-120.

⁴⁰E. K. Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 9.

⁴¹Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 65.

⁴²Loc. cit.

⁴³Wickham, op. cit., I, 125.

The manner in which the plays came into guild jurisdiction still remains a mystery.⁴⁴ However, even after the plays were in the hands of the guilds, they still remained under strong church control.⁴⁵ In fact, after a play was assigned to a guild, generally a monk or priest was commissioned to write it.⁴⁶ Thus, while the plays were religious, their production was the responsibility of the civic administrators in control of the performances.⁴⁷ The guilds that financed the plays among other duties were usually assigned to a particular play on the basis of their qualifications.⁴⁸ For example, in Noah's Flood, the Waterleaders and Drawers of Chester and the Shipwrights, Fysshers and Marynars of York were in charge of producing the play.⁴⁹ Relevant to this matter of assignment, is the fact that the freedom with which each guild operated depended

⁴⁴Kenneth Sisam (ed.), Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose, p. xxv.

⁴⁵R. J. E. Tiddy, The Mummers Play, p. 95.

⁴⁶Clarke, op. cit., p. 58.

⁴⁷Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 10.

⁴⁸Allardyce Nicoll, British Drama, p. 31.

⁴⁹Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, pp. 132-133.

entirely on the nature of the individual city.⁵⁰ Generally, guilds were financed through their own fees, contributions, gifts, and funds established according to their specific purpose.⁵¹ Religious guilds were also formed throughout the country. For example, at York their sole purpose was to assist in the elaborate Corpus Christi procession, which constituted an act of faith.⁵² In general, the guilds of laymen and clergy worked together in promoting activities, ranging from Church work to social projects.⁵³ In the larger towns, the guilds grew in prominence, for they could employ a large number of members and support a great amount of plays.⁵⁴

The favorite seasonal date for the performance of the guild plays was Corpus Christi Day, instituted by Pope Urban IV in 1264, and advanced by Clement V at the Vienne Council in 1311.⁵⁵

⁵⁰Lujo Brentano, "Preliminary Essay in Five Parts on the History and Development of Gilds," English Gilds, Joshua Toulmin Smith (ed.), p. cxxix.

⁵¹Ibid., p. lxxxvii.

⁵²Ibid., p. lxxxv.

⁵³Ibid., p. xxxvi.

⁵⁴Herbert Francis Westlake, The Parish Gilds of Mediaeval England, p. 55.

⁵⁵John Edwin Wells, A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, p. 540.

Corpus Christi Day, the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, began with a spectacular processional through the town, followed with the performance of the plays on a fixed stage.⁵⁶ Guilds in many of these towns participated only in plays associated with the Festival itself.⁵⁷ These latter guilds were not involved with the Corpus Christi plays and were not allowed to interfere with the pageants of the craft guilds.⁵⁸ At Chester, however, where Church processions were popular, the plays were transferred to Whitsun Day, probably to avoid confusion.⁵⁹ Both Corpus Christi and Whitsun were excellent spring seasons for outdoor festivals.⁶⁰ There is no doubt that the religious plays reached their full potentiality during this period.⁶¹

It is generally agreed that the plays grew not from the hand of a single author but out of the communal efforts of a number of smaller cyclic plays of

⁵⁶E. K. Chambers, The Medieval Stage, II, 95.

⁵⁷Karl Young, "An Interludium for a Gild of Corpus Christi," Modern Language Notes, XLVIII (1933), 84.

⁵⁸Westlake, op. cit., p. 57.

⁵⁹Alexander Franklin, Seven Miracle Plays, p. 13.

⁶⁰Loc. cit.

⁶¹Chambers, The Medieval Stage, II, 108.

local popularity.⁶² It is also important to note that the plays were not acted or performed by a group of semi-skilled, ignorant peasants; to be accurate, one would have to say that these plays gave to the religious stage the epitome of what the Middle Ages had to offer.⁶³ The paucity of records during the fourteenth century was evidently due to tight Church control of the plays, and not until the productions were handled as a municipal activity were they recorded in the city records.⁶⁴ At any rate, the establishment of such a Feast was another method of bringing the liturgy into direct contact with the life of the people.⁶⁵ It was not until the late fifteenth century that these events lost their popularity.⁶⁶

Before examining the various approaches to the Noah play as it appears throughout the cycles, it would be appropriate to look closely at the Christian symbolism from which the Noah story was derived for a

⁶²Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, pp. 9-10.

⁶³Loc. cit.

⁶⁴Hardin Craig, "The Corpus Christi Procession and the Corpus Christi Play," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, XIII (October, 1914), 597.

⁶⁵Wickham, op. cit., I, 313.

⁶⁶Westlake, op. cit., p. 58.

fuller view of its liturgical significance. For example, the story is deeply embedded in the Divine Office and grew as a significant expression of the religious framework that promoted its purpose.⁶⁷ This framework includes God's over-all scheme of Salvation, which begins with the Creation and continues to the end of the world and Final Judgment.⁶⁸ Such a pattern was sacred to the medieval mind and remained, with few exceptions, unaltered throughout the numerous performances.⁶⁹ Thus, this liturgical pattern embodied well-known themes, including the Redemption of Man.⁷⁰ One should note that these themes were not present for dramatic but for liturgical practices, symbolically expressing the belief of centuries.⁷¹ It would seem a short step, then, to the story of the Building of the Ark, the Flood, and Salvation, each of which was popular

⁶⁷R. Pascal, "On the Origins of the Liturgical Drama of the Middle Ages," Modern Language Review, XXXV (July, 1941), 386.

⁶⁸Effie MacKinnon, "Notes on the Dramatic Structure of the York Cycle," Studies in Philology, XXVIII (July, 1931), 438.

⁶⁹Richard Southern, The Seven Ages of the Theatre, p. 56.

⁷⁰Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles, p. 17.

⁷¹Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 9.

and acceptable within this natural framework.⁷² If to modern critics these liturgical stories seem anachronistic, it is only because the modern mind fails to realize that behind each play lies the fundamental scope of man's existence evident in a highly unified pattern.⁷³ More profound, even, is the fact that the entire circuit of plays is directly controlled by, and gains its unity through, the Church.⁷⁴

In The City of God, Saint Augustine emphasized that these early teachings cannot be studied as history or allegory, per se, but that their preservation during thousands of years, in such an "orderly succession" is evidence that one must study history in light of one and then another's end.⁷⁵ However, to allow for a careful study, one must turn to Sexagesima Week itself, since the ancient symbolism relates the meaning behind the Noah story as apparent in Scripture. The following complete text of this pre-Lenten Week is paraphrased from

⁷² Alfred W. Pollard (ed.), English Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes, p. 180.

⁷³ Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 9.

⁷⁴ MacKinnon, op. cit., p. 438.

⁷⁵ Whitney J. Oates (ed.), Basic Writings of Saint-Augustine, II, 315-316.

Dr. Pius Parsch's The Church's Year of Grace:⁷⁶

The Week of Sexagesima

In the Parable of the Sower, the Church shows God at work and illustrates man's duty to cooperate. The Sower scatters his seeds upon the ground but it depends upon the ground whether His seed will produce. This central message is illustrated by two men, Noah and Paul, the former from the Old Testament, the latter from the New.⁷⁷

Sexagesima Sunday

At first, Noah is pictured as the sower of flesh who represents nature; in the image of the ark and flood are implied the redemption.

Next, Noah, at God's command, is building the ark through many years. Noah's nobility and goodness are emphasized to represent the piety of the human race through virtue. This passage indicates how Christ is the ultimate Sower, both Sower and Seed.

Noah, the Just, is preserved to continue the human race. This preservation is not due to nobility but to divine holiness and piety.

Monday After Sexagesima

This day represents the beginning of the flood. Noah, his family, and animals enter the ark as the flood begins. Water destroys all life on earth and covers the highest mountains. The flood was a punishment from the hand of God for man's sins.

Tuesday After Sexagesima

Then God remembered Noah and his companions. God calmed the waters and the floodgates of heaven were closed. The rains from the heavens ceased. The waters gradually subsided at the end of one hundred and fifty days. On the seventeenth day of the

⁷⁶Dr. Pius Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace, II 32-50.

⁷⁷Note, that only Noe will be taken up here.

seventh month, the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat. On the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains could be seen. This scene, indicative of high praise, represents the Savior's resurrection which is inherent in the traditional Alleluia.

Wednesday After Sexagesima

Noah leaves the ark. Then God commands Noah to bring with him his wife, sons, and sons' wives, and all living creatures of all flesh, birds, cattle, and each creature that crawls upon the earth.

Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and sacrificed every clean animal and bird. God was pleased and promised never to destroy human creatures again. God next established his covenant with Noah and all men to follow. A bow was fixed in the clouds as a symbol of God's covenant with the earth.

Thursday After Sexagesima

The sons of Noah who left the ark were Sem, Ham, and Japheth. With them the earth was populated.

Noah, a farmer, planted a vineyard and one day was drunk from the wine. As he lay naked in his tent, Ham, his youngest son, saw his nakedness and told his two brothers outside. Sem and Japheth clothed their father's nakedness. Ham's disrespect toward his father, who had not known the effect of the wine, prompted Noah to predict the destinies of his sons and their offspring. From God Noah received the power for such an act. This lengthy episode shows Sem as the ancestor to the Redeemer, and that it is imperative to remember God during all daily activities.

Friday After Sexagesima

Scripture presents the Table of Nations, from which seventy-two peoples have descended from Noah's three sons. This symbolic table represents that mankind is a member of one family and one creator.

The next event deals with the tower of Babel in which Sem's children appear hostile to God, resulting from the conflict in languages. The idea here is that confusion begets sin but that Christ always

brings unity and order to troubled people.

Saturday After Sexagesima

This account takes one through the story from Sem to Thare, Abraham's father, and ten succeeding generations.

Obviously, the Church condensed these symbols of Salvation into a working form compatible with the Roman Breviary and Daily Missal for the purpose of instruction. As has been taught in early Christian theology, and to the present, these signs guide the lives of all Christians. Church doctors agree that the story of Noah involves the following basic doctrine:

- (1) The deluge shows a divine act which punishes the corrupt children of the world. Sin is washed away by both the deluge and baptism.
- (2) God sent Noah to save all mankind; later He sends Christ as the Savior.
- (3) The ark symbolizes the Church. Noah is saved by the ark, as man today is saved by the Church.
- (4) The dove with the olive branch symbolizes the baptized Christian.
- (5) The rainbow is the sign of peace and shows the Redeemer's covenant to which heaven and earth are joined.⁷⁸

While it is tempting, here, to discuss the entire significance of the Mass, one brief point is that the ceremony itself was a dramatic event, with antiphonal singing and responses that gradually

⁷⁸Parsch, op. cit. p. 44.

developed into the trones of the well-known Queen Quæritis.⁷⁹ In the Daily Missal, the following passage for the Friday in Easter Week, illustrates the unity with which the Noah story is extended throughout the Church's liturgy:

. . . These in times past had been disobedient when the patience of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was building. In that ark a few, that is, eight souls were saved through water. Its counterpart, Baptism, now saves you also (not the putting off of the filth of the flesh, but the inquiry of a good conscience after God), through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.⁸⁰

It is apparent, therefore, that the apex of religious drama developed within the services of the Church, first, in the solemnity of the Mass and, later, in the immediate liturgy, the Breviary, available to the people.⁸¹

While medieval religious drama has its immediate origin in Christian liturgy, one concedes that its development was due also to external influences.⁸² As citizens in the towns became more prosperous, they were able to purchase a cheap quality of paper on which

⁷⁹John Gassner (ed.), Medieval and Tudor Drama, p. 33; also Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 4.

⁸⁰Walter Van de Putte (ed.), Saint Pius X Daily Missal, p. 331.

⁸¹Albert C. Baugh, A Literary History of England, pp. 273-274.

⁸²John Speirs, English Medieval Poetry, p. 308.

ecclesiastical and secular manuscripts appeared.⁸³ These materials were circulated throughout the villages and served as a powerful aid in teaching the Scripture to the ordinary man.⁸⁴ On the assumption that the eye communicates better to the uninformed than the ear, visual representations in the form of carving and stained glass were also common instruments of instruction.⁸⁵ In Church art and manuscripts, representations of Noah are scarce, but those that exist suggest interesting attempts to relate the story to contemporary life. In addition, several works illustrate a clear deviation from the traditional story, while in most of them there are remarkable parallels with the religious plays. For example, the Holkham Bible Picture Book contains the story of Noah, emphasizing the idea of his drunkenness.⁸⁶ Another picture in the same text shows Noah with a basket of sheep, strongly suggesting their use on the stage.⁸⁷ The Noah legend

⁸³Beckmann, op. cit., p. 1.

⁸⁴Loc. cit.

⁸⁵Rosemary Woolf, "The Effect of Typology on the English Mediaeval Plays of Abraham and Isaac," Speculum, XXXII, (October, 1957), 811; also Wickham, op. cit., I, 151.

⁸⁶Anna J. Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LVI (September, 1941), 622.

⁸⁷Anderson, op. cit., p. 140.

was found on the wall-paintings of a Swedish church, and another in the Church of Edshult (Smaland), dating from the fourteenth century.⁸⁸ These early productions indicate the nature of Noah's wife and her known association with the devil. The Edshult painting, for example, illustrates that the devil is on her shoulder, controlling her hand, while Noah has hold of her other hand, coaxing her into the Ark.⁸⁹ There is evidence to suggest that the Edshult work reveals an English influence, especially in the manner of theme and style.⁹⁰ This theory is probably sound, inasmuch as the Biblical influence was already continental.⁹¹

The Villberga Church (Uppland) contains two fifteenth century Noah scenes, one of which shows an angel building the ark; the other, although marred by inept restoration, pictures the devil and Noah's wife, the dove and raven scenes, and Noah, all three of which are combined into a single fresco.⁹² In Risinge Church

⁸⁸ Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LVI (September, 1941), 622.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 623.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 624.

⁹¹ Katherine Carvin, "A Note on Noah's Wife," Modern Language Notes, XLIX (February, 1934), 90.

⁹² Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LVI (September, 1941), 623.

(Ostergotland), five original paintings illustrate in order: (1) the ark under construction, (2) the devil's conversation with Noah's wife, (3) a potion scene involving the devil and Noah's wife, (4) a scene with Noah in the ark, leaving his wife on land with the devil, and (5) one in which Noah is looking from the window of the ark.⁹³ In the Caedmonian Manuscript XI, there is evidence of a woman, apparently Noah's wife, waving her hand and refusing to climb a ladder.⁹⁴ Although Garvin is cautious on this point, the MS. would seem to suggest that the artist was familiar with the popular wife's legend.⁹⁵ If this view is sound, it is vital in proving that the Noah's wife episode was known in England between 1000 and 1035 A. D.⁹⁶ It was obvious that medieval craftsman and writers drew upon their knowledge of the plays to illustrate the Scriptural material.⁹⁷ It would also seem, without doubt, that what was shown through the liturgical stage

⁹³Loc. cit.

⁹⁴Garvin, op. cit., p. 89.

⁹⁵Loc. cit.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 90; Sir Israel Gollancz found the same conclusion independently and dates it 1000 A. D. from: Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LVI (September, 1941), 614.

⁹⁷Anderson, op. cit., p. 15.

was often repeated through paintings.⁹⁸

Another external influence was the use of block woodcuts as illustrations. The earliest known illustration of Noah's ark was discovered at Cologne in Werner Rolewinck's Fasciculus Temporum, around 1473-74.⁹⁹ Another, Jacobus de Theramo, the designer of Der Sondern Troest, illustrated his text with a full page cut of Noah's ark, on February 15, 1484; and Werner Rolewinck's Fasciculus Temporum used a small illustration of Noah.¹⁰⁰ The Speculum Humanae Salvationis, a compendium of Old and New Testament subjects, was designed to assist the clergy in their teaching.¹⁰¹ This monumental work, fifty-eight picture blocks in all, included eight scenes from the Old Testament, some of which are the Fall of Lucifer, the Creation, and Noah.¹⁰²

Scholars have discovered other sources that directly influenced the religious plays within the four cycles, as well as have promoted the liturgical theme. For example, at least seven plays of the Chester cycle

⁹⁸Wilhelm Creizenach, Geschichte des neuren Dramas, I, 321.

⁹⁹Arthur M. Hind, History of Woodcuts, I, 357.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., II, 574.

¹⁰¹Ibid., I, 245.

¹⁰²Loc. cit.

are influenced by the poem, Stanzaic Life of Christ.¹⁰³

The French, Mistere du Viel Testament has similarities to be found within the entire Chester cycle.¹⁰⁴

Additional Chester influences are Comestor's Historia Scholastica; the Legenda Aurea; Tatian's Harmony; and miscellaneous hymns, legends, and sermons.¹⁰⁵ Certain definite works, such as The Northern Passion and Gospel of Nicodemus, have influenced the Egge, York, and Towneley cycles.¹⁰⁶ York's cycle has also felt the effects of the Cursor Mundi, Transitus Mariae, and Legenda Aurea.¹⁰⁷ Additionally, the Prima Pastorum, the Harrowing of Hell, and the Cursor Mundi have influenced the Towneley.¹⁰⁸ Numerous other references have been suggested as liturgical influences on the

¹⁰³Robert H. Wilson, "The Stanzaic Life of Christ and the Chester Plays," Studies in Philology, XXVIII (July, 1931), 414; see also Sexagesima Week in this poem, A Stanzaic Life of Christ, edited by Francis A. Foster, pp. 131-138.

¹⁰⁴Arnold Williams, The Drama of Medieval England, p. 120.

¹⁰⁵Wells, op. cit., p. 549.

¹⁰⁶Francis A. Foster, "The Mystery Plays and the Northern Passion," Modern Language Notes, XXVI (June, 1911), 171.

¹⁰⁷Wells, op. cit., p. 554.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 559.

cycles, including the Breviary.¹⁰⁹

The Newcastle Slipwright's edition of Noah has been omitted in this study because of its fragmentary nature; and similarly, the so-called Hull's Noah play, acted on Plough Monday, also because only records remain of the lost text.¹¹⁰ All other editions of the play are later than the medieval period and, therefore, are excluded from this review.

¹⁰⁹Joseph S. Laut, "Drama Illustrating Dogma: A Study of the York Cycle," Dissertation Abstracts, XXI (1960), 1950.

¹¹⁰Anna J. Mill, "The Hull Noah Play," Modern Language Review, XXXIII (October, 1930), 489.

CHAPTER II

THE CHESTER NOAH PLAY

As earlier noted, the Vulgate, from which the Breviary account of Noah was adapted, is the ultimate source for the Noah play and provides the account found in Genesis (6: 1-15; 7: 1-24; 8: 1-22; 9: 1-29).¹¹¹ From the standpoint of source, this plot will be used for the purpose of examining the extant editions of this play. The story, a familiar one, begins with God's anger over the wickedness of men, in which He promises to destroy all creatures on the face of the earth. But Noah, who is a just and perfect man, found grace before the Lord and, together with his sons, Sem, Cham, and Japheth, walked with the Lord. God instructed Noah to build an ark of timber planks, the length of three hundred cubits, the breadth of fifty cubits, and the height of thirty cubits. In the ark shall be a window, a top in a cubit, and a door on the side. There are to be a lower, middle chamber and a

¹¹¹The Holy Bible. Translated from the Latin Vulgate, Douay Version of the Old Testament, pp. 10-14.

third story within the craft. Then, God told Noah to enter the ark, with his wife, sons, and their wives, and two of every kind of living creature of all flesh, of male and female, and to take food with them. Noah did as God said. He took with him into the ark seven male and seven female of clean beasts, and of the unclean beasts, two of each, a male and female. It rained on the earth forty days and nights, and Noah was six hundred years old when the waters of the flood overflowed the earth, on the seventeenth day in the second month. The water was fifteen cubits higher than the mountains which it covered, and all flesh was destroyed that moved on the earth. And God remembered Noah and all living creatures who were brought in the ark and sent a wind over the earth and abated the waters, after a hundred and fifty days. The ark rested in the seventh month, the seven and twentieth day of the month, on the mountains of Armenia. On the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains appeared. Thereafter, forty days passed, Noah opened the window of the ark, and sent forth a raven, which did not return until the waters were dried on the earth. He sent forth also a dove after him to see if the waters had ceased, but the bird returned, unable to land for the waters were high on the earth. Noah caught the dove and brought it into

the ark. After seven days, Noah again sent forth the dove and it came to him in the evening, carrying a bough of an olive tree. Noah understood that the waters were ceased but remained seven days longer before he sent forth the dove which did not return. Thus, on the first day of the first month in the six hundred and first year, the waters lessened on the earth. On the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the earth was dry and God told Noah to leave the ark with his companions. Thereupon, Noah built an altar to God and offered holocausts. God smelled the sweet savour, blessed Noah and his sons, and promised that He would never again destroy the world by water. God then set His bow among the clouds as a covenant, uniting all living creatures of flesh with His heavenly kingdom. God then told Noah to increase, multiply, and fill the earth. Immediately discernible is the manner in which the various plays of Noah adhere to this original plot. One recognizes that, within the plays, the events and scenes may change, but the basic story remains, for the most part, intact.

An examination of the plot of the Chester play of Noah, III, indicates the degree to which the dramatist expanded the original story, made use of available sources, and reflected the immediate

environment.¹¹²

Scene one of the Chester play is forty-eight lines, of which forty deal with God's discontent with the condition of the world, in which He orders Noah to construct, in specific dimensions, the ark into which he is to take his wife and three sons. Noah enters the scene offering high praise to the Lord, promising without failure to fulfill His demands. It is clear that the opening scene follows closely the original source, particularly in the statement of God's purpose. One minor difference is that the height of the ark is fifty cubits (28), rather than the Biblical thirty; however, no appreciable deviation occurs until Noah enters. Here, the dramatist depicts Noah as a man who is humble and sincere, willing to alert his family to the duties for which they have been selected. Almost at once, Noah engages his entire family in building the ark, a scene of great activity and one that depicts Noah as a skillful motivator.¹¹³ The entire household is noticeably busy, as Sem gets his axe, Ham bears his

¹¹²Herman Deimling (ed.), The Chester Plays, p. 48. All citations to the Chester play will be taken from this edition.

¹¹³Charles Mills Gayley, Plays of Our Forefathers, p. 152.

hatchet, and Japhet his hammer.¹¹⁴ Noah's wife contributes her part by finding timber, while Sem's wife brings a chopping block; Japhet's wife provides some chips, and Ham's wife gathers pitch.¹¹⁵

The next division of the play depicts Noah's building of the ark (81-95), which is completed with medieval rapidity; this scene is followed by Noah's short conversation with his wife who is reluctant to see the importance of the whole operation. Next, God orders Noah to bring his household aboard, along with clean beasts of seven, male and female, two unclean, male and female, and enough food for all. God, then, promises that the rain will fall for forty days and nights. Noah tells the audience that he has been building the ship for one-hundred and twenty winters, a fact which differs from the source, but, as one critic suggests, Noah's task is slight compared with the difficulty to come in getting his wife aboard.¹¹⁶ The entire family help to bring the animals inside; one after another each member, including Noah's wife, describes a group of animals. One notes, again, that each person has an

¹¹⁴Katherine Lee Bates, The English Religious Drama, pp. 106-107.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 107.

¹¹⁶Loc. cit.

active part, assigned a quatrain each, undoubtedly a descriptive-device for including the characters in the dialogue.

The next scene shows Noah's commanding his wife to board the ark so that she will not drown, but she refuses to enter without her "gossips":

But I haue my gossips everichon,
 one foote further I will not gone;
 they shall not drowne, by St. John,
 and I may save their lyfe.
 (201-204)

Finally, it is left to Noah's sons to lift their mother into the ark, the action in which is a considerable departure from the scriptural source.¹¹⁷ At this point, the "gossips" entice Noah and the others to drink, inasmuch as the flood is coming, a gesture which is a mild allusion to comedy.¹¹⁸ Then, Noah welcomes his wife in the ark, whereupon she slaps him (242). While it is possible to imagine that the audience found such an event quite amusing, it is equally probable, for reasons to be dealt with later, that the humor is kept subordinate throughout.¹¹⁹ Noah praises God for their safety; the window of the ark is closed, as the flood

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 109.

¹¹⁸Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 185.

¹¹⁹Margaret Schlauch, English Medieval Literature and Its Social Foundations, p. 319.

approaches. One notes that the window in this scene is probably opened after the flood.¹²⁰

After forty days, a raven is dispatched to see if the land is dry, and it is followed by a dove that returns with the olive branch (278). God, then, commands Noah to leave the ship and to return to earth where he is to grow and multiply. Thus, for the remaining seventy-five lines, including Noah's sacrifice and God's promise of a covenant, there is a consistent parallel between the play and its source.

As this account might suggest, the author has wisely used sources available to him for the purpose of developing particular scenes within the story. In this fashion, he has allowed the characters to grow out of the dramatic situation and, of course, far to surpass their Biblical counterparts. For example, Noah's responsibilities to his family become far more complex as a result of his problems with his recalcitrant wife. While there is a constant obedience on the part of the children, there are also the "gossips" who are ready to act against Noah's instructions. In addition to being a dependable servant of God (41-48), Noah is a man of feeling, capable of expounding on the subjects of the

¹²⁰Clarke, op. cit., p. 37.

irritable nature of women (104-112), or the spiritual union with God (297-304). It would seem that the author consciously strove to effect an atmosphere of domestic harmony within which his characters might be developed. But the basic plot, for the most, remains untouched.

Chester play III, presented by the Waterleaders and Drawers, must be examined in view of the times in which it was performed.¹²¹ In the first place, Chester was a prosperous and independent city with an atmosphere that is reflected in its plays.¹²² At least, by 1467 there were around eight guilds that were actively producing plays.¹²³ Between 1467-1540, this number grew, and the cycle included close to twenty-six plays.¹²⁴ Acting time for these productions involved three days, which feat obviously required some physical ability.¹²⁵ For no apparent reason, many plays were divided and altered several times, and the contents varied from one time to the next, depending on the

¹²¹Frederick M. Salter, Medieval Drama in Chester, p. 41.

¹²²Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, pp. 194-195.

¹²³Salter, Medieval Drama in Chester, p. 46.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 48.

¹²⁵Franklin, op. cit., p. 15.

company in charge.¹²⁶ Two sets of Banns appear from Chester, advertising the plays on St. George's Day.¹²⁷ One observer dates the earlier banns as being around 1551.¹²⁸ Chambers suggests, 1544, while Salter mentions an earlier date, 1467.¹²⁹ These earlier banns were versified in the same stanzaic form as the plays.¹³⁰ The point is, these banns contain valuable information about the plays and important facts about the crafts in charge of production. In the following account of Noah's play, the earlier banns indicate the craft in charge:

The Compayes or trades
that playe:

Drawers in Dee &
Waterleaders

The Story or matter
that euery Companye
did acte:

Noah & his shipp¹³¹

These records do not mention the flood account, for reasons unknown, although the later banns, of the seventeenth century, list the play with the following

¹²⁶Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Plays, p. 28.

¹²⁷Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 167.

¹²⁸Wells, op. cit., p. 548.

¹²⁹Frederick M. Salter, "Banns of the Chester Plays," Review of English Studies, XVI (January, 1940), 15.

¹³⁰Chambers, The Medieval Stage, II, 140-141.

¹³¹F. J. Furnivall, The Digby Plays, p. xxi.

entry:

The good simple waterleaders and Drawers of Deey.
see that your Arke in all payntes be prepared of
Noy and his Children the whill storye and of the
universall floude by you shalbe played.¹³²

One notes that this record includes most of the scenes
of the play and, perhaps, suggests an even more complete
performance.¹³³

Apparently, the Noah play entered the Chester
cycle before 1467.¹³⁴ However, in spite of the fact
that guilds were prevalent, actually there is some
doubt as to whether the play came into craft control at
this time; for crafts were not strong in Chester, at
least until the reign of Henry VIII.¹³⁵ It was likely
that the play was given during the regular Whitsun
season and remained close to the Church until 1531.¹³⁶
Records indicate that one of the popular translators,
Randal Higden, had to make at least three trips to Rome

¹³²Salter, "The Banns of the Chester Plays,"
Review of English Studies, XVI (April, 1940), 144.

¹³³The "Breviary of Chester," compiled by Archdeacon
Robert Rogers and son, David Rogers, is an additional
source and a valuable record. Walter W. Greg (ed.), The
Trial and Flagellation with Other Studies in the Chester
Cycle, p. 121.

¹³⁴Salter, "Banns of the Chester Plays," Review
of English Studies, XVI (January, 1940), 16.

¹³⁵Salter, Medieval Drama in Chester, p. 42.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 43.

for permission to render the original Latin plays into English.¹³⁷ In this connection, both Higden and, more recently, a monk, Henry Francis (1377-89), have been suggested as authors of this cycle. However, the Church's influence created the spiritual foundation of the cycle and should always be recognized as such. Even beyond 1538, Church officials attended the plays at St. Werburgh's.¹³⁸ Even more interesting are the records that reveal the cooperative spirit between the Church and the community which the following record of purchase indicates: "Sould to Thomas Sheuyntons sonne the belman & tho dychers sonne 3 course vestments & a course streamer to make players garments."¹³⁹ However, the enthusiasm between the Church and crafts weakened over the right of censorship regarding the religious stage in 1530.¹⁴⁰ The mere fact that there were sufficient clergy in residence at Chester would suggest that a dramatist probably was not allowed much theatrical license. At least, the Chester manuscript tends to reveal such evidence. It is apparent that the

¹³⁷E. Hamilton Moore, English Miracle Plays and Moralities, p. 43.

¹³⁸Salter, Medieval Drama in Chester, p. 103.

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁴⁰Wickham, op. cit., II, 55-56.

people of Chester were a devout group and that those who were clerics took an active part both in the drama and in city affairs. Moreover, even after laymen replaced clergy as actors, the Chester plays evinced a high degree of religious respect.¹⁴¹

The matter of Noah's wife merits some discussion. In the earlier scenes of Chester, one does not bother greatly about her remarks that women are weak and that it is a man's place to carry timber (65-68). Rather, it is after refusing to enter the ark that she gains the most attention (197-200), as her troublesome nature clearly comes before the audience. Her actions, thereafter, identify her. Here, she appears drawn between Noah's command, which is God's, and her good "gossips," who probably represent the sinners or devils of the world. While no devil actually appears, Mill suggests that the reference, "Come in, wife, in 20 devills waye, / or els stand there without" (219-220), rather than idiomatic, might be the so-called "devil-naming device" (the association of a character with the devil for numerous reasons.)¹⁴² One is inclined to believe that this scene of high pitch, in which

¹⁴¹I. O. Boton King, The Chester Miracle Play, p. xii.

¹⁴²Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LVI (September, 1941), 625.

Noah's wife causes the trouble, is more serious and didactic than it is comic. In the first place, after her family fails to sympathize with her and her chances of joining the "gossips" are almost gone, she still exhibits a stubborn determination to remain where she is. A stock character she may be, but also one that is true to what she believes. One critic suggests that it was unwise of Noah, at least in his first request, to command that his wife go into the ark.¹⁴³ At any rate, the scenes between Noah and his wife represent the author's use of domestic realism and show that he obviously knew the habits and ways of the common folk.¹⁴⁴ It seems almost as if the author knew exactly how far to extend the fighting scene in order to create an exact impression upon his audience. The Gossips' Song (225-232), usually reprinted in the footnotes of the text, appears in a different meter from the rest of the play and, for this reason, is usually assigned to a later date.¹⁴⁵ In this connection, there has been no evidence found on the origin of the music which might suggest the date in which the "comic revisions"

¹⁴³Williams, op. cit., p. 121.

¹⁴⁴Arthur Brown, "Folklore Elements in the Medieval Drama," Folklore, LXIII (June, 1952), 75.

¹⁴⁵Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 27.

occurred.¹⁴⁶

The entire episode surrounding Noah's wife frequently has been investigated with the purpose of determining whether her nature is comic, serious, farcical, or exactly when her influence began and for what purpose. To this end, there have been traces of her history found in the apocryphal Jewish accounts, particularly in Legends of the Patriarchs and Prophets, where she appears only as being angry.¹⁴⁷ In Weil's Biblische Legenden der Muselmanner, she is the messenger who warns of the flood.¹⁴⁸ She also makes a brief appearance in Ginzberg's Legends of the Jews.¹⁴⁹ One critic feels that her legend is of English descent, at least as it evolved from the old Cornish plays, evidently in an attempt to evoke realism.¹⁵⁰ Certainly, Garvin's dating of the incident cannot be discounted in this connection. Another writer sees her as one of the

¹⁴⁶Fletcher Collins, "Music in the Craft Cycles," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XLVII (September, 1932), 619.

¹⁴⁷Millicent Carey, The Wakefield Group in the Towneley Cycle, pp. 76-77.

¹⁴⁸Loc. cit.

¹⁴⁹Loc. cit., There is a footnote on the mocking relatives who appear in the northern poem Cursor Mundi, II., 1729-44; see also Anderson, op. cit., p. 7 on the Cursor Mundi and this point.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 77.

"scoffers" in the Koran.¹⁵¹ In addition, there is a clue between the tenth century use of the "devil-naming device," which was first given to an ass and, later, directed to the behavior of Noah's wife.¹⁵² In Enikel's Heltchronik, a late thirteenth century work from Vienna, there is an illustration of Noah's wife anticipating Noah's behavior before he uses the "devil-naming device."¹⁵³ At least, one can be confident that the legend surrounding Noah's wife was not necessarily a product of the religious plays, although her story was incorporated into the Chester, York, and Towneley cycles, and, probably, into a great many other plays. At best, one must look to the art, the folklore, and the entire background of the episode in considering this popular "comic" entry.¹⁵⁴ A final view is that of Woolf, who posits that in all the plays but the Ludus Coventriae, Noah's wife represents the character of Eve, as she objects to Noah's every move.¹⁵⁵ Although the idea, here, cannot be any more than a theory, it would

¹⁵¹Mill, "Noah's Wife Again," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LVI (September, 1941), 615.

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 616.

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 619.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 626.

¹⁵⁵Woolf, op. cit., p. 823.

appear that, if she were intended to be comic, it would have been revealed as it developed through a series of definitely marked stages.

To be sure, the element of humor had its place in the medieval plays, but probably as an attempt to retain a more realistic effect, and was, consequently, not as obtrusive to the medieval audience as it might appear to be, today.¹⁵⁶ It is conceivable that the Expositor, at the end of Chester's play, dealt with Noah's wife in terms of the meaning of anger and disobedience, rather than in terms of outright humor. There is no doubt that the episode had for its purpose a lesson.¹⁵⁷ To this end, the conservative Chester society permitted "comic" elements in its plays.¹⁵⁸ One must admit, however, that any method of approaching this puzzling character has its disadvantages.

As to stage properties, the play has Latin directions, indicative not only of the pen of a clerical writer, but one who shows skill in the use of stage machinery. At the beginning of the play, there is the lengthy direction: "Et primo in aliquo supremo loco

¹⁵⁶Salter, Medieval Drama in Chester, p. 87.

¹⁵⁷Clarke, op. cit., p. 34.

¹⁵⁸Donald James Savage, "An Analysis of the Comic Element in Chester, York, Coventry, and Towneley Mystery Cycles," Dissertation Abstracts, Publication No. 15,958 (1955).

sive in nubibus, si fieri poterit, loquatur deus ad Noe extra Archan existentem cum tota familia sua."¹⁵⁹ As the direction suggests, in order to illustrate mountains, clouds, and other effects, the dramatist had at hand a variety of stage materials such as winches, hoists, and lifts to assist him.¹⁶⁰ However, Thompson challenges this opinion, suggesting that the stages were without any such devices, except bare essentials.¹⁶¹ At any rate, the above direction indicates, of course, that the ark is already constructed. Thus, the next direction shows that the action in the building-scene is one of pantomime: "Tunc faciunt signa, quasi laborarent cum diversis Instrumentis."¹⁶² This direction is repeated fourteen lines later, probably in its action to remind the audience of the construction so that they may further identify themselves with the actions in the episode. One could imagine that God's presence above was enhanced considerably through the use of

¹⁵⁹At first in some high place, or in the clouds if it may be, God speaketh unto Noe standing without the ark with all his family.

¹⁶⁰Williams, op. cit., p. 106.

¹⁶¹Elbert N. S. Thompson, "The Ludus Coventriae," Modern Language Notes, XXI (1906), 20.

¹⁶²Then they make signs, as if laboring with divers tools.

stage machinery. Collins suggests that, in most cases, God is accompanied by angelic music, which, also, would be an aid in creating the atmosphere.¹⁶³

The third major direction is interesting:

Tunc Noe introibit archam, et familia sua dabit et recitabit omnia animalia de picta in cartis et, postquam unusquisque suam locutus est partem, ibit in archam, vxore Noe excepta, et animalia depicta cum verbis concordare debent, et sic incipiet primus filius.¹⁶⁴

As the passage suggests, the border of the ark, on which the pictures were painted, illustrates more than fifty different animals described within the play (161-192).

One can imagine the sons and wives pointing to the pictures on the ark as they describe each animal.

However, in the nave of Norwich Cathedral, two scenes show that real animals may have been used; for example, one shows a man carrying two sheep, and the other, a woman with a basket in which may be seen several birds.¹⁶⁵ The Malvern windows depict Noah with a goat and alongside him several kinds of animals.¹⁶⁶ The Chester

¹⁶³Collins, op. cit., p. 619.

¹⁶⁴Then Noe shall go into the ark with all his family, his wife except and the ark must be borden rounde about and on the border all the beasts and fowls received must be painted that the words might agree with the pictures.

¹⁶⁵Anderson, op. cit., p. 140.

¹⁶⁶Loc. cit.

Nativity play often used animals, and, one thinks it is highly probable that they were used sometimes in the Noah play, in spite of stage directions to the contrary. Sympathy was frequently shown toward animals as a result of St. Francis.¹⁶⁷ However, any specific influence is difficult to trace, here. There are two directions involving the scene with Noah's wife--tunc ibit (then he shall go) and et dat alapanvita (and she gives him a lively blow)--both of which are probably used to advance the tension of the story. Time is traditionally eclipsed during the play, as the audience is reminded by the direction: "Tunc Noe claudet fenestram Archaee et per modicum spatium infra tectum cantent psalmum 'save mee o God' et aperiens fenestram et respiciens."¹⁶⁸ This direction introduces one of the few religious songs in medieval drama as the "gossips" sing a hymn, i. e., "Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul!" (King James, No. 69).¹⁶⁹ The use of such music might be explained by the fact that Chester was a musical

¹⁶⁷Woolf, op. cit., p. 619.

¹⁶⁸Then Noe shall close the window of the ark, and for a short while within, let them sing the psalm 'Save me o God,' and opening the window and looking around, Noe said:

¹⁶⁹Collins, op. cit., p. 619.

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¹⁶⁹Collins, op. cit., p. 619.

city and had one of the earliest known minstrel associations in England.¹⁷⁰ One of the most fascinating directions, however, involves the process of releasing and returning the dove to Noah: "Tunc emittet columbam et erit in nave alia columba ferens olivam in ore, quam dimittet ex malo per funem in manus Noe, et Postea dicat Noe."¹⁷¹ One would suspect that a pulley and a rope mechanism were used to effect this movement. One writer suggests that Noah probably drew the dove down with his hands from a string attached to the mast.¹⁷² There was a tradition which holds that most any effect could be produced in Chester, if the budget saw fit.¹⁷³ The final stage direction shows Noah and his family leaving the ark: "Tunc egrediens arcam cum tota familia sua accipiet animalia sua et volucres et offeret ea et mactabit."¹⁷⁴ Then, like the original source, the

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 617.

¹⁷¹Then shall he let loose a dove and there shall be in the ship another dove bearing an olive in her mouth, which someone shall let down by a string into the hands of Noe.

¹⁷²J. Q. Adams (ed.), Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas, p. 171; see also, Martial Rose (ed.), The Wakefield Mystery Plays, p. 163.

¹⁷³Williams, op. cit., p. 106.

¹⁷⁴The going out of the ark with all his family he shall take his animals and birds, and shall offer them and make sacrifice.

animals and birds are offered to God in thanksgiving and, thus, the play's circuit is completed by the covenant, as the play ends with the final "Finis paginae Tertiae," (End of play three).

A closer look at the Chester play reveals the direct connection between the liturgy of the Sexagesima Week as it appears in the Roman Breviary and the point at which the dramatist invented elements for purposes of the dramatic situation.¹⁷⁵ The sequence of events in the play and the parallel passages in the Breviary may suggest a method useful in evaluating other plays whose subjects are in accordance with the Church year:

Noah

Deus. Manne that I made I
will destroy, / beast,
wrome, and fowle to flie; /
for on earthe they doe me
nye, / the folke that are
theron. . . that sore it
greueth me Inwardlic /
that ever I made manne.
(9-16)

God continues to speak to
Noah:

Therefore, Yoe, my servant
free, that righteous man
art as I see, a shipp
sone thou shalt make
the of trees drye and
lighte. Little chambers
therein thou make and

Breviary

God. I will destroy man
whom I have created, from
the face of the earth,
from man even to beasts,
from the creeping thing
even to the fowls of the
air, for it repenteth me
that I have made them.
(Sun., ii.)

Noah was a just and per-
fect man, he walked with
God: And did all whatever
God directed. . . Make
thee an ark of timber
planks; thou shalt make
little rooms in the ark,

¹⁷⁵To determine on what day in the Week the passage occurs, with its parallel Latin, I refer the reader to the Appendix.

bynding slich also thou
take, with-in and -out
thou ne slake to anoynte
it through all thy mighte.
(17-24)

and thou shalt pitch it
within and without. And
thus shalt thou make it.
(Sun., ii., Resp.)

Another aspect is the similarity of lines within the play and its immediate source. For example, the phrase "Noe is free, righteous man (servant)," appears in three sections of the play (17-18; 115; 370); and the words, "Noe is just and perfect . . . walks with God," appear three times in the Breviary.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, these passages occur almost in the same positions of the texts in both the play and Breviary, twice at the beginning and once at the end, although such textual evidence is not always reliable. God, again, commands Noah to take into the ark the following:

Noah

Noe, take thou thy meanye,
and in the snippe hye that
you be; / for none so
righteous man to me / is
now on earth lycinge. of
cleane beastes with thee
thou take / seaven and
seaven, or thou slake, /
hee and shee, make to make
be lyve in that thou bringe,
of beastes uncleane two
and two, male and female,
without moo; of cleane
fowles seaven alsoe, the
hee and shee together.
(113-124)

Breviary

Go in thou and all thy
house into the ark; for
thee I have seen just
before men in this
generation. Of all clean
beasts take seven and
seven, the male and the
female. Of the fowls
also of the air seven and
seven, the male and the
female.
(Mon., i.)

¹⁷⁶See Appendix: (Sun., ii, R; Sun., iii; and
Thurs., ii, R.).

Since there was a tendency to expand the lectiones found in the Breviary, it is altogether possible that these accounts of the stories suggested to the dramatist the original concept of Biblical expansion. One notes, also, that those sections in which God is narrator are usually closest to the source and, thus, indicate no deviation. Again, in the raven-scene the textual parallel is obvious:

Noah

Now 40 days are fullie
gone. send a raven I will
anone if ought-where
earth, tree, or stone /
be drye in any place.
(257-260)

Breviary

And after that forty days
were passed, Noah, opening
the window of the ark
which he had made, sent
forth a raven: which went
forth and did not return,
till the waters were dried
up upon the earth.
(Tues., ii.)

God, who is now pleased with Noah's work, increases the bond between them. One doubts that the playwright could have tampered with these words in the presence of such a clerical atmosphere as Chester:

Noah

You shall now grow and
multeply, and carth againe
you sdeifie; each beast
and fowle that may flie, /
shall be agrayed of you.
And fishe in sea that may
flytte shall susteyne yow,
I you behite, to eate of
them yow ne lett, that
cleane bene you may
knowne.

Thereas you have eaten

Breviary

Increase and multiply, and
fill the earth. And let
the fear and dread of you
be upon all the beasts of
the earth, and upon all
the fowls of the air, and
all that move upon the
earth: all the fishes of
the sea are delivered And
everything shall be meat
for you: Saving that flesh
with blood you shall not

before grasse and rootes,
 sith you were born / of
 cleane beastes now, les
 and more, / I geve you
 leave to eate, / Safe
 bloode and flesh bothe in
 feare or wrong dead carren
 that is here, / eates not
 of that in no manere; for
 that eye you shall let.
 Manslaughter also you
 shall flee; / for that is
 not pleasant to me. that
 shedes bloode, he or shee,
 ought-where amongst man-
 kinde.

(321-336)

eat. For I will require
 the blood of your lives at
 the hand of every beast,
 and at the hand of man, at
 the hand of every man, and
 of his brother, will I
 require the life of man.
 Whosoever shall shed
 man's blood, his blood
 shall be shed: for man
 was made to the image of
 God.

(Wed., iii.)

Even more interesting is the Parable of the Sower and Seed (344-352) in which the writer utilizes Church symbolism to introduce the covenant scene, thus, uniting the play to its liturgical cycle. In a sense, then, the audience is morally bound to the play, as the play is bound to its own liturgical pattern. Hence, a unity of purpose and a deep sense of logic are evident, not only in the play, but in the cycle.¹⁷⁷ Nothing can better express this dramatic union than the following parallels of God's words to Noah:

Noah

My Bowe betwene you and me
 in the firmament shall
 bee, by verey token that
 you may see that such
 vengeance shall cease,
 That man ne woman shall

Breviary

This is the sign of the
 Covenant which I give
 between me and you, and to
 every living soul that is
 with you, for perpetual
 generations. I will set

¹⁷⁷Salter, Medieval Drama in Chester, p. 105.

never more / be wasted by
 water as is before, / but
 for syn that greveth me
 sore, therefore this
 vengeance was.

where clouds in the welkin
 bene, / that ilke bowe
 shall be sene / In tokeninge
 that my wrath and tene shall
 never this wroken be. This
 string is turned toward
 you / and toward me is bent
 the bowe that such wedder
 shall never shoue, / and
 this behett I thee.

(355-363)

my bow in the clouds, and
 it shall be the sign of a
 covenant between me, and
 between the earth. And
 when I shall cover the sky
 with clouds, my bow shall
 appear in the clouds.

(Thurs., i)

The fact that God maintains a position of high respect and authority contributes to the liturgical purpose and supports the didactic elements within the play. The two major additions to the narrative occur in character expansion and in the use of communal effort. Obviously, these additions were directed to a religious community as reflected in the play and author. From the standpoint of source, the Chester play remains close to the Church liturgy, probably because of its highly clerical atmosphere. Yet, one fully appreciates the author's attempts at characterization and those of domestic appeal. Although it is unlikely that any one play will serve conclusively in identifying an author, one suggests that the Chester author had a developing part in achieving a dramatic appeal and more than once demonstrated his acquaintance with the medieval conventions

regarding the Church and stage. It appears, therefore, that this conservative play is a valuable record of the time.

CHAPTER III

THE YORK AND TOWNELEY NOAH PLAYS

The York play includes two separate pageants, one performed by the Shipwrites and concerned with the Building of the Ark; and the other related to the Story of the Flood, presented by the Fysshers and Marynars.¹⁷⁸ It would seem that the unusual feature of this cycle is the appearance of a play which occurs only as an incident in the other plays of Noah. One notes, also, that this feature of two pageants evidently arose out of vast methods of production.¹⁷⁹ But the fact is, the internal evidence indicates that Play VIII, on the building of the ark, is the earlier one, containing an older stanza and one that is notably more serious.¹⁸⁰ On the other hand, Play IX, of the flood, exhibits a later stanza and a considerable deviation from the Biblical source.¹⁸¹ Play VIII is shorter, contains only God and Noah as

¹⁷⁸Clarke, op. cit., p. 80.

¹⁷⁹Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 8.

¹⁸⁰Gayley, op. cit., p. 151.

¹⁸¹Ibid., p. 152.

characters, and adheres closely to the original account of this incident. It is highly probable that this latter play was a part of the older cycle, given over in toto to the later play IX, the opening directions to which suggest such a possibility: "The Ark in the forest where it was built." It might be well to mention, here, that the York cycle experienced revisions, too numerous to mention, and that these pageants probably measure the diversity of development attained within the cycle.¹⁸² Greg's criterion of play lengths--early ones very short and later very long--would seem to bear out such an hypothesis.¹⁸³ Whoever was in charge of these pageants undoubtedly saw the great need for retaining the earlier pageant, which was probably due to guild participation or the demands of changing conditions.¹⁸⁴ One notes, furthermore, that York had the necessary wealth and an abundance of trading facilities to promote a number of extra pageants.¹⁸⁵ The fact that the pageants suggest a desire to divide

¹⁸²Baugh, op. cit., p. 279.

¹⁸³Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Plays, p. 25.

¹⁸⁴Chambers, The Medieval Stage, II, 145.

¹⁸⁵Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, pp. 7-8.

the clerical and secular matters (God appears only in the Shipwrites' version) is an interesting topic, but one lacking substantial proof.

Play VIII, containing 151 lines, retains the traditional ship-building scene as found in the source, except for two deviations.¹⁸⁶ For example, Noah tells God (49-52) that he is too old to construct a ship and cannot work except out of necessity; he, then, continues to explain (65-68) that he knows nothing about the manner of shipcraft. Whether or not Noah, here, represents the playwright's position is a matter that cannot be proved beyond conjecture. At any rate, God explains in detail the process (69-88) and Noah, an apt apprentice, soon relates the details to the audience.¹⁸⁷ Rose contends that the craft was undoubtedly assembled on the stage but that a prefabricated model could not have been used by one person in the time allotted.¹⁸⁸ The evidence, to date, seems to indicate that some construction was made, but evidently the ark was already built into the shape of a boat or house, with an open front so that the audience could observe the action

¹⁸⁶Lucy Toulmin Smith (ed.), York Plays, p. 40. All references to the York play of Noah are from this edition.

¹⁸⁷Williams, op. cit., 127.

¹⁸⁸Rose, op. cit., p. 161.

inside.¹⁸⁹ As to the length of performance, the forty-eight play cycle was given in a single day, beginning at 4:30 a. m.¹⁹⁰ Logic would suggest that within such a short acting time, a permanent ark would be necessary.

The author of the York play, IX, shows a vast divergency from the Biblical narrative, as he attempts to shape the play to fit his needs. The dramatis personae gives eight characters, even without God, while the play is skillfully divided into three scenes.¹⁹¹ For example, the first scene opens with a forty-six line monologue in which Noah grieves the coming of the flood because of sin, and recalls that his father, Lamech, also had predicted such an event. Here, Noah tells the audience:

Syrs, by þis wele witte may ye,
My ffadir knewe both more and mynne,
By sartheyne signes he couthe wele see,
That al þis worlde shuld synke for synne.
(33-36)

With these remarks, Noah stresses the importance of punishment and is depicted as a spokesman for God. Next, he orders his son to fulfill his commands, one of which is to call his mother into the ark (47-54). The

¹⁸⁹Clarke, op. cit., p. 71.

¹⁹⁰Franklin, op. cit., p. 15; also, Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 28.

¹⁹¹Bates, op. cit., 92.

author characterizes the son as being most obedient, for he departs immediately for Noah's home. The second scene, which is short, shows the son asking his mother to join Noah in the ark (55-70). In reply, she refuses to believe him, but after three attempts, he finally coaxes her into following him. Thus, early in this play, Noah's wife is a dubious and stubborn woman. Scene three and the rest of the play are given over to depicting Noah's wife as a reluctant spouse, the events of which become highly dramatic. Refusing to enter the ark, she offers three reasons for her behavior. In the first, she states that she must return home in order to pack her personal items; in the second, she accuses Noah of not telling her about his plans to build an ark; and in the third, as in the Chester, she must have her "gossips" and cousins first. The fact that all three reasons appear to be practical ones suggests that she is within her rights to comment upon her "secretive husband."¹⁹² It should be remembered that Noah was in the forest building the ark for one-hundred years.¹⁹³ It would, therefore, be reasonable to assume that she felt upset and neglected.¹⁹⁴ At any rate, her daughters

¹⁹²Rudolf Brotanek, "Noahs Arche," Anglia, XXI (1899), 193.

¹⁹³Creizenach, Geschichte des neuren Dramas, I, 209.

¹⁹⁴Loc. cit.

comfort her, as she finally consents to Noah's demands.¹⁹⁵ In spite of the comic interpretation, this scene effectively presents a pathetic but serious account of the so-called shrew. Furthermore, the author's additions to his source provide insight into the family's relationship, while the incident with Noah's wife serves as a kind of bond between the audience and the characters in that one may identify himself with her at any time. The dramatist concludes the play on a series of minor scenes which follow his source, as Noah tells the family to go forth and multiply. Thus, Noah has remained as the exemplar of the faith; he is not necessarily affected by other characters, except God, but other characters are affected by him. Furthermore, one realizes that Noah's wife and children serve as a means of accentuating the plot, enabling Noah to function in his familiar role.

In addition to several short stage directions (74, 96, 120, 200, 216, and 246), there are two instances in which the author makes use of a narrator (211-218 and 281-288), perhaps to advance the story and to serve as a break between Noah's lengthy

¹⁹⁵Gayley, op. cit., p. 167.

speeches.¹⁹⁶ The reliance upon familiar nautical language, *i. e.* ". . . I sall caste leede and loke be space" (199), to measure the depth of the water indicates the writer's familiarity with such terms and reveals, perhaps, an influence of the Shipwrights and Mariners.¹⁹⁷ Probably, the similarity of Noah's words, "Bot nowe my cares aren keen as knyffe" (7) to the son's, "Oure cares are kene as knyffe" (223), indicates the common idiom of the writer.

Another deviation from the source is Noah's promise that the world is to be destroyed by fire (301). This allusion, Smith says, might originate from Iranian legends.¹⁹⁸ Of further importance, is the part that Noah's children play as they support the narrative. Scholars have pointed out that they illustrate the author's adroit skill in versification.¹⁹⁹ Besides aiding their mother, in three sections (178, 251, and 296), they also remind the audience of the time that has elapsed. Furthermore, one is reminded of the

¹⁹⁶Williams suggests that the absence of lengthy stage directions in this play may mean that the director's contributions were never put into writing. For some reason it was not necessary in York. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

¹⁹⁷Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁹⁸Smith, *op. cit.*, p. xlvii.

¹⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p. xlvi.

familiar dramatic chorus in their manner:

Pat lorde pat lennes vs lyffe,
 To lere his lawes in lande,
 He mayd bothe man and wyffe,
 He helpe to stynte oure striffe.
 (219-222)

As earlier noted, York, a wealthy city, financed a host of pageants. One could only imagine the amount of activity when Richard II attended the plays in 1397.²⁰⁰ There were, during this time, at least sixteen stations throughout the town and apparently a great deal of competition entered into in order to have these stations visit one's home.²⁰¹ A strong city council regulated the performances, maintaining order, imposing fees, and handling most of the details with the plays.²⁰² Each guild, in turn, owned its own play and, outside of council control, conducted the performance according to its own manner.²⁰³ Even before city guilds, there developed in 1408 religious guilds founded by the clergy, undoubtedly an attempt to heighten the moral

²⁰⁰Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 205.

²⁰¹Robert Speaight, Christian Theatre, pp. 29-30.

²⁰²Baugh, op. cit., p. 278; A. C. Cawley (ed.), Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays, p. xi.

²⁰³Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycle, p. 27.

aspects of guild-life.²⁰⁴ At least seventy-five clergy were among the first members, and during the years, the number grew to over seven thousand, many of whom left costly legacies in which the city benefited.²⁰⁵

Throughout York, there was a consistent moral outlook, particularly to be seen in the close supervision of these plays.²⁰⁶ The reason for this attitude, of course, is not hard to find. York was an ecclesiastical centre and undoubtedly possessed one of the most religious cycles.²⁰⁷ However, the plays are not as "religious" as those of Chester and are probably of a later vintage, as indicated in the so-called Memorandum Book of 1376.²⁰⁸ Roger Burton, a town clerk, compiled two sets of records around 1415 and 1420, which confirm the popular forty-eight play count.²⁰⁹ In any case, their total pageants and income far surpassed those of

²⁰⁴Westlake, op. cit., p. 53.

²⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 54-55.

²⁰⁶Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 147.

²⁰⁷Loc. cit.

²⁰⁸Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 28.

²⁰⁹Loc. cit., see Alfred Harbage, Annals of English Drama, p. 10.

Chester.²¹⁰ As a rule, the expense for producing a play fell to the crafts.²¹¹ They, in turn, received sufficient contributions, in addition to their own fund, in which to allocate expenditures.²¹² One further note concerns the existence of sixteen stations in York which made the procession a lengthy one.²¹³ However, this method of performing the plays throughout the city is unquestionably a result of Corpus Christi influences.²¹⁴ The original manner in which the guilds assembled the plays cannot be traced with any complete accuracy. About all that one can do is to observe the religious and civic points of view and the individual craftsman who encompass the entire cycle of production.²¹⁵

The York dramatist does not hesitate to show both sides of life. In this sense, he might be considered an early forerunner of accurate and scientific thought.²¹⁶ Scholars have longed to know more about this York

²¹⁰Loc. cit.

²¹¹Chambers, The Medieval Stage, II, 115.

²¹²Ibid., p. 116.

²¹³Ibid., p. 138.

²¹⁴Cawley (ed.), Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays, p. xii.

²¹⁵Kenneth Sisam, op. cit., p. xxv.

²¹⁶Brown, op. cit., p. 76.

Realist whose influence was one of exceptional ability, one who blended the contemporary scene with the art of Gothic realism.²¹⁷ Craig, for instance, believes the York Realist was a deeply religious person.²¹⁸ Others suggest that he was primarily a reviser, specifically of eight Passion Plays in the cycle.²¹⁹ Rossiter, acting on the assumption that the entire cycle underwent a revision, claimed that the Realist revised only certain parts of it.²²⁰ As to composition dates, Frampton feels that the author did most of the work during the early part of the fifteenth century.²²¹ Others suggest that the cycle had three periods of revision and that the middle period, of Noah, is separate from the later more realistic period.²²² While there have been numerous attempts to discern when

²¹⁷Waldo McNeir, "The Corpus Christi Passion Plays as Dramatic Art," Studies in Philology, XLVIII (July, 1951), 628.

²¹⁸Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 158.

²¹⁹J. W. Robinson, "The Art of the York Realist," Modern Philology, LX (May, 1963), 241.

²²⁰Arthur Percival Rossiter, English Drama from Early Times to the Elizabethans, p. 66.

²²¹Mendel G. Frampton, "Date of the Wakefield Master: Bibliographical Evidence," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LIII (March, 1938), 112.

²²²Gayley, op. cit., p. 158.

and where the York Realist revised parts of the manuscript, there is, at least, significant agreement that the plays show an independent aspect of development.²²³ In other words, the plays are the individual products of York from which they came. Equally important, is the realistic quality which permeates these plays, executed within the strict confines of religion, as portrayed in Biblical events.²²⁴ It would appear, then, that the religious appeal united the medieval audience in a respect for truth, one that intimately involved the entire cycle in a kind of "shared devotional experience."²²⁵ To be sure, the plays were directed to a normal mode of living that one might encounter during the fourteenth century, and, consequently, in them appear familiar and not uncommon events.²²⁶ Both pageants of the York cycle show the liturgical influence. One need only set aside the domestic episodes, as in the Chester, to see the

²²³Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles, p. 27; Schlauch, op. cit., p. 319; Smith, op. cit., p. xliii.

²²⁴MacKinnon, op. cit., p. 437.

²²⁵Wickham, op. cit., I, 260.

²²⁶J. S. Purvis, The York Cycle of Mystery Plays, p. 12.

significance of these passages.²²⁷ For example, Play VIII echoes the passages in the Breviary from Sexagesima Week, as God tells of the destruction of the world:

Noah

Breviary

Deus. Al newe I will bis
worlde be wrought, / And
waste away þat wonny þer-
in, / A flowyd a-bove
þame shall be broght, /
To stroye medilerthe,
both more and myn. Bot
Noe alon lefe shall it
nought. To all be sownkyn
for ther synne.

(25-30)

God. It is repented him
that he made man on the
earth. And being touched
inwardly with sorrow of
heart, He said: I will
destroy man, whom I have
created, from the face of
the earth . . . But Noe
found grace before the
Lord.

(Sun., ii)

These opening remarks suggest the theme throughout both pageants; next, God tells Noah in what manner the ship is to be constructed:

Deus. Take high trees and
hewe þame cleyne, / All be
sware and nought of skwyn. . .
iii C cubyttis it sall be
long, / And fifty brode,
all for thy blys, Þe
highte of thyrtty cubittis
strong.

(73-74; 81-84)

God. Make thee an ark of
timber planks. . . and
thus shalt thou make it:
the length of the ark
shall be three-hundred
cubits: the breadth of
it fifty cubits, and the
height of it thirty cubits.

(Sun., iii)

At this point, the author expanded his original source to allow for a detailed account of how the ship's materials were bound together. The fact that the precise dimensions are retained shows a close familiarity with the source, or, at least, a certain scribal

²²⁷Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 85.

accuracy. The remaining parallel in Play VIII suggests the amount and types of items that are to accompany the ark:

Noah

Deus. For dyuerse beestis
 per-in must lende, / And
 fewles also in pere degree
 . . . of ilka kynde pou
 sall take twoo Bothe male
 and femalle fare in fere;
 / Thy wyffe, thy sonnes,
 with þe sall goo, And
 thare thre wyffes, / with-
 owten were, / Pere viij
 bodies with-owten moo, /
 Sall þus be saued on this
 manere.

(128-135)

Breviary

God. Of all clean beasts
 take seven and seven, the
 male and the female, Of
 the fowls also of the air
 seven and seven, the male
 and the female. . . R.
 In that selfsame day Noe,
 and his sons, his wife,
 and the wives of his sons
 went into the ark. W.
 Destroy all the land, but
 only Noe and all with him
 in the ark shall remain.

(Mon., 1)

In play IX, Noah alludes briefly to Lamech, his father (15) in the opening scene. The Lamech account appears in the Breviary during Septuagesima Week, but does not concern this play directly. Furthermore, there are no direct source parallels again until line (211), probably because of the realistic encounter between Noah and his wife. At this juncture, the Raven and Dove scenes pick up the source narrative, as it were, with the following explanation:

Noah

The Raven is wighte, and
 wyse is hee. / Pou arte
 ful crabbed and al thy
 kynde, / Wende forthe þi
 course I comaunde þe . . .
 My birde had done as I hym
 badde, An olyue braunche I

Breviary

Noe, opening the window
 of the ark which he had
 made, sent forth a raven:
 Which went forth and did
 not return till the waters
 were dried up upon the
 earth. . . sent forth the

se hym brynge. Blyste be
pou fewle þat neuere was
fayd.
(212-215; 255-257)

dove out of the ark. And
she came to him in the
evening, carrying a bough
of an olive tree, with
green leaves, in her mouth.
(Tues. ii; iii)

Even more interesting, Play IX includes two Latin
cues that are also found in the Breviary, and their
close agreement with the source, again, suggests the
liturgical framework of the play:

Noah

. . . For synne as men may
see, Dum dixit penitet me.
Full sore for-thynkyng was
he That euere he made
mankynde.
(277-280)

Breviary

. . . It is repented him
that he made man on the
earth. And being touched
inwardly with sorrow of
heart. . . for it
repenteth me that I have
made them. (and the Latin)
poenitet enim me fecisse
eos.
(Sun., ii)

Three lines later, the second Latin phrase occurs:

But sonnes he saide, I
watte wele when, / Arcum
ponam in nubibus, / He
sette his bowe clerly to
kenne, / As a to-kenyny
by-twene hym and vs In
knowlage tille all cristen
men, / That fro þis worlde
were fynyd þus, / With
wattir wolde he neuere
wastyd þen.
(282-288)

God. This is the sign of
the Covenant which I give
between me and you, and to
every living soul that is
with you, for perpetual
generations. I will set
my bow in the clouds,
(Arcum meum ponam in
nubibus) and it shall be
the sign of a Covenant
between me, and between
the earth. . . and there
shall no more be waters of
a flood to destroy all
flesh.
(Thurs., i)

Kretzmann suggests the phrase, Ponam arcum meum in
nubibus coeli, in response to the Latin tag found on

line (283) of the play.²²⁸ Indeed, it is surprising, for his quotation does not appear as often in the source, while the more accurate Arcum meum ponam in nubibus appears at least seven times throughout the Week. At the end, a symbolic use of the seed imagery appears to unite the play even further to its source:

Noah

Noe. Sones, with youre
wiffes 3e salle be stedde,
/ And multiplye youre
seede salle 3e.
(311-312)

Breviary

God blessed Noe and his
sons, and said to them.
Increase and multiply and
fill the earth. W. Behold
I will establish my
Covenant with you, and
with your seed after you.
(Wed., i)

Equally important, the audience is reminded of a further liturgical concept, as Noah discusses the elements of "brede & wyne" (318), found also in the Breviary (Thurs., ii). The play ends with the traditional, "In goddis blissyng & myne." (322). It is evident, therefore, that the dramatist had a keen knowledge of scriptural material. Most likely, he was a member of a religious house, somewhere in the vicinity of North Yorkshire.²²⁹

Towneley Play III immediately presents a problem as to whether or not Wakefield was the locality for the

²²⁸Loc. cit.

²²⁹Smith, op. cit., p. xlvi.

plays. Mention is made of the name "Wakefield" only in connection with plays I and III, as part of the titles, and not as later additions.²³⁰ In the first place, if the entire cycle produced the plays in this town, it seems unusual that the name of the community does not appear on all extant editions. Wann suggests that such an omission would seem to indicate that the other plays were not done in Wakefield.²³¹ Tradition holds that the manuscript, belonging to the Towneley family, became associated with "Widkirk" or "Woodkirk," an area four miles north of Wakefield.²³² It is not clear how or when the Towneley family acquired these plays, however Towneley Hall was close by and may have been connected with the composition.²³³ Another contributing factor is that the village of Woodkirk sponsored events large enough to engage plays.²³⁴ This

²³⁰Louis Wann, "New Examination of the Manuscript of the Towneley Plays," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XLIII (March, 1928), 150.

²³¹Ibid., p. 152.

²³²Chambers, The Medieval Stage, II, 415. Chambers notes there was only a cell, not an abbey, of Augustinian canons of St. Oswald at Nostel.

²³³Wann, op. cit., p. 151; also, Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 34.

²³⁴Alfred W. Pollard, "Introduction," George England (ed.), The Towneley Plays, p. xii.

concept is further supported by Peacock, who adds that there is no "Widkirk" but that "fairs" were given at Woodkirk, or West Ardsley, about the same location from Wakefield, and that religious events were present.²³⁵ "Whitkirk," possibly taken to mean "Widkirk," is eight miles northeast of Wakefield, but did not have a religious house and, therefore, could not be connected with the cyclic plays.²³⁶ On the other hand, there are no records that indicate Wakefield, at least early, had a Corpus Christi tradition.²³⁷ For that matter, no actual plays have been found.²³⁸ Craig thinks the Burgess Court records from 1554-1556 indicate that Corpus Christi plays were performed on movable stages.²³⁹ While it is probable that the trade guilds produced plays, nevertheless, the size and condition of the streets do not support the idea of movable pageants.²⁴⁰ However, the fact that Wakefield was a popular center,

²³⁵Matthew H. Peacock, "The Wakefield Mysteries," Anglia, XXIV (April, 1901), 513.

²³⁶Ibid., p. 514.

²³⁷Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 209.

²³⁸Chambers, The Medieval Stage, II, 415.

²³⁹Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 209.

²⁴⁰Peacock, op. cit., p. 518.

and larger than Woodkirk, would support the contention that the plays were given there, as well as in the latter town.²⁴¹ Here, the problem remains.

The first seventy-two lines of the document are devoted to Noah's speech, which recalls that mankind has sinned and that God shall take vengeance upon such deeds.²⁴² This speech differs from its source, first, in that Noah appears before God enters. In his opening remarks, therefore, Noah seems to prepare the audience for God's directions. Next, God, Who is above, refers to the destruction of the world and states that all men will perish through the flood. At this point, God comes over to Noah (according to a stage direction) and, in forty-four lines, describes how to construct the ark and explains what to include in it. God's speech is sharp and clear as He commands Noah to follow His explicit instructions. Instead of greeting God, Noah fails to recognize Him and asks for His identification (163-165). When God tells him, Noah is stunned to think that God should appear to such a common man as he. It is quite probable that Noah's behavior, here, reflects

²⁴¹Ibid., p. 520.

²⁴²Alfred W. Pollard and George England (eds.), op. cit., p. 23. All citations to this play will be taken from this edition.

that of the author's deep religious respect, although this point cannot be taken beyond conjecture. Further, with this deviation from the source, the dramatist seems to add to the serious scene a human element in which the audience may identify itself with Noah. As God leaves, Noah, who is probably kneeling, is blessed. In the next scene, Noah explains to the audience that his wife has little control over her temper. One notes that this preparatory remark either indicates that Noah is to introduce the major characters in the play, or that such an explanation was deemed necessary in view of the audience.

One next encounters Noah's wife who is upset because it appears that Noah has been wasting his time and neglecting to provide food for the family (190-198). Before Noah can mention the flood or his encounter in the earlier scene with God, she upbraids him further and addresses the audience on the subject of all such husbands (208-216). The tension mounts as a verbal quarrel carries into an exchange of blows, followed by Noah's soliloquy on wives (230-234). At this juncture, Noah leaves in order to build the ark, and his wife returns to her spinning. By this means, the dramatist has used an early domestic quarrel to set the pattern for the later more violent ones that occur over the ark.

One notes, however, that this particular first quarrel did not concern the ark, nor is Noah's wife totally unjustified in her remarks. Next, the scene is directed to the ark, wherein Noah, in forty-four lines, engages the audience in construction. The first stanza gives the measurements exactly as God had earlier commanded (122-126; 257-261); in the second, Noah removes his gown and works in his coat at the mast, complaining occasionally of a back pain; in the third, he prepares the top and sail as he drives in the nails; in the last, he adds the door, window, and three chambers. The Master's ability to dramatize is cleverly shown, here. Rather than telling the audience that Noah is tired, he allows the character to grow, by degrees, weary of his task.²⁴³ Thereupon, Noah is tired from his work, but proudly departs in search of his family. One cannot help thinking that a greater part of this construction took place before the audience. At least, it is conceivable that, in this play, prefabricated sections might have been used and merely erected on stage.²⁴⁴ At home, Noah tells his wife, for the first time, about the impending flood (303-306) for

²⁴³Diller, op. cit., p. 275.

²⁴⁴Rose, op. cit., p. 161.

which she displays a surprising sense of fear and wonder. Undoubtedly, it would not only be appropriate for the playwright to use a contemporary appeal to carpentry but it would also have been advantageous to the narrative.²⁴⁵ In this same scene, Noah's wife respectfully aids the family in carrying their goods aboard, but, at the same time, she refuses to join them on grounds that she has more spinning to do. She strengthens her argument by telling the wives that her spinning cannot be done in the ark but upon the hill where she stands (363-366). Although spinning was a common medieval custom, it became associated with superstition and commanded a degree of respect as an element of the unknown.²⁴⁶ While proof is obviously uncertain, one critic suggests that there was a relationship between her spinning and the coming of the Flood.²⁴⁷ The fighting scene continues, at the end of which both Noah and his wife direct speeches to the audience. Each speaking on behalf of their position as man and wife, together they provide a clever contrast

²⁴⁵John Speirs, "The Mystery Cycle: Some Towneley Cycle Plays," Scrutiny, XVIII (1951), 97.

²⁴⁶A. C. Cawley (ed.), The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle, p. xxiv.

²⁴⁷Speirs, "The Mystery Cycle: Some Towneley Cycle Plays," Scrutiny, XVIII (1951), 97-98.

in character delineation. The fact that the audience is asked to share the problems indicates a degree of the author's ingenuity. Their actions involve the children, who next reproach them for such fighting, and together they enter the ark (414-417).

While at the helm, Noah calls upon God to guide his craft as the waters rise. When the flood is at its height, in order to measure its depth, Noah gives the helm to his wife, while he checks the water. His first sounding with the lead is in vain, for he cannot find the bottom.²⁴⁸ The second testing (448), accomplished after forty days, shows that the water has receded; and, on the third, three-hundred and fifty days later, he touches ground on the "hillys of Armonye," which event ends the voyage. The fact that on three separate occasions Noah tests for depth suggests either the guild (if there were such) or the author was familiar with the methods of navigation.

In the last scene, having dispatched the raven, Noah dispatches two doves, prays for their safe journey, and blesses one upon its return with an olive branch (508-510). Thus, Noah and his wife, along with the children, leave the ark. Unlike the source, Noah in the

²⁴⁸C. Sisam, "Towmeley Play of Noah," Review of English Studies, XIII (November, 1962), 388.

last scene asks his wife which bird would be best, an action which seems to indicate an end to family strife, and the dramatist, having removed all serious doubts, has now prepared the way for the "chosen" family.

Noah's behavior is rather modern as he leaves the ark. Rather than prayers, he resorts to ordinary remarks as he observes the destruction of the world. At the end, he asks God to bless his family so that together they may find everlasting happiness with Him in heaven. The audience must have observed Noah as a man who had the fortitude to live according to the moral order. The nature of his relationship to God is held by the author to be proof of a deeper and inborn sensitivity to the needs of his fellowmen and family.

The Towneley playwright has broadened the source to include a considerable variety of realistic material, including domestic violence, social customs, and a much more detailed description of the events of the play. For example, the quarrel of the pair takes on a physical violence in which the setting of the fight is more elaborate, more sequential, and one that eventually involves the entire family. The ship-scene furnishes a useful device in which Noah, with measuring rod in hand, takes the audience through the process of construction, thus, rendering the incident more applicable to their

everyday lives. In this connection, Noah uses both the tiller and the oar in attempting to touch the bottom (420), since this particular mechanism was in use and the only one of its kind that reached far enough.²⁴⁹ It is probable that the dramatist knew carpentry, as well as carpenters.²⁵⁰ More important, however, he shows a devout spirit as he sets about the task of making the ship.²⁵¹ Equally important, he wants to share his satisfaction with his task as he shows the singular effort before the audience. (279). Further, the monologues in this play (208, 230, 389, 397) are not only direct, personal, and concrete, but indicative of the cumulative effect of polished rhetoric. One is not surprised to find that the dramatist was only casually interested in using realism as a device on the stage; his inherent purpose was to create a contemporary identification within which his Biblical and apocryphal events could function.²⁵²

²⁴⁹Ibid., p. 389.

²⁵⁰Brown, op. cit., p. 75.

²⁵¹Nicoll, op. cit., p. 35.

²⁵²George Raleigh Coffman, "A New Approach to Medieval Latin Drama," Modern Philology, XXII (November, 1924), 244; this desire for realism is most apparent in the popular Shepherd's speech, i. e., William H. Manly, "Shepherds and Prophets: Religious Unity in the Towneley Secunda Pastorum," Publications of the Modern Language Association, LXXVIII (June, 1963), 152.

For the most part, the Wakefield Master is the author with whom the Towneley plays have been associated. Such a contention, however, does not mean that one may identify beyond doubt this person with the plays. It is proper to remember that they were anonymous for sound medieval reasons.²⁵³ As a composer or reviser of the plays, this learned man, of Northern descent, strove to achieve a kind of literary freedom through his use of vernacular language and popular subjects.²⁵⁴ Apparently, as a result of his efforts in language, critics are able to see in his style a peasant influence, and together with his use of Latin and French, assert that he probably was a secular priest.²⁵⁵ The Latin tags and religious inferences throughout the plays also bear out such testimony.²⁵⁶ His use of the familiar nine-line stanza and the advanced "bob" mark a distinctive feature that is unrelated to the so-called York Realist.²⁵⁷ In this connection, it is possible to

²⁵³Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, pp. 9-10.

²⁵⁴Margaret Trusler, "The Language of the Wakefield Playwright," Studies in Philology, XXXIII (January, 1936), 39.

²⁵⁵Loc. cit.

²⁵⁶Riddy, op. cit., p. 102.

²⁵⁷Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 37; see also A. W. Ward, "The Origins

associate the Noe cum Fillis, or Play III, with such a poetic system and one of the later period.²⁵⁸ Recently, it was found that the Master had a hand in the Towneley's Talents play, as well as in a great many other later productions.²⁵⁹ At any rate, his power to project a sense of reverence and realism into the language gave to his drama a plain and earthy quality, a mode for dramatizing sacred subjects. Nevertheless, his effort is an illustration of what can be done even without modern dramatic techniques, and serves as a valuable source to the contemporary scene.

There is one allusion to costume and two Latin stage directions in the play. Noah's wife says . . . "Take the ther' a langett / to tye vp thi hose!" (224-225). The word, langett, refers to the "tongue of a balance," (NED) and was first used in 1413. Frampton places the allusion during the fifteenth century and emphasizes that it is a clue in dating the author.²⁶⁰

of English Drama," The Cambridge History of English Literature, V, 20.

²⁵⁸Mendel G. Frampton, "Date of the Flourishing of the Wakefield Master," Publications of the Modern Language Association, L (September, 1935), 650.

²⁵⁹Martin Stevens, "The Composition of the Towneley Talents Play: A Linguistic Examination," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LVIII (July, 1959), 432.

²⁶⁰Frampton, "Date of the Flourishing of the

On the basis of costume, Chambers suggests a date not later than 1426 for the Master.²⁶¹ Perhaps, it should be said that, since scenery was scarce, these plays made the most of costumes, oftentimes an essential element in the drama of this period.²⁶² One Latin direction, Tunc peract ad uxorem (Then he shall cross over to his wife, 189), serves as a device for descriptive action; and another, Explicit processus Noe, sequitur Abraham, at the end, suggests the fact that the play was probably processional. As the name would imply, processus is synonymous with pagina, meaning pageant.²⁶³ Inasmuch as processus appears at both ends of Play III, one safely suggests that it belonged to a movable pageant.

Additional colloquial idioms are worth noting. For example, Noah's wife wishes her husband clad in "Stafford blew" (200), which probably means beaten black and blue.²⁶⁴ "Stafford blew" could also mean a color of

Wakefield Master," Publications of the Modern Language Association, L (September, 1935), 632.

²⁶¹Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 40.

²⁶²Nicoll, op. cit., p. 26.

²⁶³Peacock, op. cit., p. 515.

²⁶⁴John S. Tatlock and R. G. Martin (eds.), Representative English Plays, p. 4.

attire that depicts one as a "flunkey."²⁶⁵ Noah yells "ram-skyt" (217) as he tells his wife to hold her tongue; while, on a different occasion, his wife tells the audience that she must have a "measse of wedows coyll" (389), probably to invoke their sympathy concerning the fact that she is not properly fed. The author uses such phrases as "Beytter of bayll (Healer of sorrow, 311) and "all-weldand" (494), both of which indicate late originality and seem to appear only in Wakefield.²⁶⁶ In addition to the above, there are three oaths, one on Mary (209), Peter (367), and God (227) which the author has seen fit to include. It ought to be apparent that the dramatist distinguished this play, as well as the cycle, in using those items closely resembling the times.

A closer look at Wakefield shows that in 1381 the population was around 315, and Frampton thinks it unlikely that this town, a farming community, could support a cycle of plays.²⁶⁷ Rossiter adds to this

²⁶⁵Gayley, op. cit., p. 169.

²⁶⁶Cawley, The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle, p. xxix.

²⁶⁷Frampton, "Date of the Flourishing of the Wakefield Master," Publications of the Modern Language Association, L (September, 1935), 651; also Frampton, "Date of the Wakefield Master: Bibliographical Evidence," Publications of the Modern Language Association,

view that the town did not come into the wool industry until late in the cycle, and therefore raises doubt, especially as to the home of the earlier plays.²⁶⁸

As suggested earlier, there is reason to believe that the nearby people must have joined forces in performing these plays and that the size of the town did not matter a great deal. Judging from the play, and the adjoining evidence, Wakefield was probably a scene of great festivity.²⁶⁹

There is little doubt that, since York was only forty miles away from Wakefield, there must have been some mutual influence. In the first place, high taxes in York sent many of those in the wool business out of town, probably to nearby Wakefield.²⁷⁰ However, visits to other towns were not uncommon before and after 1593.²⁷¹ Precisely how much borrowing of plays took place, when and in what manner, of course, has been a topic of considerable research. In the case of these two villages, Cady suggests that the Towneley plays

LIII (March, 1938), 17.

²⁶⁸Rossiter, op. cit., p. 67.

²⁶⁹Peacock, op. cit., p. 523.

²⁷⁰Baugh, op. cit., p. 280.

²⁷¹Wickham, op. cit., II, 113.

were derived from the York cycle, and that both had a liturgical origin.²⁷² Another critic, Lyle, on the basis of internal evidence, claimed that both cycles were originally one.²⁷³ This opinion has been challenged by Frank, who suggests that it is far better to talk about individual plays being borrowed, rather than entire cycles which tend to elude an accurate evaluation.²⁷⁴ Clark, who agrees with Frank, further points out that the plays were probably revised by independent guilds and did not necessarily originate from a "parent cycle."²⁷⁵ However, another interesting theory, in support of Lyle, is that Wakefield borrowed from the parent-cycle at York, and in the case of Noah, condensed the two pageants into one, since Wakefield was a smaller

²⁷²Frank W. Cady, "The Liturgical Basis of the Towneley Mysteries," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XXIV (September, 1909), 434.

²⁷³Marie C. Lyle, "The Original Identity of the York and Towneley Cycles--A Rejoinder," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XLIV, (March, 1929), 319.

²⁷⁴Grace Frank, "On the Relation between the York and Towneley Plays," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XLIV, (March, 1929), 318.

²⁷⁵Eleanor Grace Clark, "The York Plays and the Gospel of Nicodemus," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XLIII (March, 1928), 160; Grace Frank, "Revisions in the English Mystery Plays," Modern Philology, XV (January, 1918), 188.

town with fewer crafts.²⁷⁵ Craig suggests that evidently the entire York cycle was borrowed and established at Wakefield but, most likely, with the consent of the York City Authorities.²⁷⁷ Nevertheless, it is now generally agreed that the plays, The Iherao, The Doctores, The Harrowing of Hell, The Resurrection, and The Judicium, were borrowed from the York cycle.²⁷⁸ Finally, Chambers felt that the two cycles could not have developed side by side, nor could there be contemporary revisions, since the Wakefield cycle was not fully developed until almost a half century later than York's.²⁷⁹ Without doubt, the full extent of the borrowing will probably never be known.²⁸⁰ Thus, one must again consider the basic distinction, which is that two separate towns produced plays which must be evaluated as such.

One, next, must look at Play III as it appears in Sexagesima Week. However, it is necessary for one

²⁷⁶Frances A. Foster, "Was Gilbert Pilkington Author of the Secunda Pastorum?" Publications of the Modern Language Association, XLIII (March, 1928), 132.

²⁷⁷Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages, p. 214.

²⁷⁸Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 35.

²⁷⁹Ibid., p. 36.

²⁸⁰Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Plays, p. 83.

to recall the divergent ways in which this play, while following its Biblical source, varied, because of its immediate influences.²⁸¹ In a liturgical sense, the play has for its theme the creation, destruction, and salvation of mankind.²⁸² This simple pattern, present in the services of this pre-Lenten season, unifies the play, and serves as a means of examining the document. The first seventy-two lines of Noah's monologue concern the creation and fall of man, including an account of the seven deadly sins (51-53). Next, Noah, complaining that he is growing old, invokes God's mercy as an aid (60-63). Speirs thinks that this action indicates that Noah is undergoing both a physical and moral decline.²⁸³ It more than likely says that all men, even Noah, need God's strength to perform all tasks. At least, one would think that the medieval audience would see in it their own human condition. While the Latin tags are noticeably absent, the structure, however, conforms to the liturgy, as in the following:

Noah

Breviary

Deus. In erth hymself to
stuf with syn that dis-

God. The end of all flesh
is some before me: the

²⁸¹Cady, op. cit., p. 463.

²⁸²Speirs, "The Mystery Cycle: Some Towneley Cycle Plays," Scrutiny, XVIII (1951), 96.

²⁸³Loc. cit.

pleasse me / Most of all;
 Veniance will I take, In
 crth for syn sake, My
 frone thus will I wake,
 both of grete and small.
 (85-90)

Deus. I repente full
 sore that euer maide man,
 / Bi me he settis no
 store and I an his
 soferan; / I will
 distroy therfor Both
 beest, man, and woman, /
 All shall perish les and
 more that bargan may
 thay / ban, That ill has
 done.

(91-95)

earth is filled with ini-
 quity through them, and
 I will destroy them with
 the earth.

(Sun., i)

God. . . It is repented
 him that he made man on
 earth. And being touched
 inwardly with sorrow of
 heart, He said: I will
 destroy man, whom I have
 created, from the face of
 the earth, from man even
 to beasts, from the creep-
 ing things even to the
 fowls of the air, for it
 repenteth me that I have
 made them.

(Sun., ii)

After God cites the dimensions, he tells Noah to
 "anoynt" (127) the ship, which remark clearly reflects
 the traditional cleansing of the soul in preparation
 for its salvation and refers to the Church's baptismal
 ceremony.²⁸⁴ At this point, Noah is to take his family
 into the ark:

Noah

When all is doyne thus
 right thi wife, that is
 thi make, Take in to the;
 / This sonnes of good
 fame, / Sem, Iaphet, and
 Came, / Take in also hame,
 Thare wifis also thre.
 (139-144)

Breviary

In that selfsame day Noe,
 and his sons, his wife
 and the wives of his sons
 went into the ark-And the
 Lord shut the door.
 (Sun., iii, N.)

²⁸⁴Cawley, The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley
 Cycle, p. xxix.

Next, God warns of the flood and instructs Noah to take with him the following animals:

It shall begyn full sone
to rayn vncessantle, /
After dayes seuen be done
and in-duyr dayes fourty,
/ with-outten fayll. / Take
to this ship also / of ich
kynd beestis two, / Mayll
& femayll, bot no no, /
Or hou pull vp thi sayll.
(147-153)

Of all clean beasts take
seven and seven, the male
and the female. Of the
fowls also of the air
seven and seven, the male
and the female: . . . For
yet a while, and after
seven days, I will upon
the earth forty days and
forty nights; and I will
destroy every substance
that I have made.

(Mon., i)

Indeed, the author makes it clear that this work is to be done "In the name of the holy gast" (162), which is the third person of the Trinity, strictly theological in origin, and a proper function of the Church. Noah conceives of this divine structure as primarily a mystery of faith, as God tells him, "I am god most myghty, / Oone god in trynyty" (168-169). The appellation, trinity, appears five times in the play (2,30,83, 169, and 254) and is one of the most significant Church doctrines. Strictly speaking, one cannot over-estimate the role of theology in the moral formation of medieval man. Certainly, the basic discipline was, more or less, dictated by the Church, but it was left to the Wakefield dramatist to integrate this material into the totality of the play.²⁸⁵ Furthermore,

²⁸⁵Eleanor Prosser, Drama and Religion in the

it was not unusual for the Pope, at times, to grant an indulgence for attendance at such performances.²⁸⁶

God, then, blesses Noah, who is probably on his knees, with these words:

Noah

Noe, to the and to thi fry
My blyssyng grant I;
Ye shall wax and multiply,
And fill the erth agane.
(177-180)

Breviary

God blessed Noe and his
sons and said to them.
Increase and multiply
and fill the earth.
(Sun., vii, E.)

Munson advances the theory that Play III of the Towneley Cycle is a so-called Discovery Play, in which Noah and his family achieve self-knowledge about the world and others, mainly through their own actions.²⁸⁷ In such a scheme, however, there is some question about its relationship to religious obedience.²⁸⁸ In other words, it is difficult to determine at what point the author allows the characters to function on their own, separate from God's influence.

There are several instances in Noah's activities showing that the vocabulary is strictly theological. For example, before building the ark, he blesses

English Mystery Plays, p. 16.

²⁸⁶Gardiner, op. cit., p. 2.

²⁸⁷William Frederick Munson, "Three Kinds of Dramatic Action in the Towneley Plays," Dissertation Abstracts, XXVI (1965), 4636.

²⁸⁸Loc. cit.

himself, saying, "In nomine patris, & filii, / Et spiritus sancti, Amen," (252). This act, used at the beginning and end of the Roman Mass, involves the invocation of the Trinity to guide one's way, or, in Noah's case, to bless his work on the ark.²⁸⁹ Indeed, there is reason to believe that such a popular Latin phrase was used colloquially; although it must be remembered that Noah's craft is a special one, designed to withstand all of mankind's sins and, therefore divinely directed.²⁹⁰

At least six times, the word, faith, is referred to; three times the word charity; as well as the devill (299) and hell (545) within the play. In passing, one ought to observe that the play clearly reflects its own times but also goes well beyond its setting to include the whole treatment of Salvation.

²⁸⁹See also Tuesday, iii., W., in Appendix.

²⁹⁰Speirs, English Medieval Poetry, p. 322.

CHAPTER IV

THE HEGGE NOAH PLAY

It is necessary at the outset to acknowledge a problem concerning the background and development of Play IV of the Hegge cycle. During the seventeenth century, the manuscript of Ludus Coventriae was somehow associated with the plays at Coventry, which theory has since been disproved on the basis of textual evidence.²⁹¹ The difficulty seems to stem from the early records when Sir Robert Hegge, an Oxford man who died in 1629, owned the earliest known manuscript of the plays.²⁹² From Hegge, the document was taken over by Richard James, librarian to Sir Robert Cotton, the former having written on the manuscript the words, "Ludus Coventriae sive Ludus Corporis Christi,"²⁹³ At the time, the note suggested that the plays were acted by the monks or friars.²⁹⁴ Dugdale's History of

²⁹¹Baugh, op. cit., p. 282.

²⁹²Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 47.

²⁹³Loc. cit.

²⁹⁴Moore, op. cit., p. 41.

Warwickshire, which attributed the plays to a local house of friars, probably influenced Hegge and others in associating the plays with the Grey Friars of Coventry.²⁹⁵ Chambers believes this idea is derived from the Coventry's Annals which attests that Henry VII saw plays performed by the "Gray Friars."²⁹⁶ Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence to show that the extant manuscript of Ludus Coventriae has no possible connection with the two surviving plays of Coventry.²⁹⁷ In fact, Greg believes that the Ludus Coventriae, while still the work of an East Anglian writer, in dialect alone could not resemble the Coventry plays;²⁹⁸ so, also, Creizenach.²⁹⁹

Craig has suggested that the Annals entry of the phrase, "Grey Friars," may be common idiom to mean the Church and that the craft guilds performed the plays on

²⁹⁵Chambers, The Medieval Stage, II, 419.

²⁹⁶Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 47.

²⁹⁷Chambers, The Medieval Stage, II, 420; these two survive: Sherman and Tailor's Play and The Weavers Play. Ibid., 423; see also Harbage, op. cit., p. 12.

²⁹⁸Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles, p. 110.

²⁹⁹Wilhelm Creizenach, "The Early Religious Drama," The Cambridge History of English Literature, V, 54.

Corpus Christi, probably on the steps of the "Grey Friars Church."³⁰⁰ In the conclusion to the general Prologue of the plays, one finds:

A Sunday next, yf that we may,
At vj. of the belle we ginne oure play,
In N. towne, wherefore we pray,
That God now be youre sped.³⁰¹

Sharp says that, if "N. towne" refers to Coventry, the plays did not remain there, for there is no record of performances.³⁰² Chambers adds to the controversy that "N" probably stands for the word Nomen, used in the context of the marriage ceremony, and that the "N. towne" refers to either Norwich or Northampton.³⁰³ Rossiter claims that "N" is a typical abbreviation used in the "Banns" to announce the production.³⁰⁴ Hemingway believes this last part of the Prologue suggests the use of strolling players as needed for the

³⁰⁰ Hardin Craig, "Note on the Home of the Ludus Coventriae," Studies in Language and Literature, Series No. I (October, 1914), 74.

³⁰¹ Thomas Sharp, A Dissertation on the Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries Anciently Performed at Coventry, p. 7.

³⁰² Loc. cit.

³⁰³ Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 47.

³⁰⁴ Rossiter, op. cit., p. 165.

various performances.³⁰⁵ Obviously, one cannot be secure in concentrating solely upon the popular Prologue alone.

Craig argues that the cycle at Lincoln is the setting for the plays.³⁰⁶ In the first place, there is evidence from city records which points to a Corpus Christi play being transferred to St. Anne's Day, showing, among other things, characteristics similar to the Hegge cycle.³⁰⁷ Next, the fact that the Hegge plays had a strong Marian emphasis was a well-known observation.³⁰⁸ Thus, it was a short step in linking this fact with the significance of the Virgin Mary during the St. Anne's Day ceremonies, another important sign of the home as Lincoln.³⁰⁹ In his comparison, Craig indicates that Lincoln had a procession on St. Anne's Day, while the Prologue to the Hegge cycle reveals that its older plays were in a processional

³⁰⁵ Samuel B. Hemingway, English Nativity Plays, p. xxxi.

³⁰⁶ Craig, "Note on the Home of the Ludus Coventriae," Studies in Language and Literature, Series No. I (October, 1914), 75; also Herbert Hartman, "The Home of the Ludus Coventriae," Modern Language Notes, XLI (December, 1926), 530, who agrees with Craig.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 78.

³⁰⁸ Speaight, op. cit., p. 30.

³⁰⁹ Anderson, op. cit., p. 24.

form.³¹⁰ But from the evidence of the plays in Lincoln Cathedral and the extant Hegge stage directions, it is clear that the plays were performed on a fixed stage.³¹¹ Such facts tend to support Creizenach's date of 1517 for the end of St. Anne's Day processions.³¹² While it is difficult to determine how many plays used pageants, Craig suggests that, in Play IV, one is employed as Noah comes and goes with the ark.³¹³ Swenson, who agrees with this idea, mentions further that the ark was undoubtedly on wheels and moved in and out after the Lamech scene.³¹⁴ As to the cost, Lincoln accounts reveal that a great deal more was charged for the Noah pageant than for the other plays.³¹⁵ However, since the city of Lincoln is on a hill, the typography might not be very desirable for pageant performances.³¹⁶

³¹⁰Craig, "Note on the Home of the Ludus Coventriae," Studies in Language and Literature, Series No. I (October, 1914), 79.

³¹¹Loc. cit.

³¹²Creizenach, Geschichte des neuen Dramas, III, 419.

³¹³Craig, "Note on the Home of the Ludus Coventriae," Studies in Language and Literature, Series No. I (October, 1914), 79-80.

³¹⁴Esther L. Swenson, "An Inquiry into the Composition and Structure of Ludus Coventriae," Studies in Language and Literature, Series No. I (October, 1914), 71.

³¹⁵Rose, op. cit., p. 161.

³¹⁶Williams, op. cit., p. 100.

At any rate, these few examples, and a great deal more, tend to support the Lincoln hypothesis which seems quite plausible.³¹⁷

The plot of Play IV is a rapid, two hundred and fifty-three lines, of which the first twenty-five show Noah asking God to protect his family from sin.³¹⁸ Following this prayer-like account, Noah, probably addressing the audience, suggests that each man is subject to evil and that mankind will be held accountable for their deeds. This early speech follows the Biblical source and seems to stress the idea of penance within man's life on earth. The next scene begins a series of monologues in which each member of the family, after introducing himself, proceeds to elaborate on Noah's general recommendations. It would appear that the playwright uses each character to advance the story.³¹⁹ These devices of the play are closely

³¹⁷For purposes of this chapter, Lincoln will be used as the home of the Ludus Coventriae or Hegge Cycle. Dr. Craig treats this whole problem definitively, and in a letter to the author on July, 17, 1967, again verified the Lincoln theory.

³¹⁸K. S. Block (ed.), Ludus Coventriae; or the playe called Corpus Christi, p. 35. All citations to the play are taken from this source.

³¹⁹Thomas Blake Clark, "A Theory Concerning the Identity and History of the Ludus Coventriae Cycle of Mystery Plays," Philological Quarterly, XII (April, 1933), 150.

related to the action and take on the form of a rapid-moving dialogue in which few extra words appear.³²⁰ While the characters seem almost lifeless and prosaic, nevertheless one notes that the author shows great invention in manipulating their various speeches.³²¹ These early speeches seem to be a preparation for God's visit.³²² At this point, He enters (92) and in stern words explains to the audience that He will send an angel to Noah with the message to build a ship. Unlike the God in the other plays, He does not appear directly to Noah but sends His angel as a messenger.³²³ This "chain of command" would seem to indicate a formal reliance on the Church's hierarchy, or more than likely, the modern tradition that God cannot be seen by mortal man. God makes only one appearance in the play, speaking twenty-eight lines to the audience. From this point, the angel appears to Noah with God's directions for building the ark. In these directions, there is a noticeable absence of source dimensions for the ark, implying that the dramatist felt that they were

³²⁰Ibid., p. 161.

³²¹Gayley, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

³²²Thomas Blake Clark, op. cit., p. 160.

³²³Ibid., p. 159.

unnecessary, inasmuch as actual construction, perhaps, did not take place before the audience. Noah's first reply to the angel is that he is too old (five hundred years) to undertake such an operation, but the angel assures him that God will give him the needed strength. Thus, Noah and his family leave to carry out God's command.

One next encounters the character of Lameth, who during the hundred-year interval involving Noah's obedience, kills Cain, creating an episode about which a great deal has been said. Some maintain that this interlude was added simply to enable Noah and his family to construct the ark.³²⁴ Others suggest that, since there is no mention of the Lameth-scene in the Prologue, it must have been a late addition.³²⁵ If so, the fact that this popular incident might show an allegorical purpose would seem tenable.³²⁶ In a closer look, Swenson points out that the Lameth-scene, including the rest of the play, is in a double-quatrain form, with a "tumbling meter," which suggests a late revision,

³²⁴Rose, op. cit., p. 162.

³²⁵Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles, p. 123.

³²⁶Schlauch, op. cit., p. 7.

also, probably to fit a stationary performance.³²⁷ Several writers support this latter theory.³²⁸ As to the major scene change, there is the possibility that the dramatist saw in the ship episode an irrelevant custom, one that wasted time and contributed little to the narrative. It may be this simple, since there were no crafts connected with the play, and the work had to be done elsewhere, although such a theory is not trustworthy, nor consistent with Craig's setting.

After the fifty-five line Lameth scene, Noah enters with his family and tells the audience that the ship is completed (204-213). Clark claims that nothing is said about Lameth, Cain, or any of the details surrounding the interlude while Noah was absent.³²⁹ However, Sem's wife mentions the murder briefly (224), while both Sem and Japhet discuss the topic of "lechory" at some length (218, 235). One notes, furthermore, that Noah's wife is a patient and devout companion. She enters the ark with no incident.³³⁰ Obviously,

³²⁷Swenson, op. cit., p. 7.

³²⁸Block, op. cit., p. xxvi; also, Howard R. Patch, "The Ludus Coventriae and the Digby Massacre," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XXXV (July, 1920), 338. See also meter in this latter work.

³²⁹Thomas Blake Clark, op. cit., p. 160.

³³⁰Bates, op. cit., p. 121.

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³²⁷Swenson, op. cit., p. 7.

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³²⁹Thomas Blake Clark, op. cit., p. 160.

³³⁰Bates, op. cit., p. 121.

there is no comic element associated with her, or for that matter, any means by the dramatist to expand her character. The general feeling about the absence of comic elements in this play is summarized by Block, who suggests that their absence makes the cycle an independent one.³³¹ The remaining parts of the play (241-253) come quickly, as the scene shifts to the ark, where Noah relates the familiar dove episode, and together the family join him in a song of praise to God.

Aside from this Lameth scene, however, there is very little plot expansion or character development. There is, as well, no extended detail of the flood, ark, or scenery; in a dramatic sense, the author appears to assign speeches to each character but does not allow for much independent expression. There would seem to be little trouble, then, in one's recognizing that realistic detail was never intended, with the exception of Lameth. The characters show that they know their religion well, and to this end they seem to satisfy the author's purpose.³³² Thus, one must throw out the theory that the play is purely didactic and expresses

³³¹Block, op. cit., p. liii.

³³²Moore, op. cit., p. 41.

no innate interest in Church doctrine per se.³³³ It does appear, however, that the play underwent a late revision in which its plot was made to fit a strong religious intent.

As to stage directions, the dramatist has equipped the cycle well.³³⁴ The first seven plays in the cycle contain most of the Latin stage directions.³³⁵ A theory is advanced that these directions suggest only what the audience is to see, rather than what actually happens on stage.³³⁶ Certainly, their use was practical in that the medieval audience must always be told of a change in locale, else they may have become confused.³³⁷ The Latin directions in Play IV tend to substantiate such a theory as they reveal a change of scenery, beginning with the "Introitus Noe," and ending with the "Introitus abrahe." Swenson feels that these two directions prove that the plays were once a unit or probably one continuous play.³³⁸ The first direction

³³³McNeir, op. cit., pp. 617-618.

³³⁴Williams, op. cit., p. 100.

³³⁵Thomas Blake Clark, op. cit., p. 165.

³³⁶Thompson, op. cit., p. 20.

³³⁷Wickham, op. cit., I, 157.

³³⁸Swenson, op. cit., p. 8.

(142-143) shows Noah's family leaving to build the ark and the entrance of Lameth. Another direction (197), upon Noah's return, removes Lameth from the scene. On this stage evidence alone, Greg suggests that there must have been a fixed stage for this play.³³⁹ Two additional directions (246, 249), indicate the release and return of the dove. The final direction introduces a song but says nothing about leaving or landing the ark. Like the play itself, the directions retain an impersonal quality which suggest that the playwright was a master at such objectivity.³⁴⁰

One cannot hope to find absolute proof to show the way in which this play was composed or how many various revisions it may have been given. Perhaps Play IV was done by a cleric of considerable skill and originality.³⁴¹ The abundance of moral and theological principles in the text might suggest that the author had access to a library, perhaps in his own religious house.³⁴² Furthermore, there is a theory which holds

³³⁹Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles, p. 123.

³⁴⁰McNeir, op. cit., p. 619.

³⁴¹M. J. Benkovitz, "Some Notes in the Prologue of Demons of Ludus Coventriae," Modern Language Notes, IX (February, 1945), 79.

³⁴²Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 49.

that the entire manuscript was meant to be read rather than acted, since there is appended to it a detailed table of figures, including dimensions of the ark.³⁴³ It will have to suffice for now that strong religious supervision played an important part in the development of this play and in its immediate environment. The fact that Lincoln was closely associated with the Church cannot be dismissed.³⁴⁴ Even the well-known Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, forbade his priests to act in the local plays, but, of course, they were still performed in Lincoln Cathedral for a long time afterwards.³⁴⁵ Thus, it becomes evident that no better setting than Lincoln has so far been located. Until further evidence is substantiated, the question of locale will remain unsolved.

Kretzmann suggests that the Latin tag at the end of the play (Hic decantent hoc versus, Mare vidit et fugit, Jordanis conversus est retrorsum. Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, Sed nomini tuo da gloriam) was used

³⁴³Greg, Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles, p. 143.

³⁴⁴Craig, "Note on the Home of the Ludus Coventriae," Studies in Language and Literature, Series No. I (October, 1914), 81; Craig further states that "The medieval drama is based on the service of the medieval Church," Letter of July 17, 1967 to author.

³⁴⁵Speaight, op. cit., p. 23.

in the liturgy for Quinquagesima Week in reference to the "dispersion of the waters." (Psalms 114:4, 115:1)³⁴⁶ Of additional importance is the fact that during this Week in the Breviary there is a reference to the waters of Jordan (Mon., ii, iii).³⁴⁷ Most intriguing is the fact that, on a closer examination of this passage in the Breviary, one finds in Psalms 113: 3, 9, words identical to those in the play (Mare vidit, et fugit: Jordanis conversus est retrorsum. Non nobis. Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.)³⁴⁸ This evidence would tend to substantiate the belief that the author of this play used the lectiones of the Breviary. The Lameth or Lamech character is in the Breviary on Saturday in Septuagesima Week, which is the Saturday before Sexagesima Sunday (Sat., ii, iii) and would support the reference for his purpose.

In two sections of the play (57, 83), genealogies appear in support of Greg's hypothesis of a reading play. The one, "Noe genuit Sem, Cham, and Japhet," is also in the source (Sun., i); the other, includes a

³⁴⁶Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 85.

³⁴⁷Breviarium Romano-Seraphicum: Officis Trium Ordinum S. P. N. Francisci, Typographia Pax Et Bonum, Rome, Anno Jubliari MCML, p. 676.

³⁴⁸See Psalm 113, pp. 79-80 in the Breviarium-Romano-Seraphicum. Taken from Vespers for Sunday.

detailed list of family names that appear on Friday of Sexagesima Week. In addition, there are several textual resemblances, one of which includes God's speech, as the following parallels show:

NoahBreviary

Ufecisse hominem nunc pen-
itet me pat I made man
sore doth me rewe myn
handwerk to sle sore
grevyth me/ but pat here
synne here deth doth
brewe.

(105-108)

. . . It is repented him
that he made man on earth.
And being touched in-
wardly with sorrow of
heart, He said: I will
destroy man, whom I have
created.

(Sun., i)

And, in the angel's speech to Noah:

A shyp loke pou make and
many a chaumbyr pou xalt
haue perinne / Of euery
kyndys best a cowply pou
take / with-in be shypp
bord here lyvys to wynne.
/ Ffor god is sore
grevyd with man for his
synne pat all pis wyde
werd xal be dreynt with
flood saff pou and pi wyff
xal be kept from pis
gynne / and also pi child-
ren with here vertuys good.

(118-120)

Make thee an ark of timber
planks: thou shalt make
little rooms in the ark,
and thou shalt pitch it
within and without. And
thus shalt thou make it:
the length of the ark
shall be three hundred
cubits: the breadth of
it fifty cubits, and the
height of it thirty
cubits.

(Sun., iii)

As the above passages suggest, the playwright did not hold to the exact ark dimensions, which in itself shows an element of independence, indicating probably that he was at liberty to choose the materials that fit his need; or the lack of precision might be the result of scribal transmission during the number of revisions.

Sin seems to play a symbolic role throughout the

play, as each character elaborates on its consequences in the scheme of salvation. For example, Noah mentions the "syn man wyl not fle" (212), while Sem, the "synne of lechory" (218), and Cham's wife, the "Rustynes of Synne" (230). The Lameth scene probably serves as the epitome of sin, thus enabling the author to show the audience exactly how far man might go in such a state. Only because Noah and his family know the real significance of sin are they "saved" from the flood. This doctrine serves to unite the play and its source and further suggests that its author had a definite theological purpose for each event.³⁴⁹ This unity is skillfully maintained and is but one indication of the insatiable appetite of the audience for information concerning their purpose, salvation. Fry contends that the play centers on the so-called Abuse-of-Power theme which involves the following steps: (1) Preparation for Satan; (2) The development of Redemption; (3) The protagonist's entrance and lack of divinity; (4) The conflict and destruction of the antagonist.³⁵⁰ While the greater portion of the play is devoted to the

³⁴⁹This is the most common point of comparison between the Chester and Hegge cycles.

³⁵⁰Timothy Fry, "Unity of the Ludus Coventriae," Studies in Philology, XLVIII (July, 1951), 531.

subject of the sin of lechery, in which the Lameth-episode is the extent of man's degradation, there is a continuous search for the Redeemer.³⁵¹ To this end, the play retains a theological unity and pattern throughout the cycle.³⁵² It seems sound to infer that this play shows the strongest clerical influence and has, for its over-all purpose, the exposition of religious principles.

³⁵¹Ibid., p. 542.

³⁵²Ibid., p. 527; in a conversation on July 5, 1967, Professor Fry re-stated that the play centered around Lameth, the first bigamist, and the topic of lechery, or sins of the flesh.

CHAPTER V

THE INDEPENDENT-UNITY OF THE NOAH PLAYS

Perhaps, the most significant approach to the study of Noah as it appears in the Chester, Hegge, York, and Towneley cycles is through a realization that each of the plays is an independent product of its own community. At the same time, this independent product becomes, as such, one play developed from a common source. Adoption of this credo allows one to examine each play according to its own influences and to determine as nearly as possible what, in respect to source, makes each play seem different. It seems valid to posit that in the case of the Noah play there has been too great an emphasis on the comic aspect of Noah's wife to the extent that other important influences have gone unnoticed.

A decidedly important feature of each play is that the plot covers about the same area and, except for individual characteristics, remains remarkably simple.³⁵³ This simplicity, as most agree, is controlled

³⁵³Tatlock, op. cit., p. 3.

by a persistent logic, deeply rooted in theological principles.³⁵⁴ Kretzmann suggests that the mere fact ". . . there is such an agreement in the subjects and in the sequence of plays--argues for a common well-known source."³⁵⁵ To this end, the "liturgical source" has survived through the years the product of an independent growth.³⁵⁶

One would have to admit that these plays borrowed from the traditions of the people for whom they were intended, which method ought to indicate a certain degree of dramatic freedom.³⁵⁷ But, more importantly, these domestic inventions were a dramatic attempt to stress the importance of religion in practical terms of everyday occurrences.³⁵⁸ It seems, therefore, beyond question that one must look to each play in its native growth as well as to their major source of influence as it makes the plays liturgically one.

This study reveals, additionally, general aspects

³⁵⁴Rossiter, op. cit., p. 51.

³⁵⁵Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 79; see also, Brotanek, op. cit., p. 193.

³⁵⁶Cady, op. cit., pp. 423-424.

³⁵⁷Brown, op. cit., p. 78.

³⁵⁸Gardiner, op. cit., p. 3; see Lynn Thorndike, The History of Medieval Europe, p. 409.

about each play as it appears in its own cycle. For example, the Hegge play shows little use of realism in that it is more symbolic or suggestive in its narrative; one exception might be the Lameth-scene, but it is far surpassed by the other incidents in the play and can scarcely be representative. For the most part, then, this play shows the least amount of source deviation. In other words, it remains close to the Church liturgy. The Towneley play, on the other hand, indicates the most deviation in that its realistic description is a dominant characteristic, its characters and setting are more elaborate, and it shows an absence of symbolism.³⁵⁹ The Towneley author had the greatest amount of freedom and appears to be the most "modern" in his approach to the play. While the York play deviates from its source, it is not as realistic in its narrative as the Towneley play and shows little use of symbolism. The Chester play deviates from its source and shows better characterization and more domestic realism than the Hegge's edition; however, there is not a high concentration of realistic action, even with Noah's wife or the pantomime scene. The play, in general,

³⁵⁹The term, symbolism, in this context means the opposite of realistic or physical action, one that merely hints at its subject, rather than demonstrates. The term is not to be taken for Church symbolism as discussed throughout this paper.

is conservative.

While the medieval plays must be viewed within the general context of the Church, the major influence arises as the early Breviary provides the material with which to expand the stories into plays.³⁶⁰

There remains a great deal to be done about the many problems surrounding the religious plays, several of which may never be solved. While it is impossible, here, to discuss the full subject, this present author has sought to point out one approach to the medieval play in English Literature.

³⁶⁰Anderson, op. cit., p. 22.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

The text of Sexagesima Week, with a parallel English translation follows. The Matins were recited in a form of dialogue in which lesson one and the versicle (V) to that lesson were said by the first leader; while the responsory (R) to lesson one was recited by the second leader. As for the second lesson, this process merely reverses itself, i. e. the second lesson was said by the second leader and so forth. Portions of the actual text that appear to the author insignificant have been deleted. (From: Breviarium Romano-Seraphicum: Officiis Trium Ordinum S. P. N. Francisci, Typographia Pax Et Bonum, Rome, Anno Jubilari MCML; and The Holy Bible: Translated from the Latin Vulgate, Douay Version of Old Testament, P. J. Kennedy & Sons, 1950.)

Dominica in Sexagesima
(Ad Matutinum)

Nocturn I

Lectio i Noe vero, cum quin-gentorum esset annorum, genuit Sem, Cham et Japhet. Cumque coepissent homines multiplicari super terram et filias procreassent, videntes filii Dei filias

Sunday in Sexagesima
(From Matins)

Nocturn I

Lesson i And Noe, when he was five hundred years old, begot Sem, Cham, and Japheth. And after that men began to be multiplied upon the earth, and daughters were born to

hominum quod essent pulchrae, acceperunt sibi uxores ex omnibus quas elegerant. Dixitque Deus: Non permanebit spiritus meus in homine in aeternum, quia caro est; eruntque dies illius centum viginti annorum. Gigantes autem erant super terram in diebus illis. Postquam enim ingressi sunt filii Dei ad filias hominum, illaeque genuerunt, isti sunt potentes a saeculo viri famosi.

R. Dixit Dominus ad Noe: Finis universae carnis venit coram me: repleta est terra iniquitate eorum, Et ego disperdam eos cum terra. *R.* Fac tibi arcam de lignis laevigatis, mansiunculas in ea facies—Et ego.

Lectio ii Videns autem Deus quod multa malitia hominum esset in terra, et cuncta cogitatio cordis intenta esset ad malum omni tempore, poenituit eum quod hominem fecisset in terra. Et tactus dolore cordis intrinsecus, Delebo, inquit, hominem quem creavi, a facie terrae, ab homine usque ad animantia, a reptili usque ad volucres caeli; poenitet enim me fecisse eos. Noe vero invenit gratiam coram Domino.

R. Noe, vir justus atque perfectus, cum Deo ambulavit: Et fecit omnia quaecumque praecepit ei Deus. *R.* Fecit sibi arcam, ut salvaretus universum semen.— Et fecit.

them, the sons of God seeing the daughters of men, that they were fair, took to themselves wives of all which they chose. And God said: My spirit shall not remain in man for ever, because he is flesh, and his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. Now giants were upon the earth in those days. For after the sons of God went into the daughters of men and they brought forth children, These are the mighty men of old, men of renown.

R. God said to Noe: The end of all flesh is come before me: the earth is filled with iniquity through them, and I will destroy them with the earth. *R.* Make thee an ark of timber planks, make little rooms in it— I will destroy them with the earth.

Lesson ii And God seeing that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that all the thought of their heart was bent upon evil at all times, It is repented him that he made man on the earth. And being touched inwardly with sorrow of heart, He said: I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth, from man even to the beasts, from the creeping thing even to the fowls of the air, for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noe found grace before the Lord.

R. Noe was a just and perfect man, he walked with

LECTIO III Hæc sunt generationes Noe: Noe vir justus atque perfectus fuit in generationibus suis, cum Deo ambulavit. Et genuit tres filios, Sem, Cham et Japhet. Corrupta est autem terra coram Deo, et repleta est iniquitate. Cumque vidisset Deus terram esse corruptam, (omnis quippe caro corruperat viam suam super terram) dixit ad Noe: Finis universae carnis venit coram me: repleta est terra iniquitate a facie eorum, et ego disperdam eos cum terra. Fac tibi arcam de lignis lævigatis, mansiunculas in arca facies et bitumine linies intrinsecus et extrinsecus. Et sic facies eam: Trecentorum cubitorum erit longitudo arcae, quinquaginta cubitorum latitudo, et triginta cubitorum altitudo illius.

R. Quadraginta dies et noctes aperti sunt caeli, et ex omni carne habente spiritum vitae ingressa sunt in arcam: et clausit a foris ostium Dominus.

W. In articulo diei illius ingressus est Noe in arcam et filii ejus, et uxor illius et uxores filiorum ejus. - Et.
Gloria Patri.

God: And did all whatever God directed. W. Build the ark, and save all the seeds.- And did all whatever God directed.

Lesson III These are the generations of Noe: Noe was a just and perfect man in his generations, he walked with God. And he begot three sons Sem, Cham, and Japheth. And the earth was corrupted before God, and was filled with iniquity. And when God had seen that the earth was corrupted (for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth) He said to Noe: The end of all flesh is come before me, the earth is filled with iniquity through them, and I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of timber planks: thou shalt make little rooms in the ark, and thou shalt pitch it within and without. And thus shalt thou make it: the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits: the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

R. Forty days and nights the skies were opened, and all the flesh having spiritual life entered the ark. And the Lord shut the door. W. In that selfsame day Noe, and his sons, his wife, and the wives of his sons went into the ark.- And the Lord shut the door. Glory be to the father, and to the son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Nocturn II

Lectio iv (omitted)

R. Aedificavit Noe altare Domino, offerens super illud holocaustum; odoratusque est Dominus odorem suavitatis et benedixit ei, dicens: Crescite, et multiplicamini, et replete terram. *N.* Ecce ego statuum pactum meum vobiscum, et cum semine vestro post vos.- Crescite.

Lectio v (omitted)

R. Ponam arcum meum in nubibus caeli, dixit Dominus ad Noe, Et recordabor foederis mei quod pepigi tecum. *N.* Cumque obduxero nubibus caelum, apparebit arcus meus in nubibus.

Lectio vi (omitted)

R. Per me metipsum juravi, dicit Dominus, non adjiciam ultra aquas diluvii super terram: pacti mei recordabor, Ut non perdam aquis diluvii omnem carnem. *N.* Arcum meum ponam in nubibus, et erit signum foederis inter me et inter terram.- Ut. Gloria Patri.

Nocturn III

Lectio vii In illo

tempore: Cum turba plurima convenirent, et de civitatibus properarent ad

Nocturn II

Lesson iv (omitted)

R. Noe built an altar unto the Lord, offered holocausts upon it, and the Lord smelled a sweet savour and praised it and said: Increase and multiply, and fill and earth. *N.* Behold I will establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you. Increase and multiply and fill the earth.

Lesson v (omitted)

R. I will set my bow in the clouds said the Lord to Noe: And I shall remember my Covenant with every living soul. *N.* And when I shall cover the sky with clouds, my bow shall appear in the clouds. And I shall remember my Covenant with every living soul.

Lesson vi (omitted)

R. I have sworn says the Lord that I will not bring the waters of the flood upon the earth again. I will be mindful of my Covenant. Never again shall the waters become a flood to destroy the flesh. *N.* I will set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be the sign of a Covenant between me and between the earth. Never again shall the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Nocturn III

Lesson vii At that time:

When a very great crowd was gathering together and men from every town were

Jesum, dixit per similitudinem: Exiit qui seminat, seminare semen suum. Et reliqua.

R. Benedixit Deus Noe et filiis ejus, et dixit ad eos: Crescite, et multiplicemini, et replete terram. *N.* Ecce ego statuam pactum meum vobiscum et cum semine vestro post vos.

Lectio viii (omitted)

R. Ecce ego statuam pactum meum vobiscum et cum semine vestro post vos: Neque erit deinceps diluvium dissipans terram. *N.* Arcum meum ponam in nubibus, et erit signum foederis inter me et inter terram.

R. Cum turba plurima convenirent ad Jesum, et de civitatibus properarent ad eum, dixit per similitudinem: Exiit qui seminat, seminare semen suum. *N.* Et dum seminat, aliudcecidit in terram bonam, et ortum fecit fructum centuplum. Exiit. Gloria Patri.

Feria Secunda

Lectio i Dixit Dominus ad Noe: Ingredere tu et omnis domus tua in arcam; te enim vidi justum coram me in generatione hac. Ex omnibus animantibus mundis tolles septena, masculum et feminam; de animantibus vero immundis duo et duo, masculum et feminam. Sed et de volatilibus caeli septena et septena masculum et feminam: ut salvetur semen super faciem universae terrae. Adhuc enim, et

resorting to him, he said in a parable: The sower went out to sow his seed. And so forth.

R. God blessed Noe and his sons and said to them. Increase and multiply and fill the earth. *N.* Behold I will establish my Covenant with you, and with your seed after you.

Lesson viii (omitted)

R. Behold I will establish my Covenant with you, and with your seed after you. Neither shall there be from henceforth a flood to waste the earth. *N.* I will set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be the sign of a Covenant between me, and between the earth. Neither shall there be from henceforth a flood to waste the earth.

R. When the great crowd came to Jesus, they gathered around him from the cities, he said to them by way of a parable. The Sower went out to sow his seed. *N.* And as he sowed some fell on the ground and brought forth fruit a hundred fold. The sower went out to sow his seed. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Monday

Lesson i The Lord said to Noe: Go in thou and all thy house into the ark: for thee I have seen just before men in this generation. Of all clean beasts take seven and seven, the male and the female. Of the fowls also of the air seven and seven, the male and the female: that seed may be saved upon

post dies septem ego
pluam super terram
quadraginta diebus et
quadraginta noctibus,
et delebo omnem substan-
tiam, quam feci de
superficie terrae.

D. In articulo diei il-
lius ingressus est Noe
in arcam et filii ejus,
Uxor illius et uxores
filiorum ejus. *N.*

Delata sunt universa de
terra; remansit autem
solus Noe et qui cum
so erant in arca.

-Uxor.

Lectio ii Fecit ergo
Noe omnia quae manda-
verat ei Dominus.
Cumque transissent sep-
tem dies, aquae diluvii
inundaverunt super
terram. Anno sexcen-
tesimo vitae Noe,
mense secundo, septimo
decimo die mensis,
rupti sunt omnes fontes
abyssi magnae, et cat-
ractae caeli apertae
sunt: et facta est
pluvia super terram
quadraginta diebus et
quadraginta noctibus.

E. Recordatus Dominus Noe,
adduxit spiritum super
terram, et imminutae
sunt aquae, Et prohi-
bitae sunt pluviae de
caelis. *N.* Rever-
saeque sunt aquae de
terra euntes et
redeuntes, et coeperunt
minui post centum quin-
quaginta dies.-Et.

Lectio iii In articulo
diei illius ingressus
est Noe, et Sem, et Cham,
et Japet filii ejus;
uxor illius et tres

the face of the whole world.
For yet a while, and after
seven days, I will upon the
earth forty days and forty
nights; and I will destroy
every substance that I have
made, from the face of the
earth.

D. In that selfsame day Noe,
and his sons, his wife, and
the wives of his sons went
into the ark. *N.* Destroy
all the land, but only Noe
and all with him in the
ark shall remain. -His wife,
and the wives of the sons.

Lesson ii And Noe did all
things which the Lord had
commanded him. And after
the seven days were passed,
the waters of the flood
overflowed the earth. In
the six hundredth year of
the life of Noe, in the
second month, in the seven-
teenth day of the month,
all the fountains of the
great deep were broken up,
and the flood gates of
heaven were opened: And the
rain fell upon the earth
forty days and forty nights.

E. The Lord remembered Noe,
and sent his spirit upon
the earth, and the waters
were diminished, and He
stopped the rain from the
heavens. *N.* The waters of
the heavens were stopped
and they began to diminish
after one hundred and fifty
days. And He stopped the
rain from the heavens.

Lesson iii In that selfsame
day Noe, and Sem, and Cham,
and Japhet his sons: his
wife, and the three wives
of his sons with them, went
into the ark: They and
every beast according to

uxores filiorum ejus cum eis in arcam: ipsi et omne animal secundum genus suum, universaque jumenta in genere suo, et omne quod movetur super terram in genere suo, et omne quod movetur super terram in genere suo, cunctumque volatile secundum genus suum. Factumque est diluvium quadraginta diebus super terram, et multiplicatae sunt aquae, et elevarunt arcam in sublime a terra.

R. Quadraginta dies et noctes aperti sunt caeli, et ex omni carne havente spiritum vitae ingressa sunt in arcam: Et clausit a foris ostium Dominus.

N. In articulo diei illius in gressus est Noe in arcam et filii ejus, et uxor illius et uxores filiorum ejus. Et clausit. Gloria Patri.

Feria Tertia

Lectio i Recordatus autem Deus Noe, cunctorumque animantium, et omnium jumentorum, quae erant cum eo in arca, adduxit spiritum super terram, et imminutae sunt aquae; et clausi sunt fontes abyssi et cataractae caeli; et prohibitae sunt pluviae de caelo.

Reversaeque sunt aquae de terra euntes et redeuntes: et coeperunt minui post centum quinquaginta dies.

Requievitque arca mense septimo, vigesimo septimo die mensis super montes Armeniae.

its kind and all the cattle in their kind, and everything that moveth upon the earth according to its kind, all birds, and all that fly. And the flood was forty days upon the earth, and the waters increased, and lifted up the ark on high from the earth. *R.* Forty days and nights the skies were opened and all the flesh having spirited life entered the ark. And the Lord shut the door.

Tuesday

Lesson i And God remembered Noe, and all the living creatures, and all the cattle which were with him in the ark, and brought a wind upon the earth, and the waters were abated. The fountains also of the deep, and the flood gates of heaven were shut up and the rain from heaven was restrained. And the waters returned from off the earth going and coming; and they began to be abated after a hundred and fifty days. And the ark rested in the seventh month, the seven and twentieth day of the month, upon the mountains of Armenia.

(*R.* and *N.* omitted)

Lesson ii And the waters were going and decreasing until the tenth month: for in the tenth month, the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared. And after that forty days were passed, Noe, opening the window of the ark which he had made, sent forth a raven: Which

R. Aedificavit Noe altare Domino, offerens super illud holocaustum; odoratusque est Dominus odorem suavitatis et benedixit ei, dicens: Crescite, et multiplicamini, et replete terram. *V.* Ecce ego statuum pactum meum vobiscum, et cum semine vestro post vos.

Lectio ii At vero aquae ibant et decrescebant usque ad decimum mensem; decimo enim mense, prima die mensis, apparuerunt cacumina montium. Cumque transissent quadraginta dies, aperiens Noe fenestram arcae quam fecerat, dimisit corvum; qui egrediebatur, et non revertebatur, donec siccarentur aquae super terram. Emisit quoque columbam post eum, ut videret si jam cessassent aquae super faciem terrae. Quae cum non invenisset ubi requiesceret pes ejus, reversa est ad eum in arcam. R. Ponam arcum meum in nubibus caeli, dixit Dominus ad Noe, Et recordabor foederis mei quod pepigi tecum. *V.* Cumque obduxero nubibus caelum, apparebit arcus meus in nubibus. Lectio iii Exspectatis autem ultra septem diebus aliis, rursum dimisit columbam ex arca. At illa venit ad eum ad vesperam, portans ramum olivae, virentibus foliis, in ore suo. Intellexit ergo Noe quod cessassent aquae super terram; exspectavitque nihilominus septem alios dies, et emisit columbam,

went forth and did not return till the waters were dried up upon the earth. He sent forth also a dove after him, to see if the waters had now ceased upon the face of the earth. But she, not finding where her foot might rest, returned to him into the ark.

(*R.* and *V.* omitted)

Lesson iii And having waited yet seven other days, he again sent forth the dove out of the ark. And she came to him in the evening, carrying a bough of an olive tree, with green leaves, in her mouth. Noe therefore understood that the waters were ceased upon the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days: and he sent forth the dove, which returned not any more unto him. Therefore in the six hundredeth and first year, the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were lessened upon the earth.

R. I have sworn says the Lord, that I will not bring the waters of the flood upon the earth again: I will be mindful of my Covenant. Never again shall the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh. *V.* I will set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be the sign of a Covenant between me, and between the earth. Gloria be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

quae non est reversa ultra ad eum. Igitur sexcentesimo primo anno, primo mense, prima die mensis imminutae sunt aquae super terram. *R.* Per memetipsum juravi, dicit Dominus, non adjiciam ultra aquas diluvii super terram: pacti mei recordabor, Ut non perdam aquis diluvii omnem carnem. *V.* Arcum meum ponam in nubibus, et erit signum foederis inter me et inter terram. Gloria Patri.

Feria Quarta

Lectio i Locutus est autem Deus ad Noe, dicens: Egredere de arca tu et uxor tua, filii tui et uxores filiorum tuorum tecum. Cuncta animantia quae sunt apud te, ex omni carne, tam in volatilibus quam in bestiis et universis reptilibus, quae reptant super terram, educ tecum, et ingredimini super terram: crescite et multiplicamini super eam. Egressus est ergo Noe et filii ejus, uxor illius et uxores filiorum ejus cum eo: sed et omnia animantia, jumenta, et reptilia quae reptant super terram secundum genus suum, egressa sunt de arca. *R.* Benedixit Deus Noe et filiis ejus, et dixit ad eos: Crescite, et multiplicamini, et replete terram. *V.* Ecce ego statuam pactum meum vobiscum, et cum semine vestro post vos. Lectio ii Aedificavit autem Noe altare Domino: et tollens de cunctis pecoribus et volucribus mundis, obtulit holocausta super

Wednesday

Lesson i And God spoke to Noe, saying: Go out of the ark, Thou and thy wife, thy sons, and the wives of thy sons with thee. All living things that are with thee, of all flesh, as well in fowls as in beasts, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, bring out with thee, and go ye upon the earth: increase and multiply upon it. So Noe went out, he and his sons: his wife, and the wives of his sons with him. *R.* God blessed Noe and his sons, and said to them. Increase and multiply and fill the earth. *V.* Behold I will establish my Covenant with you, and with your seed after you. Lesson ii And Noe built an altar unto the Lord: and taking of all cattle and fowls that were clean, offered holocausts upon the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour and said: I will no more curse the earth for the sake of man. for the imagination and thought of man's heart are prone to evil from his youth: therefore I will no more destroy every living soul as I have done. And the days of the earth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, night and day, shall not cease. *R.* Behold I will establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you, Neither shall there be from henceforth a flood to

altare. Odoratusque est Dominus odorem suavitatis et ait: Nequaquam ultra maledicam terrae propter homines; sensus enim et cogitatio humani cordis in malum prona sunt ab adolescentia sua: non igitur ultra percutiam omnem animam viventem sicut feci. Cunctis diebus terrae, sementis et messis, frigus et aestus, aestas et hiems, nox et dies non requiescent. R. Ecce ego statuam pactum meum vobiscum, et cum semine vestro post vos, Neque erit deinceps diluvium dissipans terram. Arcum meum ponam in nubibus, et erit signum foederis inter me et inter terram.

Lectio iii Benedixitque Deus Noe et filiis ejus. Et dixit ad eos: Crescite, et multiplicamini, et replete terram. Et terror vester ac terrores sit super cuncta animalia terrae, et super omnes volucres caeli, cum universis, quae moventur super terram. Omnes pisces maris manus vestrae traditi sunt; et omne quod movetur et vivit, erit vobis in cibum: quasi olera virentia tradidi vobis omnia. Excepto quod carnem cum sanguine non comedetis. Sanguinem enim animarum vestrarum requiram de manu cunctarum bestiarum; et de manu hominis, de manu viri, et fratris ejus requiram animam hominis. Quicumque effuderit humanum sanguinem, fundetur sanguis illius; ad imaginem quippe Dei factus est homo. R. In articulo diei

waste the earth.

Lesson iii And God blessed Noe and his sons. And he said to them: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth. And let the fear and dread of you be upon all the beasts of the earth, and upon all the fowls of the air, and all that move upon the earth; all the fishes of the sea are delivered And every thing that moveth and liveth shall be meat for you: even as the green herbs have I delivered them all to you: Saving that flesh with blood you shall not eat. For I will require the blood of your lives at the hand of every beast, and at the hand of man, at the hand of every man, and of his brother, will I require the life of man. Whosoever shall shed man's blood, his blood shall be shed: for man was made to the image of God.

(R. omitted)

Thursday

Lesson i And God said: This is the sign of the Covenant which I give between me and you, and to every living soul that is with you, for perpetual generations. I will set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be the sign of a Covenant between me, and between the earth. And when I shall cover the sky with clouds, my bow shall appear in the clouds; And I will remember my Covenant with you, and with every

illius ingressus est Noe in arcam et filii ejus, Uxor illius et uxores filiorum ejus. *W.* Deleta sunt universa de terra; remansit autem solus Noe et qui cum eo erant in arca. Uxor. Gloria Patri.

Feria Quinta

Lectio i Dixitque Deus: Hoc signum foederis quod do inter me et vos, et ad omnem animam viventem, quae est vobiscum in generationes sempiternas: Arcum meum ponam in nubibus, et erit signum foederis inter me et inter terram Cumque obduxero nubibus caelum, apparebit arcus meus in nubibus; et recordabor foederis mei vobiscum et cum omni anima vivente quae carnem vegetat: et non erunt ultra aquae diluvii ad delendum universam carnem. *R.* Dixit Dominus ad Noe: Finis universae carnis venit coram me: repleta est terra iniquitate eorum, Et ego disperdam eos cum terra. *W.* Fac tibi arcam de lignis laevigatis, mansiunculas in ea facies. Lectio ii Coepitque Noe vir agricola exercere terram, et nudatus in tabernaculo suo. Quod cum cidisset Cham pater Chanaan, verenda scilicet patris sui esse nudata, nuntiavit duobus fratribus suis foras. At vero Sem et Japheth pallium imposuerunt humeris suis, et incedentes retrorsum operuerunt verenda patris sui: faciesque eorum aversae erant, et patris virilia non viderunt. *R.* Noe, vir justus atque perfectus, cum Deo ambulavit, Et fecit

living soul that beareth flesh: and there shall no more be waters of a flood to destroy all flesh. *R.* God said to Noe: The end of all flesh is come before me, the earth is filled with iniquity through them, and I will destroy them with the earth. *W.* Make thee an ark of timber planks, make little rooms in it. I will destroy them with the earth.

Lesson ii And Noe, a husbandman, began to till the ground, and planted a vineyard. And drinking of the wine was made drunk, and was uncovered in his tent. Which when Cham, the father of Chanaan had seen, to wit, that his father's nakedness was uncovered, he told it to his two brethren without. But Sem and Japheth put a cloak upon their shoulders, and going backward, covered the nakedness of their father: and their faces were turned away, and they saw not their father's nakedness. *R.* Noe was a just and perfect man, he walked with God: And did all whatever God directed. *W.* Build the Ark, and save all the seeds. And did all whatever God directed.

Lesson iii And Noe awaking from the wine, when he had learned what his younger son had done to him, He said: Cursed be Chanaan, a servant of

omnia quaecumque praecepit ei Deus. *W.* Fecit sibi arcam, ut salvaretur universum semen. Et fecit omnia quaecumque praecepit ei Deus.

Lectio iii Evigilans autem Noe ex vino, cum didicisset quae fecerat ei filius suus minor, ait: Maledictus Chanaan, servus servorum erit fratribus suis. Dixitque: Benedictus Dominus Deus Sem, sit Chanaan servus ejus. Dilatet Deus Japheth et habitet in tabernaculis Sem, sitque Chanaan servus ejus. Vixit autem Noe post diluvium trecentis quinquaginta annorum, et mortuus est. *R.* Quadraginta dies et noctes aperti sunt caeli, et ex omni carne habente spiritum vitae ingressa sunt in arcam: Et clausit a foris ostium Dominus. *W.* In articulo diei illius ingressus est Noe in arcam et filii ejus, et uxor illius et uxores filiorum ejus. Et clausit. Gloria Patri.

servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said: Blessed be the Lord God of Sem, be Chanaan his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Sem, and Chanaan be his servant. And Noe lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years: And all his days were in the whole nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

R. Forty days and nights the skies were opened, and all the flesh having spiritual life entered the ark. *W.* In that selfsame day Noe, and his sons, his wife, and the wives of his sons went into the ark. And the Lord shut the door. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. And the Lord shut the door.