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Triple time in the Towneley cycle a modern understanding of medieval perceptions.

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LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE NOUS L'AVONS RÉCU
TRIPLE TIME IN THE TOWNELEY CYCLE:
A MODERN UNDERSTANDING OF
MEDIEVAL PERCEPTIONS

by

Nancy A. Morrison Gorski

A Thesis
submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through the
Department of English
in Partial Fulfillment of
the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts at
the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1986
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For Bernard and my parents
and in loving memory
of Arla Oja.
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Abstract

The seemingly disparate time treatments evident in the Townley Corpus Christi drama of relevant Christian history remain consistently fused into a sophisticated synchronicity throughout the cycle. That fusion is implicitly connected to the preponderant medieval reverence for the eternal Trinity and may therefore be better understood by considering the trinitarian influence in the plays. The aim of this thesis is to underline the underlying unity of the cycle expressed by this implicit connection between temporality and eternality, and with the aid of medieval trinitarian icons as the basis for a modern series of metaphorical geometric diagrams, this important connection is made more explicit for modern man.

As Three Persons are One God, so the linear, cyclic and anachronistic medieval time techniques create one time. These time treatments are examined separately before their resulting fusion into an Eternal Present of perception is detailed. History is fundamentally the linear progression of time, as is the literary medium of the drama. However, recurring cyclic touchstones of theme and of type add a sense of cosmic order and stability within progress. In this fusion of disparate concepts, a third element is incorporated: anachronistic time, which effectively collapses temporal distinctions so that past, present and future become transcendent synchronicity.
The vast stock of trinitarian and triplistic references imbedded in the dramatic history presented provides the foundation for making the implicit connection explicit. The Trinity, at work throughout the process of time is suggested when the number three is used in dialogue, staging or the triple repetition of action, for example. As a consistent and consistently unifying theme in the drama, the Trinity works with and within the time techniques utilized to give the audience a sense of transcendent spirituality from within the confines of temporality.

In order to express the transcendent factor, the triangle and the circle (Alpha and Omega) are used to represent, respectively, temporal and eternal perceptions, and the implicit connection between time and the Trinity in the Towneley cycle is made explicit in a fused representation of the simplest and most complex geometric figures. In this way the modern understanding of the medieval triple time sense is heightened into a fuller appreciation of the true unity and sophistication of this Corpus Christi play.
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Introduction

What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.
—T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*

Despite the wide range of dramatic accomplishment in the Towneley cycle, from the unimaginative to the more innovative dramatic spectacle, there is throughout an expression of a general medieval perception which affords a certain unity and uniformity to the text: namely, the time treatments. Ranging from the fundamental linear representation of time which necessarily belongs to all forms of literature, to figurally cyclic correspondences between episodes and characters of the Corpus Christi cycle, to the many and varied anachronisms which effectively collapse distinctions between past, present and future, the diverse techniques combine to convey the notion of meaningful Christian time and history being synchronous. To a large degree subliminal intuition on the part of the medieval audience, arising from the cultural context of the Middle Ages, the "felt" responses to the abstract concepts of time are lost to modern man. We may only make inferences based upon the textual evidence, as well as on the predominant philosophical and theological emphases of the era, one of which is amply and aptly described by V.A. Kolve. According to him, "significant time" in the dramatization of these plays, becomes... the will of God expressed inside time from outside time, by which
a connection deeper than temporal causality is stated.  

It is the modern elucidation of this "deeper" medievally perceived connection which is the focus of this study. Examination of the text and the discovery of three differing senses of time fusing into the immediacy of one synchronous time led me to an awareness that the preponderant number of references to the number three inspired a new angle of perception, both in medieval and in modern terms. If three "times" are conveyed as one, and Three Persons are One God, the thought struck that trinitarianism could be the key to facilitate modern understanding of the seemingly complex aspects of time in the Towneley cycle. St. Augustine's temporal analogies of the Trinity set the precedent for this type of interpretation in the medieval era, and it spilled over into conceptions of time: from the inherent analogy between the Trinity and the three-fold unity of time past, time present and time future, to the tripartite division of Christian history into Three Ages, originally perceived by Augustine.

Bound in time to a modern perspective is not to be bound in understanding as well. While it is necessary to maintain the objectivity provided by distance from the medieval plays, it is also important to enter a time capsule and travel backwards in time in order to fully appreciate the inspiring nature of the medieval perspective. By examining the predominant beliefs of the era, the context of
that highly religious milieu, the modern scholar will find himself able to posit quite educated inferences concerning the intent, content and effectiveness of the medieval Corpus Christi drama.

The critical approach here is manifold, then, both for the edification of the dated and often obsolete time techniques, as well as for the promotion of a judicial modern perspective on them. As Davidson so clearly states,

\[ \text{in no sense can a strictly formalistic approach to medieval drama provide clues to its aesthetic basis in medieval Christianity.} \]

Considering that the general tendencies of dramatic criticism since the Renaissance have leaned in favour of the three "prescribed" Aristotelian unities of time, place and action, it is little wonder that the mysteriæs were long considered faulty and primitive drama for their lengthy range and huge extent. But dismiss the Aristotelian "description" of Greek drama with which the cycles have no connection, take them on their own terms, and criticism becomes much more favourable. As Davidson asserts,

\[ \text{synchronic approaches which relate the events to social and religious patterns, and to the conditions which brought the staged examples into existence though not in a directly causative way, will provide a necessary corrective to much previous criticism.} \]

For this reason, the critical stance of this study is to consider the Towneley cycle not only as a literary accomplishment based on the merits of the text, but as a
vessel containing evidence of authorial intent, religious influence, period philosophy, didactic devices and the assumed audience response which resulted: heightened temporal devotion, and a sense of ongoing spiritual hope.

In order to appreciate the transcendent synchronization of time in the Towneley more fully, we must begin with a consideration of the seemingly dichotomous aspects of linear and cyclic time in the first chapter, since it is necessary to understand these perspectives separately before an educated assessment of their fusion may result.

Anachronism, which modifies both the linear and cyclic views of time into contemporaneity, is the subject of the second chapter, culminating in a discussion of St. Augustine's Eternal Present and its relationship with the transcendence and eternalization afforded by the synchronization of the medieval triple time sense.?

Fittingly, the third chapter details the relationship between the medieval trinitarian tradition and the trinitarian aspects of time in the Towneley cycle. Incorporating a consideration of some predominant period number symbolism, its reflection in medieval musical notation, its expression in the then popular trinitarian icons of Joachim of Fiore and John Duns Scotus, and its significance to and in the plays, this final chapter offers a modern series of metaphoric geometries which describe systematically, in modern terms, the subliminal intuitions of transcendent spirituali-
ty assumed to be the experience of the audience of this cycle. According to Reiss,

We must be concerned with and knowledgeable in [number] symbolism if we want to understand fully the nature and accomplishment of all medieval literature.⁸

The contention here is that the inherent mystery of the number three, by its predominant figural relation to the Trinity, can and does reflect the intangible still point which marks the transition from time to timelessness, from becoming to being, and from imperfection to perfection for the salvation-oriented medieval audience. And since language is not always efficacious in describing the intangible and incomprehensible nature of abstract time and eternity by the very limits of its linear expression,⁹ such abstractions may be most effectively translated in a more comprehensible manner for moderns by the use of geometric metaphors. Such metaphors are tied not only to the medieval trinitarian tradition which revered such symbolic representations, but are tailored to modern understanding and expectations, as well. The interpretations they offer are meant to facilitate an educated modern perspective concerning the medieval collective unconscious experience of time and intuition of eternity as it is reflected in time. That a significant key is to be found in the number three is indicated primarily by its predominance in the extant manuscipt;¹⁰ of thirty-two pageants, only six show no
occurrence of triplicity, either stated, staged, or structurally inherent. (See Appendix.)

Before detailing the deeper connection implied by the medieval time techniques as reflected in the Towneley cycle, a consideration of the simpler facets of these abstractions is necessary. One must always test the ground before beginning to dig and lay the foundation before erecting the structure.
CHAPTER ONE

Linear and Cyclic Time

If the future and the past exist,
I want to know where they are.
-St. Augustine, Confessions XI:18.

Since time is an abstract concept, the reckoning and recognition of its movement naturally lead to critical and philosophical dispute. Do we experience time in a linear fashion? Does man progress along a straight line from birth, through life, to death? Or does he, metaphorically and imaginatively, live many lives and die many deaths? Philosophically, the two manners of perceiving time need not be considered as mutually exclusive. In modern times, we may visualize our lives as progressive and constantly changing, yet the "history repeats itself" cliché is an innate part of our consciousness as well. Man looks for patterns in a world of vicissitudes, for patterns offer a sense of stability and meaning, real or imagined, to life.

So, too, for medieval man. The audience of the Corpus Christi cycle plays would not have perceived time, in general, as solely linear, nor would it view the concept as a completely cyclic process. There tends, however, to be some critical wavering on this point, and before beginning a deeper examination of these two seemingly disparate concepts, we must reach an understanding of this critical disaccord in order to satisfactorily resolve it.
At one side of the scales is C.A. Patrides, who notes the decided emphasis on and preference for the linear concept of time in the Middle Ages,\(^1\) while at the other extremity, V.A. Kolve notes that, "Any event that related to one period only and not to all time seemed to the Middle Ages not in the highest sense historical."\(^2\) Herein lies the dispute: the denotative definitions of the differing concepts are contradictory in nature. How, then, can co-existing treatments of time be present in the cycle plays? Cyclic time, suggested by the nature of ritual repetition, would appear to cancel out a linear view of time and vice versa.

Clifford Davidson, though he concurs with Patrides, affords us some elucidation when he states that though the medieval "general perception" of time is linear, this perception is not "fully assimilable."\(^3\) He notes that this is a result of the importance of yearly rituals to medieval man. "Through the [liturgical] calendar, sacred time in the past becomes the occasion for a feast day—i.e., sacred time in the present."\(^4\) The importance of such cyclic events affected the normal temporal experience of time as linear progression.

Walter Meyers takes the general perceptions a step further when he refers directly to time in the cycle plays as, a straight-line view of history with certain modifications. The Christian cycle plays, like the Christian liturgical year, create not just a New Year,
but re-enact and join together all human time. A fusion of opposites is here implied. Cyclic time affects linear time.

Are we to view the modifications of which Meyers speaks as, "largely due to the alternation of narrative dramatic with ritual scenes," in the cycle plays, as J.W. Robinson contends? It is an unlikely and limited stance, for though the modes are, on a surface level, often juxtaposed with one another, they are more consistently and subtly superimposed on each other. Robinson notes that the medieval audience would be "able to cope" with the alternations "naturally," but it is more likely that they assimilated both concepts in such a way that the dual perspective was not an alternating one. After all, as Erich Auerbach says, "The whole is always borne in mind and figurally represented" (emphasis mine). It is likely that what is represented is, at least subliminally, also accepted.

Consider the Towneley Noah, for example. Taking Robinson's approach, the play appears to begin as ritual, when Noah prays to his God, praising Him and recounting human and divine history. The central portion is the dramatic conflict between Noah and Uxor which is resolved in a linear manner, while the final portion returns to ritual-like prayer and thanksgiving. This is alternation, it seems, yet Noah is considered a medieval typological forerunner of Christ. This figural association is further
emphasized by the Christian anachronism which runs through the characters' speeches. Noah's invocation of the Trinity (11.251-52) is, strictly speaking, anachronistic, and Uxor's oaths "bi mary!" (1.289) and "bi godis pyne" (1.227) are expletives of the Christian era, yet these instances serve to reinforce the typological connection of Noah with Christ. These cyclic aspects are the superstratum, while the narrative storyline is the substratum on which they are spread. Jeffrey Helterman, however, would disagree. He says, "Noah was a common figure of Christ for the Middle Ages, but no evidence from the Wakefield play indicates that he is one here." Since Noah was already accepted as a medieval type of Christ, his references to mercy and repentance alone are sufficient to call the relationship to a mind already familiar with the connection. Indeed, even Noah's argument with Uxor would serve to remind the audience that he is but a type, for according to Auerbach, the type never exactly foreshadows the actual. Christ is both God and man while Noah is merely man.

There is, though, concrete evidence in the play of the typological connection which Helterman appears to have disregarded. God has offered Noah and his family salvation by means of the ark. Noah suffers as he builds the means of mankind's temporal salvation (11.253-78) as Christ does later on in spiritual salvation history. If this connection is not explicit enough, Noah refers to both the tree from
which the ark (or salvation) will be begun, and to the nails which he will use (11.253, 273, & 277). Though Noah drives in these nails, the typological association cannot be disputed. These nails foreshadow, by contrasting suggestion, the nails that will later be used on another tree: the cross. Noah also says of the ark, a "type" of the later, ultimate salvation through Christ: "This will ever endure" (11.283). It is important to remember that these cyclic overtones occur during the "narrative dramatic" scene, and not merely the more formal ritual scenes. A cyclic sense of the meaning of time, then, is superimposed on the linear progression; the two aspects are not really separate or alternating, except perhaps on a surface level.

By this brief survey of critical dispute, it is apparent that both concepts, whether consciously or unconsciously, are present in and acceptable to the medieval mind. What is fused in the medieval psyche, however, must be examined separately and closely in the remainder of this chapter before we moderns may begin to appreciate the depth, breadth and height of the achievements these plays have reached and realized: a transcendence from time to timelessness. By understanding the subtle textures of these time treatments, we may begin to fathom how such dealings in and with time may help in interpreting the timeless.
Linear Time

The English cycle plays represent the encapsulation of relevant Christian history, from Creation through Christ's First Advent to the Last Judgment, with the exception of the Cornish cycle which does not include a Doomsday play. As such, the medieval spectator, "sees the plays from the same standpoint as God sees history." Just as God views his ultimate creation as bound in time, the Corpus Christi dramas, by their nature as a serial medium, are also bound in time. "Words move, music moves/ Only in time."

Contrastingly, God sees all time at once, synchronically, while for the audience of the plays, history-in-miniature unfolds chronologically. The standpoints, then, are not the same; rather they are similar. God knows His own will and the meaning of all human time, while man must aspire to these truths, learning step by step the meaning of what Christian history has revealed and will continue to reveal to him.

The cycles, by virtue of their didacticism, facilitate the learning process. Indeed, the medieval historian Bede, commented on the moral utility of history, and in Roger Ray's essay on the historian, he notes that, "The word history comes from the Greek 'historein' which means to see and comprehend." This is a natural linear progression, for observation and comprehension cannot be simultaneous for man.
Much of the didacticism of the cycles is reinforcement of the "Repent Now!" message which Eleanor Prosser has pointed out:19 a lesson, if medieval sermons have not missed their mark, already learned. By seeing the Christian history plays, medieval man's realization of the importance of repentance is re-emphasized and given more immediately relevant meaning; the audience is still part of the historical process, living in the Sixth Age.20 As Kolje says,

The present had dignity... as a time for amendment and preparation; its proper use was to earn man a place in heaven.21 This is what is relevant to the audience of the medieval cycle dramas.

Time, the abstraction, is rendered operable in the plays and by them as well, since they offer their audience a raison d'être. Linear time is operable, then, in the sense that it is a relative function of eternity, its sum being salvation (or damnation). Says Vaughan,

History is salvation history.... Time is a matter of morality not chronology; it is measured by grace, not minutes.22

Although this statement is essentially ahistorical in modern terms, and therefore non-linear in a sense, salvation, a release from time, can only be attained by earning it in time.23 A natural response to the linear concept of time and history present in the cycles; then, is to envision it in its most simple form: a horizontal line segment within
the framework of eternity or eternal salvation. (Refer to diagram 1 on page 28.)

Kolve, however, disputes the importance of the concept of horizontal time in the plays. Basing his argument on some of Erich Auerbach's observations, Kolve stresses and stresses again the importance of the metaphysical aspects of the plays in comparison to insignificant temporality. Centering on a figural sense of time in the cycles, Kolve diagrams the Corpus Christi proto-cycle in blocks, vertically arranged, to correspond with each of the Seven Ages. (Refer to diagram 2 on page 28.)

Says Kolve,

The events chosen for representation are those in which God intervenes in human history; significant time, it follows, becomes simply the point of intersection between these actions, the will of God expressed inside time from outside time by which a connection deeper than temporal causality is stated.

The significance of this deeper connection certainly exists as a vertical conception of the timeless interacting in human time. (Refer to diagram 3 on page 28.) This represents the vertical relation of God to man. Kolve's view, however, tends to exclude the significance of time itself. How can a medieval audience comprehend this "point of intersection" as "significant time" without first understanding something of the nature of causality?

While Davidson warns the reader or critic that, "Understanding medieval drama in terms of seriality... involves a serious critical error," the consideration of horizontally
conceived linear time cannot be so quickly dismissed. I do not contend that it is the only approach to time structures in the plays, but I do see it as part of an approach which elucidates more fully the complex treatments of time in the plays. Indeed, according to Vaughan, the synchronous nature of medieval time, though not strictly limited to chronological progression, "can be and often is represented in horizontal sequence" (emphasis mine). 28

In order to further emphasize the significance of linear time in the cycles, we must consider the plausibility of another of Kolve's statements. He maintains that,

Christ exists both before his Incarnation and after his Crucifixion; His relationship to time is not horizontal but vertical, because of His triune nature in eternity. 29

Although the initial clause of the above observation is, in a typological and religious sense, true, the circumscriptio of Christ's relationship to time denies his essentially dual nature 30 as God and man. Historically, Christ existed in time as well as having an eternal existence. Joseph Longo's reference to Christ's Incarnation as both "historical event and historical continuum" 31 bears out this dual relation to time and to timelessness. Certainly, the statement can apply to the whole of Christ's life in human time as well.

In human terms, an understanding or recognition of Christ's real existence in time is an important first step in progressing towards a comprehension of his metaphysical
being. Kolve's "significant time", then, is a rather limiting choice of words, since it is not merely the "point of intersection" that is meaningful, but that which follows the vertical intervention as well. The vertical and horizontal concepts of "time" are combined and imbued with a far more proportionately equitable importance in diagram 4 on page 29. Vertical intervention is followed by periods of temporal causality.

A further consideration of this fourth diagram is that it ascends, and it should hardly need be mentioned that salvation would exist, metaphorically, as the top of a mountain: the final achievement following a long and arduous climb. Kolve's diagram, perhaps arbitrarily, descends through the ages. Though he does state that,

For the most part the Middle Ages was chiefly conscious of degeneration, of times growing ever worse and worse, he also adds that the affirmative tone of the times lies in the fact that the present for the medieval audience is the time of mercy. "Now is the time of grace."32 Since salvation is offered with the advent of grace through Christ, and since the attainment of salvation is the thematic didacticism on which the Corpus Christi cycles often centre, the conception of such pointed motion through

*Vertical intervention would more aptly be termed an element of timelessness.
time must be an upward progression, as diagram 4 illustrates it.

The "degeneration" of time as opposed to the more optimistic view of an upward climb towards salvation presents a slight critical problem, though. Harriet Hawkins notes that "depending on who is doing the calling, the Middle Ages can be called the best, or the worst, of times." 33 Yet she sides with Professor Kolve when she says that medieval man's "vision of life in this world is profoundly pessimistic." 34 On the other side of the issue, however, are such critics as Reeves, Davidson and Longo. According to Reeves, "the whole temporal order was progressing towards its golden age"; 35 a statement indicating a great degree of optimism. Davidson also notes that,

In a drama which is essentially emblematic, the imagery of falling as symbolic of human failure and alienation should logically be countered by movement upward as indicative of the direction of salvation. 36

He also contends that despite the paradox of willfully rising being productive of a fall, and of humbly submitting to God's will producing a movement heavenward, "Upward movement [is] the only freedom open to [man]" (emphasis mine). 37 In referring to the dramatic episodes of the cycles, Davidson adds further emphasis to the optimistic view, saying, "The historical events [represented]...tended to be placed in a framework of eschatological hope." 38
may become aspiration, and aspiration initiates progress, and, as Longo says,

Progress is spiritual....With the appearance of Christ, history enters its final stage; it becomes a one-directional movement towards the single goal of salvation.39

The view, then, indeed depends on the person "doing the calling."

It is, however, the spiritual goal of salvation, the right to which must be attained in time, which justifies the upward movement metaphorically represented in diagram 4. Times, perhaps, seemed to be growing constantly worse, as Kolve and Hawkins contend, yet the progress through time brings man closer to the end of time, and therefore, closer to salvation. This pessimistic optimism, or optimistic pessimism, cannot but remain to some degree paradoxical. However, the movement from left to right in the representational diagrams which I have included here is not paradoxical in terms of that spiritual progress through time. According to Davidson, "left, like the West, became synonymous with despair, just as right and East became identified with hope."40 By virtue of their didacticism, the cycles are concerned with the morality and spiritual progress of their audience, hence the "eastward" progress in the diagrams.

Plateaus of causality are important to the linear based framework of the steps as they illustrate human action, by
example, in a linear, cause/effect way. To re-iterate, the plays are "designed to shape action." This shaping of human action capitalizes on man's ability to learn by means of experience, whether vicarious or immediate and personal.

In the Towneley Creation, consider the terms in which Eden is given to Adam and Eve:

> ye shall have love & bliss therein, while ye will kepe you out of syn, I say withouten lese, (11.192-94).

The word "while" indicates the horizontal terms of the agreement. Though the Towneley manuscript has lost the remainder of this play, and possibly the Fall of Man as well, the medieval audience will no doubt have viewed Adam and Eve progressing through linear time until they violate the contract by eating of the forbidden fruit and are dismissed from paradise. Obviously, the law of action/reaction is an important, directly causal relationship, and as a lesson to the medieval audience, is an important representation of the significance of temporal time.

We cannot, however, negate the importance of vertical intervention and its relationship to time, discussed above, when considering the plateaus of causality. A focus on the fourth diagram may further elucidate the nature of God's intervention in the temporal world. God's first line in Creation is, "Ego sum alpha et o" (1.1). Diagram 9a on page 29 will illustrate this almost incomprehensible concept,
making all time significant as it dwells in the timeless, sub specie aeternitatis. This displays the nature of God, that metaphysical entity, as all linear time, vertical intervention and horizontal progression, for in God is everything. It is necessary to bear in mind that this representation, as metaphor, is somewhat limited by two-dimensional rendering, and that all my diagrams are offered as approximations of relatively intangible concepts, not as exact illustrations.

Note that Deus maintains,

All maner thyng is in my thought,
Withouten me ther may be nought;
f for all is in my sight;
hit shall be done after my will,
that I haue thought I shall fulfill
And manteyn with my myght, (11.13-18).

Though the playwright is limited in his representation of God by dramatic temporality and the linear nature of language, he is approximating, as closely as such limitations will allow, the concept of God as everything. Fulfillment of God's promises to man exists on the horizontal line of time, with the exception of eventual salvation, the fulfillment of which exists beyond time, in eternity. He possesses not "foreknowledge, but simply knowledge." And his "thought" is the vertical intervention, becoming both conclusion and initiation of the ages. Indeed, the lovely and almost contradictory rhetoric of God as alpha and omega is illustrated and resolved in terms of linear time in diagram 4a. (Other interpretations of this concept will be
considered in the third and final chapter.) The Corpus Christi plays diagram the fulfillment of God's will along the horizontal line of time.

Numerous critics, however, note the absence of direct temporal causality in, and particularly between, the plays. In the former case, Davidson observes that The Second Shepherds' Play, for instance, "defies normal analysis based on the study of causation or motivation." However, it is necessary to bear in mind that the plays "fail to present causation in modern terms" (emphasis mine). Longo's assessment is more suited to the medieval conception of progress in this particular play:

the denotative and connotative themes of each of the three scenes in the play are yoked and disposed in their linear progress through chronological order (from time past to time future), spatial order (from the natural to the supernatural), associational coherence (from the episode of the lost sheep to the Good Shepherd), and a logical sequence (from Mak as the false messiah to Christ as the true Redeemer). Therefore, what initially appears to be "temporal illogic" may, in fact, be a medieval sense of temporal logic affected and influenced by metaphysical concerns. Where the lessons of the plays are offered by example, rather than by an expositor, this medieval logic is displayed.

Consider, first, the fall of Lucifer and his worshipers in the Towneley Creation play. Though the event deals with metaphysical beings, the cause of the fall is Lucifer's
pride, and the effect is endless pain and misery for himself and the apostates. To an audience aware of temporal causality by virtue of living the experience of time, Lucifer's punishment equals his crime. The bad angels, upon reproaching their malefactor, proceed to detail the cause and effect of their fall from bliss:

We were in myrth and Ioy enogh
When lucifer to pride drogh.
Alas, we may warrie wikkyd pride,
so may ye all that standys be side;
We held with hym ther he saide leasse,
And therfor haue we all unpeasse.
Alas, alas, oure Iove is tynt,
We mon haue payne that neuer shall stynt,
(II.154-61).

The event of the fall, though not a strictly temporal occurrence, is enacted for the audience in a causal progression of misdeed/retribution, and the lesson is simple enough.

There is further causal didacticism displayed in the Towneley Mactatio Abel. As with Adam and Eve, Cain is given horizontal terms in God's contract with him:

if thou tend right thou gettis thi mede;
And be thou sekir, if thou teynd fals,
thou bese alowed ther after als, (II.294-96).

Upon ignoring the message and ridiculing God, Cain proceeds to kill his brother. Yet, for all his braggadocio, he fears God's wrath for his fraternal transgression and the punishment which he knows will follow, according to the linear terms of the agreement which he has chosen to pervert.
Into Som hole fayn wold I crepe;
ffor ferd I qwake and can no rede,
ffor be I taken, I be bot dede, (11.337-39).

Here, Cain's motivation is causal: fear of punishment for his misdeed causes him to hide. Though his punishment is God's malediction and not immediate death, Cain is aware of the gravity of his sin:

Syn I have done so mekill syn,
that I may not thi mercy wyn,
And thou thus dos me from thi grace
I shall hyde me fro thi face; (11.358-61),

just as he later comprehends the extent of his punishment:

... I must nedis weynd,
And to the dwill be thrall,
warld withouten end, (11.463-65).

Once again, temporal causality (in medieval terms), determines man's eternal existence, whether it be damnation or salvation, the movement left or right, downwards or upwards.

Another element of didacticism in the plays details the causal nature of obedience/reward. Just as Noah's obedience to God is rewarded by the temporal salvation of humankind via the ark, the Towneley Abraham exhibits Abraham's obedience to God and the reward of Isaac's merciful salvation from sacrifice. The nature of Abraham's obedience, though it is stedfast, is also touched with a very temporally oriented grief: "he spekis so rufully to me/
That water shotis in both, myn eeyn" (11.215-16). Still further, Abraham says,

It must nedis be withouten lesse,
thof all I carpe on this kyn wise,
The more my sorow it will incres; (11.251-53).
Thus, the lessons of reward or punishment are taught to the medieval audience in causal, linear terms in the "temporal" world: the road which leads to eternity.

The absence of causality between many of the biblical episodes is another consideration of linear time as mentioned above. God's intervention between any two of the seven stages of Kolve's protocycle is a means of editing history so that significant (and significantly didactic) events of time and history maintain the primary focus. Kolve notes that "the horizontal connections between... [the Seven Ages] are ignored, a matter of indifference to the Corpus Christi cycle." The connections, however, are not so much "ignored" as merely omitted for the sake of brevity and thematic coherence. Because the transitions from age to age are "often without consecutive impulse," and are "not built upon a theory of direct causation," these omissions may be termed historical contractions: a necessary product of linear time in the plays. Meyers says that,

The viewer of the pageants sees the whole sequence; in case he should miss the interconnections of the drama, the various types and themes are constantly pointed out to him.

With this re-iteration, then, the non-causal connections are neither arbitrary, nor are they unduly abrupt. (Refer to diagram 2, and the well-known biblical figures.)

The theme of salvation must place the emphasis on important events, and interconnections and inter-episodic
progressions are linear time restructured for the dramatist's purposes. Indeed, historical contractions are utilized in the unfolding of the actual episodes as well, for they are mimetic interpretations of time within the framework of the eternal. In the Towneley Creation, the first day of creation is capsuled in two stanzas! (11.19-38). The passage of time in Noah's ark is spoken; and the sequence collapsed for the sake of the mimetic action. Within twenty-two lines of the Noah play, the depth of the waters is measured three times with noticeably different results, (11.438, 448 & 468, respectively). Also, Mary's nine month pregnancy in The Annunciation is carried almost full term in the wink of an eye (between 11.154 & 155). The effects of such contractions of historical time in the plays serve to contrast human time with eternity. While horizontal progressions aid the didactic purpose, the abridgement of history emphasizes the relative insignificance of time to the timeless. Note the term relative, though, since time is not wholly dismissed. To paraphrase Paula Ložar, the thematic relations between and within the plays often supersede unadulterated chronology.54

The most remarkable deviation from historical chronology in the Towneley plays is that The Prophets precedes Pharaoh with what Martin Stevens calls "the awkward effect that Moses reads the law from the Tablets before the Exodus."55 While in temporal terms this is awkward, we
must recall the relation of time to eternity. This re-
ordering of the narrative details is due to the "skill or
perversity" of the playwright, according to Davidson.56 The
latter assessment is most unlikely, though, since the goal
of the plays is to facilitate spiritual progress or
transcendence.

The transcendent factor of linear time in the drama
brings us back to the concepts of the vertical and the
horizontal. Robert Edwards explains their fusion:

In order to achieve transcendence, the
drama must move past time and re-order
the flow of the narrative which in
itself establishes a kind of time
scheme.... Much as this art uses the
devices of condensation, conflation and
omission to create its scenes yet
retains a sense of narrative develop-
ment, the drama relies on the fixed
images of memory to add a vertical
dimension to the horizontal movement of
mimesis.57

Again, one perception of linear time does not cancel the
other out. Though medieval man's "sense of chronology..."58
[is] extremely vague, by his grasping the familiar
aspects of temporal time, he is able to move past them at
the same time, to a comprehension of the contrasting nature
of the eternal in which his temporal world is enveloped.

In one particular manner, the prophets seem to repre-
sent an irreversible element in the horizontal, linear time
expressed in the plays. This has the effect of fortifying
the concept of strict chronological sequence. A passage
from The Second Shepherds Play will illustrate:
patryarkes that has bene/ and
prophetys before; They desyryd to have sene/ this
chylde that is borne. Thay ar gone full clene/ that haue
thay lorne, (11.692-94).

Obviously, a prophet's life cannot be repeated in the time
of Christ, and this is dramatic mimesis of temporal, linear
time at its most realistic stage.

The Prophets, though, having been removed from its
logical chronology, is imbued with a conspicuous timelessness. Indeed, the prophecies themselves are timeless,
springing directly from God's eternal plan for man's
salvation. Christ's First Advent brings some of the
prophecies full circle, as his Advent on the day of Judgment
will fulfill the remainder of the soothsaying. And the
fulfillment of prophecy is a cycle completed! Therefore,
the next consideration of this paper is the nature of cyclic
time in the Corpus Christi cycle plays.
Fig. 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Seven Ages of the World</th>
<th>The Corpus Christi Liturgical Cycle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Creation and Fall</td>
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<td>Second</td>
<td>Noah and Flood</td>
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<td>Third</td>
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<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Nativity, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, Assumption, Coronation of the Virgin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Corpus Christi: Moment of Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>Omniday</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 3.

Time → Eternity →
Cyclic Time

The aspect of cyclic time in the English cycle plays is a particularly complex consideration in this paper, and while the aim here is not to argue either for or against the classical identifications of their sources as being the Latin liturgical dramas and tropes, the religiosities of their subject matter requires the acknowledgement and subsequent examination of the liturgical influence. This will necessarily entail a discussion of ritual, archetypal and typological elements as they appear in the plays. First, though, we must remove the stumbling block of the denotative implications of cyclic time.

According to the Oxford International Dictionary, the Middle English definition of "cycle" is: "A recurrent period of a definite number of years." This is too circumscribed, though, for the cyclic concept, as recognized by modern critics of these medieval plays calls for echoes of theme and of type. Therefore, it does not indicate exact repetition as Origen interpreted the cycles, saying,

Jesus will again come to visit this life and he will do the same things that he has done, not just once but an infinite number of times according to the cycles.

Indeed, "Repetition as a formal principle [is] not the same as merely repeating." Origen's assessment of the cycles, then, is too completely literal (see figure 1 on page 63), especially considering that the predominant perception in
the Middle Ages was of "the essentially figural mode of salvation history." What we need is, of course, a more connotatively religious and spiritual approach to promote better understanding of the cyclic aspects.

Where Origen would see mere redundancy, the rituals and liturgy of the medieval Christian church, while indeed imitating the biblical history of the world, serve to emphasize and re-emphasize particular and particularly relevant Christian themes. And these themes are Christocentric: that is, they find their meaning in Christ's existence as God and man and, therefore, as Saviour. Let us consider some less circumscribed critical assessments of Christ's cyclic existence.

Lauren Lepow, in dealing with the eucharistic overtones in the Towneley plays of Christ's life, notes "Christ's eternally contemporary sacramental existence." While Christ's First Advent is an historical event, its real relevance to the medieval Christian is as historical continuum, as the spiritually elevating rituals of the mass and communion remind us. What is cyclic, then, in Christian terms, is the meaning which, though unvarying, in repetition becomes further and further amplified. One could compare it to a pebble dropped in a still pool of water. The circular ripples expand and multiply, though eventually disappearing, while the source of the rings remains the same. In Christianity, the pulse at the centre of salvation
history (Christ's Incarnation as man) endlessly produces these ripples of religious and spiritual meaning. Yet another analogy of the Christocentricity of cyclic time is the growth of a tree: the rings are continuously layered with each passing year, and while the tree grows in girth, the core or origin is the simple seed from which it sprang. The planting of the seed is the original historical event, while the growth of the tree (or the expanding ripples of water) represents the historical continuum. These metaphors, though necessarily limited and finite because subject to the passage of time, are nonetheless apt when attempting to understand cyclic time and Christocentric history in the English mystery plays. (See figure 2 on page 63.)

The above metaphor of the tree can be further extended to the consideration of an historical event like the Incarnation. Though this seems a one-directional movement, from planting through growth, by extending the imagination one can see that the possibility of the tree's existence is contained within 'the seed in preformation long before it is even planted. This illustrates that in spite of the Incarnation as an historical event, Christ has "existed always," 78 the Incarnation being the fulfillment and realization of that eternal actuality. 71

What follows the events of Christ's life is, of course, the establishment of the Christian Church and its rituals -- the latter producing a "periodic regeneration of history." 72
And in keeping with such ritual structure and meaning, D.W. Robertson refers to the Nativity in The Second Shepherds' Play as "a perennial event" with both historical and immediate relevance for its spectators. 73

Mimetic Christian ritual must be further understood before we may begin to comprehend how the mystery plays themselves bridge the gaps between past, present and future. In his article "Space and Time," Clifford Davidson affords some clear insights into the transcendent nature of ritual:

Christian rites too tend to deny the reality of chronological time, which they therefore seek to overcome in establishing representations of sacred events of the past. Since these events are ones which have marked the past, they are also ones that are able to bring the meaning of the past event into the present. They also... are able to point accurately toward the future. By performing the rites, men imitate the actions of the divine person and hence communally make themselves more like him. In Christian rite, the central point is the Mass, in which the events of Maundy Thursday are repeated in the sacred meal whereby the congregation is able to partake of the actual body and blood of Christ to their salvation, which is rooted in the future. 74

This idea of "marked" time, then, effectively collapses sequence, as the liturgical rituals re-enact history in the present in order to ensure future salvation. The repetition involved in ritual is not mere redundancy since the mimetic action serves to reinforce and re-emphasize the mystery of important eternal lessons by virtue of their very immediacy.
for the congregation: the eternal transcends the present. The congregation takes part in events that were once in time, but which are now replete with eternal meaning.

The Christocentric ritual of the Eucharistic feast at Mass is the most common and illustrative example of cyclic or marked time in the Christian liturgy. How, though, does this sense of ritual translate into the plays? The most striking, though obvious, example of this time-collapsing cycle of ritual meaning lies in the oft-praised Second Shepherds' Play. Upon witnessing the Virgin and Child, Daw says of the Nativity scene, "ffor sothe all redy/ it semys to be told/ full oft" (11.749-50). Such an anachronistic reference affords what William M. Manly calls "a sense of ritual re-presentation"75 to the scene. A religiously indoctrinated medieval mind would necessarily connect the scene with its own experience of the re-telling in church celebrations at Christmas. The sense of ritual, then, is translated into the scenes with carefully constructed reminders: sometimes overt, while at other times much more subtle.

Church ritual, being basically repetition, promotes recognition and understanding, and since the realm of medieval experience is infused with an influential religiosity, the echoes of liturgical prayers found in the plays re-emphasize the rituals with which these prayers are associated. In the Towneley Annunciation and Salutation of
Elizabeth can be seen some reminders of medieval mariolatry. In the former, the angel Gabriel greets Mary thus:

\begin{verbatim}
    hail, mary, gracyouse!
    hail, madyn and godis spouse!
    Unto the I lowte;
    Of all vyrwyns thou art quene,
    That ever was, or shall be seyn,
    wythouten dowte.

    hail, mary, and well thou be!
    My lord of heuen is wyth the,
    wythouten end;
    hail, woman, most of mede! (11.77-86).
\end{verbatim}

Yet another portion of the "Hail, Mary" is found in the Salutation play:

\begin{verbatim}
    Blyssed be thou of all women,
    And the fruyte that I well ken,
    Within the wombe of the; (11.31-33).
\end{verbatim}

Such elements as these anachronisms in performance confirm the existence of ritual elements in the medieval mysteries, and their very inclusion reflects a cyclic perspective towards time. The historical events portrayed are part of a cyclic continuum, as with the rites of marked time in the liturgy. The repetition is recognized and understood via the associative memory.

This particular function of memory is fed by paradigms, and Jeanne S. Martin advances an interesting comparison of style in her article, "History and Paradigm in the Towneley Cycle." Upon noting the tendency toward an archetypal perception of history in the Middle Ages, Martin goes on to compare the lexical repetition in the angelic praises to God with the repetition found in Lucifer's claims in Creation.
What she finds is that the repetition in the speech of the Cherubym,

functions as a paradigmatic system and thus establishes the unitary nature of creation. God generates an order in which differentiation exists but is subsumed by sameness or solidarity. 76

The speech to which she here refers is as follows:

Oure lord god in trynyte,
Myrth and loyng be to the,
Myrth and loyng ouer al thyng;
ffor thou has made, with thi bidyng,
Heuen, & erth, and all that is,
and giffen vs Ioy that never shall mys.
Lord, thou art full mych of myght,
that has maide lucifer so bright;
we Ioue the, lord, bright ar we,
bot none of vs so bright as he:
he may well hight lucifer,
ffor lufly light that he doth bere.
He is so lufly and so bright
It is grette Ioy to se that sight;
We lofe the, lord, with all oure thoght,
that sich thyng can make of noght, (11.61-76).

Martin notes that the syntactic meaning of the repeated words and phrases never alters in the above. The repetition reflects the solidarity of the eternal community of God in heaven, and although reference is made to Lucifer's brightness, it is to that brightness as a part of creation, not as separate from it. 77 In modern terms, we may understand the cherubic praise as cyclic; it always returns to the unity of God.

On the other hand, Martin notes that Lucifer's claims to supremacy, though using repetition of the same key words as the Cherubym employ, are based on differentiation and individualism.
Certys, it is a semely sight,
Syn that we ar all angels bright,
and euer in blis to be;
If that ye will behold me right,
this mastre longys to me.

I am so fare and bright,
of me commys all this light,
this gam and all this gle;
Agans my grete myght
may nothyng stand ne be.

And ye well me behold
I am a thousand fold
brighter then is the son;
my strengthe may not be told,
my myght may no thyng kon;
In heuen, therefore, wit I wold
Above me who shuld won.

ffor I am lord of blis,
ouer all this warld, I-wis,
My myrth is most of all;
therefor my will is this,
master ye shal me call, (11.77-98).

As Martin points out,

in this case, what appears as repetition
becomes displacement, as the syntactic
functions of the repeated terms undergo
progressive changes away from the
Cherubym’s meaning.78

By means of his increasingly individualistic claims, Lucifer
moves sequentially through his argument, from community to
enigma. Lucifer progressively excludes himself from "all"
the angels with which he opens his speech. He is a tempor-
ally oriented character, and his speech is more linear in
that he departs from his initial observations on the
community.

Though this conflict of community versus individualism
is stylistically subtle—indeed, we cannot assume that the
medieval audience would explicate the scenes of the drama as we do), the effects of staging would certainly and more obviously suggest the nature of the conflict. Lucifer separates himself from the stable community of the Cherubym, and sets himself above them, on God's throne, as a visual illustration of such a conflict of ideologies: a conflict which the audience would recognize, for the social philosophy and practice of the age is community-oriented. 79

From Creation to the Last Judgment this paradigmatic system functions; the good characters approximate the speech patterns of the Cherubym, while the evil ones assume Lucifer-like stances and attitudes. The associative memory, then, can easily recognize the archetypal relations between characters, and the drama becomes a cyclic pattern of history. 80

The purpose of the cyclic repetition of such paradigms is to function in the same way as ritual. Davidson notes that the role of the holy women depicted at the sepulchre at Easter is to,

provide on an archetypal level, the pattern to be followed by those who wish to follow Christ,...the congregation could join in praises at the side of the grave beside the holy women who first discovered the empty tomb. They were taught how to imitate the divine one through examples of those who had previously imitated him with all possible perfection. 81

Such devotional rituals are paradigmatic systems of repetition for the sake of promoting active participation in the
mysteries of faith. Kolve notes that Latin liturgical
drama,

was purely ornamental - the liturgy was
complete without it, and to dramatize an
event was merely to reiterate a state-
ment and celebration already made in
purely liturgical terms, (emphasis
mine).82

This ornamental reiteration is fundamentally didactic, as is
the archetypally based system of paradigm which Martin
isolates in the Towneley Plays. Robert Edwards terms such
reiterative elements the "cumulative reinforcement [of the]
images of memory."83 Familiarity, through such didactic
repetition, breeds understanding, and Edwards also notes
that ritual-like elements in medieval drama are quite
possibly due to the dramatist basing the acceptance of his
work on the audience's recognition of these elements.84

Such ready recognition, however, does not extend only
to archetypal paradigm, but includes typological connections
as well. Though Martin does assert that typology is a
"closed system" precluding all but biblically-based exem-
plae,85 it also "engender[s] the habit of seeing events as
part of a unified whole, rather than as discrete inci-
dents."86 Whether it be a paradigmatic system which the
audience is called on to imitate (archetypal), or a correla-
tion of meaning between two (or more) events or persons
within the drama (typological), the "congruities of
pattern"87 are cyclic touchstones with which the audience,
by means of continual repetition, becomes increasingly familiar.

Consider Auerbach's well-known assessment of typology:

*Figural interpretation establishes a connection between two events or persons, the first of which signifies not only itself but also the second, while the second encompasses or fulfills the first.*

This would indeed seem to be a closed, linear system of limited connection. There is the "type" which prefigures the "actual" by sharing a kind of prophetic identity with it. Yet, there is also the "figure" which, in linear terms, follows the actual in imitation. Although the terms "type" and "figure" are often used interchangeably in criticism, this study will maintain the distinction of "type" preceding, and "figure" following the "actual", as detailed above. If considered in Christocentric terms, the type and the figure have not only a typological relation to the Saviour, but archetypally to each other as well. Says Kolve, "The middle event, the Crucifixion, has affected history both before and after it" (emphasis mine). 89 What is present in the plays, then, is a multi-textured system of cyclic touchstones of meaning. The typological connections are amplified between events and characters by archetypally extended and extending overtones. Again, according to Meyers,

*in case... (the viewer of the pageants) should miss the interconnections of the*
drama, the various types and themes are constantly pointed out to him. 98

And this is accomplished both by typological reminders and archetypal repetitions.

Martin notes that, "Meyers frequently uses the term 'typological' when, in fact, the phenomenon he is describing is 'archetypal'." 91 It is important to note that the typological and the archetypal are interlaced systems in the plays. Typological associations are familiar "images of memory," closely related to the liturgy, upon which the archetypal models for imitation can expand. By such means, particular patterns of behaviour in characters may identify those characters as types of Christ, 92 just as the differing behavioural patterns of other characters indicate how they should be judged or categorized. If a character follows Lucifer's lead, for example, the judgment must be harsh, such a model being present only to represent those patterns of behaviour to particularly avoid.

Typologically, let us consider the Towneley Abraham. According to Rosemary Woolf,

in an age when the typological interpretation of the Old Testament was everywhere well known and accepted, there was no type which was so popular, so familiar, and so recurrent, (emphasis mine), 93

as the sacrifice required of Abraham as a type of the Crucifixion. The connection is explicit; according to Mirk's Festial, Abraham represents God the Father, while
Isaac stands for the Son. Yet further, the play can stand for the Eucharistic sacrifice just as the Mass does for the Passion. Abraham's prayer to God is archetypal, though, according to Martin. The unity and solidarity found in the Cherubym's praises in the Creation are echoed by Abraham's prayer. Within the play, then, both the typological and archetypal systems work together, amplifying the significance of the historical event. As Isaac calls to his father for mercy, the typological connection foreshadows the end of Mosaic Law and the advent of mercy through Christ's salvation of mankind, while Abraham's prayer is an exemplum of the proper reverence and humility which must be imitated in the prayers of the truly righteous.

Typology, though, may not be as "closed" a system as Martin contends. While it is limited to biblical events and persons, the inter-relationship is not necessarily as circumscribed as Auerbach's definition of the phenomenon would lead us to believe. Helterman, for instance, identifies Adam both as type of Noah, and type of Christ. And he also notes that figures "are not necessarily prefigurations but may point forward or backward to divine events." Again, for ease of interpretation, I employ the two distinct terms noted above. In this sense, if Adam is a type of Noah and a type of Christ, Noah must figure Adam, archetypally and typologically, while remaining a type of Christ. The types do not stand alone then, in a singular relationship to
Christ, but through Christ find a relation with each other which adds substantially to their typological, cyclic significance. And upon this more extended look at typological inter-relations, the archetypal paradigms are expanded. The relationship of type to type is implicit, while the archetypal significance is explicit in the characters' manifestations of speech and action.

Just as an archetypal pattern is set wherewith to judge the behaviour of the characters (see above, page 38), so the typological representations include the foreshadowing of both good and evil characters: ultimately types of Christ and of Antichrist. In the latter case, Meyers contends that we have a kind of "profane typology" in the Towneley plays, but he contends that the typological inferences culminate in Pilate,98 rather than in the Antichrist or his agents on Doomsday, relating the pride of Lucifer in the Creation, through its echoes in Pharaoh, Caesar Augustus, and Herod, ending with this culmination of characteristic evil in Pilate. Although these characters do "follow the archetype, Lucifer, in vanity of appearance"99 they also foreshadow the Antichrist who, because of the superficiality of his prideful claims, does not even make an appearance in the final play of the cycle! This is artfully done by the dramatist[s] of the Towneley plays: leaving the typological symbols of the preceding profane characters to amplify the evil Antichrist in the audience's imagination.
Yet another approach to figural exegesis in the plays has been to identify typological suggestion by contrast within similarity. This leads critics to such readings as Arnold Williams points out in his article, "Typology and the Cycle Plays: Some Criteria." For example, in the Second Shepherds' Play, is the stolen sheep to be considered "a symbol of the 'lamb of God' instead of an anti-type"? Are "parodic antitrinities" actually contrasting typological reminders of the true Trinity? Or are Herod's ranting claims at all capable of foreshadowing, by contrast, Christ's complete sovereignty? How and if such typological connections affected the medieval audience of the cycle plays are major concerns, then.

Certainly the "images of memory" that arise from the medieval realm of experience are far too distant for moderns to grasp completely, yet would such images have to be as "simplified, common [and] obvious" as Williams maintains? Indeed, the subtle typological readings that arise from modern exegesis of the plays, if seemingly complex from a twentieth century standpoint, could quite easily have been obvious to medieval man. A primary consideration is, of course, audience familiarity with such symbolic representations as appear in the plays. Edwards states that,

The images of memory underlie... [the episodes of a drama based on spectacle] in the way iconic scenes underlie the miniature cycles of Christian art.
The very visual nature of the drama and iconic art would easily lend itself to establishing such touchstones of meaning as medieval Christian typology affords. Since the "history of typology is contemporaneous with the history of Christianity,"¹⁰⁴ according to Meyers, Davidson's observation that the "selection of events" depicted in the plays "had been previously established in the visual arts,"¹⁰⁵ is a defense of the typological approach.

The arrangement of detail, though, differs from the plastic arts to the stage; as Patrick Collins points out, the plastic arts always supplied type to antitype (actual), without reference to chronological time sequence. They were grouped together. Collins also contends that figural interpretation had fallen out of favour at approximately the same time as the advent of the cycle plays.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, Davidson stresses that "the relationship between the theatre and the visual presentations of the artists remained close until the seventeenth century."¹⁰⁷ In addition, though Davidson agrees with Collins' latter assertion in part, saying that the cycle plays "are not principally figural," he does state that typology affords "invaluable clues"¹⁰⁸ towards the understanding of medieval temporal and historical perception. Based on the above observations, as readers and typological explicators of the mysteries, we must guard against assuming (as Meyers does) a fundamentally figural basis of organizational unity in the Towneley or
other cycles, particularly one which is founded on iconographic and dramatic inter-relations. Echoes, or images of memory, may be typologically related from the habits of liturgy and art, but this is not the sole approach to uncovering the secrets of unity in the cycles. Therefore, following Williams' suggestion, it is necessary to avoid overreading typological inferences in the text.109

Just as over-reading may lead to false assumptions concerning the nature of the typological influence in the plays, under-reading may also lead to false conclusions.

We are ... able to predict a considerable knowledge of liturgy - mediaeval folk of every rank went to church - and ... some understanding of the typological method which persuaded mediaeval life, (emphasis mine).110

The medieval typological perception, if indeed waning as Collins contends, did not and could not disappear instantly. Old habits die hard. And typology's 'attendant theory of time,'111 being cyclic, or suggesting cyclic patterns, makes it a necessary consideration in this study. The next example to be shown here is the most well-substantiated and completely obvious medieval typological pattern, the best instance we can use so as to avoid the inherent pitfalls which might occur in assessing the collective consciousness of medieval man.112 We cannot completely understand the medieval realm of experience, subjectively or impressionistically. What remains, then, is the ability to look objectively at the expression of medieval typology as it is found
in the plays, thereby making educated judgments. Having dealt with Abraham and Isaac as very popular types, above, let us move on to the most explicitly stated figural relationship in the Towneley cycle.

That connection which a medieval audience or a modern casual reader could not fail to notice occurs in the Annunciation. God unfolds his plan for man’s salvation in strictly typological terms:

I wyll that my son manhe teake,
ffor reson wyll that ther be thre,
A man, a madyn, and a tre:
Man for man, tre for tre,
Madyn for madyn; thus shal it be, (11.30-34).

In this initiation of recapitulation, Christ atones for Adam, Mary for Eve, and the cross for the tree of knowledge. According to Bevington, the Annunciation scene is a re-enactment of the Temptation. Had the Temptation scene of the Towneley manuscript not been lost, we moderns would undoubtedly find a great deal of parallelism between these typologically related scenes to explicate and comment upon. As it is, by referring to the York Fall of Man in lieu of the original, one finds that the greetings of the maidens are constructed in a basically parallel manner of antithetical proportions. Further, by utilizing Martin’s archetypal paradigms of speech, one also finds that a typological relationship of contrast can be brought to the fore. Indeed, Deus in the Annunciation notes this typological relationship of contrast between Satan and Gabriel:
Angell must to mary go,
ffor the feynd was eue fo;
he was foule and layth to sith,
And thou art angell fayr and bright; (11.61-64).

Stated in such an obvious fashion, these typological relationships of contrast are indisputable. Medieval familiarity with the figural connections is reinforced by God’s plan being stated in such an explicit manner.

Yet another element to be considered in God’s speech in this play is his reference to the fulfillment of prophecy.

And I wyll that all prophecye
Be fulfyllyd here by me;
ffor I am lord and lech of heyle,
My prophetys shall be funden leyle
As morses sayd, and Isay,
Kync dauid, and Ierom, 
Abacuk, and daniell;
Sybyll sage, that sayde ay well,
And myne othere prophetis all,
As they have said it shall befall, (11.43-52).

The cyclic fulfillment of type to actual here works with prophecies. As previously stated, the fulfillment of prophecy is a cycle completed. While the prophets seem, in a linear sense, to point directly to Christ’s First Advent and SecondComing, we must recall that his Incarnation affected history both before and after it in the Christo-centric medieval view. An interesting point about the Prophets play is that, according to Brawer, their dramatic function "is to look forward and back as well."116 And this they do, by recounting the main episodes of history, as well as by anticipating the events of the future. As they unify and condense Christian history into its capsule of
Christocentric meaning, they act as typological forerunners of Christ as well. A distinction between prophets as types and patriarchs as types must be made, however. Foreshadowing effected by the patriarchs of the Old Testament plays is inadvertent, not intended to be cognizant, while an awareness of the future is the primary function of the prophets. As seers, their relationship to temporal time is less fixed, and therefore, more spiritual. In this sense, because they know the future of mankind, they are more closely related to Christ as God by virtue of such heavenly cognizance.

As Meyers notes, patterns of behaviour identify types of Christ (see above, page 41), so the concern of the prophets for mankind's salvation, the warnings and exhortations found in the Towneley Prophets are, typologically, forerunners of Christ's redemptive abilities. The typological relationship between God's prophets and Christ is further reinforced by Moses' biblically-based references to Christ as a prophet! (11.8, 19 & 28) And David as a king initiates the references to Christ as King (1.127).

Though the Towneley Prophets does not explicitly state the figural relationship of prophets to Prophet, as the Ludus Coventriae version does, the fact that the play is wrenched from its proper chronological position tends to controvert Kolve's notion of prophecy as "causal necessity." Certainly, the soothsaying calls for fulfill-
ment, yet it does so in a fashion which is not bound by linear time, but in a cyclic manner which transcends the implication of time as action/reaction. Again, Christ's prophesied advent is not necessitated by the Old Testament past or prophecy, but rather affects the meaning of past and future Christian history. In essence, by pointing to what will be, the prophets actually state what is!

Consider the rearranged chronology in the Towneley cycle. We have observed that Martin Stevens considers this chronological deviation a mistake (see above, page 25). The critic next infers that The Prophets, since it is broken off mid-page, is in this incomplete state probably because the scribe realized this error in chronology. If such was indeed the case, it is highly unusual that no re-numbering of Pharaoh and The Prophets resulted from this posited realization! Stevens is too hasty in censuring the chronological distortion as a mistake, while Dunn is slightly closer to the mark by referring to it as a "curious" phenomenon. The curiosity is not unconscious error, but a kind of release of the prophets from the rigours of causal necessity into a timelessness approximating Christ's eternal existence and infinite meaning for man. While their historical actuality is not unimportant for the audience, the nuance of the cycle's arrangement is suggestive of dual natures, representative of, though not equal to, Christ's own.
Again, though Williams warns against over-reading the typology in the plays, and is concerned that much of it is not capable of being translated into the actual performance, it is necessary to keep in mind that for a medieval audience, much of the figural repetition and relations would be grasped and identified unconsciously. As moderns, looking back with some degree of objectivity, we may, with the aid of some recent figural examinations, bring some subtleties to light.

Recall that Kolve's protocycle places the Prophets in the fifth age. Though chronologically this seems correct, the rearrangement in the Towneley cycle places them in the fourth age (the middle age of the seven represented). I contend that this is no accident, and though the medieval audience would not be fully cognizant of the intention, the playwrights could easily have arranged it so that the "middle event", the life of Christ, is figurally approximated by the Prophets occupying the middle age. Indeed, their style is rather more static and fixed in this play in comparison with the remainder of the cycle, with further reaching effects than are immediately apparent. Note that the action of the narrative history is momentarily halted, and an awe-inspiring pause of prophecy, exhortation and warning ensues in the Prophets before the historical action once again accelerates with Pharaoh. The suspension of the action is noticeably sermon-like and arresting in its
seeming departure from the dramatic conventions established by the preceding plays. It is breath-taking and awe-inspiring to the extent that it approximates that sublime sense of eternal significance heralded at the Nativity and extending through Christ's Passion and Resurrection.

Though the conscious level of intention, as detailed above, would not be fully assimilated by the medieval audience, the Towneley cycle effects further subliminal identifications between the prophets and Christ in an incredibly sophisticated manner. All at once, the Prophets suspends and transcends time, while its prophetic statements reinforce a cyclic pattern of history as prophecy. Indeed, Williams says, "If any suggested typology is capable of representation on a stage, and if it enhances and deepens the meaning, let us accept it." Medieval man, while not consciously understanding or recognizing each facet of this suggested typology, would at least subliminally accept the transcendent and timeless quality of the Towneley Prophets all the more because of its deliberate departure from dramatic convention and historical chronology. With Pharaoh following, the prophecy of man's eventual salvation is immediately confirmed and reinforced by the rearrangement as God's people are released from bondage!

Although the above assessment is neither "obvious" nor "simple", recall that a typological perception, whether consciously or unconsciously grasped, is part of the medi-
eval heritage. Tradition was accepted, religion celebrated — a far cry from the mere observation of religious forms all too frequently spawned by a modern, questioning world. However, what the medieval mind accepted, we must come to understand further. As Rosemary Woolf notes,

It might even ... be argued that the English writers of the mystery plays did not usually explain their typological point because it was sufficiently well known, and that such undisguised didacticism would have been hampering and unnecessary, since the audience would understand the symmetrical pattern within the chronological arrangement, and mentally always supply antitype to type.127

Just as the prophets are figurally related to Christ's advents, Dunn sees a prophetic correspondence between the prophets and the Old Testament patriarchs who form "a procession of their own," since they, too, are precursors and prefigurative types of the Saviour.128 The inter-relationships are cyclic time — God touching separate ages with his eternal plan and infinite meaning, making each age important for its own sake as part of that plan, but more important in and for its relation to the whole of history. According to Kolve, "Any event that related to one period only and, not to all time seemed to the Middle Ages not in the highest sense historical" (emphasis mine).129 The prophets, by recounting the history of the world from their standpoint, as well as prophesying the future, are types of
Christ and figures of the patriarchs. Their relationship to history, then, is to all time.

Typology, a more complicated relation than type/actuality, has many manifestations in the Corpus Christi cycles. While Meyers tends to over-rate the method as the main unifying factor of the Towneley cycle, it does add to the unity therein. We have examined Noah and Abraham as typological characters, established Adam (man for man) as a type of Christ, and the prophets, too, as Christ-like. With the congruities of pattern established, let us return to Williams' caution against over-reading the types.

In reference to the Abraham plays, he notes that,

> When the mediaeval authors chose to follow the artistic tradition of the child Isaac instead of the exegetical tradition in which he is a man of Jesus' age, they destroyed the effectiveness of the typology and chose an alternative path.¹³⁰

And this alternative direction is the theme of obedience, according to Williams. The effectiveness of the typology would not be destroyed, but rather amplified by such a substitution for Isaac the man. Since the type was the most popular one in its day (see above, page 41), Isaac the child stands for Christ's perfect innocence,¹³¹ making the sacrifice more poignant and more closely related, therefore, to the Crucifixion.

Williams' main objection to such a reading is that, aside from the Chester version, no Abraham play mentions
typology, but, as in the case of the *Prophets*, such a reference would have seemed too belaboured to enhance the production. Even further, Williams maintains that,

> If you introduce typology into the production of any of the Abraham plays, if, for instance, you shape the wood Isaac carries into the form of a cross, or play Easter music during the play, you will risk obscuring the central dramatic point.132

That central point, being obedience, is the more obscure without the typological association with Christ and his perfect obedience as a meaningful reference. While Isaac's obedience to his father parallels Christ's, one must also note that both Isaac and Christ share the fear of death in the Towneley cycle. Jesus' fear is stylized and dependent upon the biblical account, as seen in *The Conspiracy*:

> My sawll is heuy agans the deth and the sore pynyng.

> ffather, let this great payn be styll, And pas away fro me;

> Bot not, fader, at my wyll, bot thyn fulfyllyd be, (11.498-503).

> My goost is prest therto, my flesh is seke for fere, (11.510-11).

While Isaac's fear is more dramatically realistic, what with his stichomythic pleas and responses to Abraham's intent, the fear of death he experiences undoubtedly stands as a foreshadowing of Christ's own fear. Isaac tells his father he is ready, "euer to fulfill youre bydyng," (1.140). Yet, when he understands that he is to be the sacrifice, he says,
I am heavy and not thyng fayn
Thus hastily that shall be shent, (11.175-76).

...to do youre will I am redy,
where so ever ye go or ride,
If I may oght overtake youre will,
since I haue trespast I wold be bet,
(11.183-86).

The shynyng of youre bright blayde
It gars me quake for ferde to dee, (11.201-202).

And thus gyitles shall be arayde, (1.287).

The typological correspondences are unmistakable for an audience already familiar with them. Even for modern readers, the repetition between the plays is evident: both central characters are heavy at heart, both, though ready to fulfill their fathers' commands, hope to change their fathers' will, and both mention the bodily effects of their fears. Surely the central dramatic point of obedience stressed by Williams is inevitably enhanced by such parallel responses to fate, not obscured. And Isaac's defense of himself at the last as guiltless is a simple and obvious typological approximation of Christ's innocence.

We have discerned that typological elements are present in the Towneley cycle, both by parallel and contrasting suggestion. Thematic congruity and antithetical representation make up a complex view of time which is perceptibly cyclic. Let us turn back, then, to the as yet unconfirmed readings on page 44.

Beginning with Herod, we must remember that his boastfulness corresponds to the archetypal pattern set in
Creation by Lucifer. Herod sets himself above and separate from the community of God. When Nuncias calls Herod, "Kyng of Kyngys" and "Chefe lord of lordyngys" (1.37&38), the antithetical typology does foreshadow Christ's complete sovereignty, for David in The Prophets has called the Saviour "lord and kyng of all" (1.127). However, Herod's own obsession with the prophecies of this child/king call to mind the antithetical figural relation more forcefully than any outright statement of typological connection possibly would, while the ensuing slaughter of the Innocents becomes eschatologically important. Campbell notes that the "martyred Innocents... are seen as symbols of resurrected man," according to medieval liturgy. Herod, by his inclusion in the Nativity sequence, functions not only as a foil to the Christ-child, then, but as a typological embodiment of the Antichrist, by this means focussing "attention on the eschatological meaning of Christ's birth."

Liturgically, to prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth was also to prepare for His return as Judge. A similar awareness underlies dramatic treatments of the Nativity by the English dramatists.

With this typological theme of eschatology in mind, The Second Shepherds' Play, in its common association of Mak with the Antichrist, might well convey a reverse typology linking the stolen sheep, by contrast, with the Lamb of God. Williams' suggestion to "equip the manger with a [white] lamb" and to "make Mak's sheep black," however,
is carrying this typological association to extremes, while
omitting the possibility of other readings. In terms of
eschatological elements in the play, Mak is a type of the
Antichrist whose appearance heralds the Second Coming, yet
Mak also parodies the Nativity, and in this sense is more a
generally diabolical figure. In parroding the actual
scene at the manger, the dramatist’s use of the stolen sheep
may also be considered symbolic of the Lamb of God. The
differing textures of typological meaning are not to be
overlooked, for to exclude one evident possibility is to
obscure the full meaning and depth of the play.

The Mak episode is prophetic parody and parodic
prophecy, all at once, so the stolen sheep has a dual role.
In the former case, the false manger scene anticipates the
true in an entertaining drama of deception/revelation (law
to mercy). The beast lying in a babe’s bed is a striking
contrast to the babe lying in a beast’s bed. In the latter
case, the apocalyptic touches (i.e. the storms and floods)
serve to establish Mak as symbolic of the Antichrist, whose
coming heralds Christ in Judgment, and what is more natural
than the Beast spawning a beast? For this reading, though,
Mak is rather innocuous, and his idiotic stumbling, fumbling
and mumbling over the deception he exercises is no real
threat to the shepherds. The eschatological suggestions of
the piece are parodic prophecy, subsumed, however, by the
joy of the more imminent event. To opt for one assessment
of the stolen sheep is to over-read that particular figural significance, while at the same time, under-reading the true depth of the play. 138

Typology, being what Davidson refers to as the "stock-in-trade of the medieval playwright," 139 has, of course, more immediately apparent identifications in the plays. While it will not do to scour the plays for every example as some must be long lost to modern man, a selection of the most telling must be mentioned.

The Raising of Lazarus obviously prefigures Christ's own Resurrection, though emphasizing the clear distinction between type and actual, since in the Towneley Lazarus the period from death to resurrection is four days (1.83). 140 Coll, Gyb and Daw, in The Second Shepherds' Play, along with their gifts for the Christ child, prefigure the Magi. 141 The exodus from Egypt in the Pharaoh play prefigures the Deliverance of Souls in an obvious manner. God makes explicit to Moses his message to the Pharaoh:

Thou speke to hym Wyth wordis heynde,  
so that he let my people pas, (11.136-37).  

And if he wyll not suffre then  
my people for to pas in peasse,  
I shall send venyance neyn or ten, (11.170-72).  

Christ's own words in The Deliverance of Souls recall the earlier deliverance from bondage in his harrowing of hell:  

ye prynces of hell open youre yate,  
and let my folk furth gone; (11.193-94).  

open vp, and let my pepill pas, (1.206).
Such a recapitulation of theme and of action, so openly stated, cannot fail to link the two departures from bondage. Yet further, the *Pharao* play is linked to *Herod the Great* by the dual slaughter of innocent children.

Figures of Christ, those who imitate him by following in the path he began, though not quite so numerous as the prefigurative types, can be found in the plays following the *Deliverance of Souls*. In the *Resurrection of the Lord*, the Maries vow to preach what glad tidings they have heard, and Mary Magdalene vows to enlighten the disciples. They have been brought from despair over the crucifixion to belief and hope for mankind as a result of Christ’s triumph over death. This movement from despair to belief and hope for salvation dominates the *Pilgrims*, *Thomas of India*, and the *Lord’s Ascension*, as well. Earthly despair is comforted and the mission to preach the New Law of Mercy ties the disciples to Christ as mimetic figures. Although the actual ministry of the disciples takes no part in the cycle as a separate play, the Eucharistic meal shared with Christ by the pilgrims, Cleophas and Luke, calls to mind the Mass, a celebration of the fulfillment of prophecies through Christ’s advent and sacrifice.

Further, in *Thomas of India*, the attempts on the part of the disciples to convince Thomas of the truth are ministry-like, and link them to Christ as figures of his truth. For example, in order to convince Thomas of the
truth of Christ's Resurrection, two of the apostles refer to this event as having been prefigured by Jonah's interment in the whale's belly, and others cite Magdalene's encounter with the Lord, the empty tomb, and Christ's sojourn with the pilgrims. Though Thomas requires physical evidence that the appearance of Christ is not an apparition, the further labours of preaching the Gospel are implied by Christ at the close of the play, for the disciples will be spreading the word to those who have not seen or touched the Resurrected Lord.

Thomas, for thou felys me/ and my woundes bare,
Mi risyng is trowed in the/ and so it was not are;
All that it trowes and not se/ and dos after my lare,
Euer blissid mot thy be/ and heuen be theym yare!
(11.352-55).

That the apostles are indisputably figures of Christ is seen in the Ascension play, when John speaks of the disciples as handiworks of Christ:

My lord ihesus will wyrk his will pleatt we neuer agans his thoght,
ffor vs ne wyrkes, as it is skyll,
his hand-warke that he has wroght, (11.5-8).

And as Christ reinforces their faith with his words, just as he has been able to work miracles, he asserts that the faithful will overcome evils and heal the sick!

Certainly, these figures of Christ are cyclical echoes of his own life and works. These very recurrent themes and characterizations, all linked to Christ, afford a cyclic
view of time, along with the more ritual-like repetitions mentioned above. However, despite the cyclic patterning of Christian history in the drama, the narrative story-line remains fundamentally linear. Aptly, these two aspects of time are fused in the plays. The Judgment play, while ending linear time (God as Omega), closes with the same song of praise as that with which 'time' began (God as Alpha): the "Te Deum".143 This song brings the cycle full circle, then, for the end is a beginning in reverse, just as the end of time will deliver man to the beginning of his spiritual life in eternity.

Linear time in the plays unfolds the story gradually, but in the case of the prophetic types and their eventual fulfillment as well as the echoes of the fulfillment in the figures, this temporal order is "as if reversed, with later events establishing the form of earlier events,"144 as well as dictating the patterns of the future. Again, all time is Christocentric to the medieval mind; Christ's meaning affecting both the past and the future. This fusion of linear and cyclic time makes the meaning of God's plan more evident, then, for the two perspectives, interdependent as they are in the Corpus Christi drama, are together modified by a further, more transcendent and all-encompassing aspect of time inherent to that ultimate and eternal meaning: anachronism, or synchronicity, the subject to be dealt with in the ensuing portion of this study.
This second figure represents the cyclic and typological layering and amplification of Christian themes in liturgy and in the plays.
CHAPTER TWO

Anachronistic Time and Synchronicity

Lord God ... do not shut the door in the face of my longing to know these things which are so familiar and at the same time so obscure; ... -St. Augustine, Confessions XI:22.

We have examined the interlacing of cyclic aspects of time with the fundamentally linear progression of Christian history in the cycle plays. Our next focus of attention becomes a consideration of the effects of anachronism on the medieval perspective of time and history. By simply eschewing temporal linear detail and cyclic patterns of meaning, anachronism achieves a complexity of design and technique in such a way as to suggest the transcendent and timeless even while confined to the timebound representations of the stage. According to Martin Stevens, the employment of anachronistic details in the mysteries "eternalizes the dramatic action."¹ It is this eternalization of meaning, how it is effected as well as how it affects the audience, which will be discussed and illuminated in this chapter.

Anachronistic devices are the catalyst for the fusion of medieval Christian concepts of time, history and beyond in the cycle plays.

The most obvious aspect of anachronism is that it entails a rejection of historical sequence, or historical accuracy in a modern sense.² This being the case, the critical view of medieval anachronism has not always been
favourable. Manly notes that the general critical tendency had been to perceive such ahistorical detail as "unconscious error" or as "the playwright’s quaint desire to make the experience of the play as immediate as possible for a child-like audience" (emphasis mine). In the latter case, this assessment of an "artistic simplicity" by certain critics has been attributed to the ease of discovering anachronism in the plays. To weigh medieval anachronism in modern measurements is an approach fraught with difficulty, though, since the medieval context necessarily becomes underrated. As Vaughan reminds us, "Historical drama in our sense has yet to be invented." In this examination, then, one must continually bear in mind that historical accuracy from a modern stance is far removed from the medieval perspective as much by time as by the beliefs arising from the contexts of two differing milieux. The gulf of time must be bridged in order to fully appreciate the textures which anachronism adds to the mysteries, and this may be accomplished more readily upon considering a modern instance of accepted anachronism.

This modern acceptance is a result of scientific explanation. The distance of a star from the earth determines when the light from that star reaches the night sky of this world. As a result, though that star may have died thousands of years ago, the light which emanated from it continues to pierce the fabric of space long after the
source has been extinguished. In addition, the theory of relativity claims that if man can travel at speeds greater than the speed of light, in looking back over one's shoulder, one can relive that flight and experience it vicariously again by seeing it as it happens. These are modern anachronisms, scientifically explained, understood and subsequently accepted. For moderns, then, the acceptance of anachronism is based upon faith in scientific evidence; for medieval man, such acceptance is based upon faith in God. Therein lies the difference.

In the modern sense, consider the Star of Bethlehem which heralded Christ's birth. Scientifically speaking, the star existed before its light reached the earth. Consequently, in a theological sense it may be said to have existed *always.* By analogy, in the medieval view of Christian history, *Christ existed always.* The light of the star is certainly symbolic of Christ as the light of God, so this analogy is not farfetched. Though by no means do I suggest that modern analogies are to be found for each and every instance of anachronism in the medieval mysteries, to admit the correlation between the modern scientific view of the star and the medieval intuition of and belief in Christ's eternal existence is a step closer to appreciating the use of anachronistic detail in the plays. The gulf of

* This term is relative and metaphoric.
time begins to diminish as we relate more easily to the idea of anachronistic time.

Differing types of anachronism are found in the mysteries, the Towneley cycle being particularly rich in such examples. These range from simple medieval allusion, characterization, dialogue and costuming to the use of Christian and Islamic expletives in the Old Testament plays, to the more complex direct audience addresses, medieval liturgical music, and most conspicuously in the Towneley cycle, to the re-ordered chronology of the Prophets. In each instance, the anachronism is used as a dramatic device in a deliberate way to achieve certain effects: to mediate between the audience and history, to unify the medieval perception of history into synchronous action and meaning, and/or to amplify the significance of timeless eternity in comparison with the relative insignificance of human, worldly time. Though the effects of these devices do interlace, anachronism as mediation will be dealt with first before we move on to discussions of the synchronization and eternalization of time, respectively.

Kolve points out that the cycle plays "managed to hold a mirror to the times while imitating the structure of human time." This mirror gives moderns a clearer view of late medieval life since the anachronistic details enmeshed in the biblical stories afford lessons with immediate relevance for the spectators. Because the historical past is closely
linked to the contemporary present of the Middle Ages by means of anachronism, the universality of such lessons makes the plays become as generally applicable as Christ's parables. Human, not merely historical truths, are told. As Kolve notes, The Killing of Abel becomes not just a biblical story but very like a medieval sermon on the sixth commandment, and, to a lesser degree, on tithing fairly. Though the term "parable" should be substituted for "sermon" on the basis of the entertainment quotient, the anachronistic correspondence between "past" and "present" is mediation which heightens the sense of imagined similarities for the audience. The medieval details serve to outline the "contemporary as well as historical." As Meyers tells us, the "anachronism of the [Towneley] cycle is constantly working against any attempt to divorce past from present." That medieval English dialogue is necessary is obvious, while other instances are less clear. Some select examples from the Mactatio Abel and Noah and the Ark will illustrate the mediation affected by these latter details.

Consider the Mactatio Abel more closely. The first anachronistic factor is the presence of Garció, Cain's servant boy. At a time when but four people technically populated the earth according to the Judeo-Christian myth, Garció is complete medieval fabrication. In addition, reference is made to a bailiff, a priest and a king's pardon! (11.405, 104, & 418 respectively) Yet further, in the midst of
complaining about his lot in life, Cain makes this anachronistic comparison:

When all men's corn was faire in feld
Then was myne not worth a neld, (11.122-23).

While the audience would easily recognize in this the attributes of Envy, one of the Seven Deadly Sins, the covetous comparison to other men's yields could more easily and realistically take place in the medieval community. Also, as an excuse not to tithe, Cain says,

And it is better hold that I have
then go from doore to doore & craue, (11.142-43).

It would indeed be difficult to beg for one's sustenance without people from whom to beg. However, this anachronistic detail further establishes the medieval identification already initiated by the character's repeated use of such Christian expletives as "bi hym that me dere boght!" (11.114 & 461), "for godis payn!" (1.400), and "by Godis sydis!" (1.458). Such instances of anachronistic contemporaneity serve to reinforce the Christocentric view of Christian history already discussed, while mediating between historical and immediate meaning for the audience's enlightenment and enjoyment. With this type of mediation, the "past" of the play is superimposed on the audience moment.18

More explicitly doctrinal examples than Cain's Christocentric expletives are found in the Noah pageant. Nelson observes that,

Noah, is a medieval man acting out the story of the Flood without discarding
everything he knows from having lived after the Flood. 19

This assessment is quite correct, since Noah, like the other patriarchs characterized, calls for mercy even though he lives before its spiritual advent. The mercy vouchsafed Noah is temporal in nature and extent. The anachronism of this desire, presented at a period which "predates" even Mosaic Law, emphasizes more forcibly that "'Now' is the time of grace" (emphasis mine), 20 for the audience, although the effects of the message would undoubtedly be subliminal. Noah may have been subject to the tortures of hell until released by Christ, but medieval man may entirely escape it by repenting, another Christian theme raised in this play. 21 (Most particularly, see 11.56, 81 & 117.) This mediation of Christian theme and doctrine between past and present is quite didactic while maintaining its position as a subtle dramatic technique which heightens the Christocentric perspective.

However, the most evident and striking instance of temporally misplaced doctrine to the modern mind is Noah's supplication to the Trinity (11.251-52). God, in Creation, has established himself as three-in-one, yet such a knowledge is not vouchsafed to his believers until the early Christian era. During the Old Testament era, Hebrew belief in God was indisputably monotheistic in name and number. The notion of tritheistic monotheism began with the Apostle's Creed, and was an interpretation meant to distinguish the
new religion from Judaic monotheism and pagan polytheism.22

The anachronism of the Trinity and Christian themes supports
Christian dogma with strong medieval identifications. Ac-
cording to Kolve,

The drama, in short, compensated for the
formal unimportance of the audience
moment by staging the past as though it
were largely identical with present
time, thereby honoring its specific
audience while seeking (among other
things) to amend their lives.23

The contemporaneity of the medieval associations in
Noah and the Ark is also augmented by a passage which
Helterman notes, "would remind the audience of some recent
sermon condemning the present age."24

Bot now before his sight/ every liffyng
levye,
Most party day and nyght/ syn in word
and dede
full bold:
Som in pride, tre, and enuy,
Som in Couetyse & gldyny,
Som in slothy and lecherie,
And other wise man" fold, (11.47-54).

After reminding the audience of the ills of this world, the
action of the play moves through the construction of the Ark
and on to the dispute between Noah and Uxor. This domestic
tiff is, of course, symbolic of the theme of God's maistrye
over man, yet the homely manner in which it is presented
allows for familiar identification. Indeed, much of the
couple's raillery is colloquial-sounding and conspicuously
Christian at points. Noah's speeches turn from pious and
reverent ones to ireful and short-tempered ones very
quickly, perhaps recalling the audience's attention to how easy it is to sin before one is aware. Uxor, like Cain, swears "bi godis pyñe," while later in their disagreement, Noah's expletive is "Peter!" (11.227 & 367, respectively). Although they eventually overcome and repent their previous anger, becoming archetypally pious through to the close of the episode, another striking mediation between distant past and medieval present occurs when both husband and wife appeal to the audience's sympathies in direct address:

_Uxor:_ Lord, I were at ese/ and hertely full hoylle,
Might I onys have a measse/ of wedows coyll;
ffor thi saull, without ise/ shuld I dele
penny doyll,
so wold mo, no frese/ that I se on this
sole

of wifis that ar here,
ffor the life that thay leyd,
Wold thare husbandis were dede,
ffor, as euer ete I brede,
So wold I our e syre were.

_Noah:_ Yee men that has wifis/ whyls they are yong,
If ye luf youre lifis/ chastice thare tong;
Me thynk my hert ryfis/ bot levyr and long,
To se siche stryfis/ wedmen among;
Bot I,
As hau I blys,
Shall chastys this, (11.388-403).

At such points, the anachronism is no longer acting to superimpose past on present, but draws the present into the past, by involving the audience in the action. They can choose sides. More blatantly open than later Shakespearean asides, such appeals not only take the audience into the
characters' confidences by a suspension of disbelief, but also into their world, of which the spectators are fast becoming a part because it seems so like their own.

Such audience participation is aptly termed "vicarious attendance" by Vaughan, and while the identification of past with present is mediation via familiarity with the characters' milieu, the direct address goes beyond simple association to create actual relations between the characters and the spectators. The mediation becomes vivid and startling with such anachronistic inclusions as Cain's caveat:

> And if any of you thynk I did amys I shal it amend wars then it is, that all men may it se: well wars then it is right so shall it be, (11.331-35).

This threat of harm coming from the stage provides the audience with a "role" in the drama presented; they are to feel intimidated, just as with Noah and Uxor they are intended to, if not choose a side, at least identify more closely with the age-old struggle for power. Such involvement for the audience is of a kind with the common practice in medieval visual arts to portray contemporary figures in biblical scenes. Such practices, whether visual or dramatic, are intended to intensify belief.

Kolve is rather particular, though, in distinguishing two differing types of anachronistic detail in the cycles: unselfconscious, direct and convenient anachronism versus
that involving conscious dramatic intention. He ranks the 
Noah play with the former and the Mactatio Abel with the 
latter. Considering the above examination, it would seem 
there is little or no difference in the types of anachronism 
utilized in both pageants, nor in their ultimate effects on 
the spectators. If we are to consider the artistic 
intention, it must be considered as a whole. If the effects 
of the anachronistic inclusions are similar, it is fair to 
assume that the intention too, is similar. The effects 
mediate; the intention includes mediation.

Edwards tells us that the

intrusion by art into life space is 
precisely the intrusion intended by 
religious drama into the lives of its 
audience.30

This is accomplished with the seemingly simple anachronistic 
elements of medieval characteristics: the costuming, noted 
by Glynne Wickham,31 the speech and characterization,32 and 
other medieval allusions.33 And these elements add weight 
to the mediation intended since the lessons cloaked in them 
are made more immediately relevant by their familiar associ-
ciations.34 Yet, as regards the audience's role, it is 
important to note further the effects of the direct 
addresses on the vicarious participants. By drawing the 
audience into the time frame of the drama, the anachronism 
is shown to work in two directions, so to Edwards' statement 
may be added that the inclusion of life into art space is 
another precisely intended mediation. As Davidson notes,
there is audience participation "at least on the level of the imagination" in the sacred time which marked the original event. 35 The Now shares the past; the past participates in the Now.

Having dealt with the reciprocal movement between medieval present and biblical past via anachronism in the above select instances, let us move on to test the truth of this duo-directional movement in the most temporally anachronistic play of the cycle: The Judgment. 36 Like modern day science-fiction, The Judgment propels its audience into the future of man. Doomsday, though, has been foretold by prophecy, whereas science-fiction is anticipated on the basis of vast technological advances made possible by scientific exactness. Both Kolve and Meyers comment that The Judgment takes place in Wakefield on the basis of this anachronistic line: "let us go to this dome/ up watlyn strete" (1.126). This local allusion brings the future into the present, and while the audience experiences it vicariously in the play, the inevitability of Judgment and their own undoubtedly required attendance at it are brought to the fore, so the present of the medieval age slips towards its future. The ills of the era and of universal human nature are named as the acts which damn, from lounging at ale houses (1.217), to the donning of useless finery (11.233-41), make-up and fashions of the day (11.260-68 & 288), to church-chattering and gossip (1.296), to the more dangerous
Seven Deadly Sins (11.385-349). Throughout the enumeration of sins, the spectators would run into themselves at least once, and though the address to the audience is not direct in this play, the subtle coveryness of the caveat against sin works in a similar way. Each member of the audience is brought into the action, first, by recognizing something of himself, and secondly, by being included in Christ’s address and sermon: “Ilka creatoure take tenty/ What bodworde I shall you bryng” (11.386-87). Attention to the manner of judgment is heightened by the recognition of the aptness of the previous indictments numbered by the demons as well as those listed by the Saviour himself.

Walsh comments that the lengthy emphasis on the demons in this Judgment play adds “an emotional, subjective element, ... a typical technique in medieval preaching.” Although Walsh underrates this play’s effectiveness compared with those of the other cycles, the sometimes anachronistic portraits of sin effect a subjectivity which does transport the audience into their future role in the Judgment of mankind. Once again, the anachronisms utilized work in two directions, bringing the present into the future with the not unreasonable indictments, and the future into the present with the contemporaneity of many of the accusations. Surely these effects are intentional on the part of the playwright[s]. Too much differentiation among past, present and future would require much mediation and translation;
anachronism affords this mediation by closely preserving a kinship among past, present and future which is almost interchangeable. 38

These plays, then, by involving the audience in past and future, and by being involved enough in the audience moment to resemble it, suggest the Augustinian concept of the Eternal Present. In man's perception, then as now, "the whole is simultaneously present." 39

the present time of things past is memory; the present time of things present is sight; the present time of things future is expectation. 40

The anachronism of the Towneley cycle takes these distinctions and brings all "present" times into sight. The audience, even while recalling biblical events, is seeing them; the lessons of past and future become fused into a synchronous "present" of perception in the presentation. The implications of this synchronicity are numerous, as are the examples which will be detailed presently.

In the first chapter we noted that the audience's perspective of the historical dramas approximates God's view of time from eternity. 41 That which is changeless and constant perceives that which is not. The employment of anachronism, by likening all time to the present moment, allows for that approximation of the view from changeless eternity. As Kolve notes, "Set against eternity, all historical time is but a brief moment." 42 Correspondingly, set against actual time, all historical time presented in the
cycle is but a brief moment, and that brief moment, from
Creation to Judgment, is likened to the "Now" of the
audience moment by means of its anachronistic elements.
Despite the linear progression of the medium and the cyclic
interrelation of echoing scenes, the anachronistic elements
"suspend" the present moment, allowing the audience to
"see" and "hear" the whole of history at once, as it were,
expanding and reverberating from whatever point in the well-
known drama is being staged. Each successive movement in
the spectacle is capable of remaining in the mind as a
present and fixed image of something past or future, and as
such, may be considered tableau-like.

If we moderns were to extract one particular frame from
a film we have seen, the mind's eye would easily produce the
surrounding temporal context for that tableau. What
precedes the chosen frame and what ensues are all brought
into the present moment of perception. Is it not anachron-
istic in the sense that what are "past" and "future" in
temporal relation to the present image under consideration
become present to the mind as well because of their very
familiarity? Just so with the whole of time presented in
the Corpus Christi drama. Christian history is familiar to
the medieval audience, so that the "present" thought of all
Christian time can comprehend the whole in even less than a
moment: beginning, middle and end flash synchronously and
often subliminally upon the mind's eye. And the mind is where time exists, as the fourth dimension.

According to St. Augustine, the present has neither duration nor extension, and because of this it is impossible to measure except for the impressions of such measurement in the mind. In this way, the nature of time is as intangible and incomprehensible as God and eternity. The impressions of time are touchstones of recollection, immediate experience and anticipation, often occurring simultaneously to the mind. By an analogous, though obviously lesser experience of time than God's, the audience is metaphorically above the order of time by being removed, temporally, from the dramatic time. Similar to God, the spectators have "not foreknowledge, but simply knowledge." The informed and all-encompassing perception of Christian history arises from the deeply religious and religiously impressed milieu of the audience's medieval world. The synchronous perception of God's eternal present, then, is approximated as far as the dramatic medium will allow by the use of anachronistic affinities of time with time. Past and future are likened to the present, the present coalesces past and future into the present of perception, and a fused unity of time is the result. As God's "today is eternity", so today for the Corpus Christi audience is all significant time.
In the N-Town Passion plays, Paula Ložar notes that the sense of simultaneity achieved is a result of the overlapping of scenes. Although such techniques would undoubtedly be effective in manifesting a realistic representation of the events which did occur simultaneously, the audience's attention is required to shift itself quickly and continuously. A more steady contemplation of past and future as present moment is the domain of the Towneley cycle and its audience. Not quite so mimetically realistic as N-Town's Passion sequence, its synchronous effects are handled far more subtly and subliminally. In its amalgamation of time with time, this cycle approximates the human perception of time in the mind. Thus, with an Old Testament appeal to God for mercy comes medieval man's recognition of his "present" and "future" state of merciful grace through Christ. The ultimate meaning of spiritual mercy is constantly present to the medieval mind: eternal salvation. Such is the "constant idea," the "primacy" of which links together all time, dramatic and historical.

Consider Cain's state towards the end of the Mactatio & Abel. Cain's despair of attaining merciful salvation is a constant. Twice, he insists that Hell is to be his eternal place. The magnitude of such a sin is and always will be unpardonable when unpunished, so that his plight of eternal punishment has relevance through all human history. The anachronistic "society" in which he appears to live brings
the universal meaning into the "eternal present" of the viewer's perception. After God's statement that murderers "shall be punyshid sevenfold" (1.373), Cain speaks of his doom:

No force, I wote wheder I shall;  
In hell I wote mon be my stall.  
It is no boyte mercy to craue,  
ffor if I do I mon none haue; (11.374-77).

He certainly may not win God's mercy, especially since he continues in the same manner of complaint and threat towards Garcio and invective towards his Creator:

I warn the lad, for ay,  
ffro now furth, evermore,  
That thou greue me noght;  
ffor, bi Godis sydis, if thou do,  
I shall hang the apon this plo,  
with this rope, lo, lad, lo!  
By hym that me dere bough.

Now payre well, felows all,  
ffor I must nedis weynd,  
And to the dwll be thrall,  
warld withouten end.  
Ordand ther is my stall,  
with sathanas the feynd,  
Euer ill myght hym befall  
that theder me commend,  
This tyde; (11.454-73).

In the initial seven lines of this excerpt, Cain's expletives by Christ are ironic considering his damned state, and discordant with his prefoul attitude. Doubtless the spectators have not by this point forgotten his caveat to them, and past and present become synchronous in the amalgamation of similar threats. Further, while he shakes his fists at God, the final two words of this excerpt seem to indicate a particular point in the progress of time. However, "this
tyde" is all and every "tyde" in the context of the representational history of these plays. Cain's eternal damnation, past, present and future, is always present in the Corpus Christi assessment of time.

Just as Cain "prophesies" his damnation as unending, so it is always present to the viewer. The patriarchs recapitulate history in their opening prayers and appeals to God, and the sins and pious deeds which marked Christian history are made present again in such encapsulations, not unlike a play within a play. In the instance of Cain's sin, Abraham, in the play of the same name, specifically recalls the deed and goes on to bemoan man's needful sojourn in hell until released by God:

Yit adam is to hell gone,
And ther has ligen many a day,
And all oure elders, everychon,
Thay ar gone the same way,
Unto god will here thare mone;
Now help, lord, adonay!
ffor, certis, I can no better wone,
And ther is none that better may, (11.41-48).

It is in the universality of the human plight that the synchronization of time is achieved. In this example, Cain's past becomes present to Abraham, who becomes present to the spectator from the stage. For the audience, though, this synchronization is beyond the stage. Their sense of synchronization is the result of a religiously manufactured "omniscience" which influences their perspective towards these historical plays. And that omniscience lies in their knowledge of Christ and his mercy.
It is no surprise to the audience, then, that in *The Deliverance of Souls* Cain is named among those who must remain in hell (l.328). By virtue of their manufactured "foreknowledge", this categorization is expected if not technically realized beforehand. As Vaughan reminds us,

> History is salvation history, and time is a relative function of one's status 'sub specie aeternitatis', of one's relation to the timeless and unchanging ideal of the Christian life. Time is a matter of morality not chronology; it is measured by grace not minutes.51

The idea of salvation synchronizes Christian historical meaning and the perception of time by means of sacraments, as well, which Merton notes are synchronous. Uniting in themselves "the past, the present and the future," sacraments illuminate "the whole 'mystery of Christ.'"52 In her essay, "Drama of Communion: The Life of Christ in the Towneley Cycle", Lepow speaks of Towneley's emphasis on "Christ's eternally contemporary sacramental existence."53

In keeping with the Christocentric perspective, the critic notes that this sacramental existence is most substantial in the plays in which Christ is characterized.

> In their presentation of the life of Christ, the Towneley playwrights do not memorialize an historical figure so much as they vivify the sacramentally present Christ of the audience's own time and experience. The spectators know Christ most directly as a sacramental Presence; in keeping with the Corpus Christi occasion, the dramatists utilize and intensify this knowledge.54
The "Presence" is anachronistically reinforced throughout the cycle, so that the use of such things as medieval Christian expletive, references to spiritual mercy, and contemporary liturgical music in dramatization also makes connections between past, present and future, which centre themselves in the synchronous nature of the sacrament of Communion. The context of the Eucharist is eternal; the content of its meaning is time. The sacrament is a constant reminder in time of the constant idea of attainable Salvation, and Christ characterized, mentioned or inferred is a constant reminder of the Host. As Poteet notes, there is a "theoretical escape from time implicit in any sacrament."55 The escape from temporal progress naturally carries over to anything implicitly or explicitly related to the sacrament suggested. In the Corpus Christi plays, "the whole is always born in mind and figurally represented,"56 and that "whole" is the eternal body of Christ. A technical escape from time with these plays is an impossibility, however, while the approximation of the eternal view is not.

Such approximation is most noticeably evident in The Second Shepherds' Play. It is the most complex play of the cycle in its treatment of time. First, it presents the distant past of Old Testament life as the shepherds complain of their hopeless state, while at the same time, such complaints are relevant to the contemporary audience, so the distant past becomes fused with the medieval present. Their
low position on the hierarchical ladder of either society
causes the shepherds to live "in payne, Anger, and wo, By
nyght and day" (1.40-41), without the opportunity to help
themselves (a factor of Mosaic Law), with only the necessity
to submit to the whims of "gentlery men" (1.18). That the
shepherds are characterized as medieval Englishmen is
undisputed. Old Testament past is staged as contemporary
medieval present, while the present is staged as distant
past. "All horbery shrogs" (1.455) is little if at all
different in this presentation than Bethlehem. Therefore,
the past of the Nativity is also staged as present, with the
audience attending the past event "Now", on English soil.
"I thought that we layd us/ full nere yngland" (1.353). To
begin understanding the multi-layered representations of
time in this play, let us sum up those noted to this point:
Old Testament past, Nativity past, medieval English societal
structure as past, Old Testament world as present, the
Nativity as present, and the medieval community as present.

Here begins the complication. Vaughan notes the esche-
tological overtones of the play suggesting the future apoca-
lypse in other anachronistic time treatments included.57
For example, Mak is typologically considered a forerunner of
the Antichrist, what with his warlock's spell and the circle
he draws about the shepherds, not to mention the deception
he practices with his false nativity. As Manly reminds us,
"the false prophet heralds the true Messiah,"58 and the
propensities of such a figure would be easily recognized by
the audience as exemplified in Mak.

Further evidence that the Towneley playwright's imagination was responding to
the Antichrist story lies in his stress
on the apocalyptic storms and floods
which precede Christ's coming. Such
cataclysmic events are... associated
with the end of Antichrist's reign,
immediately before the second coming.59

To these suggestions of Christian future are added the
elements of justice and mercy. Upon discovering Mak's
fraudulence, the shepherds mete out a punishment. The fact
that they do not judge him harshly, that their vengeance for
the wrong done to them is tempered with mercy, not only sug-
gests the forgiveness of sin that comes through Christ's
Passion, but is also suggestive of the day of Judgment in
accord with the eschatological overtones. The advent of
mercy and grace is wholly intertwined with past, present and
future Christian history. To the fusion of past and present
via anachronistic contractions of time in this play is added
the element of the future by the inclusion of the Mak
episode as well as by the typological connection between
Christ's first and second physical advents into the world.

And these typological associations with eschatology include
the anachronism of synchronicity, too. Thus, the treatment
of time in this play is wholly synchronic, despite the fact
that it is presented and unfolded in linear progression.60

With this synchronic time, the vantage point of the
Eternal Present is also reinforced. Not only the audience,
but the shepherds as well, find the present suspended, centering on the Christ-child who gives meaning to all time. After hearing the good tidings, Coll and Gyb transform into quite learned theologians as they discuss the Old Testament prophecies. Daw, the youngest, merely expresses his delight in having the opportunity to see the babe.

we fynde by the prophecy —
Of david and Isay/ and mo ther I myn,
Thay prophesied by clergy/ that in a
vyrgyn
shuld he lyght and ly/ to slokyn our
syn

And slake it,
Our kynde from wo;
ffer Isay sayd so,
Cite virgo
Concipiet a chylde that is nakyd, (11.674-82).

The shepherds contemplate the spiritual magnitude of the event, and yet Coll insists that,

When I se hym and fele,
Then wote I full weyll
It is true as steyll
That prophethys haue spokyn, (11.697-700).

Although overawed by the song and message of the angel, he is going to let his eyes convince him of the truth. His natural skepticism and the skepticism of any member of the audience is alleviated by seeing the truth of the Christ-child's advent. The shepherds hasten to the stable and offer their gifts — seeing and believing at once. As Vaughan comments, "The 'we' of the final lines reaches out to embrace the spectators." All, shepherds, actors, spectators, witness the truth which encapsulates the meaning of past, present and future in one child: an epiphany of
the eternal touching time. And with the magnitude of the eternal compared with insignificant time, the idea of progress is transformed from temporal to spiritual. Historical time coalesces into the synchronicity of its ultimate meaning.

That ultimate meaning is, of course, the metaphysical dimension manifested in the time treatments of the Towneley cycle. Reeves mentions "the hold which a pattern of history which linked past, present and future could have over the imagination," and this hold is the manufactured omniscience which the audience experiences. As Speirs reminds us, though the stories are retold, the plays were experienced as new. This lends medieval perception to a cognizantly real overview of history, and while the spectators could identify easily with the subject matter via the anachronistic techniques, the synchronous nature of anachronistic time would afford a certain distance by placing the audience above the order of time represented.

Where some anachronism bred familiarity in the vicarious attendance of an event, the synchronized experience of all history would breed a vicarious "co-eternity" with the Creator, for the audience does "partake" in Creation, all human time, and Judgment from above the level of temporality. Although there is a homonymy between God's omniscience and the audience's, the difference lies in man's more limited capacity compared with the limitless capacity of
God. Once again, the plays approximate the eternal view while maintaining a basis in temporality, so the audience has a dual nature ascribed to it for the duration of the performance which is metaphorically akin to Christ’s own. They are both human and “divine” by means of the anachronistic techniques in the plays. Having detailed the human associations, and to a smaller degree, the divine associations from the audience’s approximated eternity, let us consider how and why the distancing is effected.

Numerous critics, Davidson and Martin among them, discuss a distancing effected by the humourous and game-like treatments of gruesome or evil historical details. According to Davidson, medieval appreciation of the comic assists “in establishing the necessary separation between the figure of evil and the audience.” However, while the laughter assists in this division, a deeper distancing is implied. Kolve tells us that the laughter in the Corpus Christi dramas was “carefully controlled”, but this does not mean, a polite, sophisticated amusement. [The drama] often sought the vulgar guffaw, the laugh from the belly rather than the smile. And on occasion it valued this kind of laughter as an indication of sanity, indeed almost of holiness.... The approval is the key! ... God is in control, the evil and the demonic behave stupidly because that is their nature, and the proper reaction to... the rightness of things is laughter.
The distance afforded by laughter from the "omniscient" stance endows the audience with a clearer judgment of the events portrayed, as they side with God, out of harm's way during the performance. Anything too fraught with horrific associations is controlled enough that close identifications with characters and events involving evil are rendered void with signs, laughter and that manufactured partisanship with God. The signs are often simple, like expletives "bi Mahowne." (See, for example, Herod the Great, 11.1, 10, 54, 127 etc., and Caesar Augustus, 11.122, 151 & 238.) Or the characterizations and actions may typologically link evil-doer with evildoer and evil with evil. Laughter is spawned most often by the futility of evil deeds, like Herod's ranting decrees which always fail of their object. The partisanship with God, though, is the greatest distancing from temporality.

Lo杉ar comments on the distancing achieved between an ending of any one play and the beginning of the next, at which point the audience's attention, turned inward, reinforces its separation from the play's time scheme. The view is "eternal"; the time between plays is suspended, atemporal, changeless. The divinatory audience are themselves "eternalized" while viewing all time, and the suspended moments between episodes are like static eternity intervening in human time, vertically. Just as God is alpha and omega, so the audience participates with its prescient
awareness in the closure and initiation of the Seven Ages portrayed. Time as an artifact of eternity, then, is also represented as an artifact of the audience's approximate eternity.

I do not here imply that the audience would perceive themselves as equal with either God or Christ. What I do assume is a subliminal, subtle experience of a higher level of cognizance than temporality alone affords. In this sense, the plays offer a means of spiritual transcendence, at least for the duration of the performance. If the didactic intent is effective, and I believe it is, the hold over the imagination spawned by such eternalization is an imaginatively experienced confirmation of religious faith. Such confirmation, in effect, makes all ages spiritually contemporary in their proximity and relation to God and eternity, and in the plays, to their audience. As Poteet reminds us,

> although the lessons of time are genuine, history...is fully understandable only in a spiritual way.

So the audience learns temporal lessons in a human fashion while their temporarily "divine" or spiritual status enables them to understand the eternal significance of those lessons. By existing, metaphorically, before Creation and after Judgment, the significance of the eternal is stressed by the audience's approximated participation in eternity, which is "man's real business." Their momentary distance
from completely temporal time affords them a more significantly contemplative perception of time in contrast with eternity.

Still, the audience's eternalized perception is perhaps even more similar to that found in The Prophets, since the prophets are, like the audience, almost visibly above the order of time presented in the plays without being either completely detached from temporality nor inextricably bound in eternity. Brawer comments on "the ceremonial, formalized manner of representation characteristic of the liturgical drama" in the cycle Prophet plays. This, in comparison with the remainder of the cycle, produces a pregnant pause in the action of history. Time is suspended, the story of Christian history is completely encapsulated, as The Prophets transcends merely temporal knowledge. While Brawer considers the Towneley version the most exceptional of the extant examples in Middle English, Gardner's sub-negative, anti-review of it inadvertently sheds light on this play's capacity to eternalize the action. In his chapter, "Insipid Pageants," he says,

the Processus Prophetarum, is the dullest and probably the oldest in the group... devoid of drama, consisting, instead, of set speeches. It affords no opportunity for spectacle except in costume, and we need say nothing of it, except that a lum here in the cycle as a whole does, perhaps, no great harm to the larger drama."
The above is almost the whole of Gardner's assessment, yet his recognition of the dull lack of dramatic action, as well as his comment on the "lull" in the cycle's movement constitute precisely the suspension of time detailed above. Its opportunity for spectacle resides in the metaphysicality of the moment presented. A modern staging technique might be to elevate the speakers, one at a time, above the main platform to illustrate the mediation of God's eternity in time, though the elevation would only be halfway to God's. The stayed procession would intimate the contemplation of divinely inspired prophecies as eternal truths, then, justifying the "movement" upwards.* Further, it would link the prophets more closely with Christ.

This typological connection with Christ and his Ascension is, technically, anachronistic, but since the prophets are, themselves, removed from time by virtue of their all-encompassing sight of human history, such an affinity would rather add to their significance than detract from it. And to further emphasize their seemingly nebulous position between temporality and eternity, the re-ordered chronology of the Towneley Prophets in the cyclic action, as discussed in Chapter One, is an innovative and effective anachronism. To attribute this play's position to scribal error, or to

* Their lack of motion compared with that of the other characters is an additional eternalization, since time implies motion. The term "movement" is, therefore, relative and figurative.
rearrange the chronology in modern performance is to lessen its impact. Considering the numerous emendations to the manuscript in its later years of performance, that the "correction" in pageant numbering was omitted seems an important enough clue to call for a deeper enquiry into artistic intention. If other anachronisms are now accepted as dramatic devices and not as archaic oddities, it is difficult to imagine why this overt example of the anachronistic technique remains unaccepted and unacceptable error in the eyes of the critics. Remembering that, "even scriptural chronology can be subordinated to the compiler's interpretive needs," the "prescience" of the prophets is so placed as to confirm the validity of the audience's own prescient overview of Christian and Christocentric history.

However, while the audience is given the benefit of the eternal view of synchronous time, the exhortations from the prophets in direct addresses to take heed, keep the audience from distancing themselves from the lessons. So, not only are the spectators elevated above time in their perception, but they are taught by the prophets how to proceed in time to their final goal of ascension through salvation at Judgment. For example, Moses says,

herkyns all, both yong and old!
God that has all-in wold,
Gretys you bi me;
his commaundementis ar ten;
Behold, ye that ar his men,
here ye may theym se, (11.31-36)
Ye that thys in hart will hald,
unto heuen shall ye be cald,
That is first to com;
And ye that will not do so,
Till hell pyne mon ye go,
And byde a bytter dome, (11.43-48).

Once more, "man's real business is eternity," and *The Prophets* effects both an eternalized perception not unlike the audience's own, while stressing the eternal framework of time. That God greets the spectators through Moses exemplifies the notion of "the eternal breaking into time for man's salvation." Eternalization, then, works with an anachronistic synchronicity "which allows the imitated action to move beyond time" into the context of significant eternity. The anachronistically placed Ten Commandments exhibit the eternal will of God touching time, and man's ability to transcend time by holding them "in hart."

We have found, then, a basis of transcendence in anachronistic time which adds "a vertical dimension to the horizontal movement of mimesis" by approximating eternity. The vertical dimension of anachronism connects all ages into a synchronous whole so that,

Any event that related to one period, only and not to all time seemed to the Middle Ages not in the, highest sense... metaphysical. In anachronism is a fusion of time that suggests eternity. The music of the Towneley cycle also adds to the metaphysical dimension in arresting and effective ways. In
The Prophets, "David unquestionably 'sings' his lines."82

The eternalizing effect of his musically rendered lyric, though, lies in his instrument, whether played or merely held. Dutka observes that the prophet/king's harp is a symbol of Christ on the cross, indicating "that the Sufferer must precede the glorified King of the prophecies."83

Moreover,

medieval writings that consider the appearance and sound of musical instruments to represent or symbolize spiritual realities have provided the opportunity for modern scholars to see a link between the choice of instruments used in the mysteries and their religious significance.84

The bells sounding in the Towneley Purification of Mary have been established by Dutka as most probably emanating from the Wakefield parish church,85 affording, of course, a ritual solemnity and an undoubted reminder of the religious and spiritual significance of the play. This awareness of eternity touching time would be heightened by Simeon noting that, "Oure bellys ryng by thare oone!" (1.114).86

The employment of trumpets and horns is associated with Judgment, the first reference to the instrument occurring in The Prophets. Sibyl foretells that, "At hys [Christ's] comyng shall beny's blaw" (1.199).87 With Sibyl's fire and brimstone prophecy, the identification of the horn of battle is particularly suited to the prophet's awe and fear-inspiring anticipation of the end of time. Actual references to horns in the Judgment play, however, are not to
beams but rather to the signal horns of herdsmen (11.3, 42, 89 & 250) and to a trumpet (1.187). The particular color of each instrument mentioned in this cycle is particularly in tune with the thematic material which it accompanies. The harp, classed as a "low" instrument,* would be well in accord with the suspended and stayed nature of the process of prophets. Horns and trumpets were, obviously, identified as "high", and were, therefore, more suited to the tone and timbre of action and theme at Judgment. Bells were clear and bright, an associational sound certainly adapted to the play of Purification, and the welcoming of the Christ-child.

The emotional and spiritual magnitude of music goes back as far as Plato and his doctrine of the "ethos" of music. Based on the mode used, the hearer might be elevated to a sense of calmness and serenity, or he might find himself excited by a particular mode. The use of medieval liturgical music in Towneley would appear to suggest the devotional, spiritual impressions which it is intended to inspire. Sticca and Edwards corroborate this point. According to the former,

Music...provided an element of spiritual solemnity, a background of devotional sublimity which contributed to the dramatizing of the Christian mysteries.90

* High and low instruments, or "haut" and "bas", refers not to their pitch, but to loudness.
Edwards maintains that,

In some plays, a final mystical song, usually liturgical in origin, amplifies the movement from the internal to the external situation of the drama and provides the shift from temporal to eternal.91

Eternalization through the use of music is related to the orderliness and harmony on which music is based. Contrasted with the dissonance of Mak's lullabye in The Second Shepherds' Play, the angelic "Gloria in Excelsis" is perfectly harmonious, and so beautiful that the shepherds attempt to imitate it. In this instance, the cacophony of the false nativity serves to amplify the significance of the truly concordant sounds of the angel. Mak is not only "clere out of toyne" (1.477) in his singing, but he is out of tune with his Maker. Music, then, becomes symbolic not only of eternalization, but, when it is poorly rendered, of temporality as well.

Edwards tells us that,

as medieval drama incorporated music in its structure, it did so as a possible means of transcendence through numbers, (emphasis mine).92

That the angels sing in perfect time, "Thre brefes to a long" (1.657), indicates the particular number which most amply explains the transcendence effected by the Towneley cycle. What reflects the Trinity reflects the eternal, and it is the use of trinitarianism, in music and elsewhere in
the cycle, which is to be detailed in the third and final chapter of this study.
CHAPTER THREE

Trinitarian Time

And therefore, we must not despise the science of numbers, which, in many passages of holy Scripture, is found to be of eminent service to the careful interpreter.

- St. Augustine, City of God XI:30.

"Thre brefes to a long" is rather technical terminology to be used as descriptive praise of the angelic "Gloria" in The Second Shepherds' Play, yet the pointed selection of this particular rhythmic division of musical time is no more arbitrary than it is accidental. As Withington notes, the terms here "suggest that the author knew the art [of music] thoroughly." The Wakefield Master's "thorough" erudition in the subject is a broad statement based solely on the above, yet what we may attribute to the scribe with more reasonable precision is a fundamental knowledge of medieval musical theory and practice. The terms are selective, and that selectivity is grounded in trinitarian symbolism. By exploiting a significantly symbolic theory of music and relying heavily on the medieval reverence for the Trinity, the playwright shows an astute assimilation of symbolic affinities rather than any soaring musical genius of melismatic proportions. The number three alone provides the clue for the medieval audience; they are to consider the angelic song as a representation of perfection, based on the "medieval feeling for the mystical perfection of the number.
3, [as] a symbol of the Trinity. As it is this trinitarianism which indicates the need for a new approach to the Towneley cycle, for the Trinity is figured in some manner, whether pedantically or more subtly, through more of the cycle than any other type expressed. As such, it can provide an invaluable key for understanding this cycle, both in medieval and in modern terms.

To establish further the symbolic significance of three breves to a long, modern scholars require a working knowledge of the vehicle of its expression here. The mystery and majesty of the number three was so predominant a pre-Renaissance perception that it infused even the unmysterious musical notation of the medieval era. The ternary division of note or time signified the perfection, while imperfect time was based on division by two. The indication of imperfect time was denoted by a half-circle, while perfect time was, fittingly, shown by a circle. What did this mean? Simply, that even the musical notation of the period affirms that number symbolism was prevalent in the Middle Ages.

The duad was, at this time, most commonly considered an ill-omen, signifying duality, duplicity, corruptibility, division from unity and the devil. In part, this symbolism resulted because God had failed to call the second day of Creation "good", and this tradition is in evidence in the Towneley cycle Creation. For the first, third and fifth
days, the descriptions and comments are favourable (11.22, 42 & 58-59). No descriptions are given for either the second or the fourth day of Creation. While "four" is not as fully replete with negative connotations, it is correlated with earth, temporality, corruptibility and mutability, and is, therefore, in somewhat the same vein, symbolically, as "two." However, the most telling symbolic affinity between these numbers is that they are even (female); "Odd numbers [masculine] were universally considered more god-like, more perfect... than the even."8

The symbolic import of the number three, as hinted at in the musical notation, is its signification of perfection. It is the first real number, indissoluble and incorruptible, and therefore, like One, is expressive of harmony, completion and the all. According to Hopper, "the sacred 3 is but the expressive number of Unity."11

With these brief summaries of predominant number symbolism, let us consider further the three breves to a long. The angel, by the very nature of his message to the shepherds, has to sing in perfect time to herald Christ's advent as the fulfillment of prophecy: "was no crochett wrong/nor no thyng that lakt it" (1.658). Fittingly, no note can be amiss in a perfect and perfectly heavenly song, for nothing can lack in completion. The playwright's description of the song through the shepherds' praises is reinforcement of the then common associations of the number.
three, and it would be foolhardy for present-day scholars to suppose the specific musical reference a mere flourish of self-indulgent vanity on the writer's part. The use of these terms is deeply imbedded in the medieval penchant for number symbolism.

The technical musical terms used in The First Shepherds' Play seem, at first reckoning, to controvert this inference. In contrast to the above, the angel's song here is rendered "four & twenty to a long" (1.414). Divisible by both two and three, this appears to confuse the issue of perfect heavenly singing. Dutka, however, describes the likely manner of division as perfect time, or "modus," with imperfect note divisions of three orders: the tempus, prolatio and dimunition. Thus, twenty-four to a long is, "3 (breves) x 2 (semibreves) x 2 (minims) x 2 (semiminims)." In this instance, the symbolism is clouded by such complexity, and on the greater majority of the spectators, the implication of perfect time is lost by the omission of the significantly sacred three. That the second play of shepherds simplifies the suggestion into its obvious symbolic correlation with the Trinity adds weight to the idea of number symbolism providing a clue to the mysteries. The intention behind the twenty-four breves might easily have been to suggest the eternal and incorruptible (3) touching corruptible temporality (2), yet without a common
denominator in musical erudition crossing from author to audience, the implication would be ineffective.

What remains effective trinitarian symbolism in both these pastoral plays, and indeed, in much of the cycle, is the tendency towards triadic groupings of basically "good" characters. (The malign ones are more often coupled.¹³)

Although there is no exact scriptural enumeration of the shepherds, in particular, the writer[s] of the Shepherds' Plays relies heavily on the tradition of triplicities. As Fry notes, the trinitarian or triadic tradition has a certain antiquity which carried over the centuries "pour les raisons mystiques."¹⁴ In part a borrowing from the story of the Magi, the tradition of three shepherds was established in England by Bede,¹⁵ and as much due to habitual number glossing as to preference for the actual number, it endured.

Hopper has established that three "was easily the favorite number of the Middle Ages" because of its "theological connotations."¹⁶ And if such connotations are not intended to be reinforced by the playwright[s] it is difficult to assume any other reason for the pointed inclusions of triplistic details. Why, for example, is the pastoral singing rendered in The Second Shepherds' Play in three distinct voices when, as simple folk, they might as effectively have sung in unison, if the intent of the play is not to a large degree number symbolic?
primus pastor. lett me syng the tenory.
liius pastor. And I the tryble so hve.
liius pastor. Then the mayne fallys to me;
lett se how ye chauntt. (11.186-89).

Three-part musical writing emerged mid-fifteenth century from a style called fauxbourdon which was typically employed

for settings of the simpler Office chants (hymns and antiphons) and of psalms and psalm-like texts like the 'Magnificat' and the 'Te Deum'. (emphasis mine). In these compositions, the tenor usually provides the main structural element in medieval English versions, and that element is often borrowed from other sources, frequently liturgical in origin. Since the shepherds do chant, and by virtue of their number, are basically good, Dutka's observation that the song is "probably without any religious connotation," is likely mistaken. If the song is not lyrically sacred, its main melody could quite easily be religious, for what other mode of music would be likely "to myrth vs [shepherds] among" (1.184). The shepherds' spirits need lifting. They do not seek entertainment, here, but rather some comfort for their woes, earlier expressed. The song also follows on the anachronistic reference to the bells ringing for laudes (1.188), and their harmonious agreement to join in song after such diverse and individual complaints further indicates the likely tenor of their "chauntt." Figurally lesser than the Good Shepherd, this
typological identification also suggests a sacred song, simple though it might be.

With musical aspects adding to characterization in the Towneley cycle, it is little wonder that Mak's lullabye in this play is such miserable noise.

Terius pastor. will ye here how thay hak?/ oure syre, lyst, croyn.
Primus pastor. hard I never none crak/
so clere out of toyne; (11.476-77).

As Dutka asserts, "'Good' characters and expert singing, 'bad' characters, and unmusical sounds seem linked." Though it is not entirely clear whether Mak and Gyll join in the lullabye, or Gyll merely groans her accompaniment, considering the duplicity of the pair, it is most likely that if the lullabye has an identifiable rhythm, it is duple because it is imperfect. Further, the performance of song becomes a metaphoric signal in the plays, corresponding with themes of harmony and of discord. Dutka notes that heavenly ascents and descents would be often accompanied by song, and in the Towneley Deliverance, Christ's entry into Hell is preceded both by light and by the "Salvator Mundi." Beautiful in itself, it sounds to Rybald like "ugly noyse" (1.95). If the staged Hell does not actually emit cacophonous sounds, the implication is that beauty becomes distorted and perverted there. In the Judgment play, the trumpet blast heralding the end sounds "spytus" (1.41) to the damned, and the second demon suggests a song as they drive the malus souls to the devil:
The meyn shall ye nebyll,
And I shall syng the trebll,
A reuant the devill,
Till all this hole rout, (11.537-48).

Doubtless, if sung, this sounded poor, but I would argue against Dutka's conjecture that "reuant" may be a scribal error for the tenor of the song. It would more likely be a two-part setting about the devil sung to the forlorn company they march to Hell, especially considering the context and syntax of the lines.

Although correspondences between number and meaning occur throughout the Towneley cycle, the symbolic significance of certain numbers is not always consistent. Occasionally, a parodic anti-trinity grouping is presented to the audience (i.e. Belzebub, Rybald, and Satan in The Deliverance of Souls), in which case, the inferred number three promotes thoughts of the heavenly Trinity by the sharply defined contrast. (Recall the discussion on typological suggestion by contrast in the first chapter.) Yet another motion away from the prevalent numerical associations is the issue of Christ's dual nature. In this instance, the dual nature of Jesus as God and man is not unlike the posited intent of twenty-four breves to a long: to illustrate the eternal touching of time, thus making comprehension of the Trinity more readily accessible to time-bound humankind. As Reeves reminds us, time is a "progressive revelation of the Trinity."
duality, then, is related more to the contrast between heaven and earth, spirituality and temporality, than to any association with evil. According to Hopper, the duad is "encompassed and harmonized by the triad." While medieval duality "may represent opposition," with Christ it cannot.

It is one of the great medieval paradoxes that the Unity of Trinity cannot be effected without the inclusion of the duad, specifically embodied in the Second Person.

The standard rules of medieval number symbolism are by no means strict. Christ's duality is true, while Mak's or Herod's is deemed false. The medieval commentators on number symbols seem apparently adept at tailoring the numerical significance to their particular needs, and the playwrights of the Towneley undoubtedly capitalize on the technique. Fry confirms such adeptness, saying,

"once the number has been suggested, later commentators are not at a loss to find mystical reasons to account for that number."

And to a guarded extent, this is my intent.

The danger which intrudes is, of course, the over-reading of the typological or symbolic significance of number. As Hopper warns,

although symbolic numbers are profusely scattered through the pages of nearly all medieval writings, it is necessary to distinguish, especially in secular and unscientific literature, between the philosophical or scientific use of number, the symbolic, the imitative, and the merely naïve preference for certain commonly used numbers.
In view of this, some of the conjectures above concerning music, if they were utilized in performance, might often have been so subtle as to be considered number symbolic only in intent. The effectiveness of number, then, will be an important facet in the ensuing considerations. The Towneley cycle abounds in all the differing uses of number listed by Hopper with the exception of the scientific, however further justification for this type of approach is required before such uses can be outlined.

Reiss tells us that the writings of St. Augustine, made it necessary for Christian man to have an awareness of the significance, as well as the general science of number, since God's universe was believed to be based in number. He complains that the "form-through-number critics," by emphasizing number as structure, have too often neglected number as meaning, and, in searching for inherent number, they have tended to overlook stated number - that is, the numbers appearing in the text of a given work, (emphasis mine).

Such being the case, an Appendix detailing the occurrence of triplicity, both inherent and stated, is included since three is the number which most concerns us here. Reiss, convinced that the particular number predominating in a work affords the scholar direction, goes on to say that, in real number symbolism, the number exists to take the audience to a concept or value that will both deepen their understanding of the whole work and
increase the significance and the relevance of the work itself.32

Before moving on to the manner in which triplicities accomplish this end, let us consider a simple though quite unique example of the number symbolic phenomenon. Herod slaughters 144,000 Innocents in Herod the Great (11:487–88),33 and the number of the Elect in the book of Revelation is identical. Surely there is a figurual pattern expressed here through number! And Hopper decidedly states that in medieval number symbolism,

it was thought possible to discover the essential archetypal pattern reproduced in both macrocosm and microcosm,34 through inherent and discovered number symbols.

This cosmic harmony is also expressed in the story of Noah, both in the bible and in the cycle version. In the first chapter of this study, the typological connection between Noah and Christ was detailed, yet this relationship is further reinforced by the actual measurements of the Ark. Three hundred cubits in length has a specific correlation to the cross, as Hopper points out: 300 is symbolized by the letter "T" which, in turn, is a symbol for the cross.35 The significance of this number symbol is dependent upon the later event of crucifixion to illuminate thoroughly the underlying meaning.36 It is not, however, as "simple, common [and] obvious" a typological connection as that of the number three (recall Williams' considerations of such exegesis in Chapter One).
If such numerical symbols as those above lend weight to the significance of the approach, the more predominant use of trinitarian symbolism further confirms its validity. Number, like music, provided a bridge between the temporal and the eternal worlds. This was a medieval cosmological belief, and that cosmology was quite thoroughly mathematical in its conception. The notion that the same man was mathematically adept was a popular extension to the belief in the mathematically proportioned macrocosm of God's creation. The emphasis on and repetition of triplicity in the Towneley cycle suggests plan, not merely the naive preference for the particular number. While Hopper warns the reader of medieval literature to be wary of the intentional or merely habitual use of number, he does state that number meanings are "drawn from old traditions," and that, "Theologians never grew weary of dilating upon the Sublime Mystery of the Trinity" (emphasis mine). That such dilation carried over into the Towneley cycle is proved by the incredibly great stock of references to and groupings of threes. (See Appendix.)

The Trinity is to be found everywhere, at least in reflection. Recall the passage from 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face." While perfect knowledge is not of this world, glimpses of it are, particularly by means of the sacred number of the Trinity, vouchsafed to man. Hopper mentions a
few of Hugo of St. Victor's telling examples of the Trinity reflected in the temporal as well as the spiritual world, flowing from the medieval belief that number is "the most exact representation of the Unknowable." 42

The Testaments are each divided into 3 parts: law, prophets, and hagiographers of the Old; and evangelists, apostles and fathers of the New. Three hierarchies are made up of God, Angels and Man. There are 3 theological virtues, and a triple triplicity of angels imaging the Trinity, (emphasis mine). 43

In addition to such instances is the belief in the Three Ages of the World, and in the Three Advents of God. 44

Joachim of Fiore first popularized the notion that each of the Three Ages corresponded to a particular member of the Holy Trinity, though this is not to the exclusion of the Godhead's inherent unity, and that the work of the Trinity was, therefore, only revealed through time. 45 I shall expand on this premise in order to show that since the Trinity is only revealed in this manner, the medieval conception of time may, concurrently, only be fully understood by examining its relation to the Trinity. According to Pasch, the

literary connection between time and the Trinity was not at all uncommon in medieval literature. 46

Let us, then, move on to some of the most illuminating trinitarian examples in the cycle.

In Creation, we have observed that God's nature of metaphysicality and omnipotence is the subject of the
initial line of the play and that this eternal nature is subsequently detailed. God is beginning and end, everything, complete while remaining completely intangible in temporal terms. "Ego sum alpha et o" (1.1), however, is not only an expression of God's attributes as they influence and have dominion over time, but is a terminology bound inextricably to specific medieval symbols of the Trinity.47 The coupled alpha (A) and omega (Ω or Ω) were often represented as temporal illuminations of the true Trinity. See, for example, Joachim's Psalterium on page 137. While it is a representation of the musical instrument deemed by its shape to be symbolic of God in Three Persons, the shapes of A and Ω (triangular and circular) were noted by Joachim as fresh evidence for the pre-existence of the Trinity in the Hebrew scripture.48

It must be noted here, that Joachim of Fiore often used the letter omicron (O) as a substitute for omega,49 no doubt because its shape was more adaptable to trinitarian interpretations. And the Creation playwright appears to have followed this example. Considering that the ensuing lines of the first and next stanzas of this play deal very particularly with the trinitarian unity of the Godhead, alpha coupled with omicron in this case suggests a leaning towards a literary expression of "a characteristic trinitarian icon of the thirteenth century."50 That is, the circle enclosing the triangle (Δ). Although the plays are of a slightly later date in the medieval period, the reliance on symbolism
to add meaning to theology and art implies that old habits died hard.

Ego sum alpha et o,
I am the first, the last also,
One god in Mageste;
Heralus, of myght most,
father & son, & holy goost,
On god in trinity.

I am without begynnyng,
My godhede hath none endyng,
I am god in trone;
One god in persons thre,
Which may never twynnyd be,
If for I am god alone, (11.1-12).

Here, God's relation to time and his eternal nature are expressed in completely trinitarian terms. So, in the very beginning of this cycle, there is evidence of the inviolate relationship between the meaning and passage of time and the co-eternal Trinity of the Godhead. It is an indicator which must not be ignored.

John Gardner maintains that God's triune nature is "thematically central" to only a few Towneley plays. He does not even mention the Creation play as possibly warranting a place in this select group. He is mistaken, however, in omitting this pageant. Even though it is incomplete, considering the discussion above, it belongs in the category. In addition, God is specifically referred to in trinitarian terms four times (see Appendix), and yet further on, he is called, "Almyghty god... that is, and was, and shall be" (11.226-27). This latter description states quite absolutely the triple distinction of St. Augustine's eternal
present discussed in the second chapter. By making educated
inferences, we may very easily consider this play as
symbolically trinitarian.

In order to confirm this inference, the terms of world
redemption in the Annunciation play must be taken into
consideration. In the first chapter, God's typological
considerations were discussed;

I wyll that my son manhede take,
ffor reson wyll that ther be thre,
A man, a madyn, and a tre:
Man for man, tre for tre,
Madyn for madyn; thus shall it be, (11.30-34).

Surely, this triplite scheme of world redemption must echo
further trinitarian references from the lost portion of the
Creation pageant, for this true trinity of redemptive
abilities replaces the false trinity of Adam, Eve and the
Tree of Life. Although conclusive evidence on either side
of this issue is non-existent because twelve leaves are
missing from the manuscript at this point, the deliberate
figural correspondences between Adam and the Second Adam,
Eve and Mary, and the Tree of Life and the Cross tend to
weigh the scales in favour of the overall figural importance
of the Trinity and trinitarianism as an important aspect of
the Towneley Creation. (This correspondence of Trinity
versus Trinity also occurs in Noah [11.28-34].)

The Noah pageant, however, speaks for itself in its
plethora of trinitarian symbolism. In it, there are six
direct references to the Trinity (see Appendix). Also, Noah
asks Uxor three times to enter the ark before she will comply, three signifying completion, fullness and the restoration of harmony from the dual nature of opposition. To further reinforce the concept of triplicity signifying completion, the depth of the water is tested three times before Noah touches the bottom. A loose analogy, for the Trinity being at work in and revealed by the time-process, the meaning is clearly related to the trinitarian tradition. Naive preference? Possibly, yet the predominance or redundancy of this favourite number in no way detracts from its symbolic associations with the Triune God.

When Noah touches the ground on his third attempt, the group finds that they have reached "The hyllys of armonyne" (1.466). The use of "armonyne", or Armenia, rather than the distinctly named Mount Ararat in the biblical rendition, is a symbol of perfection restored to the world, a world once again in harmony.52 Fittingly, the movement of this play is from unity in the opening, while Noah capitulates history in his prayer and is fully obedient to God's injunction, to diversity and opposition during the domestic row in the second part, to the restoration of harmony and co-operation in the third and fulfilling final portion.53 Three, once again, is a return to the unity of the monad, and as Gardner comments, "The play has come full circle."54

In addition, Gardner points out the typological connections of the play linking Noah with Christ, the Ark with
the Church (cross), and finally, he says, "the Flood adumbrates the Last Judgment and at the same time looks back to the Fall."55 The Three Ages are manifest in this play by figural suggestion, then, and the Trinity is at work throughout.

The Prophets also manifests the Three Ages,56 although it is without stated triplicities. Nonetheless, this pageant has a curiously symbolic arrangement even in its incomplete state. Moses details the First Age which is influenced by the Fall, while David relates the important advent of Christ and his Redemption of man in the Second Age. Sibyl and the Judgment of the Third Age are entwined. Daniel is a capsule of all three and, in the brief space of three stanzas, sums up the history of salvation.57 It is as though the eternal Trinity at work in time is reflected in the three ages detailed, and the clearer and more concise the explanation of salvation history, the clearer the understanding. If medieval spiritual faith is reinforced by intrinsically subtle as well as overt examples of trinitarian symbolism in the plays, its use is justified in the medieval period and, by a veneration for historical accuracy, in the modern.

Though not all of the Towneley plays which include triplicities are as successful in conveying such symbolic and transcendent meaning as the Noah pageant or the Secunda Pastorum (which will be considered further), the fact that
the use of trinitarian number symbolism is imitated in others emphasizes its great significance to the whole cycle. The meaning conveyed by number would not be aspired to otherwise. Why, for instance, does one of the three wronged mothers in Herod the Great appear to strike out at a murderous knight three times (see Appendix), each exclamation point indicating a blow? And why, if it is accidental or subliminal preference for number, does Abraham say of Sodom and Gomorrah: "Thre cytees brent" (Abraham, 1.30)? The significance of three days, mentioned in Abraham, The Play of the Doctors, The Deliverance of Souls, Thomas of India and many more, is related, directly or typologically, to Christ's Resurrection, of course. But the correspondence of number to character and action continues to imply the Trinity in historical time, just as in The Pilgrims, one of them,

...had no knowledge it was he [Christ],
But for he brake this brede in thre,
(11.328-29).

Thomas of India is also very imitative of the trinitarian number symbolism exhibited in other, more effective plays, and though it emphasizes the significant number three, it is not as technically refined at implying the Trinity. The didactic pedant[s] who wrote this particular play achieves the trinitarian effectiveness in the only line of real symbolic innovation in the play: "Ther bred he brake as even/ as it cutt had bey[n]" (1.265). The even
division of the Host signifies the equality and equal
eternality of the Three Persons of the Trinity and is,
therefore, transcendent in this suggestion of the omni-
potence of the spiritual influence.

Kolve brings to our attention that the relationship
between, for example, Noah and Abraham, "lies not in the
historical events intervening between them," which are
omitted in the cycles, but rather, in God and His spiritual
influence. And by virtue of his inviolate relationship to
and in the Trinity, such relationships exist in Christ as
well. Once again, we are reminded of God's vertical
intervention from eternity in time. Two plays of the
Towneley particularly express the concept of temporal
relations and meaning being effected by the Godhead. In The
Second Shepherds' Play, the Lamb of God lies, "Betwix two
bestys" (1.646). In The Pilgrims, it is significant that
the previously despondent Luke and Cleophas have hope and
faith restored fully upon recognizing their Lord Jesus
"Right here... sat betwix vs two" (1.292). Due to the pre-
dominant significance of the number three, the third element
of Christ intervening in worldly time perfects relations and
understanding, unifies meaning and, as with the perfection
in medieval musical notation, fulfills the bar of time so
that it becomes associated with the eternal and the eternal
Trinity. The mean acts as mediator, temporally, and as
the means of transcendence, spiritually.
In the second chapter, we noted that the inclusion of anachronism (which is often Christocentric) affects the medieval perception of historical time, linear and cyclic, to the degree that such temporal perception becomes synchronous as we now understand it. That three simultaneously presented through varying time schemes do achieve such a unity in the dramatic representations of the Towneley intimates a new approach to understanding time and timelessness in the plays. There seems to be a connection between the unification which Christocentricity imposes on past, present and future history in the plays, and the nature of the time schemes which create synchronicity. This connection, most probably subliminal intuition in the religiously influenced medieval mind, requires the use of geometrics to illustrate its nature to modern man. And these geometrics are, aptly, Trinocentric.

As a preparatory step to some diagrammatic explanations, recall Helterman's comment:

figures ... are not necessarily pre-figurations, but may point forward or backward to divine events.

The very nature of typology engenders triplicity in its fundamental functions, then: types foreshadow the actual, the actual is realized, and figures echo the actual. Typological relationships are cyclic, though they do unfold as history in a linear fashion. Let us take, for example, The Raising of Lazarus as a type of Christ's Resurrection.
which is the actual, and for the figure, take the good souls who are raised up to Heaven in the Last Judgment, and apply them as representatives to this diagram:

1. 

```
Type -------> Actual <-------- Figure
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However, this diagram does not take entirely into account Christ's vertical relation to temporal time hence, it also omits a consideration of his dual nature, which takes part in both eternity and time. The diagram must be modified in order to accommodate the metaphoric illustration of his divinity.

2. 

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 Actual

 Type / \ Figure
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Neither, however, does this fully express the inherent figural relationships. It conveys only the individual connections to Christ. We have discussed above that the relationship between Noah and Abraham exists in the Godhead. The shared connections in the eternal and the divine connect type to type. The shared relations of Lazarus and the good souls to Christ connect type and figure together as well, along the temporal "line" of historical time. The
addition of the third element of the divine unifies and harmonizes the whole into its spiritual meaning.

3.

John Duns Scotus maintained that the equilateral triangle was a symbol of the Trinity:

For to know that a triangle has three angles equal to two right angles insofar as this is a kind of participation of God and that it has such an order in the universe that it expresses more perfectly as it were the perfection of God, this is a nobler way of knowing a triangle has three angles etc. than to know this truth from the notion of the triangle itself, (emphasis mine). 64

It is in view of the triangle’s affinity to the Triune God that diagram 3, above, is offered. The unity of the triadic relationship, arising from Christ’s participation in time, is offered as a metaphoric illustration of the reflection of the Trinity throughout the temporal medieval world and its art. It is an adaptable geometric figure in that, although its medieval symbolic significance cannot be duplicated to the same degree in the modern milieu, it is still functionally expressive of the triplistic medieval concepts which spawned it. According to Peck,

although only God knows all things through His essence, man’s intellect can be moved by an object to know Him. 65
The first object utilized here to stimulate an understanding of the medieval audience's knowledge is the triangle.

Consider the triple medieval time sense in this light. We have detailed the metaphysical nature of anachronism and its fusion of the dichotomous notions of linear and cyclic time in the previous chapter. How medieval time was perceived as a whole despite the triple functions in evidence is represented in diagram 4, in order to facilitate modern comprehension.

4.  

```
        Anachronism
           /   |
        /     |
       /______|
         Synchronicity
           |
         Linear  Cyclic
```

This combination of three-in-one time can be seen to reflect the medieval number symbolism associated with the Trinity. Although it is a modern conception of that era's perceptions, its validity as such lies in its metaphoric reflection of the internal workings of the Trinity. We have seen that the triangle is a medieval symbol for God. In diagram 4, it is extended to encompass as representation the views of the period that venerated it as symbol. Recall Kolve's concept of time as an artifact of eternity. Time in the Towneley cycle is also an artifact of the co-eternal Trinity in its tri-unified time techniques.

Having seen that trinitarian concepts and reflections are an important part of these mystery plays, let us now
apply them to the Trinity itself: specifically Noah's New Testament blessing of an Old Testament event. (Note that this is represented as God's perspective, therefore, Christ is at His right.)

5. 

\[ \text{Patris} \]
\[ \text{Fili} \]
\[ \text{Spiritus Sancti} \]

The representational shape of this is not entirely unlike the Triune God diagrammed in Joachim's Psalterium (page 137), but the importance of the triangle is its signification of perfection, because of its inherent relation to the sacred number three. Diagram 6 shows an overall triad of relevant Christian time to its ultimate goal, outside time: Salvation. Here, we may equate the apex of the triangle to a mountain top, the height to be reached following a long and arduous climb through the dark vicissitudes of time.

6. 

\[ \text{Salvation} \]
\[ \text{Creation} \text{ (law of grace through Christ.)} \]
\[ \text{Judgment} \text{ (grace through Christ.)} \]

This is the middle event in Christian history.)

As a slight amplification of this diagram, it is possible to superimpose the Three Ages of God onto it, with the Third
Age as apex: a time when, according to Joachim, Love and Grace are to be temporally realized. And finally, the Augustinian theory of time as the Eternal Present.

Aptly, the present moment is applied to the top of this triangle since past and future may only be recognized as memory or anticipation in the present.

Diagrams 5 through 7 exhibit some larger theological and philosophical concepts, whereas the mystery of the trinities is often no more than an act repeated three times, as noted above. Or it may be represented via a triadic grouping which, according to some critics, may only have resulted from a particular playwright’s desire for aesthetic balance.67 If it is a result of such a desire, and the choice of number is accidental, then the groupings of three shepherds or of the three Maries, for example, would lose the impact of the tradition, as would the anti-trinities in Hell. However, such triadic character groupings do not lose their essential figural connection to the Trinity. While balance may indeed have been a contributing factor, it is folly to assume that the tradition of triplicities did not influence just what that balance was based upon in many of
the plays. That the tradition was a strong undercurrent in the cycle, and that typological suggestions of the Trinity resulted is confirmed by the great favour the Towneley playwrights had for the number three.

The number three, as a ritual symbol of the metaphysical Trinity, requires more scope than the metaphoric diagrams offered above, however. The closed triangle appears to be insufficient representation of the eternal nature suggested by trinitarian symbolism and typology, for $180^\circ$ is but a half-circle. As detailed earlier, the half-circle indicated imperfect time. That Kolve calls the metaphysical influence of God (or Trinity) in time "centrifugal", gives us a springboard from which to leap the bounds of limited temporality and thereby further grasp the real nature and meaning of "One God in person three" (Creation, 1.10). Remember that alpha and omega (or omicron) coupled are a medieval icon of the Trinity. According to Peck,

The triangle and circle share metaphysical qualities because of centre, point, and 3 as the first real number. In seeking the centre one moves from 3 (unity expressed) to 1 (point), 1 being the number base. Trinity is the spatial expression of that number base. Christ, the alpha and omega, completes the circle of time, thus providing the circumference to the circle. He is also the Creator and thus the centre of the circle, (emphasis mine).

The triangle utilized heretofore has been representative of the temporal medieval perception of the Trinity and
trinitarian symbols. How does this embrace the eternality of the Triune Godhead? Since three is the symbolic synonym of one in the medieval semiotics of number, let us move on to the next diagram which illustrates the crossover from temporality to timelessness with the Godhead, achieved by the synchronous time techniques of linear, cyclic and anachronistic expression.

8.

We have here the 360° of the circle, measured by the arced angles, which extend outwards in all directions, infinitely. The source of the temporal influence is the centre triangle, the Triune Godhead as medieval man might understand it, and which, though it is not a point, is the clear expression of the unity of the point. As Hopper reminds us, manifoldness is more comprehensible to human understanding, which cannot aspire to the intensity of the One. 71

So, by Three Persons, we are to understand One God, with centrifugal power extending throughout the universe and the world, eternity and time, or:
Trinity as centre and all.

The transitional diagram 8 is particularly intended as an approximation of the medieval trinitarian icons and the eternal, divine power they expressed while conforming to modern expectations and understanding as well. It is a modern metaphor for medieval trinitarian belief. Justification for its inclusion can be found in its perfection of temporal and imperfect time (180° - 360°), and in the Roman de la Rose, such an approach to understanding the transcendent effects detailed is further validated:

For [Plato] could never fully understand
The mystery that could not be explained
Till comprehended in the virgin womb.
Yet doubtless she whose womb was swollen
thus
Knew more of it than even Plato could
For just as soon as she perceived she bore
That comfortable weight, she knew that it Must be that marvelous, eternal sphere Whose centre would be fixed in every place
But whose circumference would nowhere be;
She knew it was the mystic triangle Whose angles superimpose in unity So that three are one and one is three, Triangular the circle is, or else The triangle is round, that found a home Within the Virgin.\textsuperscript{72}
The "mathematical paradox of the mystical unity of two dissimilar figures" is resolved in diagram 8, where the triangle becomes the circle and vice versa. The participation of time with timelessness is represented as wholly as two-dimensional illustration will allow.

The infinitely extending rays of diagram 8 as they stand for transcendence may be considered as loosely analogous to the transcendent nature of music. A note or chord, though seemingly limited by the confines of musical notation, resonates of the system of ascending overtones when played. We hear a specific chord (the triangle) while subconsciously we hear the ongoing texture of notes which vibrate from it (the extending angles of the circle). An endless expanse of music inhabits each note, limited only by our perception.

There is, however, a slight critical problem in using infinitely extending rays and angles as a metaphor for omnipotence and omnipresence. The "stigma of infinity" is related to even numbers "by analogy to the line," and three is a finite number, according to Hopper. And Kolve reminds us that,

- eternity means timelessness, not infinite time, and it involves a release into a different and unimaginable dimension of experience.

There are, however, critics on the other side of this dilemma. Toulmin and Goodfield compare the infinitude of God to the finite mind of man, and Duhem refers to God as an
infinite Being. Once again, I must stress that the resolution offered in diagram 8 is meant only as a geometric metaphor for the transition from time into timelessness. Where the triangle may be measured in absolute terms, the circle may not, and the incomprehensibility of its key ($\pi = 3.1416...$) is given as an approximation in temporal modern terms, of the incomprehensibility of the Trinity. (Also, recall that the angles of the diagram extend infinitely, not merely the lines.) Like the venerated odd numbers, which produce odd even when added to even (even numbers never produce odd ones), the irrational $\pi$ also maintains its irrationality, not only in addition but in multiplication, as well.

As further justification for the metaphor, consider a portion of Noah's opening prayer, where he refers to the Fall of Lucifer:

He thought hymself as worthi/ as hym that hym made,
In brightnes, in bewty/ therfor he hym degrade;
put hym in a low degre/ soyn after, in a brade,
hym and all his menye/ when he may be unglad

for ever.
shall they neuer wyn away,
hence unto domysday, (11.19-25).

Here, forever and doomsday appear synonymous, yet that synonymity marks the intangible crossing point from temporal time into the timeless and eternal realm of post-Judgment Day. A never-endingness implies infinite despair for the
apostates, and therefore, the extending angles of diagram 8 are infinity as a metaphoric synonym for eternity.

The circle, as Peck tells us, is a philosophically and theologically important geometric figure, and geometry is considered a "tool of the theologian." Between the infinite centre and that infinite circumference which includes all that is, was, and ever shall be, is the realm of time and space. In one's soul-searching, time can be comprehended only by turning simultaneously inward and outward until time and self become both circumscribed and uncircumscribed by centre and circumference. [78]

By virtue of its mystery, the circle described God, and man's soul as an image of God. Soul (or circle) searching brought medieval man closer to eternity: a state that is finite because perfect, infinite because incomprehensible and intangible.

Before having done with the transition from time to timelessness described by diagram 8, let us consider the ultimate achievement of the Towneley cycle: The Second Shepherds' Play. That we require some metaphysical erudition because it is replete with trinitarian number symbolism has already been touched upon not only in this chapter, but more thoroughly by a number of critics, as well. [79] Without once referring directly to the Trinity, the playwright has nonetheless incorporated "three variations of the main theme, three dramatic scenes or impulses, three shepherds, three songs," [80] three gifts, three locales, and a
complement of three intrinsic characters for each of these loca. And the angelic song is, of course, the triple breve. Based upon the medieval favour for triplicities, much of the staging in modern productions could be based upon the triangle, or alpha, with the Nativity at the centre and apex, the scene of deception to the left of that, and the shepherds and the field to the right. Or, if the compass directions are favoured for their intrinsic implications, the shepherds could occupy the plain in the centre, or south, with the Nativity in the East and the diabolical parody in the West, to the left of the plain. But whatever the stage arrangements chosen, it is undoubted, based on the Trinity motif of the play, that the movement of the shepherds describes a triangle from the alpha of the opening to the omega of its closing lines.

However the staging problems are solved to modern man’s satisfaction, the nature of movement in the play also represents the Three Advents of Christ, as Vaughan details them:

Christ came in his birth, he will come in Judgment on Doomsday, and he comes through grace into the hearts of his faithful followers.

Although the play does not detail the typological suggestion of the Three Advents in this exact order, it is, none-the-less, apparent. In the historical re-enactment of Christ’s First Advent, appropriately occurring in the third scene of the play, the imperfect nature of temporal existence is, harmonized by the offer of man’s own divinization through
Christ. The eschatological Second Coming is anticipated not only in this third scene by typological association, but also in the second movement of the play. Mak's deception is not only parodic anticipation of the historical advent, but by his connection with the duplicitous actions of the warlock Anti-Christ, it is, as is detailed earlier, figurally connected to the final Judgment of man. The Third Advent, temporally the middle one which prepares man for Judgment, of Christ coming into man's heart is, of course, indicated by the shepherds themselves.83 (And the audience, too, if the didactic intent is effective.) Their lives are transformed from a state of hopelessness and despair to one of joy and faithfulness and grace through Christ:

primus pastor.  What grace have we won.
iiius pastor.  Com furth, now ar we won.
iiius pastor.  To syng ar we bun:
let take on loft, (II.751-54).

Kolve, however, takes into consideration not the Three Advents of Christ but the Three Advents of God: God as Creator, as Saviour, and as Judge.84 While The Second Shepherds' Play does not technically recreate the Creation, the complaints of the shepherds in the opening scene do reflect the nature of life following the First Advent of God.85 They are oppressed and world-weary, subject to the conditions of the First Age under God. As Kolve points out, Before Christ's Incarnation, all men had already been judged: the good and the bad were alike in bondage to Satan. The Redemption made it possible that some -
those who believed in and followed Christ - should be saved, and therefore a Last Coming was necessary to separate the blessed from the damned and to judge once more, but this time forever.\textsuperscript{86}

It is incumbent on the shepherds to judge Mak's duplicity leniently and to mete out a merciful punishment in such close historical proximity to the central advent of God. And Kolve notes, this advent "is never celebrated without reference both ways in time, to the first coming and the last" (emphasis mine).\textsuperscript{87} The playwright has taken this into consideration. With the Eternal Present of salvation history existing in this play, it becomes an encapsulation of the whole Towneley cycle, which in turn is an encapsulation of relevant Christian history, here demarcated as Three, not Seven Ages. The Age of the Father follows the First Advent, the Age of the Son is the hope following his Incarnation as man, and the Age of the Spirit is the age of grace and mercy which the shepherds unknowingly ape when they deal benevolently with Mak's crime.

A final consideration of the illuminating instances of triplicity in this play is that of the three gifts which, according to Longo, "illustrate the faith of the Magi and signify the Holy Trinity."\textsuperscript{88} The ensuing list will highlight these associations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gifts of the Magi</th>
<th>Symbolic Significance</th>
<th>Gifts of Shepherds</th>
<th>Member of Trinity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gold</td>
<td>power</td>
<td>tennis ball</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>myrrh</td>
<td>humanity</td>
<td>bob of cherries</td>
<td>Son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frankincense</td>
<td>divinity</td>
<td>bird</td>
<td>Holy Spirit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Briefly, in Longo's assessment, the spherical shape of the tennis ball makes it a "metaphor for eternity and infinity, [and] the circle has become for Christians the monogram of the perfect and everlasting God." The cherries in midwinter are associated with the shedding of Christ's blood and, therefore, with the mortal form of God. The bird suggests Christ's divinity from the "prophecies of Isias" and Christ's spiritual divinity is often metaphorically equated with "a dove, an eagle, a caladrius or a phoenix." So, too, the Holy Ghost is related figurally to birds or winged souls. The bird signifies the Resurrection of Christ through the divinity of the Holy Spirit.

Where the Trinity is suggested the eventual transcendence of the human soul is implied, for through Christ's mortal nature, man's eternal soul is purchased. The number three stated, implied or realized is a spiritual mode of transcendence in the Towneley Corpus Christi cycle. If we may shed the innate modern cynicism towards medieval superstition or its seemingly pedantic symbolism and deal with it in its own terms, we may find some further pearls of wisdom spread throughout the plays which are technically and
dramatically innovative. Peck tells us that we can search for wisdom through number, and whether it is medieval wisdom or a wise modern recognition of it, the representation of the intersection of eternity in time, attempted and frequently accomplished in these plays through the use of trinitarian number symbolism, is to be revered. Imperfect time (180°) becomes perfect (360°) and timeless when medieval man is enabled to join the angels in singing the "Gloria" in their hearts, three breves to a long.
CONCLUSION

... A people without history
Is not redeemed from time, for history
is a pattern
Of timeless moments.
-T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets

The medieval perspectives of time and eternity, apparent in the Towneley cycle, implicitly reflect the trinitarian beliefs and triplite leanings of the later Middle Ages in England. More explicit are the modern geometric diagrams found in Chapter Three. Justified by their being metaphoric illustration, these diagrams aim to clarify the often inexact and equivocal nature of philosophical and theological terminology. That the time treatments combine to illustrate "The movement between the pettiness of man's everyday being and his eternal role" (emphasis mine), requires more than language to describe. And if trinitarian icons and modern interpretations of them can facilitate an apprehension of transcendent spirituality, so much the better.

We have seen that the Trinity was vastly favoured for its eternal significance and signification, and that there exist temporal reflections of eternity by which medieval man could be moved to understand more fully the divine nature of his own eternal soul, and thereby, God's eternity. There are, however, three artistic renderings which justify the geometrics and amplify the prevalence of the trinitarian
traditions in the Middle Ages. I have saved them for the final portion of this thesis since their connections with the plays are more tenuous than is their confirmation of my approach.

The first of these is the opening plate in Philippa Tristram's text. Some of the markers in the graveyard depicted in this late fifteenth century work, entitled "The Horseman of Death", are crosses in which triangles are incorporated. (See page 145.) That this was not an unusual trinitarian marker of the period is confirmed by another of Tristram's chosen plates, entitled "Animate Corpse" of the early fifteenth century. In this, too, the top of one of the crosses forms a triangle. (See page 146.)

The frontispiece to Word, Picture and Spectacle is "Creator with Compasses" of the thirteenth century, in which the Creator describes the circle of the earth by means of the exactness of the triangular compass. (See page 147.) This conveys the medieval view of God's relation to time as described herein, and as with some of my modern geometrical interpretations, places God's eternity at the apex of the triangle, Alpha and Omega expressed.

These connections may be implicit, but they nonetheless remind me by their very shapes of the explicit trinitarian symbolism so prevalent in the Middle Ages. The trinitarian influence, though it is not the main focus of any of these plates, is definitely present. Much of this symbolism was
habitual, much subliminal, but I am allowing myself a similar freedom of interpretation in discerning matters of cosmic, symbolic affinities to that which was employed by medieval theologians.

What seems most evident about trinitarianism and time in the Towneley cycle is that the most effective and effectively intertwined instances of these techniques appear in plays which the Wakefield Master had touched, revised or written, according to Gardner’s distinctions. Indeed, four of the six plays which do not include any degree of triplite occurrence are in the category of plays that show no evidence of the master’s hand. Neither of the other two is attributed wholly to the Wakefield Master, although Lazarus shows some evidence of the Wakefield stanza. The Deliverance of Souls Gardner places in the category of questionable authorship.

Of those plays showing no sign of revision, Creation heads the list. While we have discovered evidence of trinitarian leanings in the play, the Wakefield Master must have been influenced to a large degree by its emphasis on Trinity, and in his own creations was contributing to the continuance and continuity of theme initiated in the beginning of the cycle. It is also interesting to note that of those plays which follow Creation in this category, only one is replete with trinitarian number symbolic import: Thomas of India. The others, if they do include occurr-
rences, for the most part exhibit only one. Consider the list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Number of Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prophetarum</td>
<td>indirect (Three Advents of God)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cesar Augustus</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annunciacio</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salutacio Elezebeth</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fugacio Jos. &amp; Marie</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purificacio Marie</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pagina Doctorum</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johannes Baptista</td>
<td>four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas indie</td>
<td>fourteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspencio Jude</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While we cannot attribute the trinitarian themes and traditions in Towneley wholly to the Wakefield Master, it is undoubted that his handling of the subliminal suggestions of triplicities exhibits a far more sophisticated manner than, say, that in Thomas of India. Where the master playwright signalled symbolic connections and meaning subtly, as with the angelic songs in the Shepherds' Plays, the writer of Thomas employed a blatantly didactic technique of repetition, emphasis and re-emphasis. However, Thomas is still recommended to our notice in this study precisely for its redundancy. Three!...three!...three imposes the medieval necessity of belief in the mystery of the Trinity and its reflections on earth upon audience consciousness.

Of the Wakefield Master, it must be noted that in his handling of more diabolical subject matter, the use of triplicities wanes. In Herod the Great, the triadic
groupings of mothers and soldiers subtly reflect the conflict between the heavenly Trinity and the diabolical anti-trinities of Hell. Further, in *The Buffeting*, the lauded author twice calls attention to a temporal confusion as to significant number. (See Appendix.) Two or three? The nature of the number symbols which permeate the text and beliefs of the age which spawned them suggests that indecisiveness as to number here indicates temporality without spiritual insight. And this spiritually void, temporal confusion is confirmed as earth-bound and blind by the groupings. Two torturers (Fforward is a servant) and two holy men entirely mistake the spiritual nature of the second person of the Godhead. They cannot aspire to spiritual fulfillment via the Trinity.

Perhaps the medieval preference for the number three insured its frequent inclusion more than anything else, yet if such a preference may bring modern man closer to the thematic and time-related unities existing in the cycle, the end justifies the means employed to gain that special insight.

If the purpose is more precisely thematic staging of the Towneley cycle as a result of the trinitarian means used here to understand their representation of time and eternity, I must suggest one particular technique which has occurred to me during the course of this study. In order for Deus (later "Trinitas", *The Conspiracy*) to be considered One
God in Persons Three effectively throughout modern performances, His speeches could be rendered in three voices with one visible, representational player. This would undoubtedly underline the underlying theme of trinitarianism in the Towneley cycle.

One question remains a slight problem for me, and that is Pilate throwing thirteen on three dice in The Talents and losing the robe which Jesus had worn. (This, of course necessitates the use of force to acquire it.) Certainly the connotations of thirteen are unlucky, and the superstition holds to this day. The most satisfactory solution I am able to offer without initiating another area of study at this point, is that despite the misfortune associated with the number of individuals who attended the Last Supper, the power of the Trinity influencing time converts the meaning to good fortune for man by means of the coming Resurrection of the Lord. Since number implies meaning, the symbolism here can only suggest ultimate triumph over apparent defeat, and while Pilate apparently misses the significance of his throw, the audience would recognize to some degree the influence of three (God and the truth of eternity) overcoming thirteen (temporal betrayal). As Theresa Coletti has noted,

The fundamental irony of the dicing game in the Play of the Talents is that it makes eternal truth the object of a game of chance, the most unstable of human endeavors.
And that irony translates into the numbers: stability (3) defeating instability (13).

With Christ and the Trinity, time becomes a promise of timelessness for medieval man, and a fusion of seemingly dichotomous tensions is achieved by means of triplicity, especially in the historical capsule of The Second Shepherds' Play. Once again, I am not suggesting a conscious recognition by the medieval audience of the geometrically explained functions of time and timelessness discussed herein. The diagrams are intended to serve as a more graphic way of understanding the effects of comparing mortality to immortality, time to timelessness, and the inherent relationship of these abstractions. I do suggest that medieval man intuited the concept of the eternal with the aid of the often sophisticated time treatments in the Towneley Corpus Christi cycle. The diagrams are, then, an attempt to elucidate in modern terms the workings of the elusive medieval mind, lost through time. As Kolve says,

Man's duty... is to understand time as God understands it, to recognize the transient and, turning from it to prize the eternal.5

The Towneley cycle of relevant Christian history accomplish-
es this transcendent end. Or should I say, beginning?
"Animate Corpse"
APPENDIX

The Occurrence of TripliCity
in the Towneley Cycle

The Creation

1. 5-6 "ffader, & son, & holy goost,
    On god in trinity"

1. 10 "Oone god in persons thre"

1. 61 "Oure lord god in trynyte"

1. 105 "sete of trynyte"

11. 226-7 "Almyghty lord,...
    that is, and was, and shall be"
    (This is a triple distinction of Augustine's
    Eternal Present.)

The Killing of Abel

1. 194 "Two, two, now this is thre"

11. 418, 426 & 428 "Cain refers three times to the "kynge".

Noah and the Ark

1. 2 "Thre persons withouten nay /oone god
    in endles blis"

1. 30 "the trinite"

1. 83 "like to the trynyte"

1. 129 "thre chese chambres"

1. 142 Noah's three sons: "Sem, Iaphet, and Came"

1. 144 "Thare wifis also thre"

1. 169 "Oone god in trynyte"

1. 227 "Thou shal thre for two"

11. 251-2 "In nomine patris, & filii,
    Et spiritus sancti, Amen."

1. 254 "the trynyte"
1. 281 "Thre ches chambre"
1. 308 "Oure barnes that ar bayn /and thare wifis thre"
11. 352, 362 & 369 Noah asks Uxor three times before she will enter the Ark.
11. 438-41, 447-50 & 460 The depth of the water is tested three times, and on the third test, the line touches ground.

Abraham
1. 20 Adam lived "More then thre hundreth yere."
1. 26 Noah's "chylde thre"
1. 30 "Thre cytees brent"
1. 69 "the thryd day be ther, bid I."
1. 116 "The thrid day end must I be there."

Isaac
(There is no occurrence of triplicity in this play.)

Jacob
1. 114 f. [hic diuidit turmas in tres partes] Jacob divides his hosts into three parts.

The Prophets
(The Three Ages are implicitly detailed in this play.)

Pharaoh
1. 60 "moo then thre hundreth thousand"
1. 353 For "thre dayes" the fog lasts.
1. 438 "honowred be he in trynyte"

Caesar Augustus
1. 193 "by the thyrde day"
The Annunciation

11. 30-34 "I wyll that my son manhede take,
  for reson wyll that ther be thre,
   A man, a madyn, and a tre:
  Man for man, tre for tre,
   Madyn for madyn, thus shal it be."

The Salutation of Elizabeth

(There is no occurrence of triplicity in this play.)

The First Shepherds' Play

(There are three shepherds.)

1. 186 "ye thre"
1. 191 "Sytt we downe all thre"
1. 304 Jesus lays "Betwix two bestys"
1. 315 "he spake to vs thre"
1. 352 "thre childe sene"
1. 414 "he broght /foure & twenty to/a long" (This musical time division is divisible by three.)
11. 466, 471 & 488 The shepherds' gifts are a "lytyll spruse cofer", a "ball" and a "botell".

The Second Shepherds' Play

(There are three shepherds.)

1. 85 Some men have "two wyfys /and som men thre."
1. 186-88 The first shepherd will sing "the tenory", the second will sing the "tryble so hye" and "the meyne" falls to the third shepherd.
1. 219 "God looke you all thre"
1. 568 "ffare well all thre"
1. 646 Jesus lays "Betwyx two bestys"
1. 657 "Thre brefes to a long"
1. 707 "we ar lewde all thre"

11. 718, 722 & 734 The three gifts are "a bob of cherys,"
    "A byrd" and "a ball."

Offering of the Magi

(There are three kings.)

1. 229 "I rede we weymd all thre"
1. 275 "I met thre kyngis sekeand a barne"
1. 298 "dewyls on thame all thre"
1. 326 Herod wants "The answere of those lurdans thre"
1. 337 "sir kyngys thre"

11. 347-48 "...com full hastely
    To hym all thre"

1. 353 "Both I and my -elose two"
1. 362 "Thre kyngis with me broght haue I"
1. 585 "we pray all thre"
1. 535 "make offeryng, all thre"

11. 545, 551 & 557 The kings offer "gold", "rekyl" and
    "myr" to Jesus. (This is also referred
    to at 11. 233, 237 & 246, respectively.)

1. 554 "hayll, one-fold god in persons thre"
1. 613 "All myghty god in trynyte"
1. 615 "thyn angehel send thyll us thre"

The Flight into Egypt

1. 159-60 "My hart wold breke in thre,
    My son to se hym dy"

Herod the Great

(There are three knights and three mothers.)

11. 381-83 "haue at the, say I! /take the ther a foyn!
    But on the I cry /haue at thi groyn
    An othere!"
(The third mother, enraged at the murder of her child, here appears to strike out at the knight three times.)

The Purification of Mary

(There is no occurrence of triplicity in this play.)

The Play of the Doctors

(There are three doctors.)

1. 198 Mary and Joseph look for Jesus
    "Both vp and downe, thise days thre"

John the Baptist

11. 185-90 "I baptys the, Ihesu, in hy,
    In the name of thi fader fre,
    In nomine patris & filii,
    Sen he will that it so be,
    Et spiritus altissimi,
    And of the holy goost on he."

1. 248 "I blys the with the trynyte"

11. 249-50 "Almyghty god in persons thre,
    All in oone substance ay ingroost"

1. 252 "ffader and son and holy goost"

The Conspiracy

(God is named "Trinitas").

1. 46 "That fatoure says that thre /shuld ever dwell in oone godhede

1. 271 - "Judas deems an ointment worth thre hundredth pens."

1. 278 "thre hundredth"

1. 380-81 "Peter, thou shall thrise apon a throw fforsake me"

11. 428-29 "That or-the cok haue crowen twyse,
    thou shall deny me tymes thre"

1. 492 "Peter, Iamys, and thou Iohn"
1. 495  "Abye styll here, ye thre"

1. 519 ff.  Jesus prays for a third time before Judas betrays him.

1. 528  "Trinitas" (God) speaks.

1. 545  "rasyd hym self apon the thrMd day"

1. 632-33  "Siche thre knyghtys had lytyll drede
To bynde the dwll"

**The Buffeting**

1. 13  "thou haue had two or three /hety's worth a hangynge"  

1. 73-74  "Sir, I hard hym say he cowthe dystroew /gore tempyl so gay,
and sithen beld a new /on the thrid day."

1. 315  "knokys two or thre"  

**The Scourging**  
(There are three torturers and three Maries.)

1. 73  "Of us thre gettys thou no grace"  

1. 117  "oone-fold god in persons thre"  

1. 179  "fower" According to the notes in this text, the number should be three.

1. 182-3  "oure temple he shall downe bryng /and in thre daies byg it in hy
All hole agane"

11. 242-4  "a tree,
On the which he shall suffre payn /be feste with naies thre."

1. 327  "And from deth ryse on the thrMd day"

**The Crucifixion**

1. 376  "to the lyfe ryse vp agayn, /apon the thrMd day"

11. 495-96  "he shuld it [the temple] rase
...within thre dayes"
The Talents

(There are three torturers.)

1. 157-159  "Now ar we thre commen in
   A new gam forto begyn,
   This same coté forto twyn"
   (Jesus' coat divided by three.)

1. 168  "Unto vs thre it were right prophetabyll"

11. 183 & 186  The Counsellor calls Pilate three times.

11. 303-304  "heder haue I broght
   thre dyse vs emang"

1. 317  "thretteen ar (n thre"

1. 358  "were it sich thre"
   The torturer who has won the toss would give three
   such coats to Pilate after such threats as Pilate
   offers.

1. 404  "well worth you all thre"

The Deliverance of Souls

(There is no occurrence of triplicity in this
play.)

The Resurrection of the Lord

(Again, there are three Maries.)

1. 164-65 "he shuld ryse vp bodely
   within the thryde day"

11. 180-82 "...ordan to kepe that stone
   with kyghtys heynd,
   To thise thre dayes be commen and gone"

1. 197  "kepe hym well unto the thryd day"

1. 224  "To thise thre dayes be past"

11. 367-69 "help haue we done,
   And which shall of vs systers thre
   remeфе the stone?"

1. 413  "My catyf hart wyl breke in thre"
11. 595-97 "Tell my brethere I shall be
Before theym all in trynyte
Whose will that I haue wroght."

The Pilgrims

11. 178-81 "Som saide he ded shuld be,
And ly in erth by dayes thre,
And sithen, throug his pauste,
Rysse up in flesh and fell."

1. 290 f. [benedicet ihesus panem & franget in tribus partibus]
Jesus breaks the bread in three parts.

1. 292 "Right here [Jesus] that sat betwix us two"

11. 328-29 "I had no knawlege it was he,
Bot for he brake this brede in thre."

Thomas of India

11. 59-61 "If it be sothe that we here say,
Or this be the thrid day
The sothe then mon we se"

11. 128-30 "In the fader name and the son /and the holy
gast,
Thre persons to knaw and com /in oone godhede
stedfast;
I gif this mett my benyson /thrugh wordys of
myghtys mast."

1. 139 "the thrid day rysse fro ded"

1. 152 "Ihesu crist in trynyte"

1. 158 "fro ded rose the thryd day"

1. 174 "The iues haue nalyd his cors on rood /nalyd with
nales thre"

1. 189 "ffor the thryd day ihesus rase"

11. 197-99 "...a fyssh swalod ionas /thre dayes therin he lay;
Yet gat god hym myght to pas /whyk man to wyn
away;
Myyght not god that sicth myght has /rase his son
apon the thryd day?"
11. 214-15 "The thryd day right he gase /right unto the cors agayn,
    Mighty god and man he rase /and therfor ar we fayn"

1. 263 "To Emaus castell can thai pas /ther hostyld thai all thre"

1. 265 "Ther bred he brake as euen /as it cutt had beyn"

11. 289-91 "That as Ionas thre dayes was/in a fysh in the see,
    so shuld he be, and bene has/in erth by dayes thre,
    pas fro ded, ryse, and rase /as he saide done has he."

1. 294 "he shuld ryse the thrid day"

1. 309 "Trow his rysyng by dayes threyn /sen he died on the rode"

The Lord's Ascension

11. 25, 101 & 194 Jesus appears three times to his disciples before he ascends into heaven.

1. 214 "Mi rysyng on the thryd day"

The Judgement

11. 128-29 "I had lever go to rome /yei-thryse on my fete
    Then forto grefe yonde grome /or with hym forto mete"

Lazarus

(There is no occurrence of triplicity in this play.)

The Hanging of Judas

(There is no occurrence of triplicity in this play.)
NOTES

The following abbreviations are used in the notes:

Texts

**Towneley:** The Towneley Plays

Publishers:


Dictionaries:

**M.E.D.:** Middle English Dictionary

**O.I.D.:** Oxford International Dictionary

Periodicals:

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>ABR</td>
<td>American Benedictine Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>Annuaire Mediaeval</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>College English</td>
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<td>CD</td>
<td>Comparative Drama</td>
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<td>Comparative Literature</td>
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<td>Modern Language Notes</td>
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<td>Medievalia et Humanistica</td>
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<td>NMS</td>
<td>Nottingham Mediaeval Studies</td>
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<td>PLL</td>
<td>Papers on Language and Literature</td>
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<td>Studies in the Renaissance</td>
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Other abbreviations of titles are incidental and meant to distinguish between differing works by the same author. Where there is only one work of an author cited, the name and the page number will appear in subsequent references.
Introduction


6. Ibid., p. 73.


9. Robert Edwards, "Techniques of Transcendence in Medieval Drama," *MedD* (1974), p. 169, notes that once the transition from temporality to eternity has been effected, the nature of eternity anyway "has no need of syntax or linguistic building."
18. All references to this cycle will be to Towneley, eds. George England and Alfred W. Pollard, E.E.T.S., e.s 71, 1897, rpt. 1952, and will be included in the body of the thesis, with the exception of a few select indirect references which are found in the chapter notes.

Chapter One


2. Kofke, p. 188. See also J.W. Robinson, "The Later Medieval Cult of Jesus and the Mystery Plays," PMLA 88 (1973), p. 513, in which he states: that anachronism is non-narrative in structure. This indicates that its presence in the cycle plays is a non-linear function of dramatic time. Yet more specifically, see Walter E. Meyers, A Figure Given: Typology in the Wakefield Plays (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1970), p. 18, on typological time in which, "events [of the drama] are ordered, not by sequential arrangement, but by congruities of pattern"; and Mícéal F. Vaughan, "The Three Advents in the Secunda Pastorum," Spec 55,3 (1980), p. 498, notes the "essentially figural mode of salvation history."

3. Davidson, p. 53, concurs with Patrides when he says, "Early Christian writers had rejected the notion of cyclic time in favour of linear time."

4. Ibid., p. 53.

5. Meyers, p. 12. We might add the term "pre-act" as well, since the cycles deal with the future of mankind on the day of Judgment.


7. Ibid., p. 513.


11. Helterman, p. 51. The critic also suggests a typological reading which perceives Noah both as type and anti-type of God the Father, pp. 51-52. However, this reading would not cancel out the already familiar and accepted typological identifications.


13. See, for instance, Meyers, pp. 11-12; and Kolve, p. 181. Vaughan and Joseph A. Lango, "Symmetry and Symbolism in the Secunda Pastorum," *NMS* 12 (1968), 65-85, both suggest that a further encapsulation of relevant Christian history is to be found in the Secunda Pastorum itself: a kind of mystery cycle in miniature.


15. See Davidson, p. 83, "The theatre is temporal... [and] likewise timebound."; and Vaughan, p. 496, the "linear nature of language works against [synchronicity]."


17. See, for example, Kolve, p. 183; and Eleanor Prosser, *Drama and Religion in the English Mystery Plays* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 21-42, on the medieval doctrinal lessons of repentance found in these cycles.


20. Kolve, p. 120. This critic's protocycle of the Seven Ages places medieval man in the Sixth Age, or in the moment of *Corpus Christi* performance.


24. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

26. Among the critics who share this view of the importance of vertical intervention in time are Vaughan, p. 495; and Marjorie E. Reeves, "History and Prophecy in Medieval Thought," *Met H n.s.* 5 (1974), p. 52.

27. Davidson, p. 57.

28. Vaughan, p. 496. Also, see Edwards, pp. 168-69, who notes that the movement of history is linear: "Thus history moves from the Fall to the Last Judgment and from the emergence of a secular world to transcendence to a divine world.

29. Kolve, p. 121.

30. Pasch, pp. 175-76.


32. Kolve, p. 102.


35. Reeves, "History...", p. 73.

36. Davidson, p. 64.


40. Davidson, p. 43; also Martin Stevens, "Illusion and Reality in the Medieval Drama," *CE* 32 (1970), p. 462, notes that stage right as a place of honour was a fixed association of the iconography of the day.

41. Kolve, p. 103.

42. For discussions of the audience's "role" in the Corpus Christi drama, see Stevens, "Illusion..., p. 454; Davidson, p. 55; Robinson, p. 512; and Vaughan, p. 491.

43. Martin Stevens, "The Missing Parts of the Towneley Cycle," *Spec* 45, 2 (1970), pp. 256-57, contests the posited loss of twelve leaves from this portion of the manuscript, also noting that the Creation would have included the
Temptation and Expulsion scenes since the Mactatio Abel is numbered as the second pageant.

44. Note the past and future tenses of the verbs used in the passage. Also, see Vaughan, p. 496.


46. See, for example, Kolve, p. 119; and Paula Ložar, "Time in the Corpus Christi Cycles: 'Aesthetic' and 'Realistic' Modes," PLL 14, 4 (1970), p. 389; for discussions concerning the lack of temporal causality between the plays.

47. Davidson, p. 58.
48. Ibid., p. 58.
49. Longo, p. 68.
50. Longo, p. 68.
52. Ibid., p. 119.


54. Ložar, p. 389. Also Davidson, p. 55, notes that, "temporal events were wrenched out of their normal position," producing an atemporal perspective something like God's.

55. Stevens, "Missing Parts...", p. 255.
56. Davidson, p. 75.
58. Davidson, p. 51.

59. See Oscar Cargill, Drama and Liturgy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933), p. 5, where he notes that this theory began with Magnin during the mid-nineteenth century, and that the seemingly obvious evolution of the Christian plays was accepted as fact for many years without proper substantiation. However, some proponents of this

68. Kolve, p. 41.


62. Origen, as quoted by Patrides, p. 5.


64. Vaughan, p. 498.

65. Meyers, p. 12, notes that, "the Christian liturgical year, create[s] not just a New Year, but re-enact[s] and join[s] together all human time"; see also, Sister Mary Margaret Walsh, "The Judgment Plays of the English Cycles," *ABR* 28 (1969), pp. 382-83, concerning the cyclic thinking of medieval scholars which related the structure of the drama to the liturgical year; Kolve, p. 43, who makes note of the mapped liturgy of the medieval church; and Longo, p. 73, who further condenses the liturgical year into The Second Shepherds' Play, finding parallels throughout the pageant. However, Jeanne S. Martin, "History and Paradigm in the Towneley Cycle," *Meth* n.s.8 (1977), pp. 125-26, sees weakness in the posited relationship between the subject matter of the liturgy and that of the cycles, since the cycle includes elements which are absent from the liturgy, also maintaining that there are pertinent elements of the liturgy omitted in the plays. The thematic connections between the cyclic liturgy and the drama, though, are not intended to be interpreted as an exact mimesis, attempted on the part of the playwrights. Liturgical structures, though echoed in the cycles, neither limit the scope of the drama, nor does the drama restrict the liturgy. For further comments on the echoes of liturgical structures found in the plays, see Davidson, p. 53; and E. Catherine Dunn, "Popular Devotion in the Drama of Medieval England," *Meth* n.s.4 (1973), pp. 59 & 61.

66. Prosser, p. 127, details the idea of repetition as thematic emphasis, not as oversight, in a particular instance, and sees the use of thematic repetition in dialogue as a unifying technique. Also, pp. 108-9, she notes
that an amplification of theme is effected by repetition.


69. Longo, p. 67, as cited above.

70. Meyers, p. 11.

71. Reeves, "History..." p. 51, details Christ's genealogy as expressed by the Jesse Tree. The metaphor I offer of the seed and the tree is separate from Reeves' assessment in that I am illustrating the Christocentricity of medieval typological relationships, not only genealogical ones.

72. Meyers, p. 11.

73. D.W. Robertson, Jr., A Preface to Chaucer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 301. Also, see Vaughan, pp. 490-91, who notes that real Christian historical events are sacramentally the same as the medieval here and now of the audience.

74. Davidson, p. 63; further, Edwards, p. 164, notes that as the liturgy is timeless, so too the drama seeks to escape time.

75. William M. Manly, "Shepherds and Prophets: Religious Unity in the Towneley Secunda Pastorum," PMLA 78, 3 (1963), p. 153, and p. 155 n. 16, where he states that the "audience...was encouraged to see the Christ-drama more as ritual than as chronological sequence."

76. Martin, p. 138.

77. Ibid., p. 138.

78. Ibid., p. 131.


80. Meyers, p. 18, notes that typological time is arranged "by congruities of pattern." However, Martin, p. 144 n. 3, takes issue with Meyers' use of the term "typological," stating that he often uses it when he in fact means "archetypal."
81. Davidson, p. 63.
82. Kolve, p. 44.
84. Ibid., p. 168.
85. Martin, p. 141. However, Meyers, pp. 16-17, explicitly maintains that typology is not a closed system.
86. Meyers, p. 12.
87. Ibid., p. 18 (see n. 88 above).
89. Kolve, p. 118.
91. Martin, p. 144 n. 3 (see n. 88, above).
96. Helterman, pp. 56 & 92. Also, see Reeves, "History ...," p. 52, who details the typological balance between the appearance of the First Man on the Sixth Day, and the Second Man in the Sixth Age.
98. Meyers, pp. 41 & 55, respectively.
99. Ibid., p. 44.
100. Arnold Williams, "Typology and the Cycle Plays: Some Criteria," Spec 43, 4(1968), p. 600. It is necessary to draw the distinction between the terms "antitype" and "anti-type." Meyers and Woolf employ the former for the fulfillment of the type (actual), while Williams employs the latter as the contrasting typological suggestion of the actual,
perhaps even as a diabolical type. I have attempted to avoid the confusion which might result from the use of such terms by employing "actual" for "antitype," and by explicitly pointing out which figural connections are suggested by contrast, instead of referring to "anti-types" as Williams does.


102. Williams, p. 680.


104. Meyers, p. 10.

105. Davidson, p. 49.


107. Davidson, p. 43.

108. Ibid., p. 51.

109. Williams, p. 678. Likewise, Collins, p. 306, notes that while many episodes from the plays can "support the weight of typological interpretation," it is necessary to guard against finding "hidden relationships...between the actions of each and every Bible scene."


112. Williams, p. 680.

113. Ibid., p. 680. Williams does not give much credence to the notion that medieval man could discern many typological relationships in a one-time viewing. Based on the fact that the cycles were intended for yearly presentation, together with the familiar liturgy and homiletic instruction, medieval powers of perception, heightened by liturgical and dramatic repetition, would sharpen to include more scope to identify interrelationships from year to year.

115. See Martin, pp. 125-45. Also, the view that the Towneley and York cycles arose from one parent cycle, advanced by Marie Lyle in 1919, would justify substituting the York Fall of Man for the missing leaves of Towneley but only to make educated guesses at the nature of what was lost, based on the archetypal schema of language running throughout Towneley. The parent-cycle theory has, after all, been largely dismissed since Cargill’s Drama and Liturgy, yet the remaining correspondences between the two cycles may enlighten us somewhat. Further, regarding the contrasting typological—connection between Eve and Mary, Woolf, English Mystery Plays, p. 122, notes:

In literature the parallelism between Eve and the blessed Virgin was worked out [with] the two figures corresponding to two literary styles, the satiric literature of denigration of women, and the formal, ornate poetry in praise of women.

This parallelism may also be inferred as having existed in the Towneley, considering the archetypal paradigms of speech therein. (See Martin.)


117. See Brawer, “Form...,” pp. 119-122, for further discussions of this typological connection.


I Jonas, say that on the third morn.
From death he shall rise: this is a true tale,
Figured in me which long before
Lay three days buried in the whale, (11.67-78).

Meyers, p. 36, also affirms the typological relation of the prophets to Christ; and Joanna Dutka, “Mysteries, Minstrels and Music,” CD 8, 2 (1974), pp. 119-28, identifies David as a type of Christ.


120. Stevens, “Missing Parts...,” p. 255.

121. Dunn, “Medieval ‘Cycle’...,” p. 84. Also, in her article “Lyrical Form and the Prophetic Principle in the Towneley Plays,” MS 23 (1961), p. 87 n.32, she suggests reversing Pharam with The Prophets in order to arrive at the correct sequence of events. Meyers, p. 35, does arrange his
study thus, also noting, p. 33 n.16, that the arrangement is "incorrect" in the manuscript. Cf. Davidson, p. 75, where he notes that temporal details in and among the plays might be arranged for effect.

122. Williams, p. 688.

123. Woolf, English Mystery Plays, p. 64, says the seven age "patterning of history was widely known." Kolve, p. 283, says that the prophets represent the fifth age. In Towneley, the departure from chronology is intentional, and though Meyers, p. 33, would dispute this, saying there is "no doubt" that in performance The Prophets preceded Pharaoh, he offers no other evidence than the correct chronological arrangement found in the York cycle.

124. Brawer, "Form...", p. 119, considers the Towneley version the most complex of the extant English plays. Further, p. 122, he says, the structure of any part of the drama, such as that dealing with the prophets, is adequately understood only with reference to the larger framework which encloses it. This justifies the inferred intentionality of the rearrangement in Towneley. The Prophets occupy the fourth age for a reason.

125. Bräuer, "The Dramatic Function of the Ministry Group in the Towneley Cycle," Cd 4, 3 (1978), p. 171, notes that the rearrangement found in Towneley confirms the efficacy of the prophecies, since Moses defeats Pharaoh immediately following the prophetic procession. See also, Reeves, "History...", p. 73 n.9, there he quotes K. Lowith:

The past is a promise to the future: consequently the interpretation of the past becomes a prophecy in reverse, demonstrating the past as a meaningful preparation for the future, (emphasis mine).


Further, see Lozar, p. 398, on the subject of abandoning chronology for the sake of emphasis.

126. Williams, p. 691.


128. Dunn, "Lyrical Form...", p. 85. Kolve, p. 203, also sees the Old Testament plays as "prophetic events."

129. Kolve, p. 10.
130. Williams, p. 683.

131. Woolf, "The Effects...," p. 814. Also, see Lepow's article for her discussion of the Child/Host image as eucharistic typology in the plays, particularly p. 484 n. 4, where she identifies the Christchild with the idea of the sacrifice in the Middle Ages. However, Lepow's discussion does not extend beyond the plays which deal with Christ's life.

132. Williams, p. 683. However, if the central point of the play is the theme of obedience, and I believe it is, see Davidson, p. 51, for his discussion of the perfect obedience of Christ.


134. Ibid., pp. 314 & 328.

135. Manly, pp. 154-55, also remarks on this typological significance. Further, Campbell, pp. 384-387; and Vaughan, pp. 498-503, both detail the eschatological elements in The Second Shepherds' Play.

136. Williams, p. 683.

137. Vaughan, p. 492. See also, Williams, p. 682; and Longo, pp. 72 & 75.

138. The Second Shepherds' Play, because of its consistently rich textures, will be given further consideration in the ensuing discussions of time in the Towneley cycle.

139. Davidson, p. 50.

140. The Raising of Lazarus in Towneley, 1.83, tells of the four days Lazarus has been dead.

141. For the meaning of the gifts, see Longo, p. 78, and the conclusion to this thesis, which further details Longo's considerations.

142. Stevens, "Missing Parts...," pp. 261 & 263, says we can assume that the plays which have disappeared from the manuscript following the Ascension play are most likely lost as a result of ecclesiastical censorship, and were plays dealing with the Virgin Mary, not with the ministry of Christ's disciples. However, Meyers, p. 104, feels that these missing leaves contained pageants which anticipated the Second Coming.
143. Davidson, p. 84, notes that time "began" with the "Te Deum" in the York cycle, while the song "ends" time in Towneley. Dutka, Music in the English Mystery Plays (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1980), p. 42, confirms this reading.

144. Davidson, p. 49. See also Kolve, p. 116.

Chapter Two


2. See Davidson, pp. 55 & 61; Meyers, pp. 15 & 19; and Daniel P. Poteet II, "Time, Eternity, and Dramatic Form in Ludus Coventriae "Passion Play I'," CD 8, 4 (1975), p. 372, who says, "even scriptural chronology can be subordinated to the compiler's interpretive needs."


4. Meyers, p. 28. However, he does not agree with the assessment of anachronism as artistic simplicity.

5. Vaughan, p. 490.


7. See The Second Shepherds' Play in Towneley, 1.727, "lyttel day starne." This parallels biblical references to Christ as morning star in 2 Peter 1:19 and Revelation 22:16. Also, in The Offering of the Magi, "That of Iacob a starne shall spryng," (1.286), parallels Numbers 24:17.


9. Robinson, p. 512, calls direct audience address "the supreme anachronism in a kind of drama that is regularly anachronistic."

10. On the subject of anachronism as a dramatic device, see Manly, p. 153 n.8; Meyers, p. 14, who refers to medieval anachronism as deliberate; Vaughan, p. 493, who sees it as
planned; and Kolve, p. 186, who considers it to be artistic intention.

11. See Poteet, p. 377. Temporal conflations and anachronisms emphasize "the permanence of the moral hierarchy and the human condition and the denial of any special inherent significance of passing time."


13. Ibid., p. 105.


15. Meyers, p. 50. Also, see Vaughan, p. 495, where he notes that the play reduces temporal distance by invoking past/present correspondences.

16. Kolve, p. 185, has pointed out the first and the last of these particular medieval allusions.

17. Kolve, p. 185, also notes that the representation of the first murder takes place "in a highly organized medieval community."

18. Meyers, p. 20, comments on this superimposition of time.


21. See Prosser, pp. 21-42, on the medieval doctrine of repentance (as cited above, Chapter One n.17).

22. Pasch, pp. 1 & 5.

23. Kolve, p. 185.

24. Helterman, p. 56.


26. Vaughan, p. 491; See also, Davidson, p. 57, who refers to the audience's involvement in the plays as "imaginative participation."

27. Stevens, "Illusion..." p. 454.
28. I was first introduced to this medieval visual anachronism at the Offices of the Medici family in Florence, July, 1981. Also, see Robinson, p. 512, who notes the similarity between artistic and dramatic presentations of anachronism in the Middle Ages.


32. For discussions on the shepherds as Englishmen, for example, see Campbell, p. 389; Davidson, p. 59; and Kolve, pp. 104-106.

33. "Introduction" to Towneley, pp. xiii-xiv, gives a short examination of local allusions in this cycle, particularly those in The Second Shepherds' Play.

34. Concerning the immediate relevance of the lessons, see Brauer, "Dramatic Function...", p. 173; Davidson, p. 59; and Lepow, p. 486.

35. Davidson, p. 55.


37. Walsh, p. 387.

38. This notion is an extension of Edwards' discussion, pp. 165-66, on preserving a "coeval kinship" between playwright and audience through language.

39. St. Augustine, as quoted by Patrides, p. 5.


41. See Meyers, p. 12; Davidson, p. 56; Poteet, pp. 383-84.

42. Kolve, p. 117.

43. Pamela Sheingorn, "The Moment of Resurrection in the Corpus Christi Cycle Plays," Meth n.s.11 (1982), p. 119; speaks of time being frozen in some particularly iconic scenes; also, Poteet, p. 379; mentions that time is arrested by sacramental overtones in certain scenes.

44. Sheingorn, p. 119.

46. Poteet, pp. 383-84.

47. See Chapter One, n. 45.


49. Ložar, p. 392.


51. Vaughan, p. 490.


53. Lepow, p. 403.

54. Ibid., p. 484.

55. Poteet, p. 388.


57. Vaughan, pp. 492-93.

58. Manly, p. 155.

59. Ibid., p. 155.

60. Vaughan, p. 496.

61. Ibid., p. 495.

62. Reeves, "History...," p. 63.


64. See Davidson, p. 82; Kolve, pp. 124-44; and Martin, p. 148, for instance. Cf. Hawkins, p. 193, who finds gruesome laughter to be terrifying, thereby disagreeing with this notion.

65. Davidson, p. 82.

66. Kolve, pp. 139-40.

68. Kolve, p. 122, says, "time is expressed as an artifact shaped by God, whose patterns express His eternal truth."

69. Meyers, p. 16, notes that all ages are spiritually contemporary.

70. Poteet, p. 372.
73. Ibid., pp. 119-23.
74. Gardner, pp. 71-72.
75. Poteet, p. 372.
76. Cited above, n.71.
77. Davidson, p. 59.
78. Edwards, p. 159.
79. Ibid., pp. 161-62.
80. Kolve, p. 188.
81. Stevens, "Illusion...," p. 453; also see Davidson, p. 55.
82. Dunn, "Medieval Cycle...," p.
83. Dutka, "Mysteries,..." p. 120.
84. Dutka, Music, p. 12.
85. Dutka, "Mysteries,..." p. 121. Also, see Music, p. 88, where she notes that the bells "would be more elaborate than handbells."
86. Dutka, "Mysteries,..." p. 121, also makes note of this.
87. Dutka, Music, p. 82, identifies a beam as "a long metal horn or trumpet ... used for battle or hunting signals."
88. Ibid., pp. 83 & 85, refers to these horns which differ in significance and use from the "beam" anticipated in the prophet Sibyl's apocalyptic vision. However, see
pp. 148-49 n. 7, where she notes that some confusion arises from these differing terms, since we cannot establish exactly the instrument which is to herald judgment.


90. Sandro Sticca, "Drama and Spirituality in the Middle Ages," Meth n.s.4 (1973), p. 73.


92. Ibid., p. 162.

CHAPTER THREE


2. Grout, p. 88.

3. Ibid., p. 141.


5. See Butler, p. 127; and Peck, p. 59.

6. More specifically, the description of the first day of Creation in Towneley is, "it is good to be so;" of the third, "this wark to me is queme," and for the fifth day, God says, "be In my lyssyngr.

7. See Hopper, p. 101; and Peck, p. 60, for their corroborating testimony concerning the meaning of the number four.

8. Hopper, p. 101. That this preference for odd numbers over even ones is due in some way to the gender distinction in the number of human ribs has suggested itself, and could quite possibly provide an interesting area for further study following the conclusion of this. After all, Eve was the second human created!
9. On 3 as a perfect number, see Hopper, pp. 42 & 101; Peck, pp. 59-68; and Delno C. West and Sandra ZimdarsSwartz, Joachim of Fiore: A Study in Spiritual Perception and History (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), pp. 16-17.


11. Hopper, p. 100.


15. Fry, p. 471.

16. Hopper, p. 120.

17. Grout, p. 149. The fauxbourdon was originally written in two parts with the third voice added in performance.

18. Dutka, Music, p. 96. Further, see Grout, p. 151, where he declares that the most famed English composer of the day was John Dunstable, whose most important works even today are his three part sacred pieces. Also, see Mack, p. 80, who notes that the song of the shepherds "unites three in one," whereas the disguise presents one as two.


20. See The Second Shepherds' Play in Towneley, 11,446-48 & 1,476. The former is where Gyll requires Mak to sing the lullabye while she groans her "pains" of child-birth, whereas the latter distinctly indicates that "they hak," (emphasis mine).


22. Ibid., p. 102. Also M.E.D., ed. Robert E. Lewis (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985), refers to it as the questionable "scribal corruption" of tenour. "Reyant" sounds, however, as though it is derived from
French, and is perhaps an anglicized bastardization of the term "revanche", which means revenge, requital, return, or retaliation. (See Larousse's French-English, English-French Dictionary (New York: Washington Square Press, Inc., 1955). As an anglicization of a word of French origin, this would make more sense in the devil's speech; and according to the O.E.D., "revenge" is a late Middle English term. Based on this reading, the devils intend to sing a song set, aptly, in two parts, of the devil's revenge on God in claiming at least the bad souls.

23. Reeves, "History...", p. 54.

24. Hopper, p. 83.


26. Hopper, p. 165. Also, p. 41, where he says, "By virtue of the triad, unity and diversity are restored to harmony."

27. Pasch, p. 176, compares the true duality of Christ to the false duality of Herod.


30. Reiss, p. 162.

31. Ibid., p. 166.

32. Ibid., p. 168.

33. The passage of enumeration is, "A hundred thousand, I wath and forty or slayn, And four thousand."

34. Hopper, p. 94.

35. Ibid., p. 16. Also, p. 9, Hopper notes that the number 300 is in the same category of meaning as the number 3, so it follows that 300 is an extension of 3.

36. Kolwe, pp. 118-19, where he discusses time as artifact, and the middle event (Christ's life) affecting time both before and after it.

37. Peck, p. 15.

38. Ibid., p. 28.
39. Pasch, p. 192, corroborates this idea, saying that the repetition of threes is not mere redundancy, but rather a continuing demonstration of the Trinity.

40. Hopper, pp. 103 & 107, respectively.


42. Hopper, p. 109.


44. On the Three Ages, see Hopper, p. 110; on both the Three Ages and the Three Advents of God, see Davidson, p. 79; and Pasch, p. 213. For a discussion on the Three Advents of God, see Kolve, pp. 59-62; and on the Three Advents of Christ, see Vaughan, pp. 500-502.

45. Reeves, "History....", p. 54, discusses the idea of time being a "progressive revelation of the Trinity," and pp. 55-56, where she notes that Joachim's understanding suggested that the inner workings and relations of the Trinity were at work in the time process. Also, see her text, *Joachim of Fiore and the Prophetic Future* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), p. 5, wherein she explicitly states that according to Joachim, the Trinity was "built into the fabric of the time process in such a way that its very inner relations were expressed therein."


47. *Ibid.*, p. 182, where he notes that alpha and omega are "steeped in trinitarian tradition."


49. *Ibid.*, p. 260. (Also, see the conclusion, p. 138.)

50. *Ibid.*, p. 49. This icon could also be the circle within the triangle as in the case of Joachim's "Psalterium," shown on page 137. Pasch, p. 182, also identifies the opening lines of *Creation* as trinitarian. See the discussion on p. 114 above.

51. Gardner, p. 46, particularly identifies Noah and the Ark and *The Second Shepherds' Play* as thematically trinitarian pageants. However, the efficacy of these plays in conveying triplistic schemes is not to the exclusion of other, though less effective plays. Many Towneley pageants warrant the same thematic scrutiny.
52. Gardner, p. 47, also details the correlation between harmony and "Armonye" which I have suggested here.

53. Ibid., pp. 39-48, is an analysis of the trinitarian theme in Noah, although Gardner does not specifically deal with number symbolism.

54. Ibid., p. 48.

55. Ibid., p. 43.

56. There is some critical dispute over the initiation and closure of the Three Ages. (See Hopper, p. 118.) For the purposes of this chapter, Joachim's understanding of them is favoured: the First Age is under the Father, from the Fall to the Incarnation, while the Second is under the Son, from Incarnation to Judgment, and the Third Age is the more particular domain of the Holy Spirit, who heralds a heavenly state of Grace on earth following Judgment, when all men who believe will live in eternal harmony. According to Reeves, Joachim, pp. 6-7, the term "age" is really "status". See also, West and Zimdars-Swartz, pp. 13-17, who detail these "epochs" as above.

57. Meyers, p. 36, notes this encapsulation of history in Daniel's speech, and though the prophet does not specifically mention Judgment, the implication of it is there since Christ's Advent, according to Daniel, will save man "euermore withouten end" (Prophets in Towneley, 1.234). In this instance, we may interpret "euermore" as the Third Age under the Spirit, in eternity.


59. Peck, p. 38. Though the critic here refers to the readers of Piers Plowman and to Will, saying, "They all meet in Christ," we may also apply the statement to the Corpus Christi audience and the Old Testament characters, for example:

Noah ----> Christ <--- Audience

60. Hopper, p. 41, says "By virtue of the triad, unity and diversity of which it is composed are restored to harmony, 'because the mean acting as mediator links the other two into a single, complete order.'" (Hopper is here quoting Proclus, Elements, I, 148.) Further, as a modern analogy from musical theory, the third (or mediant) is never omitted in compositions of polyphonic textures since without the third, an empty sound results. See Edward Aldwell and Carl Schacter, Harmony and Voice Leading, I (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1978), p. 61. Of more interest, considering the above, the third was first recognized
and utilized by the English in the Middle Ages as a consonant interval, according to Grout, pp. 147-48.

61. See Peck, pp. 34 & 35, on the medieval triple time sense.

62. Helterman, p. 19. (Cited in Chapter One, n.97.)

63. Kolve, p. 121.


65. Peck, p. 25.

66. Ibid., pp. 56 & 59-60.

67. See Fry, p. 488, for a discussion on triadic groupings possibly having been incorporated in the plays on the basis of aesthetic balance. However, Peck, p. 40, comments that, "Parody and participation through analogy are both forms of numbering and are... useful [since] their harmonious patterns help man discover harmony." Therefore, parodic triads and "good" triads do not lose their intrinsic suggestions of the Trinity.

68. In ritual, the "Kyrie Eleison" is based on a pattern of repetition in threes. Fry makes note of this ritualistic echo of trinitarianism, p. 466 n.2.

69. Kolve, p. 119.

70. Peck, p. 56 n.61. See also, Pasch, p. 82, on the ideas of circle and centre; and Stephen Toulmin and June Goodfield, The Discovery of Time (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 70, for a discussion on God as centre and circumference of the circle.


73. Pasch, p. 49.

74. Hopper, pp. 41-42.

75. Kolve, p. 117.

77. Hopper, p. 48.

78. Peck, pp. 26 & 54 n.38.

79. In particular, see those studies by Pasch and Vaughan, herein cited.

80. Longo, p. 65.

81. See Davidson, p. 43, on the iconographic associations of left and right, as discussed in Chapter One, above.

82. Vaughan, p. 500, characterizes these advents as historical, analogical and moral, or historical, personal and eternal, respectively.

83. This third advent must actually take place between the two physical Comings of Christ in order to be spiritually efficacious. See Vaughan, p. 501.


85. Longo, p. 75, associates the complaints of the shepherds with pride, flesh and the world, influences from which man is not truly delivered until Christ's Redemption of him.

86. Kolve, p. 62.

87. Ibid., p. 59.

88. Longo, pp. 81-84, details these associations.

89. Ibid., p. 84.

90. Ibid., p. 82.

91. Sticca, p. 84.

Conclusion


2. Gardner, p. 137, as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Processus Noe</td>
<td>Mactatio Abel</td>
<td>Abraham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primar Pastorum</td>
<td>Conspiracio</td>
<td>Jacob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secunda Pastorum</td>
<td>Fflagellacio</td>
<td>Pharao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnus Herodes</td>
<td>Processus Crucis</td>
<td>Obligacio Magorum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coliphizacio</td>
<td>Talentorum</td>
<td>Extraccio Animarum</td>
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<td>Judicium</td>
<td>Resurrectio Domini</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lazarus</td>
<td>Peregrini</td>
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<td>Ascensio Domini</td>
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</table>

The first column shows the plays which are attributed wholly to the Wakefield Master. The second includes pageants which exhibit some signs of revision by him. The third contains plays of questionable authorship, possibly illustrating some touch by his hand. The fourth category appears in the Conclusion, and includes those plays which show no signs of the Master's influence.


5. Kolve, p. 117.
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