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N-TOWN MODERNIZED: AN EXPERIMENT IN
THE ADAPTATION OF A MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS TEXT
FOR MODERN PRODUCTION

presented by

ANDREW DAVID RYDER

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N-TOWN MODERNIZED: AN EXPERIMENT IN
THE ADAPTATION OF A MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS TEXT
FOR MODERN PRODUCTION

By

Andrew David Ryder

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ABSTRACT

N-TOWN MODERNIZED: AN EXPERIMENT IN
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FOR MODERN PRODUCTION

By

Andrew David Ryder

The English drama of the Middle Ages may be adapted for modern performance. Few scripts documenting medieval performances exist, and most of these are written in Middle English, Latin, Medieval French, or some combination of these. It is valuable to create modernized texts of the medieval drama, and to document the process through which modern productions may be made from modern-spelling editions of medieval plays.

This thesis explores the process of condensing and adapting the text of the N-town Passion Plays I and II into a paraphrased, modern English performance script. The process includes: changes in language and script; various elements of performance (staging, scenography, costume and audience relationship); and thematic ideas and expression.

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I. Introduction

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to experiment with adapting a specific medieval religious script for a present-day audience. This thesis describes an attempt to adapt the N-town Passion Plays I and II for a modern audience, and the process of testing the adaptation with a contemporary audience. The study organizes itself into three major areas: 1) Script adaptation: language and structure; 2) Script presentation, which includes the challenge of approximating medieval performance conditions in terms of staging, scenography, acting, costumes and audience relationship; and 3) Unique thematic content and means of expression. It includes the attempt to address contemporary audience expectations in all three areas.

The Period and Its Drama

The religious drama of the Middle Ages and the theatrical performances which grew from it have attracted the attention of hundreds of scholars over the past five centuries. Twentieth-century studies suggest a general division into genres: 1) collections of texts and translations; 2) essays on the content, purpose and dramatic value of the plays; 3) works of literary history; and

4) speculations on historical performance. There are many works in each category. The following are those which are most significant for this study.

The first group consists of original manuscripts, text collections and translations. This group includes Karl Young's monumental two-volume Drama of the Medieval Church (1933), in which he anthologizes a corpus of important medieval religious drama. Young organizes his text according to subject, rather than date, location or other criteria. David Bevington's 1975 Medieval Drama stands out among the newer works of this genre. He anthologizes many of the same texts as Young, but organizes his text chronologically, including brief prefatory sections on each period. Bevington also collects a Corpus Christi protocycle which includes the Banns and Passion Play I from N-town. The most important texts for this study are the editions and translations of the N-town cycle of R. T. Davies (Totowa: Rowman, 1972) and Stephen Spector (2 vols. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991).

The next group features scholars writing about content, themes and dramatic potential in medieval plays. Among them are: Eleanor Prosser, author of Drama and Religion in the English Mystery Plays (1961), in which she argues for the value and quality of the religious cycle drama as a drama of repentance; O. B. Hardison, whose 1965 study Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages suggests a close connection between the drama and liturgy of the medieval

period; and Arnold Williams, who attempted to bring medieval drama to a general audience with his Drama of Medieval England (1961).

An intermediate group, loosely defined as "literary historians," includes two very important works for the study of medieval drama. They are: E. K. Chambers' classic 1903 Medieval Stage, still a standard reference work because of its scope, though the concept of evolutionary development it suggests from church to drama to cycle has been generally superseded; and Hardin Craig's response to and elaboration on Chambers' ideas in the 1955 English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages. Though he does not completely abandon Chambers, and suggests that religious drama is more important as religion than as drama or theatre, Craig's ideas engender challenging questions about the religious form and purpose of the cycles.

Glynn Wickham heads the final group, which consists of theatre historians writing about the conditions of medieval performance. His Early English Stages : 1300-1660 (1959) documents performances ranging from tournaments and ridings to the construction of *The Theatre* in 1576 and beyond. His more recent Medieval Theatre (1987) summarizes European theatrical activity in the same period. William Tydeman has written widely on the subject as well. The 1986 book, English Medieval Theatre: 1400-1500 discusses some of the medieval English plays and their performance methods, while Tydeman's broader Theatre in the Middle Ages (1978) traces

the development of theatre in England from 800 to 1576, and includes a valuable chronology. Other historians of performance include: Peter Meredith and Keith Ramsay, who, with Tydeman, have written Acting Medieval Plays (1985) in which they discuss the possibilities of modern performance of the cycles, with a description of their own efforts; and Stanley Kahrl and Kenneth Cameron who published a series of articles on the specifics of staging at Lincoln Cathedral, suggesting and documenting a possible connection between the cathedral and the N-town cycle.

The Texts or Scripts

One consideration immediately faces the producer of medieval cycle drama: few texts remain. Even fewer of these texts exist in a form which may be directly produced by modern performers. Only four cycles are relatively complete: York, Chester, Towneley (Wakefield) and N-town. There are also manuscripts for plays from Coventry and Cornwall which appear to have been part of longer cycles. Each collection uses 20 plays or more (N-town takes 41) to tell the story of Mankind's Fall, Redemption and Judgment. It is possible that some of these cycles were performed, on occasion, all in one day. Their sheer length demands at least one full summer day of attention (during all available hours of sunlight) to perform a complete cycle of plays. Other than the revivals of the York, Lincoln and Chester

plays in their towns beginning in the 1950s (see Elliott 71-156; Wickham, Medieval Theatre (MT) 234-38), it is nearly impossible to consider performing an entire cycle at once. Modern producers must select some plays, scenes and lines and eliminate others. For a modern American audience accustomed to spending two or three hours in the theatre, it is probably not feasible to perform more than ten of these plays at one time.

The process of text selection involves many decisions. Some of these are: choosing one cycle; selecting scenes from that cycle or from each cycle and assembling them into a script; and determining how to adapt the selection for a modern audience. For example, this particular attempt used the Passion sequences from the N-town cycle. In N-town, the Passion is divided into two groups of plays which were ostensibly performed in alternating or subsequent years. This segment of ten plays (approximately 3000 lines of poetry) was condensed into a continuous script of twenty short scenes and about 750 lines of prose. The adapted script begins with Jesus' Triumphal Entry and continues through the Ascension.

Sources for "N-town": The Name and the Text

The cycle called "N-town" is shrouded in mystery. It was once known as *Ludus Coventriae* because an early scribe mistakenly scribbled that title on a cover of the

manuscript. Some call this the "Hegge" cycle because a man named Robert Hegge once owned the work (Spector xiii-xviii). These are also known as the Lincoln plays according to the scholarship of Stanley Kahrl and Kenneth Cameron, which places them at Lincoln based on performance records from the cathedral there and references within the N-town script. William Tydeman and Hardin Craig also accept Lincoln as a possible home for N-town (Craig 265-80; TMA 160). It is not known for sure where this cycle might have been performed (or if it was even ever performed as a cycle (Fletcher 163)), so the designation "N-town" is appropriate to indicate its anonymity. However, the title comes directly from the proclamation to the play: "A Sunday next, yf that we may / at vj [6] of the belle we gynne oure play / In N.town" (Spector 21). This description might suggest an itinerant or touring production.

Not only is the name confusing, but the manuscript itself is inconsistent. There are eight different watermarks on the paper and at least four different types of handwriting in the manuscript (Spector xxii-xxiii, xxxix-xl). Because Passion Play I has a clear beginning, middle and end, and Passion II at least has a definite beginning, it appears that they could have been performed separately and therefore either added to this manuscript or removed from one which no longer exists. Alan Fletcher argues that the cycle itself is a compilation, intended as a flexible basis for production, but not in itself a performance

script. He suggests that the additions, deletions and other changes in the text serve primarily to offer many possibilities for future interpretations. The Passion Plays came from some other source in relatively complete form, and were only altered in small ways, incorporating material from an earlier "cycle" and blending the end of Passion II into the remaining plays (172-77).

The plays in the manuscript do not accord completely with the proclamation, which announces the name and subject of each play. This introduction contradicts the content of some portions of the cycle contained within the manuscript, and shows evidence of at least two different numbering systems (Spector 417). These conditions have led many to treat this cycle as discrete units without any unity of plan and design, which must be analyzed separately according to their differences. Eleanor Prosser and Martin Stevens, however, (among others) have argued convincingly that this script is unified (Stevens, "Genres" 44; Prosser 201-205). Despite this controversy, such a play seems well-suited to be a source for a modern selection from a cycle. This conclusion is supported by Fletcher's perception of the manuscript as a composite compilation which shifts "responsibility for the final form that the *compilatio* takes . . . to those who use it" (177), which is precisely what any play script properly does.

Definitions

The term "medieval" is used in a very generic sense. Webster's dictionary defines "medieval" as "of or pertaining to the Middle Ages," and defines the "Middle Ages" as a period from approximately 500-1500 A.D. In the history of the English cycle drama, neither date is so clear or so early. The chronology listed in Richard Beadle's Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre begins in 970, with the date of the Regularis Concordia containing the "Visitatio Sepulchri." And it is not until 1376 that there is even a mention of the Corpus Christi pageants; in this case the plays at York, for which the earliest extant text dates to the 1460s. The N-town plays are dated 1468, perilously close to Webster's ending date for the "medieval" period.

Glynn Wickham proposes four possible (later) dates for the conclusion of the medieval period in theatre in England: 1576 (the building of *The Theatre* in London), 1605 (the appearance of the first proscenium-arched stage), 1642 (the closing of the theatres) or 1660 (the 'triumph of the new style of stagecraft in the public theatres built after 1660') (EES xxvii). Since the N-town cycle may have been performed as early as 1400 and no later than the 1570s (TMA 249), 1576 will serve to define the close of the medieval period for the purposes of this paper.

"Liturgy" refers to the services and rituals of the

Medieval Catholic church. "Liturgical drama" is drama which was a part of the rituals of the church and was not performed independently of those services. Most of this drama was written in Latin, beginning with the well-known "Quem Quaeritis" trope (Bevington 21-29; Young 201-369). The language and indoor performance location distinguish it from the cycle drama, also referred to here as the "mystery plays," because they deal, as Dorothy Sayers put it, "with the central Mystery of Redemption" and "show forth the *Myth*, beginning to end" (qtd. in Elliott ix).

The cycles are also distinguished from "saints' plays" and "miracle plays" (though Wickham retains the latter designation for the cycles in EES) which followed them and dramatized miraculous events and acts by historical canonized individuals. Neither are they appropriately classified as "morality plays," of which Everyman is the best-known example. Morality plays usually tell a temptation story, featuring a human subject who must make the right choices when faced with the personifications of such challenges as Death, Goods, Good Deeds and Knowledge.

In this introduction the word "drama" has already been used as an understood word. Because of its multiplicity of connotations, this thesis defines "drama" as "the written script for a theatrical performance." Within this thesis, "theatre" takes on two definitions as well. A "theater," ("-er") is the place where such a performance takes place.

The "theater" for these medieval plays may have been a

street or a field. In the case of the modern performance of this adapted script, the "theater" was a church chapel. "Theatre" ("-re") describes the shared experience of the performance of one of these plays, then or now. It is the event for which any drama is but the foundation. It is assumed that the specific definition will be clear to the reader from the context.

Within the performer/audience relationship exist a variety of possible arrangements. The two extremes of this relationship have often been described as "representation" and "presentation." These words distinguish between theatre which is illusionistic and attempts to fool the audience into believing events on stage are really happening (Crawford 501) and theatre which is given more directly to the audience, as in a lecture, an aside or a soliloquy (500).

"Presentation" implies some attempt or success at clearly informing the audience of their position and role in the theatrical contract, and often reminding them of this role throughout the production, either by direct address, labels and signs, or visible mechanics. Presentational theatre is anti-illusion and seeks to maintain the perception that an audience is nothing more than an audience in a theater. This distance from the plot or events onstage is intended to provide them with the separation necessary to think about the issues raised by the performance. John Elliott has written, "The English mystery cycles are . . .

presentational rather than realistic dramas. . . . the illusion of scenic verisimilitude plays no essential part in their meaning" (127). John Marshall concludes that modern productions have proven that "performance requires acts of presentation rather than identification" (304). The production created from this adapted script may be classified as "Presentational Theatre."

Problems and Challenges of the Drama

There are many problems inherent in the attempt to communicate this kind of drama to a modern audience. The English language has changed in many ways since the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when these plays were regularly performed (Tydeman, Theatre in the Middle Ages (TMA) 248). Our society has changed as well. The most significant societal change in terms of its effect on modern productions of these plays concerns the relationship between "secular" and "religious" life. When these dramas were being performed, they were an outgrowth of the work of the church. Even those plays which were performed entirely by craft guild members and sponsored by the town government were religious experiences in purpose. In Medieval Theatre Glynne Wickham asserts,

the drama associated with Corpus Christi was directed towards the frivolous rich and the covetous tradesman in an effort to re-dedicate society to Christ and Christ's service in the remembrance that Christ had died to save mankind

. . . the Corpus Christi Cycle plays were as much a civic response to this message as an ecclesiastical initiative. Market-squares were thus as appropriate a *platea* or acting-place for these performances as convent courtyards, laymen more desirable as actors than clerics, and civic wealth as necessary to finance productions of these *ludi* as clerical scribes to provide the texts. (67)

The cycle plays were connected with the Catholic Feast of Corpus Christi, which was celebrated on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday, or between May 23 and June 24 (TMA 97). They were performed during Corpus Christi and other summer church festivals such as Whitsun (Pentecost), approximately two weeks earlier, and St. Anne's Day, July 26 (Woolf 55). The cycles tell the story of Christian history from the creation of the world to the end of time.

Not only is this story, with its focus on the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, a religious story, but the writing, selection and editing of the story in the plays utilized liturgical materials and theological ideas present in the resources and publications of the contemporary catholic church. Among these resources were the Meditationes Vitae Christi, the apocryphal gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and the Mirroure of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ, Nicholas Love's translation of the Meditationes. These commentaries, along with the Northern Passion and other contemporary works, supplemented the scribes and scholars' primary source, the Vulgate Scripture (Spector xliv).

Guild performers, clergy or laity, considered all of their work, whether farming, preaching or shoeing horses, to be the work of God. As Wickham has written,

a mentality which regarded toil as itself a devotional exercise, a return of thanks to the Creator for the endowments of skill and bodily health . . . was the unquestioned view of the guilds, all of which existed in the service of a Patron Saint as well as for the better conduct of trade and the regulation of employment. (Early English Stages (EES) 127)

Though being at church was not the same as being at work, the harsh, black-and-white distinction we make today between "Church and State" or "Religion and Society" did not exist.

There is another element which distances modern audiences from this drama: the festive, celebratory experience of the plays. Meg Twycross acknowledges that:

There was no such thing as casual theatregoing: each of these plays was the centrepiece of a special occasion for a close-knit community. The mystery plays were at the same time a religious festival and a tourist attraction: their players could draw on a charge of heightened religious emotion and civic pride which we can never recreate. (37)

R. T. Davies describes the "celebratory function" of the cycles which functioned "as a species of both worship and self-realization . . . [to act] out the destiny of mankind under God." The Medieval people who came together for this experience were enjoying a summer festival which indulged "an entire community's many-sided and diversely satisfying activity on a public holiday" (47). And John Marshall has written, "What distinguishes medieval drama from that of our own time as much as anything else is its religious sense of

festive occasion" (296).

Some of the twentieth-century occasions on which full cycles have been produced have recreated this kind of "festival" atmosphere, among them the English town revivals (see Elliott; Marshall) and the occasional cycle festivals at the University of Toronto, sponsored by their resident production company, *Poculi Ludique Societas* (PLS). This group of students, faculty and alumni of the University of Toronto's Medieval Drama Program produces local and touring productions of short medieval plays as well as organizing occasional international festivals at which entire cycles are produced. For example: the York Cycle was produced there in 1977 (see Lindebaum); the N-town Passion was performed there in 1981 (Twycross 59; Walsh 133); and the Towneley Cycle in 1985 (Walsh 137; Marshall 295). These festivals feature performance groups from the United States, Canada and the world. Together they play one whole cycle or parts of one over a period of days. This shared experience creates a bond among the participants. Milla Riggio describes the 1985 Toronto Towneley Cycle performance and its effect this way:

even when divorced from its religious origins, a communal event such as this production powerfully creates its own ambience. The festival transcends the particularities of production. . . .the event created a sense of shared community that gave it momentum to absorb weak productions and dramatic inconsistencies. (143).

Harvey Cox's study of modern festivity suggests that our summer concerts and art shows only approximate the

experience of these celebrations. He claims that "our celebrations do not relate us, as they once did, to the parade of cosmic history or to the great stories of man's spiritual quest" (4). Cox goes on to define "festivity" as "the capacity for genuine revelry and joyous celebration" (7), attributes which seem uncommon today.

Medieval 'Time' in Religious Dramas

Another challenge to the modern producer of medieval drama is the idea of time. The medieval mind understood time differently than modern man does. Eleanor Prosser has described it this way: "the crowds that gathered to watch the mystery plays were not witnessing a dramatized 'history' of a dead past, but a living demonstration of present truth" (53). Time was not linear and causal; but time as presented in the cycles: time which began because God caused it to begin in creation and which will end when God causes it to end at Doomsday. God's "time" is "an eternal present in which yesterday is as much today as tomorrow, for He is outside time and knows all always" (Davies 45) and man's time is only a brief second of eternity. The cycles connect the audience with eternity by reminding them of the relative insignificance of human history and achievement. Harvey Cox says much the same thing about the function of celebrations (which is what the cycles were) for a society: "Celebration . . . reminds us that . . . history is not the exclusive or

final horizon of life" (46). Man's potential for good is greater in this view of time, for Man can do anything when connected with the Eternal Creator. The present is important because choices made in it will affect eternity. The past is interesting and valuable not because it illustrates mankind's achievements or demonstrates the causes of social conditions, but because it may provide the impetus to remedy the present. The future is the hoped-for bliss of Heaven, the Eternal.

This concept of time includes the Seven Ages of Man. The first five ages include the events of the Old Testament from Adam through the prophets. The sixth age is the Age of Grace, which includes Christ's lifetime and ours. The final age will begin with Doomsday and return time to eternity (Kolve 119-20).

Related to the medieval concept of time is the lack of a sense of "historicity" in the Middle Ages. The English townspeople who saw these plays had little concern for the proper historical period of the drama or story. They considered time to be connected by what was outside of and superior to it, not by a succession of historical events or ideas (Kolve 119). As John Marshall asserts, "Medieval drama presents the biblical past in terms of the medieval present" (179).

Medieval Staging Practices

There is a form to the staging of the medieval period and particularly to the N-town Passion Plays. This method may be described as *loca-platea*, or place-and-scaffold, staging. It features two primary acting areas: the *platea* (also called the "place"), which refers to the audience-level performance area and includes the space among and surrounding the seating area (Twycross 59; Southern 17-49); the *loca*, or locations, defined in and around the *platea* and raised up on constructed platforms called "scaffolds". A scaffold may also be called "scaffold, stage, house and tent" (Twycross 60). The scaffolds can indicate general or specific *loca*. In this kind of specified staging arrangement, there was always a scaffold for Heaven and some kind of "Hell," though Anne Cooper Gay finds that in treating the N-town Passion Play I as a discrete drama, no Hell is required. She describes a total of six "stations" for the performance of this play, at least three of them on elevated stages (136). Other scaffolds might indicate different locations at different times. For example, in the N-town Passion, the same "council-house" may have served both as the "little oratory" where the Jews plot Jesus' destruction and "the Temple" where Maria Virgo goes to await the Resurrection at the end of Passion Play I (see Nelson 133-47; Rose, "Staging" 210-19).

In the production described within this thesis, almost all of the locations were used to indicate more than one setting. For example, the main stage level (B), which served as the Upper Room for the Last Supper scenes in Passion Play I became the Mount of Olives and the hill of the Crucifixion later in the story (see below: fig. 1; p. 64, "Playing Space").

Limitations

The limits of this effort are as follows: this study describes the process of adapting the script for a contemporary performance of the Passion I and II segments of the N-town cycle: second, the paraphrased script is based upon R. T. Davies' English version, which reflects his own translation choices for obsolete and archaic words. Therefore, the performance script contained herein is not "a new translation of N-town." Finally, while this is not dramatic or literary criticism, the tools of both were used in preparing the script and the thesis. This thesis describes a performance script, the conditions and processes under which it was developed, and some unique features of a performance based on that script.

Significance

The performance orientation of this study is a significant feature. Few studies of this kind exist, particularly with modern English scripts. One of the greatest obstacles to the production of these texts is the length and the language, so this paraphrase and its process are an important help for potential producers, adapters and directors. It provides and illustrates a source of texts for church performances and productions, either for devotion, celebration or recreation. Additionally, it gives another script to the theatre which is capable of supporting a variety of production styles and methods.

Plays, especially medieval ones, "were intended to be seen and heard, not read . . . they were designed for a general audience which was more accustomed to hearing its literature than to reading it silently" (Beadle, Companion xiii). Therefore, it is important to play these dramas in front of an audience to determine and illustrate their theatrical viability. As Meg Twycross has written, "if we take them seriously as theatre, they will work" (37). Richard Beadle says that "modern revivals . . . propose a variety of delights, insights, questions and problems which previous studies . . . have seldom sought to address" (xv). Such revivals require texts. As mentioned above, the language, condition and length of the extant texts necessitates adaptation for modern production.

II. Adaptation of N-town Passion Plays I and II

Part A: Structural Outline and Condensation

The problems of language and script adaptation are central to this experimental study. Beginning with a modern English version of the N-town cycle in modern spelling, actions and dialogue were modified and paraphrased to make them clearer to a modern audience. This chapter will provide parallel columns of text. In the left column the primary actions of each scene in the N-town Passion Plays I and II are summarized. On the right side stands a brief indication of how each scene was adapted. The numbers in parentheses in the left column refer to page numbers in R. T. Davies' Corpus Christi Play of the English Middle Ages. In the right column, the references are to page numbers in the adapted script, found in Appendix A beginning on page 94. Page numbers preceded by "see" refer to the section on "Script Development" which follows the parallel portion of this chapter.

Structurally, N-town's Passion Play I begins with two prologues addressed directly to the audience.

Scene I: Prologues

Original N-town Script

Production Adaptation

A. Demon

The first prologue is delivered by 'Demon,' or "your Lord, Lucifer, that out of hell came" (Davies 235). He describes his fall, his control over the world, and his goal of human domination: "I am nourisher of sin to the confusion of man/To bring him to my dungeon there in fire to dwell" (235).

Paraphrased extensively (see 53-55) and condensed. (95-96)

B. John the Baptist

Demon exits on sight of John the Baptist, who delivers a sermon in which he makes his scriptural annunciation of the coming of Christ; "one shall come after me and not tarry long,/In many fold more stronger than I,/Of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose the thong," followed by a sermon on the "ways of our Lord" (239). In it he offers a dualistic approach to life. His listeners must neither presume nor despair but rather keep on "the path between bothen . . . hope and dread" (240). These exhortations by representatives of 'both sides' in the ensuing story immediately place the audience in a position to choose.

**Scene II:
Council of Jews I**

Original

Adaptation

The play itself opens at this point. The first scene shows Annas, the high priest "in his stage, besein after a bishop of the old law . . ." With him are two "doctors" and a messenger. He describes the challenge of Jesus, who "our lawes he destroys daily with his deed" (241). On the recommendation of his counselors, he sends for Caiphas to discuss this problem, as well as summoning Rewfin and Lyon who are "temporal judges" (242). All of them meet and offer their suggestions, at which time they conclude that patience, and sending spies "to see and record and testimony" (247) is the best approach.

Condensed; Annas and Caiphas made just Caiphas; Rewfin and Lyon made just Rewfin. (97)

**Scene III:
Entry into Jerusalem**

Original

Adaptation

The scene changes to Palm Sunday, as Jesus instructs his disciples on where to find a mount for him, they retrieve the ass and foal, and Jesus "rides out of the place" (248). Peter and John remain to offer additional sermons. Peter preaches on the spiritual insensitivity of the audience/crowd and the solution, which is Jesus. John supports this in his brief paragraphs confirming Jesus' approach and the honor he deserves. The citizens of the town discuss this and encourage one another in the effort to welcome Jesus to the town. As he enters on the donkey they sing, followed by Jesus' statement on "the time of mercy" (251), the healing of two blind men, and Jesus' weeping over Jerusalem.

Condensed; no sermons from Peter and John (see 55); John enters to tell the people of Jesus' approach and to encourage them to welcome him. As Jesus enters from the back of the room through the center aisle, the disciples and Maries sing to welcome him. The scene concludes with a brief message from Jesus. (98)

**Scene IV:
Maundy I**

Original

Adaptation

The next scene to be played is the beginning of the Last Supper. Peter and John ask Jesus where he "wilt . . . keep thy Maundy?" (253) as if the Last Supper has already been established. Jesus describes the host and location and the disciples quickly locate Simon the Leper, at whose house they will eat. This is a combination of the dinner at the home of Simon in Bethany and the Last Supper. The scene ends with the disciples and Jesus entering Simon's house and sitting down to eat the "paschal lamb" (255).

Condensed. (99)

**Scene V:
Council of Jews II**

Original

Adaptation

The scene shifts back to the conspirators, who have been frustrated in their efforts to assemble concrete charges against Jesus. They decide that he must be charged, even if it must be by false witnesses. Here we have the first indication that the Pharisees and their followers are less concerned with the preservation of 'Law' than of their own power. (see below, Chapter Four) Their discussion continues and presumably freezes as the scene "cuts" back to the Last Supper with the entrance of Mary Magdalene.

Condensed. (100)

**Scene VI:
Maundy II**

Original

Adaptation

Mary Magdalene enters, informing the audience of her great sin and her determination to see Jesus about it. She anoints his feet with expensive perfume and begs his forgiveness, which he offers. He casts six demons out of her and declares her forgiven. Judas objects to this great expense, but Jesus silences him and praises Mary. After the Mary episode (it is unclear whether she is still in the room or not), Jesus predicts his betrayal. The disciples react, dumbfounded, and each offers his assurance of loyalty, except for Judas, who asks, "Am I that person that thee now shall sell?" "So sayest thyself," Jesus answers (261), and Judas leaves quietly to meet with the Jewish plotters, after briefly explaining his plan to the audience: "Some money for him yet would I tell" (261).

Condensed. (101-2)

**Scene VII:
Betrayal**

Original

Adaptation

Judas leaves the Last Supper "privily" and goes to the meeting-place of the Jews. The conspirators welcome Judas' offer to betray Jesus to them, and pay him thirty pieces of silver. They ask in addition for "a token. . . that must be privy betwixt us here" because "one disciple is like thy master in all parail" (263). Judas suggests the kiss, which they agree to. He moves back to the Last Supper with this brief sentence about Jesus' probable reaction, "I trow full sore he shall it rue" (263). The Jews meet briefly after his exit, excited by the prospect of a plan, then disperse to assemble an arrest squad.

Condensed; Judas speaks only to Rewfin; others listen in and then respond after Judas leaves. (103)

**Scene VIII:
Maundy III**

Original

Adaptation

The 'Upper Room' is revealed again and the establishment of the Eucharist is played. The scene consists of a sermon by Jesus about the significance of the bread and wine in relation both to his body and impending death, but also as substitutes, replacements or fulfillments of the symbolic Old Testament Passover meal, which they have just observed. He offers them each the bread with the repeated phrase, "This is my body, flesh and blood, / That for thee shall die upon the rood" (267). When he reaches Judas he hesitates, warns him of the consequences of his actions, then offers him the bread as well. Once Judas has eaten, Christ once again tells the disciples that he has been betrayed by one of their circle. They repeat the formula "Lord, it is not I" until they reach Judas, who again identifies himself and is sent away by Jesus with, "That thou hast begun, bring to an end" (268). *Continued next page.*

Condensed (104-5); Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial omitted (see 56).

**Scene VIII:
Continued**

Original

Adaptation

After a brief re-appearance by 'Demon' who praises Judas and promises him a place beside him in Hell, Jesus continues with the wine of the Last Supper. He shares the cup with them, and explains the importance and efficacy of what he has done, "For mannes love I may do no mo/Than for love of man to be dead" (269). He then washes the disciples' feet and encourages them to do likewise. When He is finished washing their feet, Jesus is ready to go on. "The day is come I must proceed/For to fulfil the prophecy" (270). After predicting their flight and Peter's denial, he calls them to follow him to the Mount of Olives.

**Scene IX:
Agony at Olivet**

Original

Adaptation

Jesus walks with His disciples "to Bethany-ward," then leaves them to watch as he prays nearby. In spite of their promise to watch, the disciples fall asleep even as Jesus pleads with God to reconsider the divine plan for redemption. He returns to the disciples three times (three is an important symbolic number parallel to Peter's triple denial and the three days His body will spend in the tomb). Finally an angel, bearing "a chalice with an host therein" relieves Jesus' sufferings and renews His dedication to his purpose: "I shall fulfil the prophecy, / And suffer death for mannes trespass" (274). Jesus returns to the disciples a final time, and this time asks them to come with Him, since Judas and the Jews are approaching. He encourages Peter to be an example to the other disciples.

Condensed; Jesus prays continuously, then comes once to the disciples, wakes them and leads them into the place of his arrest. (107)

**Scene X:
Taking of Jesus**

Original

Adaptation

The Agony continues directly into the arrest, which also takes place in the garden near the Mount of Olives. The arrest party enters armed with "swords, glaives, and other strange weapons," but Jesus offers no resistance. Even when He tells them "I am He, Jesus of Nazareth, that same man" and the force of His words causes them to "fall suddenly to the earth" (275), they do not believe Him. They only identify Jesus when Judas kisses Him. Peter immediately defends Jesus, cutting off Malcus' ear. Jesus restores the ear, and then is led away to Caiphas accompanied by the haughty taunts of the Jews.

Condensed; Fall of arrest party on, "I am He!" attempted in rehearsal but eliminated (it played as humor rather than power). Malcus' ear episode omitted. (108)

Mary Magdalene and Maria Virgo

Original

Adaptation

The next section concludes Passion Play I. In it, Mary Magdalene enters and informs Maria Virgo of Jesus' arrest. The Blessed Mother reacts first with shock, then incredulity, then shame that "I suppose verily it is for the trespass of me!" After a paragraph of questioning and weeping, she steels herself quietly to the necessity of this suffering because "May man not elles be saved by no other kind" (278).

Omitted (see 55).

Passion Play II**Procession of the Saints/
Prologue**

Original

Adaptation

Passion Play II is structured similarly to Passion I, and does not immediately pick up where the first play leaves off. The preliminary scene is a procession of the saints (incomplete in the manuscript) followed by another prologue. This time the speaker is "an expositor in doctor's weed" named Contemplatio (279). He summarizes in very brief description the primary action of the first part and offers to "proceed how he was brought then/Before Annas and Caiphas, and sith before Pilate" (280).

Omitted.

Herod I

Original

Adaptation

The first action scene is played by King Herod and two of his soldiers, and is similar to the Annas and Caiphas introductions in Passion I. Herod describes himself as a persecutor of Christians in graphic detail; "To see them hangen or burnt to me is very pleasance,/To driven them into dungeones, dragones to gnaw,/And to rend their flesh and bones unto their sustenance" (280-81). He brags of his murder of John the Baptist and is determined to do the same to Jesus. The soldiers begin a search for Jesus at his request as Herod retires to rest.

Omitted.

**Scene XI:
Before Annas and Caiphas**

Original

Adaptation

The action begins with a messenger who enters, running and shouting "Jesus of Nazareth is taken!" (282). He comes to Annas and Caiphas to announce Jesus' impending arrival and briefly describes the scene of the arrest. Jesus is brought in and the trial begins. Annas and Caiphas ask about his disciples, doctrine and teaching, to which he simply answers, "All times that I have preached, open it was done/. . . where that all Jewes come./Ask them what I have said and also what I have done" (284). One of the soldiers assaults Jesus for his effrontery to "a bishop" and the counselors offer the usual justifications for Jesus' death; He claimed He could rebuild the temple in three days, and He claimed to be the Son of God. When He finally answers repeated questioning by Caiphas with "Godes Son I am, I say not nay" they are convinced that His blasphemy is sufficient and the entire group shouts "Yes, yes, yes . . . he is worthy to die" (285). Four Jews then beat Him at Caiphas' request.

Condensed; No messenger; No Annas. (109-10)

Peter's Denial

Original

Adaptation

Peter's denial is played next, possibly concurrent with the end of the beating. A woman comes and reacts in shock to such treatment of Jesus when one of his own disciples is watching (she indicates Peter, who is somewhere in sight). A woman with Peter asks if he is one of Jesus' disciples, which he denies. Even when the soldiers participate in the questioning, witnessing that he is the one who cut off Malcus' ear, Peter denies knowing Jesus. The rooster crows, and Jesus looks across to Peter, who weeps and offers a sad, shameful monologue on his regret.

Omitted (see 56).

**Scene XII:
Before Pilate II**

Original

Adaptation

The trials continue as Caiphas sends word to Pilate that he must meet them at once. Judas enters and throws down the money in disgust at his sin, then runs out to hang himself, according to the stage direction. The Pharisees are unsympathetic to Judas, and continue with their plan to take Jesus unto Pilate. The Jews make their case, and Pilate asks Jesus to respond, which He does, explaining that he must fulfill His Father's will and that "all that me hearken and in me believe/ And keepen their faith steadfastly,/ Though they were dead I shall them recuren,/ And shall them bring to bliss endlessly" (290). Pilate seems convinced by this, to the amazement and disgust of the Pharisees. He encourages them to punish Jesus themselves if they are so convinced He deserves it. Then Pilate conceives of a possible solution: Jesus was born in Galilee, part of Herod's jurisdiction, and therefore, Jesus is sent to Herod for judgment.

Condensed; No messenger.
(111-12)

**Scene XIII:
Before Herod**

Original

Adaptation

Herod appears to have been awakened for this audience suddenly and is both surprised and thrilled to have Jesus before him. The Jews again offer their justifications for Jesus' punishment, to which Herod reacts, "all these matters I have heard said, / And much more than you me tell. / All together they shall be laid, / And I will take thereon my counsel" (294). Then he addresses all of his comments to Jesus, referring to His great miracles and ultimately requesting a personal miracle. Jesus refuses to respond, which infuriates Herod, who also has Him beaten. When Jesus' silence persists, Herod determines that his efforts are futile and sends Jesus back to Pilate.

Condensed. (113-14)

Dream of Pilate's Wife

Original

Adaptation

Satan enters as Jesus is being led from Herod back to Pilate. It is unclear whether this is to be the same 'Demon' of the Prologue to Passion I or not. He brags of his abilities and his apparent victory over Jesus until he considers the possible havoc Jesus could wreak in hell. He warns hell to make ready, to which a demon answers, "and he ones in hell be,/ He shall our power burst" (298). Satan decides that his plan is about to backfire, so he appears to Pilate's wife in a dream, warning her that Pilate will be damned if he allows Jesus to be killed, hoping that he will release Jesus and hell will be saved from destruction. When she tells him of this dream, Pilate is more determined than ever to avoid condemning Jesus.

Omitted (see 56).

**Scene XIV:
Before Pilate II**

Original

Adaptation

The Jews return with their prisoner and Pilate chides them. His next idea is to use the legendary free-day of the Passover to release a Jewish prisoner. He chooses Jesus, but the Pharisees insist on releasing "the thief Barabbas, / That for manslaughter prisoned was," while for Jesus they insist: "Crucifigatur [Let him be crucified]" (300). Pilate's last resort is to plead with Jesus to understand his situation and possibly offer a solution. Instead Jesus offers absolution of sorts, "He that has betrayed me to thee at this time, / His trespass is more than is thine" (301). Pilate asks the Pharisees once more what they will have him do, and they insist on crucifixion, threatening to report Pilate as a traitor to Rome if he refuses to comply. After washing his hands of the responsibility, which the Jews gladly assume, Pilate pronounces sentence: freeing Barabbas and condemning Jesus and the two thieves, Dismas and Jesmas.

Condensed; Barabbas not portrayed, Dismas and Jesmas eliminated. (115-16)

Way of the Cross

Original

Adaptation

The scene that follows is the "Way of the Cross" in which Jesus is led to the place of Crucifixion. He again weeps for Jerusalem, is taunted by the soldiers, and has His cross carried by Simon. Also included is a unique scene with a woman named Veronica who wipes Jesus face with her kerchief, which miraculously retains the image of the suffering Jesus, an apt object for medieval devotion.

Omitted (see 57).

**Scene XV:
Crucifixion**

Original

Adaptation

Upon reaching the hill, the soldiers roughly lay Jesus down, stretch His body to fit mis-bored nail holes, and secure Him to the cross. They stand Him up and then make fun of Him, dancing about and mocking His "Kingship." They convince others to crucify the two thieves while they gamble for Jesus' clothes. In contrast to this playful, sadistic melee, Mary Magdalene, Maria Virgo, and John come before the cross. Maria Virgo pleads with Jesus to speak with her and faints. He forgives His persecutors who continue to mock him, along with the thieves, except for Dismas, who defends Jesus and is promised paradise. Now Maria revives and Jesus places her in the care of John, encouraging her that "this is the will, and my Fatheres intent" (310). John and Mary Magdalene comfort her and lead her off, as the Jews enter to mock Jesus themselves. When Pilate places the sign which reads, "Here is Jesus, King of the Jews," they protest but Pilate stands firm against them, saying, "That I have written, written it is" *Continued next page.*

Condensed; Added speech by Demon at foot of cross boasting of his success; no vinegar episode; temple not mentioned by Maria Virgo; no thieves (Dismas and Jesmas). (117-18)

Crucifixion: Continued

Original

Adaptation

<p>(311). Jesus calls out to God, is offered vinegar by the soldiers, and then left by them to die, which he does with the traditional "Nunc consummatum est [Now it is finished]" (312). Maria Virgo and John reenter and she falls weeping at Jesus' feet. Eventually John convinces her that this is for the best and they exit to go to the Temple, where she will occupy herself in order to forget her sorrow until Jesus rises again.</p>	
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Harrowing of Hell I

Original

Adaptation

Following Jesus' death, His spirit, presumably played by another actor as His body remains on the cross, introduces himself to the audience and crosses to Hell, opening its gates with His word.

Omitted (see 56-57).

Longeus and Burial

Original

Adaptation

Before this action is finished, the scene shifts back to the cross, where a Centurion confesses Jesus' deity along with his soldiers. Nicodemus enters and condemns the Jews' destruction of Jesus, as the centurion continues as if uninterrupted in his devotional monologue. Joseph of Arimathea enters and determines to ask for the body from Pilate. He crosses briefly and is granted permission and the assistance of two of Pilate's "knights." These knights decide that Jesus is most certainly dead, yet they ask a blind knight named Longeus to help them to be sure. They trick him into thrusting a spear into Jesus' side, at which the blood floods over his eyes and miraculously restores his sight. Though happy to see, he begs forgiveness for his unwitting part in the Crucifixion.

Joseph and Nicodemus take Jesus down and lay him in the lap of Maria Virgo, who kisses Him, begs mercy for Him and blesses Joseph for his efforts. They quickly place Jesus in the tomb and close it, "leav[ing] the Maries at the sepulchre" (322). Apparently the other Maries have accompanied Maria
Continued next page.

Omitted (see 57); Burial performed instead in dumb show by Pilate, Rewfin and two soldiers. (119)

**Longeus and Burial:
Continued**

Original

Adaptation

<p>Virgo to the foot of the cross and thus to the tomb. They will move away from the tomb somehow during the next scene, as Caiphas, Pilate, and their four soldiers come to seal the tomb, but they will still be in the area when Christ rises and appears to Maria Virgo.</p>	
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**Scene XVI:
Setting of the Watch**

Original

Adaptation

Caiphas enters to Pilate, concerned that Jesus' disciples may steal his body in order to validate his predicted resurrection. Pilate is in agreement, and they take four soldiers and some wax and go to seal the grave and place the men in guard over it. The soldiers brag of their strength and ability and promise to kill any who approach. Yet after Caiphas, Annas and Pilate leave them, they are mysteriously put to sleep.

Condensed; Rewfin added; only two soldiers take part; connected to dumb show of Burial. (120-21)

**Harrowing of Hell II/
Scene XVII: Resurrection**

Original

Adaptation

Here the Harrowing of Hell resumes. 'Anima Christi' leads forth the characters of the earlier drama, including Adam and Eve, John Baptist, and Abraham. 'Belial' bewails his lonely position: "In hell lodge I lie alone . . . I shall never come from hell" (330). Jesus proclaims victory and then returns out of hell to re-animate His body. Upon coming out of the grave, He describes His suffering and victory, then appears to His mother, who has apparently remained weeping near the grave. She praises his strength and grace and "thy precious blood,/That mankind thus does save!" (331). Both Jesus and Maria Virgo exit or move away.

Harrowing omitted (see 56-57); Resurrection condensed. (122)

**Scene XVIII:
Story of the Watch**

Original

Adaptation

The soldiers awaken and realize the tomb is open. They go to Pilate and they tell him the truth, at which he reacts with rage and disgust to their failure. They explain the irresistible nature of Jesus' power, and then suggest that they tell everyone else the story to see how they receive it. At this, Pilate becomes conciliatory and asks them to wait as he consults "my council." Caiphas is angry, but Annas suggests they bribe the soldiers to tell another story. Pilate agrees and asks them to say the disciples stole him. They gladly agree to accept the food and money offered them in exchange for their dishonesty.

Condensed; Rewfin and Caiphas alone are the "Council." (123-24)

Scene XVII:
At the Tomb

Original

Adaptation

Now that the tomb is empty and abandoned, the three Maries come to it, presumably just after the soldiers have left. This is the 'Quem quaeritis' scene which began the medieval drama in some form. The Maries in this scene are Mary Magdalene and Jesus' aunts, Maria Jacobi and Maria Salome. Magdalene looks into the tomb and finds it empty. After they have described the situation, an angel appears and tells them to go out into the streets to find Jesus, who is alive, after going to the disciples to tell them the news. They express their joy then go directly to the disciples. Peter and John react with excitement and doubt and run to the tomb to see for themselves. They return to assure the other disciples that it is true. Mary Magdalene is unrelieved because she has not yet seen Jesus. As she weeps at the tomb, Jesus appears as the gardener and then reveals his identity to her. When she realizes who he is, he tells her to tell the disciples of her experience, which she proceeds to do.

Condensed; Mary Magdalene only one to approach tomb. (125-26)

Other Appearances

Original

Adaptation

Subsequently, Jesus appears to Cleopas and Luke, two travelers on their way to Emmaus, making himself known only when they stop for the night and then disappearing. They go to tell the rest of the disciples, and while together, Jesus appears to all of them, allowing Thomas to see his hands and feet and believe. When he does, Thomas offers a hymn or litany of apology, confession and devotion, with the repeated response, "Quod mortuus et sepultus nunc resurrexit [That, dead and buried, now he is risen]" (358-59).

Omitted.

**Scene XX:
The Ascension**

Original

Adaptation

<p>Following Thomas' confession, the Ascension is played. Jesus offers the disciples peace, encourages them to wait for the promised holy spirit, commands them to "My witness only be" (360) and then ascends out of sight. The angels send them on their way with the promise that Jesus will return in judgment.</p>	<p>Condensed (127); Ends with reprise of song from "Entry" scene (see 57-58).</p>
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Part B: From Script to Performance

1. Script Development

The genesis of the production script for this experiment was selecting R. T. Davies' version of N-town and the Passion sequence. The writing of the script involved two steps for most sections. First, each scene was shortened to its essential lines, updating archaic or unknown words and maintaining much of the poetry. Next, for some sections, a complete prose paraphrase summarized the meaning in modern English. While William Marx argues that complete modernization of the language "would destroy the medieval character, meanings, and poetry of the play" (13), costume, music, and other elements of spectacle may provide a sense of the Middle Ages for an audience unfamiliar with Middle English and Latin, while shrinking the distance between the auditors and the script.

The Demon's Prologue may be taken as an example of this process, as it is the only section which was entirely rewritten. It was adapted through a process of three steps. Lucifer's original introduction is this:

I am your lord, Lucifer, that out of hell came,
Prince of this world and great duke of hell.
Wherefore my name is cleped Sir Satan,
Which appeareth among you a matter to spell.
I am nourisher of sin and the confusion of man,
To bring him to my dungeon there in fire to
dwell. . . .

For I began in heaven sin for to sow
 Among all the angeles that weren there so bright
 And therefore I was cast out into hell full
 low, Notwithstanding I was the fairest and bearer
 of light.
 Yet I drew in my tail of those angeles bright
 With me into hell, taketh good heed what I say.
 I left but twain against one to abide there in
 light,
 But the third part came with me--this may not be
 said nay. . . .
 Behold the diversity of my disguised variance:
 Each thing set of due natural disposition,
 And each part according to his resemblance,
 From the sole of the foot to the highest
 ascension. (Davies 235-37)

The first attempt at modifying the language, maintaining the poetry, produced the following:

I am your lord, Lucifer, that out of hell came,
 Prince of this world and great duke of hell.
 I encourage sin to keep humans confused
 To bring them to my dungeon there in fire to
 dwell. . . .
 I introduced sin to the sweetness of heaven
 Among all the angels that were there so bright.
 And therefore I was cast far down into hell,
 Though I was most beautiful and shining with
 light.
 But I took my share of those angels bright
 With me into hell--pay attention to me here--
 I left just two against one to live there in
 light,
 But the third part came with me--this truth is
 clear. . . .
 Look how diverse my disguise may be seen:
 Each thing perfect for its own occasion,
 And each part according to my present need,
 From the sole of my foot to the top of my crown.

The initial prose paraphrase of this introduction was:

Hello. I am Lucifer, ruler of Hell. My goal is to bring all humans to Hell with me. I created sin in Heaven where there was none: for that I was cast down into Hell. But I am not alone there--I took one-third of the angels with me!

See how common my costume may seem? Perfect to the occasion, convincing and disarming--all according to *my* purpose.

Finally, the paraphrase of the entire speech was revised into its performance form, which began:

Good evening. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Lucifer, king of hell. Oh! I see some of you have heard of me. Good! My goal in life is to lure all of you to come and live here with me. See how normal I look? I always suit my clothes and appearance to the occasion, whatever it may be. I must seem convincing, disarming-- all according to my own purposes.

Yes, it was I who first introduced sin, there in the dull holiness of Heaven. That's what got me thrown out. Seems I wasn't appreciated there. But I was: one-third of the angels came with me to Hell. They work with me there now. (91)

There were minor changes in the speech during rehearsal, but the sentences printed above remained practically unchanged from that step to production.

Condensing scenes was a similar process. Some of this process has been clear from the parallel descriptions of the production text and where it differs from Davies. Initially the performance was only to include Passion I. It would be maintained relatively intact, only omitting the sermons of John and Peter. In final production form only those sermons and the epilogue of the Maries were completely left out of Passion Play I.

Passion Play II was added in order to provide scenes which would complete the Passion story and Resurrection. Therefore, the Crucifixion and Resurrection had to be included. Beyond that, the four trial scenes (Before Caiphas, Before Pilate I and II, and Before Herod) were important and inter-related enough to include. Peter's denial was eliminated for the sake of time.

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The Dream of Pilate's wife sequence was eliminated early, considering time and shortening the cast of characters. The change this made in Pilate's character became clear later. If Pilate's effort on Jesus' behalf is not motivated by the warning from Satan that he will suffer for killing the Christ, then he must be acting out of conscience. The reasons for this change are due more to the characterization of Demon than they are to Pilate, however. In the play, the reason that Demon comes to Pilate's wife is that he has decided that killing Jesus is going too far and that if Jesus ends up in Hell, He will destroy it. Demon hopes to use Pilate's wife to reverse Pilate's decision to support the Jews' complaints.

Of the four canonical Gospels, only Matthew includes the dream of Pilate's wife, and in his account she simply says, "I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of [Jesus]" (27:19). Overall, the Gospels' characterization of Pilate is clearer and simpler. Pilate is unconvinced by the Jews, but "the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed" (Lk. 23:23). According to the Gospels, Pilate may not be a good man, but he is not as bad as the high priests. Demon's efforts on his own behalf occupy time which may be used to continue the trials. A melodramatic sensibility is added when Pilate struggles with his own conscience over Jesus' fate. Jesus' assurance to Pilate suggests that he will not suffer so harsh a fate as Demon has predicted: "The one who betrayed me to you is more

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at fault than you" (Scene XII, 111). In this arrangement, when Pilate delivers the sentence at the end of the scene he is reluctant but forced by the Jews to do so.

The Harrowing of Hell scenes were eliminated for a related reason. Jesus' victory over Demon is clear as soon as He rises from the dead. It is not necessary to see Jesus physically defeat him at this point when the focus is on the audience's response to Jesus' success.

The Way of the Cross contains the account of Simon, who carries the cross for the weakened Christ in Mark and Luke, and the legendary story of Veronica, who offers to wipe Jesus' face and retains his image in her kerchief. These episodes were left out in part because they featured characters who only appeared once, whose actions did not significantly advance the plot. Demon's speech of victory before the cross replaces these scenes, using the text of his message from the introduction to the Dream of Pilate's Wife. The speech functions as a reminder of Demon's goals and presence.

Initially the script cut from the Crucifixion straight to the Resurrection without any Burial. Instead of adding the scene with the Centurion, Joseph and Nicodemus, the production presents the Burial in dumb show using Pilate, the soldiers and the other leaders. It connects directly to the Setting of the Watch.

From this point on no scene was completely eliminated, though each was condensed drastically. At first the play

ended with Mary Magdalene's message to the disciples that Jesus was alive, though an epilogue from John the Baptist about the importance of repentance was intended to frame the story. The Ascension scene was added as a conclusion instead.

Passion Play II does not conclude so neatly as does Passion I. In the N-town text, the story continues with the calling of Matthias to replace Judas, the Assumption of Maria Virgo into Heaven, and Doomsday. Davies' text stops labeling scenes as "Passion II" after Setting of the Watch, just before the second Harrowing of Hell scene. Because of the unity of the entire story, it is difficult to find any clear ending of Passion II's action before the end of the Doomsday play. Stephen Spector suggests that Passion II "dovetails" into the remainder of the cycle near the end of the Crucifixion scene in Play 32, where two sheets of dissimilar paper have been inserted into the manuscript (540). A portion of Play 34, which includes the Burial, also appears to be similar to the remainder of Passion II in terms of paper and stanzaic form (506). There is no question that Passion Play II ends without a clear break such as there is with the Maria Virgo speech at the end of Passion I. The brief 'Ascension' piece provided an end for the production text, concluding with a reprise of the "Hosanna."

2. Changes in the Cast of Characters

Producing a complete cycle play requires an immense cast. This is probably one reason why the production of the cycles was a shared enterprise. Even a section of a cycle takes a number of actors to perform. Meg Twycross notes that in the N-town Passion I alone there are 56 speaking parts (64). However, a production script may adjust the cast of characters to a manageable size, omit partial or entire scenes, cut or combine characters and double-cast.

Unnecessary characters may be eliminated first. There are many bit parts in the N-town Passion, such as First through Fourth Citizens and First and Second Poor Men. Most of these roles were eliminated for the purposes of production, and just two soldiers were cast, instead of four. There is minor unique characterization among these characters. The dramatist/compiler has divided his message or story into equal parts for each character.

Jesus' disciples are not unnecessary characters, but the Passion may be performed without all twelve of them. Each disciple speaks twice during the Last Supper, but only to ask "Is it I, Lord?" Only John, Peter and Judas speak elsewhere. The production utilized just two disciples beyond these principal three.

Within the group of the conspirators there are other duplicate or non-essential characters. In production, the Jewish leader Gamaliel was cut, and his lines from the

arrest scene given to Rewfin or the other plotters. Rewfin and Lyon, the judges, were combined into one character, as were Annas and Caiphas (see below). The script also includes a number of witnesses who testify to Jesus' blasphemy or heresy in his trials. These roles were eliminated in favor of having the conspirators themselves voice these complaints.

Jesus' aunts, Maria Jacobi and Maria Salome, who accompany Mary Magdalene to the tomb, are unfamiliar today. In spite of the tradition of the three women at the tomb and the "Quem Quaeritis" trope, the aunts were left out and Mary Magdalene visited the tomb alone twice.

Annas and Caiphas became just Caiphas, the high priest. Though some of the cycles play them as very different characters (see Rose, Wakefield 359-72), N-town portrays them as two Jewish priests with similar desires and methods. Caiphas, in introducing himself, tells how "Christ . . . perverts the people with his preaching ill. / We must seek a mean unto him reprovable, / for if he proceed our lawes he will spill" (Davies 243). In a similar vein Annas calls the gathered plotters to consider a course of action against Jesus because, "If he proceed soon see you shall / That our lawes he will destroy. / It is our part this to deny" (246). Combining these two characters also shortens the play by eliminating the need for each character's long introduction before the initial conspiracy. In a similar fashion, Rewfin and Lyon, the secular judges, were combined into just

Rewfin, though the characterization took on some of Gamaliel's aggressive role as well, as when Rewfin taunts Jesus in the Garden (Scene X, 104).

One character adaptation decision which reduced the number of actors and gave diabolical motivation for the actions of the Pharisees in the play was to cast "Demon" as one of the conspirators, or "doctors" (i.e., legal advisors) as well. He became part of the story as well as introducing it. John the Baptist, Demon's counterpart of the Prologues, was part of the action in a similar fashion. The same actor played John the disciple and John the Baptist. This doubling suggested that representatives of both Prologue arguments were working within the play to see the audience convinced of their veracity.

Additional deletions which grew out of the experience of actualizing the script also proved effective. They were necessary because of actor commitments, and were made according to staging feasibility. First, the same actor was cast as Peter and Pilate. The fact that the denial was not played helped to make this possible, as Peter was offstage early in the arrest and Pilate did not enter until after the entire Annas trial was finished. But the actor playing Pilate was in fact the only one who was not already onstage during the Pilate scenes. No statement about a silent connection between the two characters was intended by this necessary decision. Additionally, the same woman was cast as one of the soldiers and the voice of the angel speaking

to Mary Magdalene. There was no real conflict here, as the angel spoke from offstage and was not seen by the audience.

The final consideration under this matter of character adaptation is gender. Working within a university theatre department, the great percentage of those who auditioned were women, while the majority of the Passion Play roles are male. This production simply ignored gender in auditions and casting. The result was a mixed cast in which there were about an equal number of women and men in each group (disciples and Jews). The roles maintained as male included Jesus, Peter and John, while the Maries were played by women. The remaining roles were divided up based on ability.

III. Testing the Adaptation in Production

Part A: Scenic Techniques and Staging

One of the earliest questions the producer of the medieval drama must answer is how much she or he will attempt to recreate the conditions and conventions of medieval performances in a modern context. The producer must decide how much the play will be updated to the conventions of modern stage practice and how much it will be treated as a sample of its own stagecraft. Between the extremes of complete re-creation and total modernization lie infinite possibilities. A modern sense of openness to many production methods, techniques and styles permits many different kinds of plays and performances. Though proscenium staging is the most common and familiar, modern American audiences are not baffled by arena, thrust, and "found-space" performances.

The performance of the N-town Passion based on the adapted script drew on a basic knowledge of medieval staging and the interesting and complete stage directions of the N-town Passion, but developed a blend of modern and medieval methods best suited to space, script and audience. The production attempted to communicate the flavor of the performance as medieval audiences experienced it.

Stage Directions

Most of the stage directions in N-town's Passion I and II are in English, though a few are in Latin. Elsewhere in the N-town manuscript, the overwhelming majority of the stage directions are given in Latin. For example, in the Noah play, after Noah agrees to build the ark, the stage direction follows: "Hic transit Noe cum familia sua pro novi [Here Noah crosses with his family to get the ship]" (Davies 96). Many directions simply introduce scenes or describe entrances and exits, such as "Hic incipit de suscitatione Lazari [Here begins the raising of Lazarus]" (221) and "Introitus 'Moyses' [Enter 'Moses']" (109). These are sparse and simple directions which give little indication of the specific arrangements of the playing area.

The stage directions in English of the Passion Plays are much different. They are longer, more specific and more descriptive than the other comments. Alan Fletcher calls them, "after Chester . . . the next richest in English mystery drama" (178). For example, R. T. Davies renders the stage direction preceding Annas' first line in Passion Play I as follows:

Here shall Annas show himself in his stage, besein after a bishop of the old law, in a scarlet gown and over that a blue tabard, furred with white, and a mitre on his head after the old law, two doctors standing by him in furred hoods, and one before them with his staff of estate, and each of them on their heads a furred cap with a great knop in the crown, and one standing before as a Saracen, the which shall be his messenger. (241)

This stage direction provides a general description of where Annas will appear, tells us who is with him, and describes his clothing very specifically. The issue of why they would be dressed as bishops rather than Jews will be addressed below (see Section 2, "Acting").

The most important feature of the stage directions in English in the N-town Passion plays is the locations they describe. As seen above, Annas appears "in his stage," presumably some sort of scaffold or platform. Anne Cooper Gay argues that "the use of the word 'stage' must, in connection with this cycle [N-town] be limited to refer to a scaffold" (140). When Annas and Caiphas meet with Rewfin and Lyon, the stage direction says: "Here the bishops with their clerks and the Pharisees meet at the midplace and there shall be a little oratory with stools and cushions cleanly besein like as it were a council-house" (245). This describes not only the position ("the midplace") and the location ("a little oratory"), but also suggests the furnishings ("with stools and cushions... like as it were a council house").

These stage directions can also suggest something about the staging and the "cues" of the production. Having established the "council-house" and Simon's house, the play alternates between these two *loca*, suggesting the action is continuous in both places. It was not necessary consciously to ignore the actors in the inactive location, because these settings were somehow equipped with curtains to open or

close. After Jesus and his disciples have entered Simon's house for the Passover supper, the stage direction says, "in the meantime the council-house before-said shall suddenly *unclose* showing the bishops, priests and judges sitting in their estate like as it were a convocation" (255, *italics mine*). Similar directions accompany the subsequent shifts from one place to the other.

Playing Space

The production space was a circular church chapel with a flat, hard floor and ceiling and a raised stage at one side, with steps leading up to it (see fig.1, Appendix B). The Last Supper was performed on this stage (B), as were the Setting and Story of the Watch, and the Resurrection. The tomb was placed at the upstage left corner of this stage (F). An extension of this stage at the center (C), jutted approximately eight feet out into the audience area (A-- described here as the "place" or *platea*). On this extended stage the Agony, the "scaffold" of Pilate, the Crucifixion and Ascension were staged. The downstage left corner of the stage itself (E) served to suggest Herod's "scaffold" for the trial there, while the "council-house" of the Jews was played on a standard 4 x 8 platform in "the place" at stage right (D). Several characters, as described above, made entrances from the rear of the chapel, and it was here (G) that the disciples were gathered when they received the news

that Jesus had risen. Most of the remaining action happened in the "place," also called the *platea*, at floor-level (A). Even the scenes which were located primarily in another area made use of the *platea* as an extension of their location. Meg Twycross describes the "place" as the "No Man's Land into which the characters descend to converse, fight or otherwise interact" (58). For example, at the opening of Scene II, Caiphas introduces himself from the "scaffold" (D), but then steps from it to greet Rewfin near the center of "the place" (A).

Scenography

The production design for staging this script was based largely on the concept of alternating locations. The location where the Pharisees did their plotting was always in sight of the audience. Similarly, the Last Supper tableau was visible even when the Jews were arguing among themselves over what to do with Jesus. Limited access to the performance space prior to the performance precluded the construction of complicated built scenery, which is what scaffolds enclosed by curtains would be. Standard 4' x 8' platforms were chosen as a simplified alternative, using light to isolate the areas. (Lighting proved more complex and less successful than expected. See below, "Lighting.")

The control of focus in this type of theatre, where the action takes place in front of, among, beside and behind the

audience, must be achieved primarily by action or sound. For example, in the transition mentioned above between the first Last Supper scene and the second Conspiracy scene, Jesus finishes with the words to Simon, "This reward I shall grant thee present" at which the curtain around the council-house set would open, making a noise and drawing attention as Annas immediately began speaking with "Behold! It is nought, all that we do!" (255).

The production made use of this technique to a small degree. Because of the close proximity of the different areas to one another, the speaker drew most of the attention, especially if she or he spoke from behind or otherwise out of the sight of the audience. On those occasions when the focus changed from the front of the room to another location, it was the attention of the speaker to the new character or the change of speaker to the entering actor which drew the attention of the audience, even though they were forced to sit facing the front. The transition of the Prologues will serve as an example. When Demon finished speaking and noticed John the Baptist, she looked at him in disgust, then walked off. It was just as she turned and John spoke that the audience shifted their attention from her to John.

Staging Miracles

The central actions of any Passion play are Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection. The method of staging these miracles is therefore a vital consideration for any producer. Both actions are described in the stage directions, but they are not specific and do not make clear just how realistic the indications of these actions were. The Crucifixion calls for the soldiers to "pull Jesu out of his clothes, and lay them together. And there they shall pull him down, and lay him along on the cross, and after that nail him thereon" (306). The dialogue indicates the soldiers have to stretch Jesus to fit the nail holes. The cross may have had nails already pounded into it, so the actor portraying Jesus could hold onto them as the soldiers pounded on them, making it look as if they were being pounded through him. The soldiers might have carried the nails and then placed them in pre-drilled holes in the cross. It seems likely that the actor playing Jesus would have in reality been roped to the cross beam (Beadle, York 211) with a platform for his feet, but none of these speculations may be confirmed. In such cases, pantomimic action can be powerfully suggestive in ancient and modern drama for the performance of familiar mythic actions.

In the interest of simplification this production chose to pantomime the action of the Crucifixion, creating an imaginary hammer, nails, and cross. The cross was

"presented" by a six-foot long wooden dowel, painted black, which Jesus held across his shoulders and on which He supported his arms. The effect was to show Jesus standing in a cross-like position without creating a realistic first-century Judeaean or fifteenth-century English cross.

For the Resurrection, the production took on an even more stylized approach. The tomb was placed offstage. The Resurrection was cued by a recorded brass fanfare and a bright white light on "the tomb." Jesus walked on triumphantly with his hands held high. He strode to center stage and began his speech to the audience from there.

The final miracle in the production version was Jesus' Ascension into Heaven from the Mount of Olives. Alan Nelson's article "Some Configurations of Staging" suggests that beneath the scaffold for Heaven a hill was constructed which represented the Mount of Olives, where Jesus goes to pray during the Agony. He appears in the same place for the Ascension. During the Agony, an angel descends to Jesus to offer him the host and chalice, and at the end of the Ascension, Jesus rises into heaven out of sight: "Hic ascendit ob oculis eorum" (Davies 360). Nelson suggests that a winch arrangement was permanently installed in the Heaven scaffold and that it was used to lower the angel, remove the angel, and finally to accomplish Jesus' Ascension (134-35).

For this production, the Ascension was left largely to the imagination of the audience. Jesus stood at center

stage with the disciples and Maries gathered around him in the *platea*, or floor level, looking up. After He gave them the Great Commission and promised to always be with them, the play concluded with a reprise of the song which had welcomed him in the Entry to Jerusalem.

Lighting

There was a system of floodlights installed in the ceiling and controlled by a two-scene preset light board. During the planning stage, it appeared that the lighting control would be flexible enough to isolate areas using light. However, the floodlights proved to be too general, and the control less flexible than necessary, calling for a number of adjustments. That experience, combined with the knowledge that the medieval performances took place in daylight, suggest that full light is preferable, controlling the focus by hiding rooms with curtains or attracting attention with sound, as described above (see "Scenography").

Sound

Recorded sound was another modern production technique employed for this production. The recordings included period and modern religious music, which was played to emphasize the suffering of Christ upon the cross and to

punctuate His exit from the tomb. Instrumental recordings accompanied the entrance and departure of the audience, the sleep of the soldiers at the tomb, and the scene in which Jesus washed the disciples' feet. Recorded thunder when Jesus died indicated something of the earthquake and darkness which apparently coincided with his death. Though these phenomena are not specified in the stage directions, the soldiers refer to the earthquake when talking with Pilate after the resurrection (Scene XVIII, 119).

The use of any music in connection with Jesus' death would have been taboo to the early producers according to John Stevens. He says that for the medieval audience and mind "Heaven is music" (Dutka 3). Therefore, it is only during those moments in which Heaven is represented as victorious that there would have been liturgical musical accompaniment.

Audience

The audience was seated facing the raised stage (B). The floor level playing area (A) between the audience and the stage was the variable "place" where many actions took place. The "place" included the aisles through the center and around the outside of the seating area. As many scenes as possible were staged in this *platea* in order to connect the audience with the action of the play. Both Prologues and much of the Conspiracy were played here, as were Jesus'

Arrest and His four Trials. Those who came before the cross stood in the "place" too. In the Ascension scene, the disciples stood on the floor looking up at Jesus on the platform (C) as he spoke. When He finished, they all joined in the "Hosanna," facing the audience. Even the actors who were not onstage came on and finished the song; then they all walked out the back through the center aisle.

The audience is an important character in this play. Demon's Prologue is addressed directly to the crowd, as is the sermon of John the Baptist. Jesus (or Jesus' Spirit) talks to the audience about His work of Resurrection following His suffering, and the need for repentance: "Man, and thou let me thus gone / . . . Such a friend findest thou never none, / To help thee at thy need" (Davies 331-32) ["If you let me go today without following, you will miss the friend who knows your need" (Scene XVII, 118)]. Jesus also includes the audience when He speaks to his disciples both at the Last Supper and at the Ascension. In staging the Ascension, the disciples faced toward Jesus and the actor playing Jesus addressed them and the crowd. Meg Twycross described the value of this device, suggesting that, among other things the production of medieval drama has taught that "it is possible to look the audience full in the face" (37).

Part B: Acting

1. Characterization by Costume

A primary aspect of theatrical presentation is acting. Intimately connected with acting, especially in this kind of theatre, is costume. As Glynne Wickham has observed,

Costume was designed to assist recognition of the characters rather than to disguise the actors representing them . . . such evidence as I have gathered leads me to believe that . . . contemporary costume was used to dress all historical characters, including figures from Biblical history. (EES 103)

As indicated above ("Stage Directions"), Annas and Caiphas were dressed as Catholic bishops. This immediately gave the audience a sense of the ecclesiastical authority which these high priests wielded. Eleanor Prosser describes medieval costuming as "basically contemporary" and states that such costumes "create the impact of immediacy" (53). However, she argues that the phrase "after the old law" in the description of Annas' dress indicates liturgical vestments which were slightly out-of-date in relation to the medieval audience. Alan Fletcher concurs with this idea. He has phrased it this way:

The thrust of the stage direction is clearly towards producing a sense of difference, of the exotic. Familiar things may be present, but are often combined in unfamiliar ways, or yet with things themselves unfamiliar, and noticeably when the divine or infernal are in view. (179)

Prosser concludes that such costuming would therefore only

indicate the position of Annas and Caiphas, and that the "archaic bishop's habit would . . . [prevent] identification with the contemporary church" (124). It is unclear whether or not such characterization had an overall negative effect on the audience's perception of the church or its leaders.

George Trevelyan's English Social History cites occasional attacks on specific bishops in the work of medieval friars (46) and describes other clergy as church critics (41). There were many levels in the church hierarchy, and if local secular clergy, described by Trevelyan as "unbeneficed priests, deacons and clerks in holy orders" (51), were writing and producing the cycles, they may have satirized the abuses or eccentricities of bishops and other church leaders without undermining the audience's acceptance of the doctrine contained in the plays. It seems fairly certain, however, that the Jews of N-town were dressed as medieval bishops rather than Jewish priests or rabbis.

In addition to their appearance, characters were understood to possess certain basic characteristics related to their names alone. An actor portraying Judas, for example, would not develop a personal interpretation of the part. He would, in a sense, assume a mask which identified him as Judas and deliver the lines the audience expected "Judas" to say.

2. Modern Possibilities

There are three possible approaches a modern producer may take to costuming the Jewish conspirators. First, they may be clothed as Catholic bishops, as they were for medieval performances. That is how they were dressed for the production of this experimental script. Second, Annas and Caiphas might appear as Jewish priests of the first century according to the latest historical research in order to place them accurately in the time of Jesus. Third, it is possible to dress them in something entirely different. This could mean putting them in generic black robes like the "Doctor of Laws" and "Demon" wore. One might also dress them as their modern equivalents in terms of power and authority, either within the church, the government, or the judicial system. Also within this range of possibilities is the chance to portray them as anything or anyone else at all, as Shakespeare and other playwrights are often updated or uprooted to such locations as Nazi Germany or the American West.

The intent of updating costumes is placing the drama in a context which is familiar to the contemporary audience, if there are contemporary parallels to the characters and the costume clearly indicates what the parallel is. Alan Fletcher takes the concept a step farther and says that the familiarity is really just a "hook" to draw the audience into the world of the play and to accept it on its own

terms. By incorporating contemporary references, the play "defamiliarises the here and now," making it an apt subject of and location for criticism and change. The audience is aware of this illusion and follows the arguments of the drama more clearly because of this awareness. A variety of arguments is employed in order to explain the single Divine purpose in ways which the entire audience may understand.

The potential problem with keeping the Jews and the soldiers in the medieval age is the possibility of creating a work which will be perceived and valued only as a "museum piece" or a social document. Such a danger can be averted by the use of modern language and the undated religious robes worn by Caiphas, Herod, and Pilate. John Marshall indicates that this may not be a danger at all. He suggests that fully modernized productions of any play seem to be "a consequence of directors either underestimating their audience or failing to trust their material" (297). It would seem that what he is trying to say is that directors may doubt their own abilities to communicate a trusted text to an audience.

3. Lucifer's "disguised variance."

Lucifer presents a unique problem. The prologue itself includes a long description of Lucifer's clothing, which is gaudy and excessive. He introduces this with the sentence "Behold the diversity of my disguised variance" (237). This

suggests that the actor playing the role was dressed much as the gentlemen of the day, rather than in a red suit with horns and a tail. I translated this image to modern times by dressing the woman I had cast as 'Demon' in a modern black pants suit in which she appeared to be herself. Her entrance in this outfit was an attempt to have her seem to be a modern person beginning or narrating the play until she introduced herself as Lucifer. This kind of shock for the audience was intended to jolt the audience from modern times to the world of the play.

It is not clear whether the Lucifer prologue of Passion Play I had the same effect in its original. Lucifer may have been dressed in layers, and taken on a variety of disguises. And even if he was dressed more like the audience than the characters, his line "that out of hell came" (235) combined with the presence of the hell-mouth or hell scaffold on the setting, may suggest that he makes his entrance from hell, immediately indicating his identity to the audience. Though the costume choice was appropriate and effective, it is not clear whether or not it was entirely true to the original production style.

IV. Unique Themes

The primary conflict in the Passion Plays of the N-town cycle stands between Law, represented by the Jews, and Grace, represented by God through Jesus. The final performance script for this contemporary production was therefore titled Law and Grace. There are two primary views of law contained in this text. The conservative view of the Pharisees venerates Law above all else: "It is far better for one person to die to preserve our law, than to see the law destroyed, along with our society" (Caiphas, Scene V, 100). Opposing this position is the image of the merciful Christ as the fulfillment of the Law. Christ's Grace, offered as an alternative and successor to the Law, is not considered by the Jewish religious leaders. What Jesus calls redemption or forgiveness, "perfect peace between God and Man" (Scene III, 98), is seen by the Pharisees as a threat to their power and control.

Part A: Law

1. 'Law' of the N-town Pharisees

The N-town Pharisees concern themselves almost exclusively with the legality of Jesus' actions. Caiphas warns as he introduces himself and the problem, "If nothing is done to silence his false preaching, our ancient holy law

will be made meaningless." When Rewfin is summoned, he immediately finds Jesus "a traitor to Rome and Caesar". Even more frantic, the Doctor laments that "our law is losing respect," and Caiphas fears, "our ancient holy law will be made meaningless" (Scene II, 97). More important, however, are the potential consequences: "The Romans will take away what little power we have if we do not act quickly" (Scene V, 100).

The N-town conspirators hunt for a legal means to silence Jesus, but when that approach is slow and ineffective, they decide to concoct "a secret plan to trap him" (Scene V, 100). Judas offers them the key to this secret plan when he betrays Jesus for thirty pieces of silver and arranges the signal. They assemble their party and arrest Jesus in the garden that night, accusing Him of blasphemy, treason and heresy. But Jesus points out their own lack of concern for legal means: "You are wrong to unkindly bind me here, and to fall on me by night, as if I were a common thief" (Scene X, 108). In front of Pilate the first time, the Jews timidly admit the reason they have brought Jesus into a secular court, "It is not lawful for us to make any sort of execution. This is the reason we have brought him to you" (Scene XII, 111). From this admission it is clear that the N-town Pharisees' purpose all along has been to destroy Jesus by whatever legal means possible. They want Jesus dead but they do not want to kill Him themselves. Their legality is based on human Law wherein

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violations exist only when they are discovered.

2. 'Law' in Jewish Theology

The Pharisees were the conservators and teachers of the Law of Moses. This Law included the Ten Commandments and the five books of Moses, or the Torah, "the unalterable rule and absolute standard of all religious life" (Guignebert 64). By the time of Jesus, this Law also included Pharisaic writings and a tradition of "supplementary prescriptions . . . called the *Oral Law*" (27), providing interpretation of strict, specific rights and wrongs. This oral tradition existed not to accommodate secular thinking, but to maintain the "life" of the Law. The Pharisees believed that contemporary interpretations could keep the Law connected with contemporary society rather than becoming dull and outmoded. "It could go through whatever alteration, revision and expansion was necessary to keep it . . . in harmony with the various requirements of successive generations" (63). The Pharisees were responsible for knowing the Law, keeping the Law "with exactitude" and imposing its standards on others (165-66). These Pharisees would "rather perish than disobey one jot," but they believed that repentance was the key to restoration when one broke the Law. The action of the individual could return him or her to favor "by a changed life or altered behavior" (166).

Keeping the Law was of great importance in the Jewish society. The Old Testament legal system required absolute compliance to every part of the Law, which "was accorded supreme and absolute authority" (66). There was no difference between making a tiny error and breaking a major commandment. The punishment was just as severe. It was understood, at least to a degree, that no one could possibly keep the whole Law, but it was absolutely vital that they respect it:

The piety of Israel was measured in terms of its extreme veneration for the Law even more than by the exactness of its observance. . . .any member of a Jewish community who failed in the necessary reverence might be dealt with very severely. (64)

Every individual beginning with Adam had sinned, and the only way to restore one's position of forgiveness was by sacrifice. Contained within the Law and its interpretations were specific instructions about what were acceptable sacrifices for certain sins, to be offered in the temple at specified times of year (see Exodus and Leviticus). The sacrificial animal symbolically took on the sin of the supplicant, who was then considered clean. The sacrifice was "both symbolic of the relation between Jahweh and Israel, and a manifestation of God's actual presence" (61). The Law was a barrier between man and God because of man's inability to keep it. Only the sacrifices could bridge the distance between man and God. The Jews depended on the Law not only for guidelines of conduct, but also for penalties and means of restoration. According to Guignebert, the

Pharisees viewed the Law as "the perfect expression of what man himself would choose, if he had perfect knowledge" (164).

3. 'Law' in Pauline Christianity

Christ's message was one of fulfillment. He would be the sacrifice given once for all sin (failure to meet the requirements of the Law) for all people for all time. He would open up a new relationship between man and God, restoring the connection severed by sin and Law. But He did not do away with the law or its rules. His death offered mankind something to fill the gap between them and their fallibility and God with His perfection. Man's relationship to God was not the only relationship changed by Christ's sacrifice. His death also altered man's relationship to the Law. Paul interpreted and described it this way in Galatians: "the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" (Galatians 3:24-25). In Hebrews, Paul writes:

The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (10:1)

Paul's epistles were a part of the Vulgate Scriptures which served as one of the sources for these plays. His Christology was an important element of Christianity.

4. Law and the N-town Jesus

In the N-town Passion, the establishment of the Eucharist at the Last Supper symbolizes the establishment of a New Covenant. The Eucharistic meal typifies the new law in Jesus which accepts human beings as they are when they are willing to accept its terms. Paul encourages the Hebrews, "Let us draw near . . . [and] hold fast the profession of our faith" (10:22-23). He characterizes the early Christians this way: "We are of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (10:39). Similarly, the old Passover meal, which commemorated the liberation of Moses and the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, was a type or symbol of this new Passover with the new Lamb who offers liberation to all. Jesus explicates this connection in His sermon at the Last Supper:

My brothers, we have eaten the Passover lamb tonight just as the children of Israel did when God commanded it to Moses and Aaron. That symbol's use is finished. Tonight I establish a new one. The sign is my body, represented by bread. . . . as in the old law the lamb was used for sacrifice, so I, as the new lamb, shall make the greatest sacrifice. (Scene VIII, 104)

In this exegesis, Jesus "initiates another transformation, as the rites of the old law cede to the new" (Fletcher 183). Jesus goes on to describe specifically how the method of the Passover feast relates symbolically to the Christian life:

Do not eat this lamb with the bitter bread of hatred and envy, but instead eat with the sweet bread of love and charity . . . the bitter herbs . . . are like the contrition you should have for your sin . . . Hold your staff in your hand; that is to say, Be prepared to be an example and teach these things to others. (104)

Jesus' subsequent appearances all include some mention of the removal of the distance between man and God. As He revives and emerges from the tomb, Jesus tells the audience, "I left my Father's throne to save man's soul . . . Through death I have brought bliss--Man now may go to Heaven" (Scene XVII, 122). R. T. Davies' complete treatment of this speech includes the following segment:

For mannes love I tholed [suffered] dead,
 And for mannes love I am risen up red,
 For man I have made my body in bread,
 His soul to feed . . .
 Through my death man do I save,
 For now I am risen out of my grave,
 In heaven man shall now dwell. (330-31)

Before His Ascension, He admonishes the disciples to tell everyone about this new forgiveness, "Go . . . spread the good news of my salvation to the ends of the earth" (Scene XX, 127).

Part B: Grace

1. A Christian Theology of Grace

Christianity pictures the Grace of God as the currency for a business transaction in which Mankind has become a

slave to sin and cannot possibly purchase his freedom. God provides the necessary ransom in Jesus Christ through His death and Resurrection. Jesus fulfills the Law, which required a sacrifice in order to permanently restore the divine-human relationship. Jesus' sacrifice is the "antidote" to Adam's (and humanity's) sin. The sacrifice of Jesus is "once for all," (Hebrews 10:10): an eternal effect. His death allows all mankind to live. In that one historical (and historic) moment on Calvary, Jesus died bearing the sin and failure of the entire world: past, present and future.

This can only be because God exists beyond time. God sees and experiences time as simultaneous or continuous. This is a part of the medieval concept of time discussed above. God created Man and Man failed God. God instituted the Law, and the Patriarchs and Prophets attempted to live by it. Their attempts prefigured and predicted the coming of a Messiah or Christ who would take the blame for Man's sin. That Messiah was Jesus, who was born, killed, and resurrected in order that Man would not have to live separate from God in eternity. His sacrifice had to be accepted in order to avoid the judgment at the end of time.

2. Law and Grace in the N-town Passion

God's Grace stands in direct opposition to the Pharisees' Law. Much of their Law was human Law; rules and

regulations agreed upon by a community to maintain order and civility. This kind of Law is not concerned with Grace. It is strict and inflexible, interpreted in human terms. It fails to recognize the wisdom of Portia's speech to Shylock in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice:

Mercy . . .
 becomes the throned monarch better than his crown,
 His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
 The attribute to awe and majesty.
 Wherein doth sit the awe and fear of kings:
 But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
 It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
 It is an attribute to God himself;
 And earthly power doth then show most like God's,
 When mercy seasons justice. (IV:1:188-97)

Ignoring mercy causes reactions like the Pharisees'. They considered it to be *their* Law, something of their own creation to be protected and maintained at all cost. This desire led them into a fierce defense of their own power and control under the guise of maintaining Law for the good of the community.

Jesus' redemptive view does not do away with Law. In the gospel of John, Christ says, "I did not come into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through me might be saved" (John 3). Paul, again in Hebrews, says, "He taketh away the first [the Law with its sacrifices and offerings] that he may establish the second [the New Covenant of His sacrifice]" (10:9). Jesus' death did do away with some of the rules of sacrifice the Jews had been living under for hundreds of years.

Part C: Communicating the Message

Redemption or Grace in this Passion Play is a divine action which provides restoration of the relationship between man and God. Audiences will react in different ways to this message. The initiated, who have accepted the message, find relief, reassurance and peace. Medieval audiences for the cycles found such religious instructions as the Ten Commandments, the Seven Deadly Sins, the Creed and the Seven Sacraments emphasized in the actions and "sermons" of the plays. These basic concepts were required material for parish priests "to teach the penitent the correct way to examine his conscience and to present his confession" (Prosser 20). For an uninitiated audience, the didactic purpose made use of the devotional material of the Passion story to strive for a sympathetic reaction.

A producer hopes to convince the audience that this is the truth and that they will therefore learn what is necessary to bridge the gap between them and God. It is a mistake, according to John Marshall, to completely ignore the religious elements of the plays simply because the audience might not see things quite that way anymore. "A production of medieval religious drama must treat its audience as intelligent Christian adults, whether they are or not" (297). While this may be overstating the case somewhat, it is important not to substitute modern skepticism into the plays themselves simply for the sake of

making them "accessible."

The fact remains that a modern audience is less likely to be an initiated or sympathetic audience. They may become convinced that the Pharisees' efforts are illegal and that Jesus is telling the truth. A thoroughly skeptical audience can still relate to the epic nature and scale of the story of the Divine becoming human and being oppressed, even killed, especially when he comes back to life. K. P. Roddy has written on the "Epic Quality of the Cycles" and defines the genre this way: "An epic subject is determined by the momentous impact of the action upon men's lives" (155). These plays were constructed so that even their performance created a "momentous impact." Meg Twycross notes, "one of the main theatrical features of the plays was their sheer impressiveness of scale. They were conceived on heroic lines, a marathon for the audience as well as the actors" (65). These definitions allow for both the sympathetic effect of the message and a more detached, "aesthetic" response to the grand telling of an epic story.

V. Evaluations and Conclusions

General Evaluation

The process of developing and producing a performance script from a medieval religious play has led to a number of conclusions. Paraphrasing and updating language is not as simple as it first appears, because there exist a nearly infinite number of possibilities when one attempts to make medieval references sensible and meaningful today. The loss of poetry by modern paraphrase is worth the sacrifice if the audience can relate the play as a somewhat contemporary experience, rather than a relic of an unknown age.

N-town's Passion sequence presents a unified story with a coherent conflict between Law and Grace. The protagonist is Jesus, with the Pharisees as antagonists. Jesus offers new life and new Law by coming to Earth, dying and rising from the dead. His victory over death becomes Man's victory over sin. But the language of the plays provides different levels of understanding which allow for repeated productions with different emphases. For example, this particular production emphasized the ideas of Law and Grace, while another might point up the commercial considerations of the Pharisees in the N-town Passion.

Production Methods

Concerning presentation, again many modes are possible. It is best, however, to base any production design or technique on the *loca-platea* staging described in *Passion Plays I and II*, which is an effective, interesting and flexible plan. To prevent the production from becoming too archaic, costumes should be updated for at least some of the characters, such as Rewfin and Lyon, the judges, for example. Characters like these were touchstones for the audience of their day and may be rewritten or at least reclothed to illustrate their role in modern society. And miracles may be effectively staged without expensive special effects, particularly in an age of film when theatrical effects often appear inferior to those in the movie theater.

Audience Relationships

The production audience was similar to the medieval one in another important way: most of the audience members knew one or more of the actors personally. Certainly when the cycles were put on by a town and its guilds, most of the audience members knew the performers from everyday life. R. T. Davies has written:

Medieval folk were more used than we are to reesponding to the role a man was performing as distinct from . . . the man himself, more used than we are to responding to a priest or a king than to Robert or Richard. (49)

Acquaintance with the performers was not the only connection the audience made with the performers, then or now. In terms of physical contact, the Prologues brought the actors into direct relationship with the audience. Demon moved all the way around the audience; John walked up and down the center aisle. Elsewhere in the play, characters entered from behind, around and through the audience, as if the observers were a part of the action or the acting-place, the *platea*. For example, before His Crucifixion Jesus was led out the center aisle of the church. The arrest party in an earlier scene entered from the back of the room and approached Jesus and His disciples through all three aisles.

This audience-performer connection might have been made clearer and stronger in a number of ways. First, the entire performance could have been turned into a worship service, framed by liturgical readings and responses. In a similar manner, the "Hosannas" which welcomed Jesus and praised Him at His Ascension could have included audience participation, requiring effort on the part of the audience members and identification with the actors and their characters who welcome Jesus, condemn Him, and then praise Him as they say goodbye.

Finding the sense of unity with a modern audience requires some of the techniques of staging, technology and script organization delineated above. Updated contemporary references and costumes may help in this regard, and a modernized script is necessary, though the degree of

modernization will vary from one production to another. William Marx writes that he attempted to make as much as possible of his modern performances clear to the audience through actions, in order to retain most of the Middle English and some of the Latin words.

Conclusions

This production provided a valuable theatrical experience in three primary ways for different groups of people. For the initiated, it was a religious experience. Those who did not care for or agree with the message might be interested by the medieval staging ideas or the epic qualities of the story itself. And for those who did not accept the message initially, but became convinced, the play functioned as a dialectic, sermon or argument which concluded with a "conversion."

Whatever the methods, this drama can be significant and interesting to a modern audience. If its message is true, it will continue to be an important story until the "Doomsday" it describes comes to pass. It is important as well in that it provides a glimpse into the life of another age. Performing medieval plays illustrates, as Meg Twycross has written, that "medieval theatre" is "different, and often highly sophisticated."

APPENDIX A

LAW AND GRACE

A Play of the Passion of Jesus Christ

Adapted by Andrew Ryder

Based upon Passion Plays I and II of the

Medieval English Plays of N-town

as contained in R. T. Davies'

Corpus Christi Play of the English Middle Ages

for production

in the Molly Grove Chapel of

First Presbyterian Church, Lansing, Michigan,

March 19, 1994

Scene I: PROLOGUES

(Demon enters from the door stage left, crosses to the center of "the place" and begins to speak. As Demon delivers this address, he/she walks around the audience.)

Demon: Good evening. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Lucifer, king of Hell. Oh! I see some of you have heard of me! Good. My goal in life is to lure all of you to come and live here with me. See how normal I look? I always suit my clothes and my appearance to the occasion, whatever it may be. I must seem convincing, disarming--all according to my own purposes.

Yes, it was I who first introduced sin, there in the dull holiness of Heaven. That's what got me thrown out. Seems I wasn't appreciated there. But I was: one-third of the angels came with me to Hell. They work with me there now.

At the moment, my mind is filled with thoughts of Jesus. You know, the baby born to Mary and Joseph in the stable about thirty years ago? Recently I tried to tempt him with all of the things which so easily draw you humans in; food, money, power--but he wouldn't budge. Right now he is traveling the countryside preaching, with twelve disciples doing his work. The people all love him because he heals them and makes them feel good. You know that he raised his friend Lazarus from the dead after four days!! Why, he even forgave that harlot Mary Magdalene!

He claims to be God's son as well as Mary's, and that he is going to die just to save all of you from me! That's a laugh! When he is dead we'll see who was right--when his precious soul is separated from that human body! When the time is right I will turn all of the people against Jesus--even the happy people he healed. False witnesses will accuse him of all sorts of crimes: even his disciples will desert him. Because I control this world. How? By redefining sin as 'pleasure.' I mean, what is 'pride' but honest self worth? Isn't coveting wise when you stand to lose money? Well, I haven't got the time to review every sin. But each one shares my ability to appear good; and no matter what tricks Jesus may try, they will always be mine!

(John the Baptist enters from the back of the room and walks toward the front through the center aisle.)

Here comes Jesus' trouble making cousin, John the Baptist. Do not forget about me, but right now I have other business to attend to. But anytime you call I will be sure to listen and respond!

(When John reaches the front, he turns to the audience and begins to speak. As he preaches, he moves up and down the center aisle, gesturing broadly.)

John Baptist: Greetings, brothers and sisters! I am John the Baptist and I speak the truth!

There is another coming after me who I am barely worthy to speak about. He will bring the Kingdom of Heaven. Prepare the way for him! Repent of your sin and cleanse your souls!

The one who is coming is the Lord God; you must make straight paths for him! Do not lean too far to the right or too far to the left. The right stands for mercy and the left for despair. The middle ground--where you must always walk--is a healthy mix of both hope and holy fear. Here is what I mean--Do not lean only on God's mercy, sinning in the hope of infinite forgiveness. And if you do commit 'deadly' sin, do not despair! Confess the sin and do your penance: God forgives.

The only way to God's heaven lies in combining hope and holy fear:

Hope without fear is a type of presumption;
And fear without hope is a kind of desperation;
Neither is complete without the other.

Follow my advice and you will prepare straight paths for the Lord!

Scene II: COUNCIL OF JEWS I

(Caiphas and Demon/Doctor enter to the platform stage right. Caiphas speaks:)

Caiphas: I am Caiphas, High Priest of the Jewish Council. I am responsible for Justice and Peace in Jerusalem. Jesus Christ has ignored the laws of Moses we uphold. If nothing is done to silence his false preaching, our ancient holy law will be made meaningless.

Demon: Do not take your responsibility lightly! Send for Rewfin, the judge. He'll know the legal ways and means by which Jesus may be punished. Jesus must be arrested if he refuses to change!

Caiphas: You are surely correct! Go and bring Rewfin at once!

(Dr. exits, crosses stage left to meet Rewfin.)

As for Jesus--he will be sorry he angered me!

(The doctor returns with Rewfin and Doctor of Laws. The four of them meet near the center of "the place.")

Caiphas: Welcome, Judge Rewfin! This is the situation. Jesus, who calls himself God's Son, is doing miracles and even claiming to be God! He is so popular with the people that our Law will soon be completely forgotten! What can be done?!

Rewfin: He is clearly a heretic, as well as a traitor to Rome and Caesar.

Caiphas: There is proof for the charge of treason: He claims to be King of the Jews, knowing we Jews have no King but Caesar!

Demon: Gentlemen, you have to do something! I think he ought to be executed! Make it public, make it painful and make it soon! He has broken your law and you must act!

Rewfin: Let's take the next few days to send out spies to watch and follow him and his disciples. When they report back to us, we can use his own words against him!

Caiphas: Your caution is wise. We will put your plan into action.

(They all exit stage right.)

Scene III: ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

(John enters from the stage, followed by Judas, Peter, Philip, Simon and the Maries. As he shouts, he gestures them to him at the center of "the place.")

John: Brothers and Sisters! Our Lord is almost here! Let's go and meet him!

People (all others): Let us welcome him with branches of the tree; he will be pleased with them!

SONG (all sing): "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"
(to tune of 'Ellacombe')

(as they sing, Jesus walks in through the center aisle.)

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna, We sing to Christ, Our King!
Through pillared court and Temple this lovely anthem
rings!
The God of men and angels rides on in lowly state;
Blessed He who comes in God's Name; Here for your Word
we wait.

(They all kneel; Jesus enters)

Jesus: My friends, now is the time of mercy. Man's soul will be saved, and the ruler of this world defeated! The truth of truths will now be known--perfect peace between God and Man!

Scene IV: MAUNDY I

(The disciples and others walk off, humming the song. John and Peter approach Jesus)

John: Lord, where would you like to eat your Passover meal? Tell us now, so we can prepare for you.

Jesus: Here in Jerusalem you will meet Simon, whom you know. Tell him I am coming that way and would like to eat at his house. He will not object, but do everything that you ask.

Peter: We will do exactly as you have told us.
(They cross stage left, where they see Simon entering his house. Peter speaks:)

Peter: Simon! Jesus wants to share his Last Supper in your house tonight.

John: Yes; Arrange for a Passover supper for him and his disciples.

Simon: With me? In my house? I am honored beyond words! It will take but a few moments for me to prepare. Come in and see the room . . .
I have never been so happy in all my life!
(Simon, Peter and John walk into "the room" on stage at center. They set up the furniture for the Last Supper)

Jesus: This is the way that things must be. The preparations are nearly complete. When they are, we shall continue. I take this path for love of man, for only a man can save mankind.

(Peter leaves the room to summon Jesus)

Peter: Everything is ready! Simon is ready to meet you.

(Jesus walks into the room and is greeted by Simon, who kneels in reverence. Jesus raises him up.)

Simon: Lord, welcome to my house!
All honor and reverence to you who are both God and Man!

Jesus: All joy unto you, Simon, because your heart is pure. Surely you will see me again in Heaven.

(Here Christ enters into the house with his disciples and eats the paschal supper.)

Scene V: COUNCIL OF JEWS II

(The scene is the platform SR. Caiphas and Rewfin are already in place, and Demon/Doctor and Doctor of Laws enter to them:)

Dr: We must do more! Jesus continues corrupting the people, and our law is losing respect! The Romans will take away what little power we have if we do not act quickly!

Caiphas: It is far better for one person die to preserve our law, than to see the law destroyed, along with our society. We must find a crime to accuse Jesus of.

Rewfin: I heard him say he was King of Jews, which, As I have said, is treason to Caesar and to Rome.

Dr: He said to one group that he would destroy the temple, And build it again in three days! He claims Heaven is his home and that he is God as well as man!

Demon: Let's not wait any longer! Jesus ought to be arrested and thrown in prison! Since he has spoken against our Law, we should try him quickly and condemn him to death!

Rewfin: We could spend all day arguing possibilities, And still not succeed in saving our law. What we must do is develop a secret plan to trap him-- He is rarely alone and unprotected.

Caiphas: We must all agree on a plan to bring him in!

Scene VI: MAUNDY II

(Mary Magdalene enters SL and kneels on the floor.)

Mary Magdalene: Alas, alas, I ought to die,
For the great sins that I have done.
Unless my God some way spare and receive me into his great
mercy. Mary Magdalene is my name.
Now I go to Christ Jesus to ask for some of his great grace,
For I am greatly shamed.

**(Mary rises and crosses onto the stage where Jesus is eating
the Passover with his disciples)**

Have mercy, Lord, and take my sin.
There was never a woman so full of evil.
Therefore, King of Grace, with this ointment that is so
sweet, Let me anoint your holy foot,
So for my ills I win some remedy, and mercy for my sin.

(She anoints his feet from the bottle she has brought)

Jesus: **(rising)** Woman, for your weeping heart some relief
God will send. I have good reason to save you; a sorrowful
heart can sin amend. I will answer all your prayers and
save you from your sin, And from the seven devils who
possess you.

(He places one hand on her head and raises the other:)

Fiends! Go your way and leave her; she is mine!
In my grace she will ever flower!

Mary Magdalene: I thank you Lord for this great grace,
I will never return to sinful ways
Blessed the time I came here, and this ointment that I did
bear, For now my heart is cleansed from care.

Judas: **(standing, accusing)** Lord, I think you do quite ill
To let this ointment like this be wasted.
Had it been sold we could have bought food for poor men.

Jesus: **(rebuking him)** Poor men will remain. You are
wrong to say anything against this woman--
And I'll be gone in a short time.

(To Mary)

Woman, go your way in peace--your sin has been forgiven.

(Mary exits as she came in.)

Here Christ rests and eats a little and says sitting to his disciples:)

My heart is full of sorrow, for soon I go to death though I never sinned. But this is what grieves my heart the most--One of my brothers shall work this menace.

Peter: My dear Lord, I ask that you tell the whole truth: Which of us shall do this treason?

Jesus: One of you who shares my dish will betray me. Woe shall come to him for this work of dread.

Judas: Am I the one?

Jesus: So you have said. You ask if you shall do this treason; It is up to you: You are old enough to know what is right.

Scene VII: BETRAYAL

(Here Judas rises privately and goes into 'the place.')

Judas: (to audience) I have arranged a private treason, to destroy my master's power. By some excuse I shall attempt to sell Jesus unto the Jews. The council of priests is gathered--I think they will be pleased with my offer.

(Judas meets Rewfin)

Hail, Rewfin! I have good news! My master, Jesus, I will sell, For I no longer will follow his law. How much is he worth to you?

Rewfin: Judas, how much do you want for betraying him?

Judas: Show me the money, and I will say if it is enough.

Rewfin: Here are thirty pieces of silver, If we may have your master tonight.

Judas: I will make this bargain with you. Shake hands! You shall have what you want; For money I will not fail.

Rewfin: Now this bargain is made, Neither part may break it. But we need a secret sign, to be sure we arrest the right man.

Judas: As for that, have no doubt! When you come and surround him about, Take the man that I will kiss.

(Judas bows, leaving Rewfin, and speaks to the audience)

Now I will go to my master again, And make it look as if I knew nothing. I have sold him to pain: he will be angry.

(Here Judas leaves subtly as he came.)

Demon/Doctor: (in the council room: they have heard everything) Now we have the beginning of our plan! All we need now is a group willing to fight to make this arrest. Let each of us recruit his party and meet again tonight!

Caiphas: No more delays! Hurry, each of you to his place, so we may carry out this plan tonight!

(They all exit in opposite directions.)

Scene VIII: MAUNDY III**(Jesus rises and speaks to the disciples:)**

Jesus: My brothers, we have eaten the Passover lamb tonight just as the children of Israel did when God commanded it to Moses and Aaron. That symbol's use is finished. Tonight I establish a new one. The sign is my body, represented by bread. I sincerely wanted to share this with you before I die; This will be our last meal together here on earth. And as in the Old Law the lamb was used for sacrifice, so I, as the new lamb, shall make the greatest sacrifice.

(Jesus takes the bread and looks into heaven.)

Father in Heaven, I honor you with thanks.
I, who am equal to you in Godhead but less as humankind.
As man I worship your deity.

Thank you, Father, for the illumination of this mystery. Through your power, and my blessing, this bread becomes my body.

(Again to his disciples.)

Brothers, what appears to be bread is now my body. This is the lamb without sin whom John the Baptist spoke about.

Here is how you shall eat the lamb--According to the rules of the old law:

Do not eat this lamb with the bitter bread of hatred and envy--but instead eat with the sweet bread of love and charity which feeds the soul. The bitter herbs the children of Israel ate are the contrition you should have for your sin, as Mary did and was forgiven. Eating the head with the feet symbolizes the mixture of humanity and Godhead in me, the new Passover Lamb. And, as they burned the uneaten meat, so do not be concerned with what you do not understand. Rely on your faith! Hold your staff in your hand; that is to say, Be prepared to be an example and teach these things to others.

Now that you know how to eat, I will feed you according to this new covenant.

Peter: Lord, I don't know how to take this. No man can be worthy to receive of your own body! I ask your forgiveness of all my sin. **(Peter kneels)**

Jesus: (to each) This is my body, broken for you.

Jesus: (to Judas) Judas, do you understand what you are doing?

Judas: Lord, I will not forsake your body.

Jesus: I will not deny you my body. But if you take without faith, you will be damned. You hear my warning in advance. (**Judas indicates he understands.**) This is my body, broken for you.

(After Judas receives it...)

Jesus: One of you who has eaten with me has betrayed me.

(Each will look at the others...)

Peter: Lord, is it I? (**Others repeat**)

Judas: Could it be me?

Jesus: Judas, you have said it. You have sold your friend. Go! What you've begun, now complete.

(Judas goes into "the place," where Demon meets him)

Demon: Judas, my dear Judas! You are the best I have ever known! Not only have you sold your Master, you have eaten his body! I wish you could bring him all the way to Hell. Speed on your way--I go there now to prepare for both of you; There you will sit beside me.

(Judas exits SR, Demon exits SL)

(Jesus resumes his sermon)

Jesus: Now the Son of God is glorified--and God in Him. I am sorry Judas has traded his bliss for sorrow. But now in memory of my Passion, You shall drink my blood with devotion, as I shed it for love of man. Take this cup of my New Testament and whenever you do it will defend you from Satan and his servants. It runs out from my heart to you.

(Jesus passes the cup to each of them. When all of them have drunk:)

Pay attention to what I've done. I've fed you with my body and blood. I can do no more than give my life for love of man.

As you love me, feed my sheep. Share my body with them too. I will be with you--and them--until the world's end.

Whoever takes this blood and body shall be safe from the devil's wiles.

But whoever does not take this meal will be alone without my love.

(Here Jesus washes the disciples' feet, one by one, wipes them and sits down again.)

Jesus: Friends, this washing shall prevail.
Though I am your Master I have washed you all.
Remember this night and do likewise.
Nothing pleases me so well as those who live lives of
charity.

My time has come--I shall fulfill the prophecy
I will be taken and led away; all of you shall run in fear.
For you I will die and rise again--on the third day you will
see.

Let us go from this place; the day approaches.

Scene IX: AGONY AT OLIVET

(They go to Olivet (on the steps SL). Jesus tells the disciples to wait, then says to Peter:)

Jesus: Wait here. Watch and pray. I must make my prayers to the Father.

Peter: Lord, we wait.

(Jesus goes to center and prays.)

Jesus: My body trembles with suffering, fear and pain. Please, my Father, let me pass from this suffering, since I have never sinned! Father God, remove from me this passion that I must suffer for man's sin. With your grace take away my pain and let me escape death! Water and blood flow mixed from my face in searing pain; my body shakes with fear. Please think of me, Father! You must relieve me, for I have never done wrong!

(Jesus is silently encouraged by the Spirit.)

Father, I shall fulfill your will and suffer death for the sin of man. These tears and blood are not for me, but for the sake of man.

(Here Christ goes again to his disciples and finds them sleeping.)

Awake! How could you sleep when I was in anguish? Your rest is long enough. Judas is coming with a crowd of people to arrest me.

Peter, when you see I am forsaken and stand alone, Give all the cheer that you can unto your brothers.

Scene X: TAKING OF JESUS

(Here Jesus and his disciples go into "the place." The arrest party enters from the aisles right, left and center led by Rewfin.)

Jesus: Gentlemen, you seem in quite a hurry to arrest someone who will not run away. Tell, me, whom seek ye?

Rewfin: I'll tell you who--A traitor, worthy to suffer death! We know he is here: His name is Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus: In truth I tell you, I AM HE!

Rewfin: Jesus of Nazareth is the one we want!

Jesus: I have just finished calmly telling you that it was I.

Judas: **(entering center and crossing to Jesus)**
Jesus, my dear Master and Teacher! I have been looking for you. I am so glad to find you here at last!
(Here Judas kisses Jesus. The soldiers arrest him.)

Jesus: Judas, you have performed this treason, and for that you will be sorry! It would have been better if you had not been born, for now your soul and body go to hell.
(Judas runs out SR.)

Rewfin: Jesus, you may not deny that you are guilty of treason and heresy. Think quickly on your defense, as you are tightly bound. You say you are King--Now let me see your great power. Rescue yourself from this danger! Unto Caiaphas your judge we lead you.

Jesus: Friends, take heed--you are wrong to unkindly bind me here, and to fall on me by night, as if I were a common thief. Many times I appeared before you: Why did you not refute me then? Now you start to rave, and do things that you do not know.

Rewfin: Not one more word this night! Lead him quickly to Caiaphas. Treat him like the criminal he is, and pay no attention to what he says.

(Here the Jews lead Christ out of "the place," around the room and back to the front where Caiaphas is waiting.)

Scene XI: BEFORE CAIAPHAS

(The soldiers leading Jesus place him upstage of Caiphas, who stands on his platform.)

Caiphas: Jesus, you are welcome here to our presence.
So many times we have busily searched for you.
Then we paid your disciple thirty pence, And bought you
like an ox. Now you are ours, as surely as you stand there.
Say why you have troubled us and subverted our law.
Who are the disciples that follow you about? And what is
the doctrine that you preach?
Tell me now, so we can teach your message plainly to others.

Jesus: Every time I preached, it was done openly in the
Synagogue or in the Temple, where all of the Jews come. Ask
them what I have said and done: They can tell you my words.

Soldier 1: Who do you think you are! To whom do you
speak? You should not talk back to a bishop!
For doing that I'll give you a good knock.
(Here he shall hit Jesus on the cheek.)

Jesus: If I have said something false--You must give
witness to the words; You do wrong to wish me harm.

Caiphas: Sires, take heed now to this man
That he destroys not our law, And bring witness against him
(those who can), So that he may be put to death.

Doctor: Sir, this I heard him say this with his own mouth:
'Break down this temple without delay,
And I shall set it up again
As whole as it was by the third day.'

Demon: Yes! And I heard him say that he was the Son of
God, Yet many fools believe that of themselves!

Caiphas: **(circling Jesus)** What do you say now, Jesus? Why
so quiet? Do you hear what is said against you? Speak you
fool! Are you too good to speak to me?
Don't you hear how many things you are accused of?

Jesus: **(quietly)** I am God's Son; I do not deny it. You
all shall see that at Doomsday, when the Son shall come in
great power and majesty to redeem the living and the dead.

Caiphas: What is this? Do you hear how he's blaspheming
God? Why should we need any other witnesses? You have
heard his own words--Don't you think he is worthy to die?
(And they shall all cry:)
Yes, yes, yes, he is worthy to die!

Caiphas: Take him to you and beat him for his blaspheming.

(Here the soldiers shall beat Jesus about the head and the body, and pull him down, and blindfold him.)

First Soldier: Fellows, beware what you do to this man, for he can prophesy well. Now Jesus, who gave you that?

(And he shall strike him with his spear.)

Second Soldier: Ah! And now I will begin a new game, Wheel and pill, wheel and pill, Who was that?

(The soldiers continue to beat him, blindfolded. As the scene ends, they leave off tormenting him and remove the blindfold, laying him on the ground.)

Scene XII: BEFORE PILATE

(Here Judas enters to the Jews, meeting at SR.)

Judas: I, Judas, have sinned in doing this treason. I have betrayed the righteous blood. Here is your money back, and more, From sorrow and thought I am grown mad.

Caiphas: What is that to us? You made an agreement; You sold him to us like a horse. Take responsibility for your own actions.
(Judas casts down the money and goes and hangs himself.)

Caiphas: The night is passed, and day is come. It is time this man had his judgment. Pilate waits at the meeting for us to present this Jesus.
(Here they lead Jesus about the place till they come to Pilate, whose court is at center stage. Jesus is placed SL of Pilate, who sits on the center platform, and the Jews gather about Pilate on the floor, accusing Him.)

Caiphas: Sir Pilate, take heed to this man! We have brought Jesus who condemns our law. He has caused us much shame.

Rewfin: From this city into the land of Galilee he has brought our laws to confusion with his crafty, devilish ways. He tricks the people with clever deception.

Demon: Yet, sir, another crime, worst of all--against Caesar, our Emperor, who is supreme; 'King of Jews' he calls himself, As if our Emperor's power is nothing.

Pilate: What do you say to these complaints, Jesus? These people have accused you seriously.

Jesus: Their accusations do not concern me so long as they do not hurt their souls. I have not yet accomplished what I came for; For my Father's will I must go on.

Pilate: Jesus, by this I think you are a king, and the Son of God, Lord of earth and of all things-- Tell me the truth, if it is so.

Jesus: In heaven is known my Father's will, And in this world I was born: I was sent to seek that which was lost. All who hear me, believe, and keep their faith, shall be brought to eternal bliss.

Pilate: Well, now you have heard this man, what do you think? Do you not find it reasonable that what he says may well be true? I find in him no transgression, treason, or any guilt. The law will, under no condition, allow him to be put to death without offence.

Demon: Sir Pilate, the law rests in you, and we truly know his trespass: The Emperor shall hear about it if you let Jesus pass from you.

Pilate: Tell me one thing: Of what crime do you accuse this man?

Rewfin: Sir, we tell you all together, if he were not a known evil-doer, We would not have brought him to you.

Pilate: Take him, then, according to this charge, And punish him under your law.

Caiphas: It is not lawful for us to make any sort of execution: This is the reason we have brought him to you. He could not possibly be our King. You know we have no king except our Emperor.

Pilate: Jesus, you are King of Jewry.

Jesus: So you say now to me.

Pilate: Tell me, then, Where is your kingdom?

Jesus: My kingdom is not in this world. If my kingdom had been on earth, I would not have been delivered unto you.

Pilate: Think what you can, I find no fault in him.

Caiphas: Sir, here is the record, acknowledge it! We know of great mischief in this man, not only in one day-it is years since he began! These people here can tell you; why, everyone knows, From here into the land of Galilee.

Pilate: Verify one thing, then: That Jesus was truly born in the land of Galilee, For we have no power or jurisdiction over anyone of that country. If Jesus was born there he must be judged by Herod.

Caiphas: Sir, as I am truly sworn unto the Law, I have no fear to tell the truth. In Galilee I know that he was born: in Bethlehem of Judea, which stands in the land of Galilee.

Pilate: I understand now what I must do: The judgement of Jesus lies not with me! Herod is king of that country, and he must have jurisdiction over Jesus. Lead him to Herod as quickly you can. Say I commend myself with word and deed, And that I have sent Jesus to him.

Doctor: We shall take him to Herod at once.

Scene XIII: BEFORE HEROD

(Here they shall take Jesus and lead him in great haste to Herod (across "the place.") All the Jews kneel except Caiphas.)

Doctor/Demon: Hail! Herod, most excellent King! We are commanded to your presence. Pilate sends you greeting, And charges us that we should bring Jesus of Nazareth to you because he was born in this country.

Caiphas: We know he has done great evil against the law, as we have shown. So Pilate sent him unto you, that you should give him judgement.

Herod: Now, by St. Mahomet! My god of grace! This is a kind deed, rare for Pilate. I shall be his friend until the end, Since he has sent Jesus to me. I have wanted so much to see this man! Jesus, you are welcome to me.

Soldier II: My sovereign lord, this is the case: The falseness of Jesus is openly known. There was never a man who committed such sins; he has almost destroyed our law.

Caiphas: Most excellent King, you must take heed! He will destroy all this country, both old and young, by his miracles and false preaching. He brings the people to great mistaking, saying daily among them all that he is Lord, and King of Jews, and Son of God.

Herod: Sires, all these matters I have heard said, And much more than you tell me. All together they shall be laid, And I will take from them my counsel.

Jesus, you are welcome! I thank Pilate for sending you. I have desired so long to see you. It is said you do many wondrous things: Make crooked men walk and blind men see. These are wondrous works. How are they done? What do they mean?

Now Jesus, I pray you, let me see one miracle done in my presence. Quickly, perhaps I will show favor to you. For now you are in my court; Your life and death shall be judged by me. Jesus, why don't you speak to your King? For what reason do you stand so still? You know I shall decide all things: Your life and death lie at my will. Speak, Jesus and tell me why these people so loudly accuse you. Stop stalling, and tell me right now how you can excuse yourself!

Caiphas: Sire, this is one of his false subtleties: He will not speak but when he chooses. This is how he deceives

the people so completely. He is fully false, you mark my words!

Herod: What! You unchained harlot, why will you not speak? Do you scorn to speak unto your King? Because you've broken our laws, I think you fear answering.

Caiphas: No, he is not afraid, but tries a cunning trick hoping we cannot accuse him. He knows there is no good excuse to offer.

Herod: What! Speak I say, you fouling, go to hell! Look up! The devil comes to take you! Go! Beat his body with whips; Maybe that will convince him to speak.

Soldier II: It shall be done without delay. Come on, traitor, see where real evil lies. If you will not speak unto our King, we'll teach you a lesson.

(Here they beat Jesus with whips. Jesus does not respond or react.)

Herod: Jesus, do you enjoy this? You are strong to suffer shame! You would rather be beaten than admit your own faults. But I will not completely destroy you; Sires, take Jesus at your own will, And lead him to Pilate once again. Greet him well--I give him the power over Jesus to save or damn.

Doctor: Sir, at your request it shall be done. We shall lead Jesus to Pilate once again, And tell him all you say.

Scene XIV: BEFORE PILATE II

(The Jews return to Pilate leading Jesus.)

Demon: Pilate! I have good news for you! Herod sends you Jesus once again! You must choose to save or to kill.

Pilate: Certainly it is you priests who are to blame, beating him and putting him to shame. I cannot find a fault in him. And Herod couldn't either, because he sent him back to me! Here is what I am going to do. Every year we release a prisoner. I will let Jesus go.

(Here they all shall cry, "NO!!")

Doctor: Give us Barabbas the murderer instead!

Pilate: What shall I do with Jesus?

Rewfin: Let him be crucified!

Pilate: But what wrong has Jesus done?

ALL: Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!

Pilate: Since you wish Jesus nothing but pain, I will take him aside with me a moment.

(Here Pilate takes Jesus aside.)

Jesus, what do you have to say? You would be a free man if it were up to me; But your countrymen would have you killed! These bishops and priests, and even the common people, are all against you! Why don't you answer me? Don't you know the power I have over you? What do you say?

Jesus: You have no power over me, except what my Father has given. I came to fulfill His will, and save mankind from sin. The one who betrayed me to you is more at fault than you.

Rewfin: Princes, look and see how favorable Pilate is to Jesus! If he does not change his mind, our laws will be eternally destroyed!

(Here Pilate returns to the Jews.)

Pilate: Well, what would you have me do? I can find no fault. It is my desire to let him go.

Caiphas: No, Pilate! You would be making a grave mistake to go against our Law! If you let Jesus go, you will answer to the Emperor as a traitor!

Pilate: Very well, since you will have it no other way, I wash my hands of this! As I wash my hands clean with water, So shall I be guiltless of his death.

Doctor: His blood shall be on us and on our children!

Pilate: Bring Jesus, that he may have his sentence.

(Here the soldiers shall bring Jesus.)

Pilate: What say you of Jesus of Nazareth?

Rewfin: We say he shall be put to death.

Pilate: Can you accuse him of any violation of the law?

Caiphas: Sir, we all agree that he must at once be crucified.

(And all shall cheer, and shout, 'Crucify Him!')

Pilate: Jesus, your own people have denied all attempts to save you. Here are my instructions, since you insist on crucifying him: First bind him to a pillar; Then beat him where everyone can see. Once beaten, crown him as your King: At that time you may bring him to the cross. He shall be nailed upon the cross upon three nails: One through his right hand, another through the left; the third right through both feet. Thus Jesus shall hang upon the Mount of Calvary that everyone may see. Go now!

(They all exit through the center aisle, leading Jesus.)

Demon's Speech Before the Cross

(Demon enters to center, where the cross will be.)

Demon: Now my plan is coming into focus. You see that it is I who am truly in control. Thousands of devils bow to me, ruling in flame! Whoever works for me can look forward to tortures far worse than dungeons and chains. Even on earth I will torment the one who have played games with Jesus, the one Judas sold. But Jesus is the one who really upset me! No matter the temptation, he always overcame me--until now. I have prepared this cross just for him. No matter how holy, he will be no match for this pain! Soon he shall come into my Hell! Hell, make ready! We're expecting a guest; the one who called himself the son of God! By noon he will be there, you mark my words! Soon he will join us in eternal suffering!

XV. CRUCIFIXION

(The two soldiers lead Jesus in from backstage right, and lay Jesus down on the "cross.")

Soldier I: Come on! Let's see if the cross will fit! Well, lay him down! He can't stand here all day!

Soldier II: Give me his arms! You take his feet! Now we can see if the holes line up.

Soldier I: This one does. Pull him so that one fits.

Soldier II: Fasten a rope and we'll pull him out longer. Then all the holes will match.

Soldier I: Just drive a nail here.

Soldier II: Ha! That one should hold!

Soldier I: Now the feet! This one will go through both feet!

(They laugh and dance around him.)

Soldier I: Here he lies, tacked on a tree!

Soldier II: You are indeed a worthy king!

Soldier I: Stand up the cross so we can see his face.

Soldier II: Then we can kneel and worship the great King!

(They set him up; then mock him, saying:)

Soldier I: Hail! King of the Jews! (If you are?!)

Soldier II: Come down from that tree and we'll all worship together!

(Mary Magdalene, Maria Virgo, and John all come to the cross.)

Maria Virgo: My Son! What could you have done that you are left to hang on a cross, like a thief? My heart will burst! I don't know how to go on living without you.
(She faints.)

Jesus: Father, Creator. Forgive these Jews. They do not know what they have done.

(The soldiers mock Jesus from the ground.)

Soldier I: There he is--the one who said he would destroy the temple and raise it in 3 days.

Soldier II: Yes, if you're God's Son, Help yourself! Come off the cross!

Maria Virgo: My son, what have I done wrong? You've spoken to everyone else but me. You have even forgiven the Jews. Will you not speak to me, your own suffering mother? My heart will break!

Jesus: Woman, this is your son! John, Care for her as your mother! Mother, you know God sent me here to ransom mankind for Adam's sin. If this is God's will, why should you be unhappy? This is the reason I was born to you--to restore man's bliss!

Mary Magdalene: Good lady, why? Your sadness makes ours worse; And Jesus suffers more for seeing yours.

Maria Virgo: Will you all please just let me stay here with my own Son!

John: Gentle lady, stop your mourning and come with us. It is almost over.

(Caiphas and the others come before the cross.)

Caiphas: Look! Here hangs the one who helped so many--helpless!

Rewfin: If you're the king, come down and let your God save you!

(Pilate enters with a sign, "Here is Jesus, King of the Jews." He places it beside Jesus.)

Caiphas: Sir Pilate, we'd rather have you write, "He called himself the King of Jews."

Pilate: What I have written, I have written.
(All of the Leaders exit.)

Jesus: My Father in Heaven, why do you abandon me? My human weakness feels great pain! Please look on me and relieve my pain with death!

Soldier I: Well, sir, now you are ready to go. We'll take our leave of you and wish you well.

Soldier II: We leave you with our scorn--Keep watch in the corn and scare away the crows! **(laughs)**

Jesus: Father in Heaven above, I commend my spirit to you. My suffering is over: It is finished.

Maria Virgo: I have lived too long if I am forced to look upon my own son in such suffering! He hangs there like a thief though he never once sinned!

John: Blessed woman, change this thought! Even though Jesus is in pain, it is of his own choice. He asked me to take care of you; please cheer yourself and know that this is what he wanted.

Maria Virgo: Even if he were not my own son, I would have to mourn to find my friend so beaten and so punished by his enemies.

John: Lady, I have told you, as he did, he has died so we may live! Because he has taken our sin, we may live with him in heaven! This is reason to rejoice!

Maria Virgo: My mind knows, but my heart cannot forget this sight.

John: Since that is the case, let's go from here. If you do not see him, it may be easier to cheer your heart.
(Mary kisses Jesus' feet then falls at the foot of the cross weeping again.)

John: Blessed Mother, come with me! You should not look upon his pain any longer.
(They exit. After a few moments, the soldiers enter to remove Jesus from the cross.)

Soldier I: I think that he is surely dead. We need not break his legs to finish him. Do you agree that he will not move or speak again?

Soldier II: You are right, my brother. He has suffered much, and passed away quickly. His pain is past. Let us place him in his tomb.
(The two soldiers and the leaders take Jesus down and carry him to the grave.)

Scene XVI: SETTING OF THE WATCH

(Pilate, Caiphas and Rewfin meet at center stage.)

Caiphas: Pilate, listen here; We have to be careful; Jesus said he would rise in three days, So his disciples may well try to steal his body. We ought to set a guard over his grave.

Pilate: Caiphas, it shall be done! If what you suggest were to happen, All our laws would be destroyed.

(Calling to the soldiers.)

Come, I have a job for you to do. You shall guard the grave of Jesus until three days have passed. Let no one near the grave--If his disciples try to steal the body do not hesitate to kill them. If his body is taken, your own lives and possessions will be taken from you.

Soldier I: We will not fail! If a hundred come upon us, They will surely die!

Soldier II: Even if there are a hundred thousand--or more! I will take them on myself.

Pilate: Simply do your part--and tell no one else.

(Caiphas and Pilate step off to the side.)

Pilate: Well, Caiphas; what do you think? Are we prepared?

Caiphas: Surely we are! I have no doubt.

Pilate: Now come with me to seal the grave.

Caiphas: Yes. When it is sealed we'll rest more easily and know our plan is secure.

(They all shall go to the tomb.)

Rewfin: Once the grave is closed, we will know that he cannot rise again!

Pilate: **(as Rewfin and Soldier II close the door)**

Across the door we roll this stone. He shall never come out of this grave!

Caiphas: The tomb is closed securely, now place your seal. Then we can go our way and let the soldiers do their job.

Pilate: I've sealed the door and placed this guard. No one can take him away now! We shall all go home relieved--You soldiers remain in charge.

(They exit.)

Soldier I: Now he is sealed in the ground--His claims were false. I'll guard this left side--
If anyone tries to steal the corpse I'll slide my own sword into his own side!

Soldier II: I will guard the head and feet; None shall get by me. His disciples would be mad to attempt to overcome me!

(The soldiers slowly fall asleep on the ground, in spite of their best efforts at remaining awake.)

Scene XVII: RESURRECTION

Jesus: (coming out of the tomb and crossing to center)

I have gone through much suffering and many pains for three and thirty years. I left my Father's throne to save man's soul; and gave my flesh and blood.

For you I died, then rose--I made my body into bread to feed the soul. If you let me go today without following, You will miss the friend who knows your need.

(Mary his mother is sitting weeping near the tomb.)

Greetings my dearest mother! Your son has returned to life. It is the third day, and here I am! Cry no more.

Maria Virgo: Welcome! All worship to you, great Lord my God! My joy is all the greater because my sorrow was so deep!

Jesus: This world will honor you for bringing me to die for mankind's sin. Through death I now have brought bliss--Man now may go to Heaven.

Maria Virgo: Son, your words comfort me. Blessed be your saving blood! Now death is dead and life goes on eternally
(Maria and Jesus exit together at stage left.)

Scene XVIII: STORY OF THE WATCH

(The soldiers wake up and notice the tomb is open.)

Soldier I: Wake up! He is gone! He rose under his own strength!! What are we going to say to Pilate in our defense?!?

Soldier II: Let's go to him and tell the truth.
(crossing to center as Pilate comes in) Pilate! The one you sentenced has risen!

Pilate: What!? How can you say such a thing? You must be lying. How could a dead man come out of the grave?

Soldier I: Please--don't be so angry with us. Believe our words to be the truth.
If you had been there you would know.

Pilate: When I left you, you swore to fight without fail!
It is clear that you were lying then, too!

Soldier II: You do not understand! His power overcame us.
It was as if we were trapped beneath a great weight!

Pilate: Oh, stop it! Who is going to believe that? No one will ever trust you.
You will be ridiculed in every town as worthless scarecrows.

Soldier I: Any man's heart would fail him there. This spirit would have frightened the bravest of knights.

Soldier II: We were there !! Let us go and tell everyone what we know.

Soldier I: **(beginning to move away from Pilate as if to go away and tell everyone what happened)** It is clear that he rose up of his own--No one else was ever close by!

Pilate: **(quickly)** Wait just a moment. Let us call the judges to council.
We will consider what they say to this news.

Soldier I: At your request we will stay a little while.

Pilate: **(to Caiphas and Rewfin)** What do you think?

Caiphas: Nothing but evil can come of this!

Rewfin: Here is my suggestion--Let them suppress their story and pay them well. We must keep this just between us.

Caiphas: It will work! Just ask them to look honestly at the situation.
Pay them, feed them, and they will see it our way.

Pilate: As you say, so we will do.
Good knights--come here! Stay with us awhile. Let's think of a better report.
Tell everyone he was stolen by his disciples!
Then take the gold we'll give you and return to Rome.

Soldier II: Sir Pilate--we will do as you say. We won't say a word, but go on (with your gold!)
Our promise is made to you.

Pilate: Just be sure this time your words remain true.

Scene XIX: AT THE TOMB

(Mary Magdalene enters, weeping, and moves to the tomb. She notices the stone is moved and becomes frantic.)

Mary Magdalene: Where is my Lord? He died for me and was laid here--Murdered by the Jews--
But his body is taken away!

Angel: Go out into the streets! That's where you'll find him. He is alive--go to Him! First, go and tell his disciples. Believe it! He who died has risen and lives again!

Mary Magdalene: Oh!! My joy has returned, Now that Jesus has risen to life.

(She goes to the apostles, who are across the stage.)

Brothers--be glad--I have news of Jesus: HE HAS RISEN AGAIN!!! An angel told me and said I must be sure to tell you that Christ is alive!

Peter: I have to ask carefully--Can this be true?
Is he really alive who was buried, dead and cold?

Mary Magdalene: Trust it is true.

John: This is wondrous news! I must run and see.

Peter: I run with you, my brother. Let us hurry to his grave.

(They race to the tomb.)

John: Here is the sheet that wrapped him--but he himself is gone!

Peter: The graveclothes lie here. They are surely the ones he was wrapped in at Calvary.

John: Now we know with our own eyes that this is true. Let us go to our brothers and tell them Our Lord Lives!

Peter: They will be joyful as we are at this news!
(They cross down the center aisle to the other disciples.)
Brothers! Cheer up! Our Lord is no longer dead! He lives!

Thomas: You saw the stone! How could that be moved?!

Peter: There is no way to explain--we don't know how it happened. But HE IS NOT ANY LONGER IN THE GRAVE!!!

(Mary Magdalene moves back to the grave.)

Mary Magdalene: Shall I remain in sorrow? My Lord is gone! He has been stolen from his grave!

Jesus: Woman, why are you crying?

Mary Magdalene: For the greatest cause--My Lord who forgave me has been taken. I have no words but tears.

Jesus: Mary!

Mary Magdalene: My Lord and master!

Jesus: Cure my brothers' concern with good words of my life. Tell my friends to meet me at the Mount of Olives. I will ascend to my father and prepare places in Heaven for you!

Mary Magdalene: I will do as you ask. **(And he is gone.)** My great sorrow has been turned to greater joy! **(Mary crosses back to the disciples)** Brothers--be joyful! I have seen the Lord alive! I tell you it is true! We must go to the mountain and meet him.

(They all run up the center aisle and meet Jesus, who has crossed to center stage.)

Scene XX: ASCENSION

Jesus: Peace unto you! I know it has been difficult for you to understand my words. Today I shall speak plainly. Brothers, do not leave Jerusalem, but stay and await God's promise. John baptized with water, but soon you will be baptized by the holy spirit. When you have received this power, you must go and make disciples in every country. Begin here, and spread the good news of my salvation to the ends of the earth. I promise to always be present with you, until the end of the age.

Reprise of Song: "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna, we sing to Christ Our King!
Through pillared court and Temple this lovely anthem
rings!

O may we ever praise Him with heart and life and voice!
And in His blissful Presence eternally rejoice!

(The full cast comes out to finish the song. At the end of the song they exit to the back through the center aisle.)

APPENDIX B

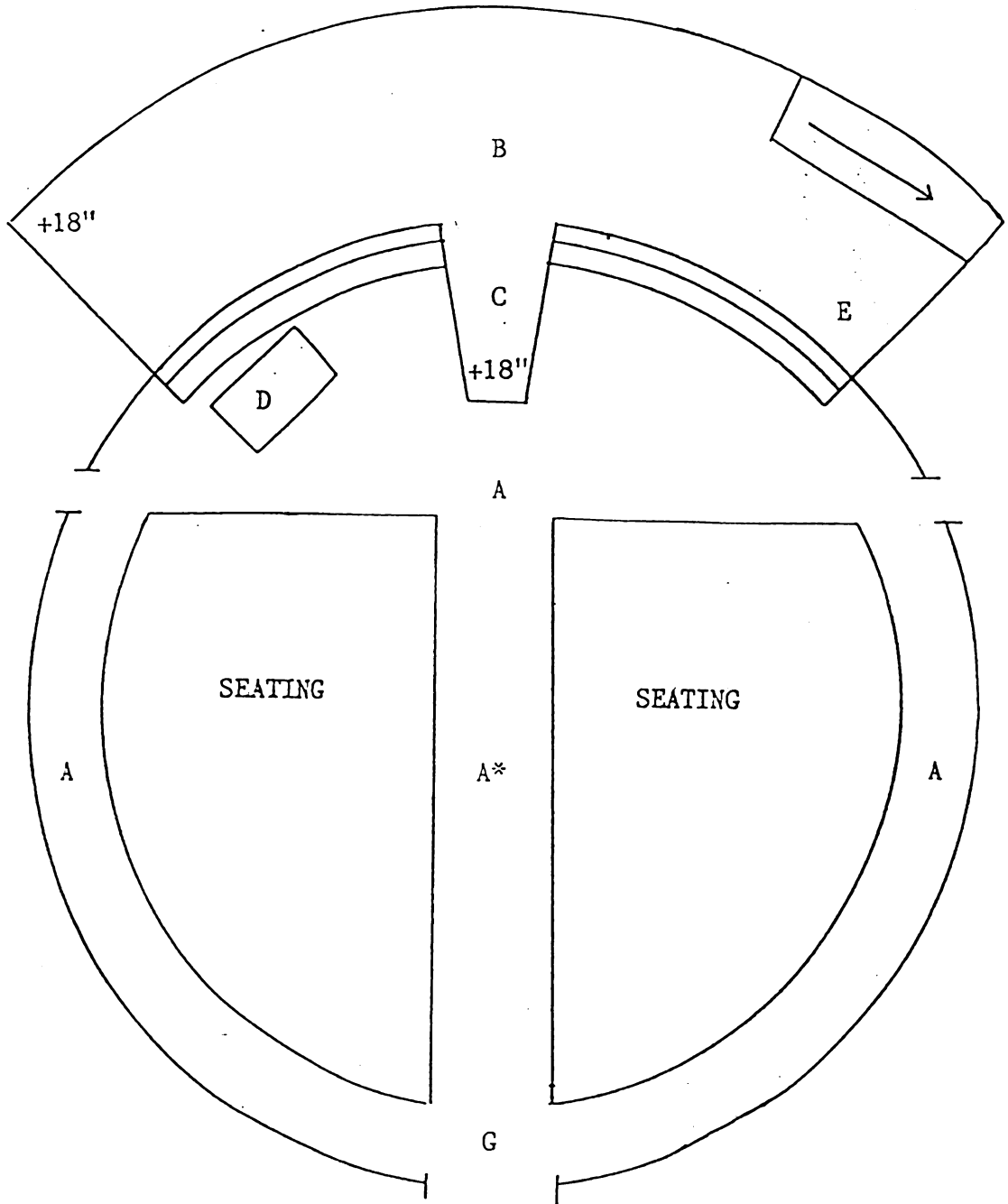


Figure 1

* The "place" (A) includes all of the floor-level playing area, as well as the seating.

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