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Michelle Ann Abate

Oversight as Insight: Reading *The Second Shepherds' Play* as *The Second Shepherd's Play*

In his 1519 book of proverbs, *Vulgaria*, William Horman includes the following adage: 'Somtyme of a myshappe cometh a good turne.'[1] Although Horman was referring to everyday life and not medieval drama when he wrote this remark, his sentiments could be applied to a pageant from the Towneley Cycle. Bearing the Latin title *Secunda Pastorum*, the drama is correctly translated as *The Second Shepherds' Play*. Numerous indexes and critical essays, however, contain a bibliographic 'myshappe' or disjunction: these listings misplace the apostrophe and record the text as *The Second Shepherd's Play*.[2] A survey of criticism written about the drama in the past thirty years reveals the widespread predominance of this mistake. Of the essays and articles catalogued in the MLA Bibliography about *Secunda Pastorum* (twenty-six at the time of composition[3]), nearly twenty-five percent misspell or mistranslate its title. Similarly, the third edition of the *Annals of English Drama: 975–1700* makes the same error, registering the work as *The Second Shepherd's Play*. Finally, Branden Books made one of the most prominent of these blunders when it reprinted *Secunda Pastorum* as a performance text and emblazoned the incorrect title across the cover in bold capitals large enough to be seen (and snickered at) from across the room. Even Sarah Beckwith's recent and well-respected book, *Signifying God: Social Relation and Symbolic Act in the York Corpus Christi Plays*, contains the error. In an early chapter, she refers to the 'Second Shepherd's pageant'.[4] Present in the main discussion, the mistake recurs in the book's index. As these numerous and diverse examples suggest, the mistranslation of *Secunda Pastorum* is a consistent and even persistent feature of the pageant. Appearing in past and present scholarship, primary and secondary sources, along with work emerging from the discipline of theatre studies as well as literary criticism, it forms a rare point of consistency in a field that is known for its mercurial nature. While critics may disagree over the performance history, authorship, and even host city of *Secunda Pastorum*,[5] their diverse and

often even differing analyses are united by the presence of the misplaced apostrophe.

Rather than politely ignoring or graciously overlooking this common translation error regarding *Secunda Pastorum* as previous scholarship has done, I take the somewhat unusual stance of embracing it.[6] In the pages that follow, I argue that this common bibliographic mistake or oversight may actually provide a critical insight. Reading *The Second Shepherds' Play* as *The Second Shepherd's Play* shifts the focus of the drama from one of sequence (the second play of the shepherds) to one of possession (belonging to the second shepherd). Recalling William Horman's observation that from a 'myshappe' often arises a 'good turne', I demonstrate that this change in context presents a useful perspective from which to view and understand the pageant. A close scrutiny of *Secunda Pastorum* reveals that the second shepherd announces central events and recurring themes within the play. Foretelling such key elements as the stealing of the sheep, the abrasive personality of Mak's wife, and the comic blending of the pious and the parodic, Gyb's remarks constitute an important point of entry for understanding the pageant. As the misplaced apostrophe suggests, therefore, *The Second Shepherds' Play* can and perhaps even should be read as *The Second Shepherd's Play*.[7] Viewed from the perspectives of plot development and disclosure of theme, the drama is in many ways *his* text.

From Shadower to Foreshadower: Taking a Second Look at the Second Shepherd

As numerous past and present critics have noted, *Secunda Pastorum* is the most widely recognized, anthologized, and analyzed pageant of a mystery cycle, Towneley or otherwise. In the words of David Lampe, 'The Towneley (Wakefield) *The Second Shepherds' Play* is clearly the single most popular piece of medieval English drama, appearing in every anthology of English literature that devotes space to the medieval period'.[8] Given its popularity, criticism about *The Second Shepherds' Play* has been both numerous and diverse. In addition to examining the pageant from its original cultural and religious contexts, studies have considered it from a wide range of thematic, symbolic, and even theoretical perspectives. Such sentiments pervade current analyses as well.[9]

In spite of all the past and present attention *Secunda Pastorum* has received, none of these studies has focused exclusively on the shepherds in general or Gyb in particular. Although Coll, Gyb, and Daw make important individual

contributions to the drama, most critics agree that they are best viewed not as independent characters but as an interdependent unit or whole. Jeffrey Helterman, for instance, argues that Coll, Gyb, and Daw have an ensemble effect that is more important than the contributions made by their individual characters.[10] Similarly, F. P. Manion outlines the benefits of seeing the shepherds not as discrete entities but as a type of chorus working in unison with both each other and the plot.[11] As a result of such sentiments, no articles to date are exclusively devoted to Gyb or the role he occupies in the text. Instead, he is commonly considered a mere echo or extension of his cohorts, Coll and Daw. Exemplifying this belief, John Gardner asserts that the vast majority of the second shepherd's speeches do not introduce new information or announce fresh themes in the pageant. On the contrary, they merely 'pick up on Coll's tone'.[12] Such sentiments pervade present analyses as well. Recent essays by Lee Templeton and Ken Hiltner echo or at least fail to challenge these previously established views of the shepherds. Examining the carnivalesque atmosphere within the pageant and its use of punning and political parody respectively, they tend to view Coll, Gyb, and Daw as a unit and lock them into fixed positions.[13]

Although the tendency to emphasize the interconnected nature of the three shepherds may enhance the overall unity or coherence of *Secunda Pastorum*, it forecloses the possibility that the trio may occupy positions outside this role. More than simply echoing the comments made by the first shepherd or providing a segue to those of the third shepherd, Gyb plays an important and previously overlooked role in *Secunda Pastorum*. Instead of merely shadowing his companions, he foreshadows key events and central themes of the pageant. For these reasons, Gyb is not simply one of the characters in *Secunda Pastorum*, but a central one.

John Gardner articulates what he considers the controlling metaphor of the drama: '*The Second Shepherds' Play* is in a sense an exploration of the Christian significance of the number three: the play focuses on three shepherds; it begins with three soliloquies which open the first of three distinct movements; it treats three motifs appropriate to the Nativity story – law, charity and wonder – and associates them with the Holy Trinity; it closes with the three adorations of the Christ child and the giving of three symbolic gifts'.[14] Given the predominance of this number throughout *Secunda Pastorum*, Gardner concludes that 'threes are by no means simply graceful embellishment. They are the heart of the matter'.[15] While Gardner's observation about the importance of numerology in the pageant is apt, it may be time to alter or modify its focus. After several decades of focusing on the

significance of threes in *Secunda Pastorum*, the insights made possible by the bibliographic oversight suggests that the time has come to consider the importance of another digit in the drama: the number two.

Not simply a mere echo or shadow of the first shepherd, Gyb's role as a foreshadower of key events emerges from his opening speech in the play. When Gyb first appears on stage, he remarks, 'Bensté and Dominus' (l. 55).[16] A mock blessing that would have been understood as comical by even lower-class members of the audience, the second shepherd's invocation establishes one of the central features of *Secunda Pastorum*: the farcical blending of secular and sacred. Although the first shepherd laments the harsh conditions on earth and wonders why God would allow them to exist, he never transforms this disillusionment into heretical comments about the divine. Instead, Coll's discussion of man's cruel state only confirms his belief in a saviour. After articulating the ways in which he is both tortured by the weather and exploited by wealthy landowners, Coll closes with the suggestive lines, 'For I trowe, perdé, / Trew men if thay be, We gett more compané / Or it be noyne' (ll. 51–4.). Although ostensibly foreshadowing the arrival of his companions, Coll's remarks also allude to the arrival of the Christ child in the close of the drama. As Mack Maynard asserts, 'What better introduction could there be to a world in need of redemption, to a story that will end with Christmas?'[17]

Although Gyb reiterates many of Coll's grievances, his opening speech takes a dramatically different tone. Rather than begin with a complaint, Gyb begins with a mock blessing. In addition to deviating from the worldview of his companion, the second shepherd's remark announces the primary comedic element on which the drama is based: the mixing of the pious with the parodic. As numerous past and present critics have pointed out, the vast majority of *Secunda Pastorum* is concerned with the comic parody of the Nativity rather than the devout retelling of it. But the blend of secular and sacred contributes to its role as a comedy of instruction. According to Rose Zimbardo's definition of the 'comic mockery of the sacred' in *Secunda Pastorum*, the humorous annunciation and adoration scenes in the opening half of the pageant simultaneously foreshadow as they reinforce the sacred and more serious ones that are to come in the final segment.[18] Phrased in a more vernacular (and metaphoric) way, they are the 'spoonful of sugar' that first captures the audience's attention and then helps make the sacred lesson that they are about to receive both more palatable and memorable. Gyb, with his own invocation of the sacred and profane, participates in or contributes to this phenomenon. The mock blessing that he utters in his opening speech

is reiterated in a more serious and sacred form later in the pageant when Gyb first sees the Christ child: 'Hayll, sufferan sauyoure, for thou has vs soght!' (l. 719). In this way, the second shepherd has not only helped prepare audience members for the pageant's account of the biblical story, but also assumed an important role in the actual telling of it.

Coupled with alluding to the recurring tension between farce and worship in *Secunda Pastorum*, Gyb's mock blessing also foreshadows transitional speeches by subsequent characters. For instance, when the three shepherds wake from their slumber later in the narrative, the first shepherd makes a proclamation that similarly traffics in mock religiosity: '*Resurrex a mortuus*!.... / *Iudas carnas dominus*!' (ll. 350–1). Echoing this passage, Mak engages in heretical mockery of sacred invocations at several points in the drama. When preparing to steal a sheep from the unsuspecting Coll, Gyb and Daw, for example, the trickster figure does not ask for the blessing or assistance of God. Instead, he utters, '*Manus tuas commendo*, / *Poncio Pilato*' (ll. 266–7). Like Gyb in his opening remarks, Mak forgoes the pious for the parodic. Significantly, because he casts the spell on the shepherds soon after uttering his mock-piety, many critics read Mak as a demonic figure. Dabbling in the supernatural and calling on the assistance of the man who presided over the crucifixion of Christ, the comic trickster has been deemed the Antichrist.[19]

The way in which Gyb's opening speech announces central themes and important events in *Secunda Pastorum* continues into the second stanza. In this section, Gyb shifts his lament from the harsh condition of making of living by animal husbandry to the harsh condition of being a husband. In what has become an oft-quoted passage, the second shepherd launches into an extended harangue about the enfeebling effects of marriage and the emasculating nature of women: 'These men that ar wed haue not all thare wyll; / When they ar full hard sted, thay sygh full styll. / God wayte thay ar led full hard and full yll; / In bowere nor in bed thay say noght thertyll' (ll. 73–6). In light of this unflattering portrait of wedlock, Gyb admonishes the men of marriageable age in the audience to avoid or at least be cautious about matrimony: 'Bot, yong men, of wowying, for God that you boght, / Be well war of wedying' (ll. 90–1).

While critics have rightly condemned Gyb's misogyny in this passage, their focus on reprimand has caused them to overlook an important facet of his speech. More than simply announcing the second shepherd as a hen-pecked and embittered husband, his remarks also prefigure the personality of Mak's wife. As Gardner aptly notes, 'Mak's Gill is a living emblem of all Gyb complained about earlier'.[20] Recalling Gyb's unflattering portrait of his

spouse, Gill is described 'As sharp as a thystyll, as rugh as a brere' (l. 101). In addition, the portly and hard-drinking woman is characterized as being 'as greatt as a whall' (l. 105) and frequently having 'wett hyr whystyll' (l. 103). Echoing Gyb's description of his wife, therefore, Gill has both a literal and figurative 'galon of gall' (l. 106). In light of Gill's tough demeanour and copious fertility, it comes as no surprise when Mak gives voice to Gyb's closing wish: 'I wald I had ryn to I had lost hir!' (1. 108).

In addition to foreshadowing Gill's crude personality, Gyb's misogynistic view of women and unfavorable portrait of wedlock anticipates another central event in *Secunda Pastorum*: the couple's comic concealment of the sheep. When the pair hides the stolen animal in a cradle and attempts to pass it off as their newborn infant, Gill makes noises similar to those that Gyb associates with his wife: feigning the pains of childbirth, she not only 'kakyls' but begins 'to crok, / To goyne or to clok' (l. 70).

Throughout the remainder of *Secunda Pastorum*, Gyb makes additional remarks that teem with future textual resonance. Soon after Mak joins the shepherds, for instance, Gyb identifies him as someone who has the look 'Of stelying... shepe' (l. 225). In addition to setting the stage for the central secular event of the drama, Gyb's comment alludes to the manner in which the ruse is detected. Interestingly, Mak's criminal potential is not rooted in his generally distrustful nature or prior deviant behavior. Instead, the second shepherd makes his judgment on this character's appearance. Soon after seeing Mak, Gyb observes, 'An thou has an yll noys / Of stelyng of shepe' (ll. 224–5). Although the word 'noys' is commonly translated as 'noise', it can also be read as 'nose'. Both the *Oxford English Dictionary* and Fernand Mossé's *A Handbook of Middle English*, in fact, list 'noys' as an archaic spelling of 'nose' while the *Middle English Dictionary* includes 'noyse' in its entries for both 'noise' and 'nose'. Putting this knowledge into practice, Marital Rose's modernized translation of *Secunda Pastorum* uses the word 'nose' rather than 'noise' for this line in Gyb's speech.[21]

Awareness that the term 'noys' can be read as 'nose' instead of or in addition to 'noise' adds another facet to his role as a foreshadower. Echoing Gyb's observation that Mak has an 'yll noys' for stealing sheep, the attempt by the comic trickster and his wife several scenes later to conceal the stolen sheep is foiled by the shape of the animal's nose. When Daw removes the blanket covering the couple's supposed newborn infant, he is shocked by its visage: 'What the dewill is this? He has a long snowte!' (l. 585.). Upon hearing this exclamation, Coll and Gyb return to the collage to investigate and, significantly, the second shepherd unveils the fraud. After seeing the woolly four-

footed infant, he proclaims, 'Ill-spon weft, iwys, ay commys foull owte. / Ay so! / He is lyke to our shepe!'(ll. 587–9).[22]

In spite of the important individual contributions Gyb makes in *Secunda Pastorum*, he has never been identified as a central or even important character in the pageant. On the contrary, this distinction has consistently gone to the trickster Mak. Wallace H. Johnson, for instance, argues that the drama has received so much critical attention because of 'the appeal of its leading character, the sheep-stealing Mak'.[23] Similarly, Richard Axton asserts that the pageant's primary 'provision of "entertainment" is concentrated in the shape-shifting Mak'.[24] Finally, a recent article by Rick Bowers argues that the trickster figure is the locus for the pageant's comedy and, as a result, the catalyst for its carvnivalesque atmosphere.[25]

The way in which the second shepherd hints at key plot developments and announces central themes throughout *Secunda Pastorum* calls this critical tendency into question. Gyb's numerous allusions call for a reconsideration of his importance in the drama. In many ways, these elements allow the second shepherd to equal or even eclipse Mak as the character of import in *Secunda Pastorum*. Accordingly, the misspelling of the *Second Shepherds' Play* as the *Second Shepherd's Play* forms something more than the bibliographic 'myshappe' or disjunction first believed. Rather, it provides a new and previously overlooked interpretive strategy through which to approach and examine this important pageant.

From Text to Context, From Page to Stage: What Seeing *The Second Shepherds' Play* as *The Second Shepherd's Play* Can Teach Us about *Secunda Pastorum* in Performance

While past and present critics may disagree over an array of textual, thematic and production elements concerning the Towneley Cycle in general and *Secunda Pastorum* pageant in particular, all agree on one detail: pageants were meant to viewed by audiences in performance and not examined in print by readers. In Richard Beadle's words, cycle pageants 'were designed for a general audience which was more accustomed to hearing its literature than to reading it silently, and it is essential to grasp that both the conceptual substance and the imaginative qualities of such plays are inseparable from their theatricality'.[26] In keeping with this observation, the significance of the misplaced apostrophe in *The Second Shepherds' Play* goes beyond simply textual or literary implications. It also enhances our understanding of the pageant in performance. The way in which the bibliographic oversight provides critical insight into Gyb's

role as a foreshadower of key events adds another facet to such performance elements as repetition, duplication, and prediction in cycle drama.

Because pageants such as *Secunda Pastorum* were largely intended to be didactic (recounting an important event in Biblical scripture) and also because they were presented outdoors where it may have been difficult for spectators to see and hear the actors, they were filled with elements of repetition and reiteration. At numerous points throughout the production, aspects of the plot, characters, setting and dialogue were repeated to ensure that the audience was able to understand what was happening. Throughout both past and present criticism of cycle pageants, critics and historians have frequently called attention to their reiteration. Meg Twycross, for instance, addresses the pervasive nature of duplication and redundancy in the plays, in discussing the typical performance style of a pageant actor:

> He also tells you 'what he is doing at the same time he is doing it'. Presumably, this running commentary draws the audience's attention to actions that some of them might not be able to see; it also adds an emphasis to significant action…. Besides this, for the characters to pass on this information is to emphasize the fact that they are communicating with the audience: these actions are not private, but are done for the benefit of the audience, that they may see.[27]

Lawrence Clopper echoes such sentiments in commenting on various versions of holy trinity, for instance: 'The playwrights recognize the need to address the issue of this relation and find a variety of ways of asserting that Christ is one with the Father; nevertheless, they at the same time they realize that this urgent issue is not easily understood and so they simply repeat doctrinal points'.[28] As these remarks suggest, repetition and reiteration were not a haphazard or accidental features of cycle pageants, but constituted an integral and even essential part of its performance style.

Secunda Pastorum not only adheres to this characterization, but common critical views of the second shepherd Gyb as a mere shadower of his companions in general and the first shepherd in particular have added further credence to it. The play is rife with elements of imitation, duplication and even recapitulation. David Lampe provides an overview of what he calls the numerous 'double patterns in the play', pointing out that *Secunda Pastorum* contains two sets of complaints, two annunciations and two adoration scenes.[29] Even essays that do not focus explicitly on instances of repetition and replication in *Secunda Pastorum* acknowledge it. Peter Meredith, for instance, notes that scenes, speeches and events in the pageant so frequently

'repeat', 'imitate', 'parallel', and 'recollect' one another that that they give the pageant an 'interweaving pattern'.[30] Similarly, Lawrence Ross addresses the instances of 'analogous action', 'parellelism', and 'false imitation' within the pageant.[31] Finally, M. F. Vaughn discusses the themes of 'parody, analogy, symbolism, [and] prophecy' that pervade *Secunda Pastorum*.[32] Comments such as the assertion that Gyb's speeches merely 'pick up on Coll's tone' rather than introduce new information into the pageant give added weight to such arguments.

Critics have been so focused on the importance of reiteration in *The Second Shepherds' Play*, however, that they have overlooked the significance of the initial iteration. V.A. Kolve, in his seminal text, identifies more than the trope of repetition or reiteration in mystery pageants. On the contrary, he also argues for one of prediction. At various point throughout his discussion, Kolve asserts that typology (or the idea that an Old Testament event foreshadows something in the life of Christ) is a powerful and productive way of reading dramatic cycles. Characters from the Towneley, York, N-Town, and Chester cycles do not simply repeat past information, they anticipate future action: the Fall of Man foreshadows the Temptation of Christ, the tale of Cain and Abel prefigures the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, the story of Abraham and Isaac can be seen as a prologue to accounts of both the Baptism and the Crucifixion.[33] Alerting audience members to important events that are to come in the plays, these elements are among the most significant and symbolic in the productions. They occupy a key role in the process by which spectators experienced and even understood the pageants.

As the pageant that recounts the birth of Christ, *Secunda Pastorum* is posed on the precise nexus between the Old and New Testaments, or between what Kolve describes in the quotation above as 'figure' and 'fulfillment'. With the first (largely secular) half of the pageant occurring before the Annunciation and the second (and decidedly sacred) half taking place after it, *Secunda Pastorum* occupies the tipping over point between *Ante Christum Natum* ('before the birth of Christ') and *Anno Domini* ('the Year of our Lord'). As such, instances of prologue, prediction, or what Kolve identifies as 'prefiguring' ought to assume added significance in the drama.

The critical insight made possible by the bibliographic oversight that Gyb announces or, at least, anticipates key elements and events in *Secunda Pastorum*, shifts discussion of the pageant from one of repetition to Kolve's argument about typological prediction among and within the plays. This new reading of the second shepherd adds another facet to instances of expectation and imitation in the *Second Shepherds' Play* and, in doing so, sheds new light

on the way in which Corpus Christi audience members experienced and even comprehended it. Similar to the two set of complaints, annunciation scenes and moments of adoration, the second shepherd also contributes to the parallelling and prophesying aspects of the performance. Anticipating such key plot elements as the stealing of the sheep, the grotesque nature of Mak's wife and the comic blending of sacred and secular elements, he helps call attention to key events in the play. As a result, Gyb plays a crucial and previously overlooked role in the audience's understanding and enjoyment of *Secunda Pastorum*. Recalling V.A. Kolve's classic argument about the importance of prediction in cycle dramas once again, the character formerly seen as merely a textual shadower reveals himself to be an important performative foreshadower. Gyb's often irreverent secular speeches alert audiences to important sacred events that transpire later in the pageant. As a result, this character who was formerly thought to be occupy an ordinary role in the text comes to play something of an extraordinary role in its performance.

In an added twist, the way in which the textual mistranslation of the *Second Shepherds' Play* provides insight into the theatricality of the pageant brings us back to the text once again. Echoing Glynne Wickham's admonition 'to use the practical conditions of stage performance as a starting point and to work from there towards the text',[34] the stage implications return us to the page. From the first scholarly writing about *Secunda Pastorum*, critics have lauded the pageant's literary sophisticationBecause *Secunda Pastorum* contains such noteworthy elements as a unique combination of secular and sacred, an effective use of parodic comedy, and an overall coherence or unity, critics set it apart from similar productions of its time. As Regula Meyer Evitt insists, *The Second Shepherds' Play* embodies one of the most important developments in English drama.[35] It possess a plot structure, level of character development and degree of narrative complexity that Alfred Harbage notes were not commonly seen in theatrical productions until nearly a century later, during the Elizabethan era.[36]

The way in which Gyb hints at or alludes to central facets of the drama adds an element of character complexity and, by extension, literary sophistication that has not been previously identified. While critics frequently note how various scenes and situations anticipate future action in *Secunda Pastorum*, these remarks have been limited in scope. Concentrating on the way in which the complaints of Coll and Gyb read like projections of their ill-treatment of Daw, or the way in which the birth of Mak's 'son' foreshadows the birth of the son of God, they do not apply this framework to any other scenes or situations. More than simply echoing the specific characteristics of

isolated characters, the second shepherd points to larger textual concerns. Gyb's role as a foreshadower of key events demonstrates that the tropes of repetition, anticipation and even typological prediction can be seen not just on the broad level of plot and dramatic form in the pageant, but also at the level of individual characters. Recalling the adage which began this paper, indeed 'Somtyme of a myshappe cometh a good turne'.

Notes

I would like to thank Steven Kruger for his kind and generous assistance with the revision of this article, and Helen Ostovich for her patience, collegialtiy, and superb editorial work.

1 William Horman, *Vulgaria uiri doctissimi Guil. Hormani… Apud incyltam Londini urbem* (London,1519), 27.

2 For those who may be curious, *Prima Pastorum* or the *First Shepherds' Play* is also often mistranslated. Rather than misplacing the apostrophe in the title, however, editors and critics commonly omit it. The most recent entry for the pageant in the Modern Language Association's International Bibliography forms a representative example. Using the English translation of the pageant's title rather than the more commonly used Latin designation, Shearle Furnish's essay is catalogued as 'Metatheatre in the *First Shepherds Play*', *Essays in Theatre* 7.2 (May 1989), 139–48.

3 This number only reflects the articles, books or essays that use the English translation of *Secunda Pastorum* and thereby open themselves up to the possibility for misplacing the apostrophe, and not those that use the original Latin appellation alone.

4 Sarah Beckwith, *Signifying God: Social Relation and Symbolic Action in the York Corpus Christi Plays* (Chicago, 2001), 64.

5 Even a cursory examination of criticism about the Towneley Cycle in general and *Secunda Pastorum* in particular will identify these areas of critical interest and controversy. Speculation about the Towneley manuscript's authorship, performance style, and host city comprise much of what has written about it during the past century. Although the primary concern of this paper is to offer a new and previously overlooked interpretative strategy for examining *The Second Shepherds' Play* rather than debate the veracity of those that have been posited previously, my argument is grounded in and influenced by them. I acknowledge these debates and cite below articles that put them into perspec-

tive. For readers interested in the performance history of Towneley Cycle in general and whether the plays were performed on processional carts or at fixed stations in particular, see Alan Nelson's 'Some Configurations of Staging in Medieval English Drama', *Essays Critical and Contextual*, ed. Jerome Taylor and Alan H. Nelson (Chicago, 1972), 116–47. For the most recent overview of critical opinions about the authorship of the Towneley manuscript including debates over the identity of so-called Wakefield Master, his role as the creator, redactor, and/or reviser of the pageants, and the evidence for the six plays (including *Secunda Pastorum*) that are commonly attributed to his hand, see Lawrence M. Clopper's *Drama, Play, and Game: English Festive Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Period* (Chicago, 2001), 173–81. Finally, for those interested in the question whether Wakefield was, in fact, the host city for this cycle of pageants, see Peter Meredith's chapter on the Towneley Cycle in *Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre* (Cambridge, 1996), 134–62.

6 The title 'Secunda Pastorum' does not appear in the Towneley manuscript. The texts of both the first and the second shepherds' plays are untitled in the original; scholars assigned the Latin and later the English titles of these pageants based on the order in which they appeared in the original manuscript. Thus, when I refer to 'translations' and especially 'mistranslations' of *Secunda Pastorum*, I mean the English conversion of the assigned Latin title.

7 Although I am arguing for this alternative and unorthodox reading of *The Second Shepherds' Play*, I acknowledge that it has no etymological basis. Because the Latin term 'Secunda' modifies the often-omitted word 'Pagina' and not 'Pastorum,' the correct translation of *Secunda Pastorum* contains the apostrophe after the final 's.' In this way, although beneficial interpretive results may arise from viewing the drama as one that is in possession or ownership of the second shepherd, it lacks any philological foundation.

8 David Lampe, 'The Magi and Modes of Meaning: *The Second Shepherds' Play* as an Index of The Criticism of Medieval Drama,' *Early Drama to 1600*, ed. Albert H. Tricomi, (Binghamton, 1985), 107.

9 See Warren Edminster, 'Punning and Political Parody in *The Second Shepherds' Play*', *English Language Notes* 40.4 (June 2003), 1–10; Sandy Feinstein, 'Shrews and Sheep in the *Second Shepherds' Play*', *Pacific Coast Philology* 36 (2001), 64–80; and Rick Bowers, 'Comedy, Carnival, and Grace: The Performance of Mak in the *Second Shepherds' Play*', *English Studies in Canada* 28.4 (December 2002), 583–602.

10 Jeffrey Helterman, 'Satan as Everyshepherd: Comic Metamorphosis in the *Second Shepherds' Play*', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 12 (1971), 516.
11 F.P. Manion, 'A Reinterpretation of the *Second Shepherds' Play*', *American Benedictine Review* 30 (1979), 44.
12 John Gardner, 'Structure and Tone in the *Second Shepherds' Play*', *Educational Theatre Journal* 19 (1967), 8.
13 Lee Templeton, 'Cast Them in Canvas: Carnival and the *Second Shepherds' Play*', *Medieval Perspectives* 16 (2001), 151 – 64; and Ken Hiltner, 'Punning and Political Parody in *The Second Shepherds' Play*', *English Language Notes* 40.4 (June 2003), 1–10.
14 Gardner, 'Structure and Tone', 1.
15 Gardner, 'Structure and Tone', 6. Ironically, in the middle of this investigation, Gardner (or, at least, his editor) falls victim to the bibliographic disjunction or 'myshappe' that forms the basis of this paper. Part of his argument on p 5 refers to the '*Second Shepherd's Play*'.
16 All my quotations are from A.C. Cawley's authoritative edition of *Secunda Pastorum* in *The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle* (London, 1958). During the past century, several editions of *Secunda Pastorum* have appeared, some designed for actors interested in performing the pageant, others for scholars wishing to preserve the text's faithfulness to the Towneley manuscript, and still others aiming to increase the pageant's contemporary appeal by modernizing its language. For a critical survey of editions, see both Martin Steven's chapter on the Towneley cycle in *Four Middle English Mystery Cycles* and David Mills's essay 'Modern Editions of Medieval English Plays'.
17 Mack Maynard, '*The Second Shepherds' Play*: A Reconsideration', *PMLA* 93 (1973), 78.
18 Rose Zimbardo, 'Comic Mockery of the Sacred: The Frogs of *The Second Shepherds' Play*,' *Educational Theatre Journal* 30 (1978), 398–406.
19 See, for example, Jeffrey Helterman, 'Satan as Everyshepherd: Comic Metamorphosis in the *Second Shepherds' Play*,' *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 12 (1971): 515–30.
20 Gardner, 'Structure and Tone,' 4.
21 Marital Rose, ed., *The Wakefield Mystery Plays* (New York, 1961), 215.
22 Although Gyb ultimately unmasks the fraud, it should be noted that he is initially resistant to Daw's suggestion that Mak has stolen a sheep while they have been slumbering. When the third shepherd tells his companions, 'When we had long napt, me thoght with a gyn / A fatt shepe he trapt; bot he mayde

no dyn' (ll. 370–1), Gyb dismisses the veracity of these suspicions. After hearing Daw's prophetic narrative, the second shepherd asserts: 'Be styll! / Thi dreme makys the woode; / It is bot fantom, by the roode' (ll. 372–5).

23 Wallace H. Johnson, 'The Origin of the *Second Shepherds' Play*: A New Theory', *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 52.1 (February 1966), 47.

24 Richard Axton, *European Drama of the Early Middle Ages*, (Pittsburgh, 1974), 192.

25 Bowers, "Comedy, Carnival, and Grace," 584.

26 Richard Beadle, Preface, *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre*, ed. Richard Beadle (Cambridge, 1996), xiii.

27 Meg Twycross, 'The Theatricality of Medieval English Plays,' *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre*, ed. Richard Beadle (Cambridge, 1996), 54.

28 Clopper, *Drama, Play, and Game*, 223.

29 Lampe, 'The Magi and Modes of Meaning', 109–10.

30 Meredith, 'The Towneley Cycle,' 156, 158, 160.

31 Ross, 'Structure and Tone,' 123.

32 M.F. Vaughn, 'Mak and the Proportions of *The Second Shepherds' Play*,' *Papers on Language and Literature*, 18.4 (Winter 1982), 355.

33 V.A. Kolve, *The Play Called Corpus Christi*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), 85

34 Glynne Wickham, *Early English Stages, 1300 to 1600*, vol. I [1300 – 1576] (London, 1959), 118.

35 Regula Meyer Evitt, 'Musical Structure in the *Second Shepherds' Play*,' *Comparative Drama* 22.4 (Winter 1988/89), 306.

36 Alfred Harbage, *Annals of English Drama, 975–1700: An Analytical Record of All Plays, Extant or Lost, Chronologically Arranged and Indexed by Authors, Titles, Dramatic Companies, &c.* 3rd ed. (London,1989), 205.