The Southern Version of Cursor Mundi, Vol. V

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APPENDIX D
Mary’s Lament and the Establishment of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception
(ll. 23909–24968)

These lines are omitted from the southern version but evidently intended for inclusion, according to lines 217–20 of the text above.

23909–44 Evidently original with the CM poet, these lines are in harmony with his devotion to Mary, as expressed for example in ll. 69–114 above.
23945–4730 These lines, recounting a dialogue between the narrator and Mary concerning the crucifixion, derive from a text, variously attributed to St. Bernard, St. Anselm, and St. Augustine, but actually written by Oglerius de Tridino, a late twelfth-century Cistercian from the monastery of Locedio, near Turin. The work bears the title De laudibus sanctae Dei genetricis and has been edited from MS Turin E V.4, fos. 1–68, by J.B. Adriani, Beati Oglerii de Tridino ... opera quae supersunt ..., and the portion of it, known from its incipit as the Quis dabit, used by the CM poet for these lines, has been re-edited by C.W. Marx, “The Quis dabit of Oglerius de Tridino, Monk and Abbot of Locedio.” All references to the text are by line number to Marx’s edition.

Oglerius’ text is characterized by a strong effort to convey the sentiment of Mary’s suffering at the crucifixion, and to this end the author relies heavily on rhetorical word play, e.g., viuebat moriens, uinensque moriebatur; nee poterat mori qui uiua mortua erat, etc. The CM poet tends to excise these more extravagant rhetorical flourishes, though he aims at creating a similar impression of Mary’s suffering.

There are many extant reworkings of Oglerius’s text, in both Latin and various vernaculars, and H. Barré, “Le Pleenctus Mariae” attribué à Saint Bernard,” believes that it lies behind all later complaints of Mary at the foot of the cross. There is a full bibliography of later versions in C.W. Marx, “The Middle English Verse ‘Lamentation of Mary to St. Bernard’ and the ‘Quis dabit.’”

23945–87 The CM poet’s own introduction.
23987–92 Cf. Oglerius 56–58. The CM poet adds 23990–92 where Oglerius has simply et vincit ad Annam tractus.
23996–98 Cf. Oglerius 60–62. The CM poet here both condenses Oglerius’ fuller account and specifies the Jews as Christ’s torturers.
23945–87 These lines, though here and there providing a distant echo of Oglerius (e.g., 23975 with 27–28, 23969 with 31–32, 23976 with 36–37), actually offer a new beginning to the dialogue. The narrator seeks to establish a spiritual link with
Mary by empathizing with her pain as she witnesses her son’s crucifixion. Oglerius, echoing the Canticum canticorum and the parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Mt 25: 1–13), first focuses on the lament for Mary of the daughters of Jerusalem (4–10), then on Mary’s part in Jesus’ birth and upbringing (10–15), then on her presence among the women who followed Jesus (15–23), and finally on her pain at the crucifixion (24–39). Only then does Oglerius speak in the narrator’s own voice, seeking empathy with Mary. The CM poet omits one interesting detail from Oglerius 53–54: Sed quia iam glorificata Mer e non possum , tu cum lacrimis scribe que cum magnis doloribus ipsa persensi.

The CM poet’s elaboration of Oglerius 63–64: et non erat mihi fere uox neque sensus.

Ps 76:4, quoted by Oglerius 63.

Oglerius 64 mentions Mary’s sisters as well as other women: Erant mecum mee sorores, et alie femine multe ...

Apparently the CM poet’s addition.

The CM poet embroiders Oglerius 65–66: Maria Magdalenae que super omnes, illa excepta, que loquitur tecum, dolebat. The “illa” is Mary, the “te” the narrator.

CfGE’s bedel translates Oglerius 66: precone.

Here the CM poet reverses the sense of Oglerius 67–69: factus est concursus populorum post ipsum euntes. Alii scilicet illum plangentem, alii ei illudentes ridebant.

Apparently the CM poet’s addition. Oglerius does not emphasize the hostility of the crowd but rather Mary’s pain, and the hostile multitude in the gospels restrict their actions to shouting.

Cf. Oglerius 70 where Mary is cum mulieribus.

Here the CM poet trims away the more extravagant imagery of suffering in Oglerius 69–72.

Apparently the CM poet’s own contribution.

A transition passage added by the CM poet to lend pathos to Mary’s suffering.


Here the CM poet translates freely, postponing the description of Christ on the cross, which follows immediately in Oglerius, in order to present the contrasting figure of Christ as he was, qui erat pre filiis hominum speciosus (Ps 44:3), a phrase interpolated into Oglerius at line 79.

These lines compress the fuller description in Oglerius 77–79. The spittle of 24085 is the CM poet’s addition.

Again the CM poet’s addition.

A fairly close translation of Oglerius 82–83.

A looser translation of Oglerius 84: ideo non poterat capi in me dolor mocus.

A compressed translation of Oglerius 84–87. The breaking in three at 24106 is the CM poet’s addition and is not further developed.

Translates Oglerius 88–89: Verba dabat amor, que raucum sonabant.
Much of Oglerius 89–91 is either compressed or omitted here: nam lingua, uocis magistra, perdiderat usum loquendi. Videbam morientem, quem diligebat anima mea, et tota liqui fistam pre doloris angustia.

The interjection may have been inspired by Oglerius 93: Fili mi, fili mi, but he puts the comment that follows in the CM before the exclamation at 91–92.

Cf. Oglerius 93–95: Fili mi, fili mi, quis mihi dabiat ut ego moriar pro te? Moritur filius; cur secum non moritur mater eius misera? The CM poet omits Mary’s first request, to die instead of Jesus, and stresses her empathy with her son instead of her sense of maternal sacrifice.

Oglerius 95–96.

Oglerius 97–99.

Oglerius 99–101, which the CM poet has translated freely.

Oglerius 101–3 is here compressed, with some of the extremes of sentiment eliminated.

A fairly close rendering of Oglerius 103–4.

Again the CM poet cuts down the sentiment of Oglerius 105–7: aut alia quacumque sua morte perimite, dummodo cum filio simul finiar meo. Male solus moritur. Orbas orbem radio, me uiduam filio, gaudio, dulcore.


These lines seem to be the CM poet’s own elaboration.

Condensed from Oglerius 108–9.

Clearly based on Oglerius 109–13 but considerably condensed.

Although these lines express a good deal of emotion, they still eliminate considerable emotion from Oglerius 109–13.

A fairly close rendition of Oglerius 117–18, though the CM poet has no way of translating the Latin verb: Nunc orbor patre, uiduorque sponsio, deseror prole.

These lines seem original with the CM poet.

Oglerius 118–22.

This longish passage seems entirely the work of the CM poet. The only warrant in Oglerius is this brief phrase at 123–24: Cui Dominus oculis et uult u annuens, de Iohanne ait, “Mulier, ecce filius tuus” (Jhn 19:26). Cf. the brief account in Jhn 19:25–27, which offers little warrant for the CM poet’s expansion.

Oglerius 124–26. The CM poet has again eliminated some of the more exaggerated rhetoric: O mollis ad flendum, mollis ad dolendum, etc.


Oglerius 128–31. The CM poet adds the wolf to Oglerius’ image of the ovem erroneam which is found.

A close translation of Oglerius 131–32: Moritur vnus ut inde totus reuuiiscat mundus.

Oglerius 132–33: Vnus ob meritum, ceteri periere minores; salvantur cuncti nunc amitus ob meritum. The CM poet is unable to reproduce the neat rhetorical contrast of vnus ob meritum (i.e., Adam’s) and unius ob meritum (i.e., Christ’s). The “al ... all” faintly echoes “ceteri ... cuncti.”

The CM poet translates Oglerius 133–34: Quod placet Deo Patri, quomodo displicet tibi? in 24275–76. But the remainder of the stanza replaces Oglerius’ image of the cup, 134–35, with Christ’s literal pain: Calicem quem dedit mihi Pater non uis ut bibam illum?

A fairly close translation of Oglerius 135–36.

These lines seem to be the CM poet’s own contribution, though the doctrine of the harrowing of hell is well established by this time.
The CM poet paraphrases Jhn 18:11, quoted in Oglerius 139–41, and demotes John from nephew to friend, though he makes him and Mary cousins in 24312.

These lines compress the more fulsome Oglerius 142–45: Inde Johanne intuitus, ait, “Ecce mater tua. Servi curam illius habe; eam tibi commendo. Suscipe matrem meam; suscipe matrem tuam. Suscipe tuam; immo magis suscipe meam.”

These lines seem original with the CM poet.

These lines, which repeat more or less the same thought three times (namely, that the two were struck dumb by Christ’s words), echo Oglerius 146–50, who also repeats himself several times.

The CM poet here transforms to direct quotation of Mary what Oglerius puts into the third person plural, thus making the utterance more immediate. The CM poet also eliminates the unabashed sentimentality and punning in Oglerius 151–53: Defecerunt enim spiritus eorum; amiserant uirtute m loquendi. Solu s illis dolor luctusqu e remansit amicus. Amabant flere et fleban t amare. Amare flebant, quia amare dolebat.

An expansion of Oglerius 153–62. The Virgin’s loss of consciousness at 24348–49 is either the CM poet’s invention or a misreading of Oglerius 174–75: Cogitare libet quantus dolor tun e infuit matr i cu m si c dolebat qu e insensibil ia erat.

The only spear Oglerius mentions is 158–59: mente martyr Maria erat percusa cuspide teli quo membr a Christi serui foderunt iniqui.

E breaks off at this point and does not resume until 24520.

Oglerius does not mention the image of the sword of Lc 2:35, where Symeon says to Mary, et taum ipsius animam pertransit gladius. This was interpreted by Peter Damien PL CXLIV 748A Ac si aperire dicere: Dum filius tuus sensori passionem crucis in corpore, te ciam transfiget gladius compassionis in mente. Barre, pp. 243–46, sees the entire tradition of the planetus Mariae deriving from such attributions of sympathy to the Virgin, where earlier church fathers denied her such feelings; cf. Ambrose, “Expositio euangeli secundur n Lucam,” PL XV 1574B.

Cf. Jhn 19:28 and Mt 27:34. both passages quoted by Oglerius 164–66.


Oglerius 169–73. 24410–12 are the CM poet’s summary of events, and the details are provided by Oglerius.

Cf. Oglerius 174–77. The CM poet rearranges Oglerius’ order, taking 176–77 at 24428–30 and 175–76 at 24431–33. He also changes Oglerius’ third-person narrative description to a first-person account.

Here the CM poet replaces a passage of puns and sentimentality from Oglerius 177–81: Vox non erat illi [sc. Mariae]; dolor abstulerat uires; limo strataiacens pallebat quasi mortua uiuens. Viuebat moriebatur, uiuensqu e moriebat; nee poterat moriebat mortua erat. In anima dolor seu semi ebat illius; optabat mori magis quam uihere Christi post mortem quem uiuens mortua tamen erat.

Cf. Oglerius 188–92. The CM poet omits Oglerius 182–87, where the Virgin is described as begging for Christ’s body to be lowered from the cross, and is selective of details in the lines on which he depends. E.g., he omits 188–89: considerans [sc. Maria] uulto benigne Christum pendentem in crucis stipite socio; but is more graphic in 24446–48 than Oglerius 189–90: pedibusque nictem in altum manus leuabat amplexitiis crucem. 24450–51 seem to depend upon Oglerius 190–91: ruens in oscula eius Christi qua parte sanguinis unda rigabat. The CM poet
seems to have taken ruen s absolutely, as a description of Mary’s collapse, where Marx’s punctuation suggests a translation like rushing to kiss Christ from whom a wave of blood flowed.

24455–75 The CM poet here condenses and removes much of the sentimentality from Oglerius 191–203, where the emphasis lies on Mary’s thwarted desire to embrace Christ, whom she cannot reach because he is still hanging on the cross. The CM poet also varies between direct quotation of Mary and narration of her actions, where Oglerius gives entirely third-person narrative. Oglerius’ final sentence recalls his 190–91, cited in the previous note: Cadentes guttas sanguinis ore tangebat, terram deosculans quam cruris unda rigabat.

24476–78 The CM poet’s own interjection.

24479–90 The CM poet here continues to report direct discourse from Mary, where Oglerius 204–12 remains in the third person. Oglerius also provides more pseudo-historical detail, e.g., that both Joseph and Nicodemus were secretly disciples of Jesus and that they asked Pilate for his body. Oglerius’ Joseph and Nicodemus bring more than just the god chere of 24485: secum instrumenta ferentes quibus clavis euulisis de cruce possent deponere eum. Moreover, Oglerius is more detailed in describing the restoration of Mary’s health (cf. 24488–90): quasi de morte consurgens, paululum reuiuisci t spiritus eius et illis quod poterat adiutoriu m ministerat.

24491–502 Cf. Oglerius 213–23. The CM poet omits some of the more graphic detail, e.g., super ipsum ruens pre incontinentia doloris et immensitate amoris quasi mortua stetit... lacrimis faciem eius rigans... Frontem et genas oculosque simul et nasum oraqu e frequentiu s osculabat ipsius. C’s anima n (24495) shoul d read an i man, like F.

24503–50 These lines, again rephrased to a direct quotation of the Virgin, seem to be the CM poet’s own interpolation, though they bear some distant resemblance to Oglerius 224–50. 24503–14 lament the lack of justice in the crucifixion and may have been suggested by Oglerius 230–31: Non desperabat, sed pie iustque dolebat quem genuit virgo. 24515–50 rest, however, on the contrast between Mary’s sor row at the crucifixion and her joy at Christ’s birth and infancy, a contrast which also forms the basis of Oglerius 224–50. The CM poet restricts the grief to Mary alone, where Oglerius involves quedam... femin e sanct e quaru m paruu s era t numeru s paucusqu e uiroru m (232–33) and et angel i simul cu m ili a dolente s (234); and he likes the notion enough to elaborate it further on: O quis angelorum uel archangelorum contra naturam illic non flesset...? (238–39). 24549 echoes more directly Oglerius 231: sperans tamen ipsum tertio resurgere die, but 24526, expressing a desire for the Holy Ghost, finds no counterpart in Oglerius.


24557–80 The struggle between Joseph and Nicodemus on the one hand, who want to bury Jesus, and Mary on the other, who wants to continue to hold him, is the CM poet’s elaboration of Oglerius 263–67, where Oglerius unusually writes direct discourse for the Virgin. Morris’ inverted comma in C should be moved from 24577 to 24580, where Mary’s speech ends.

24581–96 The CM poet here interpolates his own response to the Virgin and his further question.

24597–607 Based on Oglerius 268–75, with some of the more extravagant images modified. Oglerius continues to emphasize the struggle between Mary and the disciples over whether to bury Christ’s body or not. The CM poet, however, empha-
sizes the sorrow of the mourners for Mary, echoing two clauses in Oglerius 272-74: et super illam dabant potius plantum quam super extinctum Dominum suum. Maior illis inerat dolor de matris dolore quam fuerat de sui Domini morte.

24608-13 Again the CM poet removes some of the extravagance from Oglerius 276-79; e.g., where the CM poet has Mary lying on the tomb, Oglerius has sepulchrum mater amplectitur omni corde. The English poet also omits amaro Dominum nimi deplorans singultu.

24614-22 Cf. Oglerius 279-82, again omitting the more sentimental passages: e.g., Nam cruciata gemitus, fatigata doloribus, afflicta ploratibus, pedibus stare fere nequibat is reduced to On fore vnethes mogni i stand. 24620 C's i should read he; cf. FGE.

24623-29 Cf. Oglerius 283-93, again omitting most of the detail on the effect on others of Mary's continuing sorrow; e.g., Vix poterant lacrimas continere quicumque videbant eam plorantem. Tam pie plorabat et tam amare dolebat quod ex suo pro ploratu multos, etiam invitos, trahebat ad luctum ... etc.

24632-34 Cf. Oglerius 293-94.

24635-40 Oglerius does not mention the resurrection and thus provides no basis for these lines nor for 24630.

24641-58 The CM poet's addition, which turns the reader's attention to Mary's blessed state in heaven.

24659-730 This address to St. John, at least at its beginning, takes its warrant from Oglerius 293-99: O felix et beatus iohannes cui talem Dominus commendavit thesaurum, even to the extent that the CM poet takes thessaurum literally and makes John the treasurer (24672). But where Oglerius concentrates first on John, who was blessed by both Christ and Mary, and then on all those who are blessed through their love of the Virgin, the CM poet interpolates a passage in praise of virginity at 24677-706, perhaps taking its cue from lines 1588-96 of Wace's poem on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception from which he takes the following story at 24731.

24731-967 This account of the institution of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception is based upon the Anglo-Norman poem by Wace commonly known as La conception Nostre Dame, probably composed between 1130 and 1140. The first part of the poem, all that the CM poet translates here, is called "L'establissemne de la feste de la conception Nostre Dame." I follow (citations by line number) the edition of William R. Ashford, The Conception Nostre Dame of Wace, based on Tours MS. Bibl. Munic. 927, collated with 17 other manuscripts.

Wace took the story, based on an actual incident, from a legend of a miracle of the Virgin, often attributed to St. Anselm but mostly written around the year 1070 by his biographer, Eadmer. See Herbert J. Thurston, S.J., "The Legend of Abbot Elsi," and the exceptionally detailed entry by X. LeBachelet, "Immaculé conception," esp. 1001-3 for the legend of Abbot Elsi. I have followed the admittedly corrupt Latin text in PL CLIX 323-26 because it seems closest to Wace's version, but see Eadmeri monachi Cantuariensis tractatus ... ed. Thurston and Slater, olim sancto Anselmo attributus nonc prima integer ad codicum fidem edidit editus adjectis quibusdam documentis coaetaneis in PL H. Thurston et T. Slater S.J. The CM poet seems to have depended wholly on Wace's version of events.

24753-54 See above, ll. 10123-574 and notes, in Vol. II of this edition.

24757 Cf. Wace 3: En quel tens, comente par qui. But Wace refers to the establishment of the feast, where the CM poet speaks still of the conception itself.

24762 Wace 9: Que a nul tens anceis fist on.
Cf. Wace 11: le rei Guillalme.

Wace 13–14 does not describe William's prowess but stresses his conquest: Par force e par bataille prist, / Viles, chastels, citez conquist.

Wace does not mention Harold's Danish origins.

Cf. Wace 20, a detail not found in Eadmer's Latin.

The CM poet omits Wace 25: Qui le rei Aralt orent mort.

Apparently original with the CM poet, though perhaps suggested by Wace 25.

William's reaction, though alarmed, is less fearful than Wace 28: Dolenz en fu, paor en ot.

FG E's vnderstode translates Wace 33: Cum cil qui mut saveit de guerre better than C's vnder stode, which should properly be one word.

The CM poet's laconic litotes, Wit-vten ani mer in muth, condenses Wace's ef-fusiveness: Qui mult par saveit bien parler / E un bien grant conseil done / Si estieit de grant eloquence / E parlot par grant sapience (41–44). Wace has here substituted diplomatic competence for Eadmer's emphasis on Elsis' devotion: Jesu Christo...dumabatur, eujusgenetricem, servitiu m ejus faciendo devotissime, venerebatur. PL CLIX 323B.

E's cosin is clearly in error.

Wace 47: Bailla lui mut bons garnemenz seems to have given the CM poet difficulty, E's Wit tresori his schip was dith offering the best translation though at the expense of the rhyme with gift in the following line. C's triffer appears to be a nonce word, perhaps a misreading of long s for f in a word like tressor. G at least manages to load the ship with cargo, but F only manages to get the abbot himself aboard. The AN MSS show considerable variation here, though nothing that might account for CFG's confusion. Eadmer says nothing of Elsis' preparations, only that on arrival he et salutes ac munera atque servitia ex Guillelmi regis parte obtuli t to the Danish king. PL CLIX 323C.

Cf. Wace 59–60: E teI ot qui il promist; / L'ost fist remainderre, tant lor dist. The MSS show many variants, and Ashford's note, p. 93, which quotes CM 24822–26, does not help much, nor does Eadmer's proceresque terrae muneribus et prom-issis oneravit. PL CLIX 323D.

The CM poet's own interjection.

The CM poet generalizes what in Wace 80–82 is specific: Ne l'uns ne puet l'autre adier; / Li plus sage poi i savaient, / E li plus prot poi i veiems. Eadmer has...preces cum lacrimis Deo fundunt, et se graviter deliquisse miserabiliter gemunt. PL CLIX 324B.

Wace 88: Deu reclamation, where the CM poet prefers Deu.

24875  Wace 94–95: A Deu s’esteient comande, / Quant uns anglès lor aparut differs from the CM poet, who attributes the angel’s arrival to Mary, sco [F ho, G scho] pat euer es bot o bale.

24880  selcuth clothing misses Wace’s ecclesiastical emphasis: Si ert d’un vesqual vestement, which he takes from Eadmer’s ... quamdam pontificalibus vestibus ornatum. PL CLIX 324C.

24885  C’s ferr cost shoule of course be one word, as it is in E; it translates Wace 103: la nef.

24887  The CM poet omits Wace 105–6: Li abes Helcin se dreca, / Cum il ainz pot vers lui ala, thus denying Elsis a moment of dignifie d recovery, also allowed him by Eadmer: Dum autem ... Elsinus surrexisset. PL CLIX 324D.

24889  C’s Forgeten should read Forgeten; cf. FGE.

24888–908  Wace 118–24 is a good deal more frank about the carnal begetting of Mary: .. . Fu conceue e engendree. / Voe, Helcin, a celebrer / E as altes faire honorer / Le jor que ot engenderment / Sainte Marie charnalment, / Que fu conceue en sa mere / E engendree de son pere. Eadmer is as reticent as the CM poet: in alvo matris concepta fuit. PL CLIX 324D.

24923  The CM poet is content with mentioning Mary’s birthday, where Wace 140–41 is more specific: Tot el de la nativit / Qui est oit jorz dedenz Septembre.

24931–34  The CM poet’s addition. C’s propre refers to the proper of the mass; FG seem to have misunderstood.

24940  CGE’s Vte of pair sight [F ship] is the CM poet’s addition. Cf. Wace 152: Ez vos l’angele d’iluec tome.

24944  The image of seamen dressing their tackle is more vivid than Wace 155: E cil lor nef repareillierent.

24947  CE’s farnet and F’s compani translate Wace 159: sa gent. G’s fardel is wrong.

24950–52  The CM poet’s emphasis on Elsis’ public declaration is not found in Wace 161–62: Si reconta la o il pot / Ce que veu e oit ot.

24965–72  The CM poet’s conclusion, not in Wace, who goes on to tell of Mary’s conception, birth, and upbringing, matters already narrated in ll. 10123–654, above.