THE MANUSCRIPT SOURCE OF THE FRAGMENT,
RYLANDS FRENCH MS 6

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The Manchester manuscript, John Rylands University Library, French MS 6, is a fragment detached at some point from a larger manuscript. Rylands French MS 6 (R) has been described several times in scholarly journals;⁴ to date, however, the source manuscript from which R is detached has not been identified. It is probable that R was purchased by Lord Crawford in the Libri sale in 1859; it became part of the Rylands collection in 1901, but the provenance of R before the nineteenth century has remained unknown. The provenance of the manuscript which we propose to demonstrate is the source of R, namely British Library, Egerton 2710 (E), is only slightly better known; a marginal note on folio 83 indicates that E belonged to a Priory at Derby at the end of the fifteenth century,² but after that nothing is known of the history of the manuscript before it was purchased by the British Museum on 14 January 1889, for £60 paid to W.G. Warton.³ A close examination of these two manuscripts shows, however, that R (or at least fos. 1–8) was initially part of E. The following details are offered to support this conclusion.

Most of the facts which have led to our conclusion are given in the notices of R published by Fawtier and Ker, although a few misleading details have tended to mask the real relationship between Egerton 2710 and Rylands Fr. 6. Fawtier, for example, in his ‘Notice’ on the contents of R, remarks that the ‘Passion de saint Paul (en prose)’ is also found in two Paris manuscripts, Arsenal 3516, and Bibliotheque Nationale fr. 19525, and in two London manuscripts, Harley 2253 and Egerton 2710.⁴ This statement is, in fact, false, for although the ‘Passion de saint Paul’ is part of a prose legendary (consisting of five

3 We are indebted to Mrs. A. Payne, Superintendent, Students' Rooms, Department of Manuscripts, British Library, for this information.
legends) which is found in these four manuscripts, the ‘Passion de saint Paul’ is missing from both the London ones. Fawtier’s small slip, then, misleadingly implies that R could not be part of E, since both contain the ‘Passion de saint Paul.’ Our study of the prose legendary leads to the opposite conclusion, however, since precisely those two legends missing from the prose legendary in E are found in R, namely the ‘Passion de saint Paul’ and the ‘Vie de saint Jean Baptiste.’ The combined prose legends of E and R correspond to the series found complete in only one other manuscript, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale fr. 19525 (P). Since the versions of these legends in E and R are all very close to the P version, one is led inevitably to the hypothesis that R was at one time part of E.

There remain, however, material details of the manuscripts to consider before this hypothesis can be proven correct. The present foliation of R is not that of the original manuscript; both Fawtier, and later Ker, give the earlier order of the folios. The folios of the first quire of R were copied in the order 3, 4, 5, 2, 1, 6, 7, 8. We are indebted to Miss Glenise Matheson of the John Rylands University Library for the demonstration of how the original order was changed at some time in the past, to arrive at the present foliation. A single bifolium, current fos. 1–2, originally at the centre of the quire, has been removed and refolded in such a manner that the original fo. 5 recto/verso became the current fo. 1 recto/verso, and the original fo. 4 recto/verso has consequently become the current fo. 2 recto/verso. Once refolded in this fashion, this original central bifolium has been bound at the beginning of the current first quire, without any further change in the original order of the remaining bifolia of this quire. As a result, the original fos. 1–3 became fos. 3–5 in the present foliation, and the original fos. 6–8 retain this same position in the current numbering. The reason for the displacement of the original central bifolium by those responsible for the present order is obvious when one considers the fragment. By removing this bifolium and placing it at the beginning of the fragment, the perpetrators of this change have found a way to place the beginning of a text at the beginning of the manuscript fragment, to give the impression that the fragment is a complete entity in itself. Furthermore, this text, the ‘Passion de saint Paul,’ is the only one in R which has an initial letter decorated in gold leaf, and is by far the most attractive introductory capital letter of any found in this fragment.

The current foliation was designed, then, to disguise the fragmentary nature of R, and to give the appearance that it was a small, separate entity. Although the earlier descriptions of R by Fawtier and

Ker quickly laid bare the faulty foliation, there remained some hesitation about the relative order of the quires of R. Both Fawtier and Ker reported that the first quire of R originally began with a continuation of the text of the 'Explication du Pater' of Maurice of Sully; the beginning of the 'Explication' was to be found in the unidentified manuscript from which R derived. Ker insisted, however, that the current disposition of the quires of R was not necessarily the original one, stating: 'ff. 9-12 may have preceded or followed ff. 1-8, which formed the 20th quire in the manuscript as it once was: the signature “xx”, perhaps in the main hand, is at the foot of f. 8v.'

A resolution to this hesitation is found easily, however, when one examines Egerton 2710. In our edition of La Vie de saint Laurent we gave a description of the last folio of E, on which S. Laurent ends, followed by a fragment of an exposition on the Pater Noster. This fragment, which we did not identify at the time of our edition of S. Laurent, is in fact the beginning of the 'Explication du Pater,' which is continued in R. The sentence in E, which is interrupted by the removal of the twentieth quire of the original manuscript, reads as follows (Egerton 2710, fo. 151v): 'Kar li malveis hom qui Deus e son comandement ne crent e fet icels choses que li deable aime . . .' The sentence is completed in R (fo. 3r): 'n'est pas fiz Deus mes fiz al deable, si cum dit Nostre Seignur as Jueus qui de li ne sa parole n'aveient cure . . .' The corresponding sentence from the published text of the 'Explication du Pater Noster' reads: 'Quar li malvais hom, qui despist Deus e le suen commandement, e fait icles choses que le diables aymme, n'est pas fils Deus, mais fils al diable; sin dist Nostre Sire Deus as Juis qui de lui ne de ses paroles n'avoient cure: . . .'7

The text of the 'Explication du Pater' shows clearly that the first quire of R directly followed the last quire of E. In fact, the numbering of the quires in E and R confirms this, for the last quire of E has the signature ‘XIX’ at the bottom of fo. 151v, just as the first quire of R has the signature ‘XX’ at the bottom of fo. 8.

A final material obstacle, however, stands in the way of the identification of E as the original source of R, for the physical dimensions of the two manuscripts are different. The physical dimensions of R, according to Fawtier, were probably 276 × 190 mm., and he considered fos. 9–12 to have been trimmed down.9 Ker's later description is more precise; 'ff.ii+12+xxvi. 272 × 190 mm. Written space 183 × 125 mm. 2 cols. 42 lines (40 lines, ff.3r–4r; 44 lines, ff.

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6 Ker, Medieval Manuscripts, 433.
7 'Explication du Pater' is one of a series of homilies by the well-known Bishop Maurice of Sully. For a study of the composition of the homilies, and an edition of the French text, see C.A. Robson, Maurice of Sully and the Medieval Vernacular Homily (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952); the text of ‘Explication du Pater Noster’ is on 83–7. See also our Appendix.
8 Robson, Maurice of Sully, 84.
11–12\textsuperscript{v}). The first line of writing above the top ruled line. Collation: 1\textsuperscript{8} (ff.3–5, 2, 1, 6–8) 2 four (ff.9–12: two adjacent bifolia: a gap between 10 and 11).\textsuperscript{10}

The dimensions of E are 265 × 180 mm. Is it possible that E has also been trimmed for its current binding? When the dimensions of the written space of E are examined, it is evident that these dimensions agree with those of R. The ruled double frame for the writing space in E varies from folio to folio: for example, one of the smallest spaces is found on fo. 114\textsuperscript{v}, which has a ruled frame 176 × 121 mm.;\textsuperscript{11} one of the largest frames is found on fo. 127\textsuperscript{v}, which has a frame 184 × 122 mm. (135 outside). Fo. 141 gives a good example of this variation in space within a single folio: the verso has a frame which measures 183 × 125 mm., corresponding exactly to R, fo. 1\textsuperscript{r}; the frame of E, fo. 141\textsuperscript{r}, however, measures 187 × 125 mm. In short, the written space in the first quire of R fits perfectly within the range of variation of written space in E. The outside dimensions of E must have been trimmed for the current binding.

To this point we have considered only the dimensions and contents of E and R, without discussing the scribal hand of either manuscript. In fact, E and the first quire of R are written in the same hand. This identity of scribal hands is borne out by the orthography and by the use of abbreviations in both E and R.

The orthography of E and R can most easily be compared by reading the text of the small prose legendary, mentioned above. The text of three of the prose legends is found in E, the text of the two remaining legends is in R. This version of the legendary, (E + R), is very close to that of BN. 19525 (P), as mentioned earlier. P can serve, then, as a control in our identification of E and R as originally a single manuscript. Without entering into a detailed demonstration, we can confirm that the graphics used in the legends in R always correspond to the graphics found in E, in contrast to the graphics of P.\textsuperscript{12} In addition, the number and quality of variants found between R and the corresponding texts in P’s version of the legendary, is very similar to the number and quality of variants between E and the corresponding legends in P. In both cases the variants are few and minor, compared to the variants of Harley 2253 or Arsenal 3516 with respect to P.

The evidence, then, we believe, supports fully our hypothesis that R was originally part of E, with respect to the first quire of R. Of the remaining two bifolia of R, fos. 9–12, the same assertion cannot be

\textsuperscript{10} Ker, Medieval Manuscripts, 433.

\textsuperscript{11} 121 mm. is the width of the inside frame; the outer frame measures 134 mm. The outer frame is usually 135 mm., but occasionally is wider, measuring 135 mm. on fo. 136\textsuperscript{r}, 141 mm. on fo. 136\textsuperscript{v} (inside 130 mm.), and 144 mm. on fo. 137\textsuperscript{r} (inside 131 mm.).

\textsuperscript{12} The following are examples of graphics from E and R which are identical, and opposed to those of P (given in parentheses): decendre (descendre); durrai, durra, durreit (dorai, dora doreit); Espirit (Esperit); lumere (lumiere), manere (maniere); overaigne (ovraigne); pecche (pechie); pour (poor, pouour); precher (preecher).
made, for want of proof. It can be stated, however, that the twentieth quire of E/R was followed by further quires, still undiscovered. Whether or not fos. 9–12 were originally part of these further quires of E remains an open question. Although Fawtier considered fos. 9–12 to be earlier than fos. 1–8 (late thirteenth-century and early fourteenth-century hands, respectively), Ker gives only one date ("s. xiii"), based on information from Dr. Frank Taylor, formerly Librarian of the John Rylands Library. Certainly, nothing in the contents or the dimensions of fos. 9–12 excludes them from having at one point also belonged to E.

With the identification of the first quire of R as part of E, the contents of the original E+R are even closer to those of P than was earlier remarked. The texts contained in the first quire of R, fos. 1–8, in addition to the legendary and the 'Explication du Pater' already discussed, include *Li Ver del juise* (fos. 1r, 6v, 8v), the *Visio Pauli* (fos. 4r–5v), and the fragment of the *Vie Ste Marie l'Egyptienne* (fos.8v-v). All these texts are also in P, with the exception of the 'Explication du Pater' (P does have Adam of Exeter’s ‘Explication du Pater Noster,’ however). Of the remaining part of R, fos. 9–12, only the *Vie s. Alexis* (here just a fragment, fo. 10r-v) is also found in P, while three other items are not – the *Vie de Ste Katherine* (here a fragment, fos. 9r–10r), the poem on Antichrist written for Henri d’Arci (fos. 11r–12r), and the poem on the ‘Quinze Signes du Jugement’ (fo. 12r-v). It is clear, then, that although the majority of the texts of R are also found in P, the congruency of the two manuscripts becomes less evident in the last part of R, and there is less to suggest that fos. 9–12 originally belonged to E. Such is not the case for the first quire of R, however, which we believe the evidence given above clearly demonstrates was initially part of E.

The identification of the first quire of R as part of E allows us to add two more complete copies to the list of known manuscripts for two medieval texts. For the first text, we now have the missing beginning for one of the numerous manuscript copies of the 'Explication du Pater' of Maurice of Sully. But much more significantly, for the

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13 See *La vie de saint Laurent*, 5. This relationship is also mentioned by Erik Rakka, *Li Ver del Juise: Sermon en vers du XIIe siècle* (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Romania Upsaliensa, 33, Uppsala: Almqvist, 1982), 39–42.

14 See E.C. Fawtier-Jones, 'Les Vies de Sainte Catherine d’Alexandrie en ancien français,' *Romania*, 56 (1930), 80–104. Fawtier-Jones draws our attention to the similarity between the fragment of the *Vie de Saint Alexis* in R and the copy of Alexis in P. (Gaston Paris placed R and P in the same family.)

15 'L'Explication du Pater Noster' is sermon number iii in Robson's edition. A synodal sermon (number i), an exposition on the *Credo* (number ii), and number iii are usually found at the beginning of Maurice of Sully’s homilies in French. As well, the ‘Explication du Pater’ is sometimes found by itself in manuscripts, sometimes along with the exposition on the *Credo*. Robson gives a list of 23 manuscripts (of which R is one) which contain the homilies with the ‘Explication du Pater.’ In the first published editions of the homilies (the first dates from 1484), sermon numbers i–iii are not found. On the manuscripts, see also the articles by Paul Meyer, *Romana*, 5 (1876), 466–87; 23 (1894), 179–91, 497–507; 28 (1899), 245–68.
other text, in E and R we have the second of only two complete sets of legends for the Anglo-Norman prose *Légendier apostolique*. And, finally, in a more general sense, the satisfaction one gains from discovering the source of a manuscript fragment which has remained separated from its original manuscript for several centuries, stems no doubt from the feeling that one has, in a very small way, reversed the process of time.

### APPENDIX

"Explication du *Pater Noster* de Maurice de Sully"

This sermon was composed probably after the death of Richard de Saint-Victor in 1173, and before 1175; Maurice de Sully seems to have modelled his French text on the *Allegoriae*, II, ii, of Richard de Saint-Victor. The text of the 'Explication' in Egerton 2710 and Rylands Fr. 6 contains a few variants to the text as edited by Robson. In order to give an example of these variants we give a transcription here of the beginning of the text.

We expand the conventional abbreviations; sometimes only the Latin initial is given, as, for example, in the sentence which begins: 'Panem nostrum co.d.n.h.', or 'dimitte nobis d.n.s. & n. dimittimus de.n.' The rubric which begins the text is illegible. Additions to the text are enclosed in square brackets; rejected readings are indicated in footnotes. We have adopted the punctuation of Robson's edition, and added the acute accent, to distinguish final accented e from final atomic e, and the cedilla to distinguish ç from c. We separate, as well, u and v, and i and j in our transcription. We print the Latin text in italics.

"Explication du *Pater Noster* (Egerton 2710, fo. 151 'b')"

\[\text{Pater noster, qui es in celis, sanctificetur nomen tuum: Sire Pere qui es el eel santefiez seit li ton nuns; adveniat regnum tuum: avenve li tuens regnes; fiat voluntas tua, sicut in celo et in terra: seitt fet ta volenté en tere si cum ele est fete el cel. Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie: nostre pain de chescun jur nus donez hui; et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris: e pardonez nus nos}^{16}\text{ pechez ci cum nus pardonum a cels qui mesfet nus unt; et ne nos inducas in temptacionem: go est a dire ne suffrez que nus seuns temptez par la temptacium al deable ne par la malveise char mené a mal; set libera nos a malo, amen: mes delivrez nus de mal, amen.}

\[\text{Entre totes les paroles qui furent unques establies ne dites en tere, si est la plus halte e la plus seinte Pater Noster, kar ceste nomement establi Deu memes, e comanda a dire a ses apostles, e par les apostles la comanda a dire a tuz cels qui en li creeient, pur ço que ele est plus dit e plus deit estre dit que nul altre ureisun. Kar ço sachez veirement, que tels poez vus estre, que plus dema[n]dez vus mal que ben a vostre os, quant vus dites la Pater Noster.}^{17}\text{ E pur ço que nus voluns que vus sachez que vus dites e quei vus demandez a Deu quant vus dites la Pater Noster, si vus dirruns e mustruns en romanz ço que la lettre ad en sei, e ço que ele nus signefie; kar quant nus diuns la Pater Noster si façuns set requestes a Deu, ço sunt set peticuns.}

\[\text{Ore dirruns la premere peticun que nus requeruns a Damnedeu quant nus diun la Pater Noster. Nostre Pere qui es el cel, seintefiez seit li ton nuns. Tels aple Deu Pere, que n'ad dreit kar il n’est pas fiz Deu par nul bon ouere qu’il face, ne que il}

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16 The text reads *nus nos nos*.

17 The scribe here writes *nostre* rather than *noster*, and, similarly, uses the abbreviation for *nostre* rather than *noster* at the end of the first sentence of the next paragraph.
demande, ne Deu nel conut mie a sun fiz pur le pecché u le deable l'ad mis. Kar li malveis hom, qui Deus e sun comandement ne crent, e fet icels choses que li deable aime, [Rylands Fr.6, fo. 3r] n'est pas fiz Deu mes fiz al deable, si cum dit Nostre Seignur as Jueus qui de li ne sa parole n'aveient cure: 'Vos inquid 'ex patre diabolo estis': 'vus estes', dist il, 'de cel pere qui est apelé deable.' Ore bosoigne dunque que li home que volt que Deus oie sa parole, que il se face tels que Deus le reconuissse par sa grace a sun fiz. E dunque pot il dire a dreyt: 'Pater Noster qui es in celis sanctificetur nomen tuum', e Deu li orra, e fra ço qu'il li demandera, si il veit que ço seist a sun pro[fit]. E si il prie que il seist fiz Deu, e Deu nel conut a sun fiz pur la seinte vie que il deit demener, sa preere ne serra pas oie. Kar si cum dit le seint Escription, Deus peccatores non audit: Deus, ço dit, ne ot pas peccheurs. Ices peccheurs devez vus entendre qui de li n'unt cure, e qui plus volentiers funt les ovres al deable que les comandemenz Nostre Seignur. Tels homes se deivent amender, par bone vie demener deivent devenir les fiz Deu; e lores les orra Deus e dunque purrun il dire: 'Sire qui es el cel seintefiez seist li tons nuns.'


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18 The word is illegible because of the worn state of the manuscript.
19 A second ço dit is expuncted.
20 The text of the 'Explication' continues on to the end, finishing at the bottom of fo. 3v.