

THE HOLY CROSS LEGEND: A UNIQUE VERSION IN OXFORD,
TRINITY COLLEGE, MS 29

The Holy Cross legend in medieval England

The legend telling the history of the Holy Cross before Christ, a Middle English version of which is the subject of this article, was immensely popular and widespread throughout medieval Europe. Versions of this tale are extant in many Western European vernaculars as well as Greek, Armenian, Syriac, and Slavonic. It is a tale, or rather a group of tales which appear in the art and literature of many languages in various shapes over a period of several hundred years. The essential concept underlying these stories is a parallel between man's fall and man's redemption: just as the fatal fruit in the garden of Eden came from a tree, so Christ's Cross was made from the wood of a tree. This typological analogy is well known in medieval biblical exegesis, and finds an early expression in verse in a sixth-century hymn to the Cross ascribed to Venantius Fortunatus, which was used in the Divine Office during Holy Week and on prominent feasts of the Holy Cross:

De parentis protoplasti fraude factor condolens,
quando pomi noxialis morte morsu corrui,
ipse lignum tunc notavit, damna ligni ut solveret.

Hoc opus nostræ salutis ordo depoposcerat,
multiformis perditoris arte ut artem falleret,
et medellam ferret inde, hostis unde laeserat.

(The Creator, grieving for the crime of our first-formed father,
when by the bite of the fatal fruit he fell in death,
then picked out wood to remedy the harm that wood had caused.

The plan of our salvation had demanded that this take place,
so that by his art he should foil the art of the shape-shifting destroyer,
and secure healing from the very source from which our enemy had
worked harm.)¹

The Holy Cross legend makes this connection between the two trees, in which the tree of Paradise is a figure of the Cross of Christ, more immediate and palpable in ascribing a special history to the wood of the Cross. It recounts the

origin of the tree from which came the wood of the Cross, lending it a particular significance appropriate for the important role it will later play in the universal drama of man's salvation enacted on the Cross. Based upon apocryphal material, the legend relates that the tree of the Cross came from a seed of the paradisaical tree. Thus, the very same tree which is the means by which death is first brought to mankind later becomes the means by which mankind is reunited with God through Christ's death.

This legend has attracted a great deal of scholarly interest, especially in the late nineteenth century and then again in the 1960s.² More recently, interest in this field has somewhat lessened, whilst some excellent work on particular aspects of the Holy Cross legend unfortunately remains unpublished.³ Much has been written elsewhere on the early history and tradition of the legend, so that no more than a very short summary need be given here. The development of the tale has been traced by scholars as starting with two originally separate stories, the origin and languages of which are uncertain.⁴ One strand of this tradition is a tale of Seth's journey to Paradise to attain the oil of mercy, as found in the Greek text *Life of Adam and Eve*,⁵ and later in the Latin *Vita Adae et Evae*,⁶ with elements of the tale also appearing in the apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus*.⁷ This tradition was combined with an initially separate set of legends concerned with the origin of the wood of the Cross, the so-called 'rood-tree legends',⁸ which spread throughout medieval Europe from the eleventh century onwards.⁹ In this way, two originally separate traditions merged to form a single story (hereafter referred to as 'Holy Cross legend').¹⁰ The version of the combined legend which had the greatest influence in medieval England is a thirteenth-century Latin text entitled *Post peccatum Adae* (henceforth *PPA*),¹¹ which afterwards became the basis of numerous translations into almost all European vernaculars. Its popularity is attested in the large number of over eighty extant manuscripts,¹² the majority of which are found in England.

In medieval England, the *PPA* tradition was widely known, as attested by a number of Middle English texts which were influenced by it. Notably, the legend appears as part of a larger narrative in the *Cursor mundi*, *Mandeville's Travels*, Caxton's translation of the Latin *Legenda aurea* by Jacobus de Voragine, Mirk's *Festial*, the *Gilte Legende*, Malory's *Morte Darthur*, and the *South English Legendary*. Furthermore, different versions appear in the *Northern Passion*, the *Expanded Northern Passion*, and in the *Northern Homily Cycle*. Only very few scattered allusions to the tale appear in some of the English mystery plays,¹³ whilst the Holy Cross legend plays a much more important role in the Cornish *Ordinalia*, where elements of the legend are woven into the biblical pattern and form an integral part of the plays.¹⁴ There are also two independent prose translations of this legend extant in Worcester, Cathedral Library, MS. F. 172¹⁵ as well as Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2125.¹⁶

Not all of the texts mentioned are based exclusively on *PPA*, as the Latin *Vitae Adae et Evae* tradition was also widely known, and sometimes combined with *PPA*. There are some further Middle English versions, such as the *Canticum de creatione* and the Auchinleck *Life of Adam*,¹⁷ which appear to be derived mainly from *Vita Adae et Evae*. The textual relationships between both Latin and vernacular manuscripts containing Holy Cross legends are frequently highly complex and have not yet been completely disentangled.

The Holy Cross legend in Oxford, Trinity College, MS 29

In addition to the Middle English texts mentioned above, there is a further version of the legend contained in Oxford, Trinity College, MS 29, which has escaped scholarly attention to date. The manuscript contains a late fifteenth-century prose history of the world, which was written after 1482 and possibly originates from Norfolk or Suffolk, although the language does not have a pronounced dialectal colouring, perhaps due to its date so late in the fifteenth century.¹⁸ It is a seamless prose history which starts with the creation of the world and ends incompletely with a description of Hannibal's exploits.¹⁹ The overall structure of the text follows the Old Testament chronology, collecting information on any given subject from both Middle English and Latin sources. These include the Vulgate, Caxton's print of the *Polychronicon* (a universal chronicle by Ranulf Higden originally written in Latin and translated into Middle English by John Trevisa), *Mandeville's Travels*, the *Confessio amantis*, the *Canterbury Tales*, Wynkyn de Worde's print *Informacion for pylgrymes vnto the holy londe*, a translation of Jacques Legrand's *Book of Good Manners*, and Peter of Poitiers's *Compendium historiae in genealogia Christi*. Written in a single hand, these texts are compiled and revised in a highly idiosyncratic manner to form a new, continuous narrative. Within this larger historical framework, the Holy Cross legend is broken up into smaller episodes, and inserted into the main narrative at the appropriate chronological points in the history.

The main elements of the version of the legend in Oxford, Trinity College, MS 29 (hereafter referred to as *T*), which is presented in six blocks of narrative of varying length inserted into the larger work, can be briefly summed up as follows. Before his imminent death, Adam sends his son Seth to Paradise to ask God for the oil of the tree of mercy. Seth goes to Paradise, but is refused entry by an angel. Instead, he is granted three visions: Firstly, the now withered tree from which the apple was taken is shown to him. Secondly, he sees an adder winding around that tree. In the third vision, Seth is shown a newborn baby in the tree top. The angel afterwards explains to him that the first two visions signify the sin of man, whilst the baby is God's own son who will take away that sin and who will be the oil of mercy. Seth is given three seeds from the

very same tree and is instructed to put them under his father's tongue after his death and bury him. From these seeds will grow a tree through which mankind will be saved. When Adam hears about this, he rejoices greatly, dies soon after, and is buried in the valley of Hebron. From the seeds in his mouth grow three trees – a cedar, a cypress, and a palm tree.

Later, Moses finds the small trees growing in the valley of Hebron and takes them with him, planting them again on Mount Tabor. The story is then continued by David, who is commanded by an angel to find the three trees and carry them to Jerusalem. On the way to Jerusalem, diverse sicknesses are cured by the touch of the trees. After the three trees are planted in David's orchard, they grow together into a single tree.

During Solomon's time, the tree is cut down in order to be used in the construction of the temple. However, the beam changes in size, so that it cannot be fitted into the walls of the temple. It is then placed as a bench in the temple. A woman called Maximilla tries to sit on it, but it bursts into flames. She then prophesies that the Jews will put their saviour to death on that tree. Because of that prophecy, the Jews kill her and, out of spite, use the beam as a bridge over a ditch. When the Queen of Sheba comes to visit Jerusalem, she recognizes that the tree is sacred and refuses to step on it. The queen prophesies the destiny of the tree. Later, it is enclosed in gold and silver and set in the door of the temple by Solomon, from where it is stolen by the Jews and cast into the pool of Bethesda. Miracles are subsequently performed by the water of that ditch, until the time when the beam is used as the Cross of Christ. The time of the crucifixion is not recounted in *T*, but it could have been contained in the lost leaves at the end of the manuscript.

Textual features of the legend in T

One of the features of the version of the Holy Cross legend in *T* which is especially noteworthy is the way in which it is integrated into the context of a historiographical compilation. References to the legend appear throughout the manuscript, the first and the last of which can be found on fol. 7^v and fol. 175^r (the entire compilation breaks off on fol. 225^v). The way in which the tale is incorporated into the text of *T* is in certain respects comparable to the treatment of the legend in the *Cursor mundi*,²⁰ even though the two versions do not appear to be related textually. The legend as it is found in most Middle English and Latin texts is a single, continuous verse or prose narrative. In both the *Cursor mundi* and *T*, however, the legend is split up into different episodes, which are inserted into the frame narrative in a way which corresponds with the overarching chronology. Thus, in *T* portions of the legend of varying length appear in the sections dealing with Adam, Shem, Moses, David, Solomon, and Rehoboam, at different points

in the narrative. The legend is thus integrated into a larger historical framework and interwoven with other historical events. Essentially, it functions as a sub-plot within *T*, connecting seemingly unrelated episodes in the chronology.

Whilst the different episodes of the Holy Cross legend are split up and occur at different points in the chronology, the compiler of *T* was evidently determined to create a sense of narrative unity and clarity of reference in the text of the legend. This desire is evident in the frequent references which the compiler inserts at the beginning of sections which take up the theme of the Holy Tree, as if to remind the reader of the parts of the legend which have already been told. For instance, when the story relates how the three seeds grow into three branches, we are told that 'of þe iij kernelys þat **Seth** putte vnder his fadrys tounge as þe aungil him badde, þere sprange thre fayre braunchis of lyche long' (lines 91f.).²¹ The relative clause which postmodifies the noun *kernelys* is not found in *PPA* – it appears to be added in *T* in order to emphasize the narrative links within the story. Likewise, the account of Moses' finding of the three branches on fol. 113^v begins with the words: 'Than furthermore we rede how þe peple of Israell abode with Moyses in deserte in þe vale of Ebron where Adam was buryed. And þere Moyses in his vysyoun sy3 þe iij braunchis standyng abought his hede þat grewe oute of Adams mouthe' (lines 113–15), thus referring to an event which has been mentioned much earlier, on fol. 9^v, before moving on to the next episode of the Holy Cross legend. First and foremost, such references obviously fulfil a cohesive function. Since excerpts concerned with the Holy Cross legend are frequently rather short and dispersed over a great number of pages in the manuscript, these summaries of the previous elements of the story would serve as a reading aid if a reader tried to recover the connections. This suggests a compiler who is conscious of writing for an audience, for readers whom he is at pains to provide with as much clarification as possible. The reader is subtly guided through the vast quantity of historical material by means of a recurring story which binds the various events closer together, and is reminded of these narrative links through recurring references. This also shows the compiler's intention to unify the entire compilation, smoothing the transitions from excerpt to excerpt and blending the different elements of the Holy Cross legend into the surrounding material.

At the same time, this splitting of the legend into different parts which are spread out over almost the entirety of the compilation creates a connection which reinforces the typological significance of Old Testament history. As thousands of years of Old Testament history unfold, interspersed with recurring references to the legend, there is a continuous anticipation of the eventual use to which the tree will be put – as the Cross of Christ. History becomes suffused with the expectation of the future saviour of mankind. Just as the tree from which the apple was taken becomes a type of the Cross of Christ, so all the events of the Old Testament relate to Christ and the foundation of his Church and prefigure

them. The use of the Holy Cross legend creates a sustained typological structure, gesturing again and again towards the Crucifixion as the central event of all history. Since the manuscript is incomplete, we cannot say with certainty whether the Crucifixion was meant to be included in *T*, but the use of the Holy Cross legend gives good reason for hypothesizing that it was. As pointed out above, the structural function of the Holy Cross legend in *T* is reminiscent of its use in the *Cursor mundi*, where it is used in a comparable way to provide structure and narrative unity.²² A similar use can be observed in the Cornish *Ordinalia*, where the inclusion of the Holy Cross legend emphasizes the typological significance of Old Testament material, and references the Passion of Christ as the central theme of the plays.²³ The incorporation of the Holy Cross legend in *T* thus creates a sense of continuity throughout the text as well as reinforcing a typological perspective on historical events, with an emphasis on prophecy and prefiguration. This makes it clear that the Holy Cross sections with their intra- and intertextual references are pieces of a well-planned larger textual whole with a consistent point of view.

By including Holy Cross material in a text primarily concerned with Old Testament history, the legend is also afforded an increased authority by being placed side by side with biblical material. Whilst the history in *T* includes material from a variety of sources, biblical and otherwise, non-biblical material is frequently accompanied by clear references to sources and authorities, such as 'Policronicon seith' (fol. 5^v) or 'Iosephus seith' (fol. 6^v). The Holy Cross material, however, is only very occasionally accompanied by any references to sources, as in line 9: 'Some Doctor seyth.' For the most part, the legend cannot be easily distinguished from the biblical material contained in the history, as in line 113: 'Than furthermore we rede how þe peple of Israell abode with Moyses ...'. Interestingly, we find chronicles concerned with biblical material which include Holy Cross material in medieval German as well, the so-called *Historienbibeln* ('story-bibles'). As Murdoch has pointed out, these chronicles tend to emphasize explicitly that the Holy Cross material is not biblical.²⁴ This is not as noticeably the case in *T*, where the Holy Cross legend is allowed to stand side by side with the Old Testament narrative, mostly without any markers of its non-biblical origin. A reader would require some advanced theological knowledge to be able to distinguish between the two, which gives the legend an authority close to that of the biblical narrative.

Textually, the Holy Cross legend in *T* is clearly indebted to the Latin *PPA* tradition. This tradition is characterized, first and foremost, by several distinctive plot elements, such as the threefold vision in Paradise, and the gift of the three seeds.²⁵ *T* follows this tradition in most of these significant details, which suggests that the *PPA* tradition is at least one of the sources behind the version in *T*. However, not all of the motifs typical for *PPA* are also found in *T*. For instance,

versions of *PPA* frequently relate how David composed the penitential psalms under the tree in his garden after committing adultery,²⁶ a detail which is missing in the version in *T*. Another detail not contained in *T* is an explanation of the symbolic significance of the three types of wood from which the Cross is made – in *PPA*, the angel speaks of them as signifying the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,²⁷ whilst *T* omits this detail. A collation of *T* with the Latin *PPA* reveals that the version in *T* appears to translate some passages quite closely from the Latin, while other passages are considerably shortened, edited, or expanded with additional information. For instance, Adam's sexual abstinence at the beginning of the legend is described in the Latin thus:

[Adam] ait: 'Ecce tot mala contingunt per mulierem! Viuit dominus non agnosco eam', abstinuitque se ab ea ducentis annis. sed postea per preceptum domini iterum recognouit eam.²⁸

This is rendered in *T* as :

And þere **Adam** seyde þat 'Alle this sorw thow a woman cam, and þerfor shal I neuer nyhe her more.' And an C yere and fourty Adam wolde neuer com nyhe his wyfe. But aftyr throuh Goddis commaundment **Adam** toke his wyfe ayen.' (lines 1–3)

This is a relatively close translation, which, however, omits Adam's invocation of God's name, and changes the number of years from 200 to 140. The number 140 recurs in several other versions, but numbers are variable throughout the Holy Cross tradition.²⁹ In other places, *T* moves further away from the Latin text, as in the description of Seth's reaction to seeing Paradise for the first time:

And whan he cam þere, he was sore aferde of þat blessyd syght, for he cowde nat thyngke to what thyng yt myht best by lykenyd to. Yt was so bryght and blessydful to see and as rede as flamyd fyre. (lines 23–5)

By contrast, the Latin text does not contain a reference to Seth's inability to compare this sight with anything else he has ever seen:

'In itinere vero stupefactus propter splendorum paradisi, credidit enim ardorem ignis.'

Such alterations and additions to the Latin text are characteristic of the entire legend in *T*. It is difficult to tell whether these changes are the result of a compiler translating and editing the text of *PPA*, or whether the legend in *T* is indebted to other sources beyond this Latin text. However, some plot elements might suggest that the legend in *T* draws both on the *PPA* and the 'rood-tree' tradition. For instance, *T* recounts how the skin of several Ethiopians is turned white by the touch of the tree (lines 132–4), which is a typical element of the 'rood-tree' legends, but is not found in *PPA*.³⁰ It is, of course, possible that this blending of material is not original to *T* but occurred in a Latin source text,

but this question is difficult to solve in absence of a Latin text which exhibits the same features as the version in *T*.

What is particularly striking about the version of the legend in *T* is the inclusion of occasional Latin sentences, such as 'Hic mittit Adam suum filium Seth ut sciat quando remittetur sibi culpa sua' (lines 13f.). It is striking that all the Latin sentences in *T* provide a summary of what follows in the narrative, and most of them start with the deictic reference 'Hic'. Surprisingly, these summaries are not commonly found in the Latin text of *PPA* (although the use of headings is common in the *Vita Adae et Evae* tradition). The deictic 'hic' suggests that these Latin sentences were originally marginal headings which accompanied a Latin version of the legend, and which were subsequently incorporated into the main text, either by the compiler or at a previous stage in the text's transmission. However, any such suggestions must remain speculative, as long as possible Latin exemplars containing such marginal notes remain undiscovered.³¹ Interestingly, the compiler himself uses marginal headings in a similar way to summarize the contents of the main text, as can frequently be seen in *T*, as well as in two other manuscripts in the same hand (San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 144, and London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 84), although these marginal headings are usually in the vernacular.

There are other extant manuscripts which illustrate what the compiler's exemplar might have looked like. In the illustrated encyclopedia known as *Omne bonum* in London, British Library, Royal MS 6 E 6, Latin marginal headings appear in conjunction with the Holy Cross legend. The entry for 'Adam' contains a version of the Holy Cross legend which is accompanied by marginal headings which follow a similar format to the Latin sentences in *T*, starting with the deictic reference 'Hic'. The content of the headings does not agree with *T*, but nonetheless the similarities between the two texts are striking.

Another analogous use of marginal headings occurs in the stage directions which can be found in some vernacular dramatizations, such as the Cornish *Ordinalia*. The Cornish *Origo mundi*, for instance, has Latin stage directions such as '*hic ponet grana in ore ade*'.³² The manuscript of the fifteenth-century Low German play *Der Sündenfall* by Arnold Immessen, which contains Holy Cross material, has Latin stage directions of a very similar kind (e.g. 'Hic ambulat Seth et venit ante paradisum ad cherubin'),³³ but these stage directions do not agree with *T*. Vernacular section headings are also relatively frequent in the *Vita Adae et Evae* tradition, as can be seen, for instance, in the fifteenth-century French adaptation of the material entitled *La Penitance Adam*, although this text has headings which begin with 'how' rather than 'here' (e.g. 'Comment Adam acoucha malade et des belles remonstrances qu'il fist a ses enfans').³⁴ Even in the iconographical tradition of the Holy Cross material we find similar tituli, as in the Dutch woodcut version of the story printed by Veldener in 1483, in which

nearly all woodcuts are accompanied by a quatrain beginning with 'Hier'.³⁵ Although none of these references in Latin and in the vernacular agrees with the Latin sentences which are found in *T*, it is clear that there was a long tradition of adding marginal headings or captions to Holy Cross material, in a variety of sources and media, and that the legend in *T* draws on this tradition.

In addition to incorporating Latin sentences, *T* adds information to the legend which is primarily taken from Caxton's edition of John Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon* into English, and from the Middle English Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels*.³⁶ This is in accordance with compilatory strategies which can be observed across the entire historical text in *T*, in which information on various topics is drawn from a number of different sources in an encyclopedic manner. For instance, in the section dealing with Rehoboam, during whose reign the Holy Tree is removed from the temple and cast into a pool, the opening sentences are copied from Book II, chapter 30, of the *Polychronicon*, and give some background information in order to explain the historical circumstances preceding the theft of the tree: '**Iosephus, libro 8, capitulo 5**, seith þat **Sufac**, kynge of Egipste, spoylyd and toke away þe sheldes of golde þat Solomon had sette in Ierusalem. And **Roboas** sette sheldys of brasse in her stede' (lines 176–8). In the same section, the compiler then adds material on the *probatica piscina* from *Mandeville's Travels*. A passage describing the *probatica piscina* in *Mandeville's Travels* states, 'And what man þat first baped hym þerynne aftir þe steryng of þe water, he was made hool what sikenesse so he hadde',³⁷ while the version in *T* reads 'And who þat bathyd hym fyrst aftir þat in þat watyr, was made hole of what syknes þat he hadde' (lines 186f.). This way of compounding material relevant to the subject matter is characteristic for the entire text: in a manner which is noticeable throughout *T*, the compiler collects information on different subjects from different sources, and then presents them as a cohesive whole at the appropriate points in his history. It is clear, then, that *T* contains a unique version of the legend which edits the content of the Latin *PPA* to fit the specific needs of this historiographical compilation.

The legend in *T* is unique in yet another respect. Even though the overwhelming majority of the text is in prose, it contains occasional traces of rhyme and metre, for instance in the section describing Seth's third vision in Paradise. I have lineated my transcription here to bring out the patterning of verse which can be heard, if not seen on the page, in its block of prose:

and he behelde and sawe vpon þe tre
a childe late born was to see.
In cradyl bondys was it bownde
and in smal clothis it was wounde.
Abovyn þe crop it lay in swevyn
on þat tre vp toward hevyn. (fol. 8^v, lines 43–5 below)

In this passage, rhyming couplets with an iambic metre with four or five stressed syllables can be discerned. Overall, more than thirty lines of residual verse can be detected in the legend in *T*. This sporadic occurrence of residual rhyme suggests either that part of the compiler's exemplar was in verse, or that he had access to several source texts containing the Holy Cross legend, at least one of which was in verse. If the latter was the case, it appears that he adapted the verse to the overall requirements and to the dominant textual mode of the prose history he was creating. The rhyming sections in *T* are clearly remnants of verse texts, and are thus distinct from the inclusion of rhyming prose which we recurrently find in medieval texts. Within the specific tradition of Holy Cross legends, however, the text in *T* shows striking similarities with the way in which late medieval German *Historienbibeln* frequently adapt verse sources of the *Vita Adae* tradition to a new prose narrative. An example of this tradition can be found in a fifteenth-century manuscript of a German *Historienbibel* from the Austro-Bavarian dialect area, which contains an 'Adambuch' describing the lives of Adam and Eve in prose, but contains occasional occurrences of rhyme, which can be traced back to their rhymed source texts.³⁸

I have undertaken a collation of the legend in *T* with the extant versions of the Holy Cross legend in Middle English. *T* shows no perceptible similarities with the versions in the *Cursor mundi*, the *South English Legendary*, the *Canticum de creatione*, the *Auchinleck Life of Adam*, Caxton's translation of the *Legenda aurea*, the *Gilte Legende*, Mirk's *Festial*, the *Morte Darthur*, or the prose versions in Worcester, Cathedral Library, MS F. 172 and Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2125. Another source of Holy Cross legends which was highly influential, particularly on the English mystery plays, is the *Northern Passion*. Neither the shorter versions of *The Northern Passion* nor the *Expanded Northern Passion* nor the *Northern Homily Cycle* bears any textual similarities to *T*. However, a different, expanded text is contained in the London Thornton manuscript, London, British Library, Additional MS 31042 (*Ad*). The manuscript contains, amongst other texts, the *Northern Passion*, which Robert Thornton expanded considerably, adding several hundred lines dealing with Holy Cross material.³⁹ The text of *Ad* frequently bears a marked similarity with the residual rhyme in *T*, and is in places almost identical:

he sawe abowne þat Ilke a tre
a childe late borne on to See
with credille bandis was it bowndyne
and in riche clothes wondene
and abownne the croppe fulle euyne
Of that tre tornede heuene (*Ad*)⁴⁰

and he behelde and sawe vpon þe tre
a childe late born was to see.
In cradyl bondys was it bownde
and in smal clothis it was wounde.
Abovyn þe crop it lay in sweyyn
on þat tre vp toward hevyn. (*T*, fol. 8^v)

However, in spite of these similarities, not all of the rhyming words agree between the two versions. The rhyming passages in *T* clearly stand in some textual relation to *Ad* or its sources, but it is unlikely that *T* was copied directly from *Ad*, unless the compiler made some marked changes to the text.⁴¹ Here as elsewhere in the legend, the version in *T* is shortened and devoid of several details which are contained in other versions. For instance, the version in *Ad* describes how Seth, in his third vision in Paradise, sees his brother Abel's soul sitting on the great tree in joy. In several respects, this is puzzling, for the traditional version contained in *PPA* has Abel's soul sitting in the roots of the great tree which reach down to hell. Meanwhile, *T* omits this detail concerning Abel entirely. Such changes seem to echo the compiler's overall method of rewriting and shortening his source texts in *T*.

The matter of the relation between *T* and *Ad* is further complicated by the fact that there is a lacuna in *Ad* on fols 41^{r-v}. The part of the text which is missing would have covered Adam's sending Seth to Paradise, Seth's arrival in Paradise, and his first vision. This may explain why no analogue can be found in *Ad* for some of the residual rhyme in *T* corresponding to this part of the legend (cf. note on lines 35–8 below, p. 71).

Thus, the text of the Thornton manuscript of the *Northern Passion* appears to correspond to *T* only with respect to the rhyming passages, but where *T* presents prose, the text is markedly different in *Ad*. It seems likely that the compiler of *T* drew on a source text of the same textual tradition as the text which Thornton used; *Ad* itself is unlikely to have been the compiler's exemplar. Overall, it is clear that the main source text of the Holy Cross legend in *T* must have been in prose rather than verse. The compiler seems to have had access to several different versions of the legend, which he conflated and rewrote. One of them was possibly in Latin, which would account for the inclusion of Latin phrases in *T*. It is, of course, difficult to determine whether this rewritten text was already present in the compiler's exemplar, or whether it was his own work. However, the manner of compiling from different sources which is evident from the Holy Cross legend is very similar to the compilatory techniques observed throughout the manuscript, which suggests that the latter possibility is likely. Whether the text was the compiler's own work or not, what is certain is that the Holy Cross legend in *T* is the only surviving witness of this specific textual tradition, and its unique features are thus of great interest to scholarship.

To sum up, the version contained in *T* is quite extraordinary, since it is the only known legend in Middle English which includes verse as well as prose passages. The sporadic occurrence of residual rhyme suggests that at least one of the compiler's exemplars was in verse, and stood in some textual relation to London, British Library, Additional MS 31042. The compiler combined this source text with a text in the *PPA* tradition, possibly translating from the Latin

directly. As pointed out above, some plot elements of the legend in *T* suggest that this text draws on the 'rood-tree' tradition as well. Overall, the structure and presentation of the text in *T* and its use of the Holy Cross legend shows certain similarities to other medieval traditions and genres which use Holy Cross material, such as German *Historienbibeln*. Furthermore, the compiler of *T* also incorporated more general contextual and historical details from other texts such as the *Polychronicon* and *Mandeville's Travels*. In this way, different traditions were adapted to the requirements and to the dominant textual mode of the history of the world in *T*, creating a unique version of the Holy Cross legend not preserved in any other extant Middle English manuscript.

Edition of the sections in T containing the Holy Cross legend

Editorial conventions:

The letters *u* and *v* have been preserved as they occur in the manuscript, as well as the letters *þ* and *ȝ*, and *i* and *j*. This edition treats the ambiguous majuscule *I/J* as *i* throughout. Double *f* is represented as capital *F*. Numerals appear in the manuscript in a large variety of forms. The edition preserves the manuscript usage as far as is possible and practicable. I have regularized numerals where the manuscript usage might lead to confusion or misunderstanding. Interlinear additions have been marked by 'forward and reverse primes'. The display script used for names and specific phrases is indicated by **bold type**. Marginal headings for individual sections of the manuscript text are presented as subheadings. Abbreviations have been silently expanded. Punctuation, capitalization, and word division have been modernized. The paragraphing is editorial. Editorial interventions are clearly marked with square brackets. The running titles for each of the different sections which contain the Holy Cross legend refer to the generations after Christ; they are mentioned in the commentary. The commentary analyses important themes and textual borrowings from a range of sources.

[fol. 7^r] And þere **Adam** seyde þat 'Alle this sorw thow a woman cam, and þerfor shal I neuer nyhe her more.' And an C yere and fourty **Adam** wolde neuer com nyhe his wyfe. But aftyr throuh Goddis commaundment **Adam** toke his wyfe ayen. And aftyr þe begynnyng of þe worlde CC yer and xxx she conceyuid a childe be hym. **Anno mundi CC xxx natus est Seth**. Whiche **Adam** namyd hym **Seth** and thankyd God þat he had sent hym anoþer sonne for Abel þe whiche Cayn slewe. And soone aftyr þat Seth was born, dame **Eve** deyde.

How Seth yede [to] Paradise.

Some Doctor seyth þat longe aftyr this tyme **Adam** was greuously syke and he remembryd þe synne and sorw þat shulde come aftyr his dayes be his generacioun and also of þe long lyfe þat he had lyuyd in grete labur and trauayle with Eve his wife, þe whiche remembraunce greuyd hym ful sore. Than **Adam** callyd to hym **Seth** his sonne and seyde. **Hic mittit Adam suum filium Seth ut sciat quando remittetur sibi culpa sua**. 'Thow shalt goo to þe aungil þat kepyth Paradise with a sharpe brennyng swerde. He kepyth þe tree of lyfe. And sey vnto hym þat my lyfe noyeth me sore and also þat he wolde sende me þe **oyle** of þe tree of mercy for to anynte with my membrys þat I myhte haue hele. [fol. 8^r] And I shal now tel þe þe wey. Throue yendyr grene valey thou shalt goo, for þat lyeth evyn est to þat countre. Thow shalt see be my steppys how thou shalt goo to þat place. For þere as I steppyd with my feete, þe gresse welkyd away and grew neuer ageyn yet and þat was for my synns þat were so foule and vnclene. And yf thou dredyst þe of any thyng þat thou shalt see, blesse þe wel at þe begynnyng and than shalt thou see bodely al thyng.' And than thryes **Adam** blessyd **Seth** his sonne. And than **Seth** toke his wey to Paradise. And whan he cam þere, he was sore aferde of þat blessyd syght, for he cowde nat thynke to what thyng yt myht best by lykenyd to. Yt was so bryght and blessydful to see and as rede as flamyd fyre. Tho he blessyd hym and yede to þe aungil **Cherubym**, but þe aungil wolde not lette hym come yn at þe gate but askyd hym fro whens he cam. Than he seyde, 'From my fadyr **Adam** þat for age may no lenger lyue, and he prayde þe to send hym of þe **oyle** of þe tree of mercy þat God hiht hym so largely whan he was dryvyn oute of Paradise. And yf it were þe wyl of God, he wolde be deede and lyue nomore.' Than spake þe aungil and sayde, 'Abyde thou here at this gate and beholde what thou maist see tyl I come ageyn to þe.' **Seth** dyd as þe aungil hym bad and saw þere woundrys and maruelys grete þat was of frutys and flourys of many dyuers colour and of byrdis þat so myrly sounge. Also in þe myddys of Paradise he syȝ a fulfayre wel and oute of þat wel com iiij stremys whiche be callyd **Gyson, Phison, Tigris, and Ewfrates**. And oute of þat welle þere grewe a tree, þe fayrest þat eny man myht see, ful of braunchis bothe hye and lowe. But oo braunche þeron was drye and bare no lefe nor aftyr þe odoure of þe tre yt had no savour. Than thouht **Seth** in his resoun þat þeron grewe þat appyl þat his fadyr **Adam** ete of, and for þat cause it was welkyd as hys steppis were aftyr his pace. Than sawe he also [fol. 8^r] a gresly syhte. An addyr raumpand þat was lothly to see yede abouht þat fayre tre. Tho for drede **Seth** ganne to fle. Than þe aungil bad hym,

42 'Goo ageyn and beholde wel, thou shalt see more.' Seth went as þe aungil hym bad,
 43 and he behelde and sawe vpon þe tre a childe late born was to see. In cradyl bondys
 44 was it bownde and in smal clothis it was wounde. Abovyn þe crop it lay in swevyn on
 45 þat tre vp toward hevyn. Anoþer marvayle he syh also. Þe roote of þat same tre, throwh
 46 þe erthe to helle yt zede, and of þat Seth had grete drede. And to þe aungil anon
 47 he zede and tolde hym what he had seyn and prayde hym þat he wolde seye what tyme
 48 his fadyr shulde deye and also þat he wolde tel hym what þe childe shulde synyfy þat
 49 he sawe in þe tre so hye. Than þe aungil prophesied and seyde, 'That þe childe þat
 50 thou syest is Goddis sonne of hevyn þat wepyth sore for Adams synnys and yet shal ful
 51 moche more, for he shal byen al þat synne þat **Adams** keende is bownden yn. And
 52 whan þat shal be, ther shal be grace and mercy plente. And þat is þe **oyle of mercy** þat
 53 God behytyth so largely. But of þat **oyle of mercy** thou gestist noon vnto þe tyme ther
 54 be complete **fyue thousand** and **fyue hundred** zerys. **Hic dedit angelus sibi tria**
 55 **grana ut poneret sub lingua patris quando sepeliret eum et praedixit sibi mortem**
 56 **cristi**. And than þe aungil toke **Seth** thre kernelys of þe same tree þat **Adam** ete of þe
 57 apple and bad hym goon home and sey þat his fadyr Adam shal deye þe thrydde day
 58 aftyr. 'And whan he is deede, ley these iij kernelys vndir his tounge and than bery
 59 hym.

60 Where þe aungil prophesied of Crist.
 61 And of these thre kernelys þe aungil prophesied and seyde that it shulde bere a frewte
 62 throuh þe whiche frewyt **Adam** shulde be sauyd and alle his, but yf it were here owne
 63 foly. **Hic ostendit** [fol. 9^r] **Seth patri suo grana et dixit sibi quid angelus dixit ei et**
 64 **Adam benedixit**. And whan **Seth** cam ageyn, he tolde his fadyr **Adam** where he had
 65 been and what he had seen and tolde how þe aungil seyde þat he shulde dey þe thrydde
 66 day. And whan **Adam** herde þat, for ioie he lowh a grete lawhyng, and in his lawhyng
 67 he cryde alowde and seyde, 'Lorde, my lyfe is long inowhe. I praye þe yf it be thy wyl,
 68 take fro me my long lyfe. **Adam** neuer lawhyd but for ioie þat his dethe was come.

69 Whan Adam deyde and how longe he lyuy[d].
 70 And þe thryd day he deyde. And than **Seth** put þe thre kernellys vndir his tounge as þe
 71 aungil hym badde, and buryd hym in þe vale of **Ebron** on þe viij day of kalendas of
 72 April, þat is þe day of þe annunciacioun of oure lady. And on þat same day he was
 73 made and on þat same day Crist suffryd deth on þe rode tree for al mankynde. And alle
 74 this fyll on þe Fryday, þat **Adam** was made, deyde, and redemyd. And **Adam** lyvyd
 75 here in erthe ix^c yere and xxxⁱⁱ.

76 Where patriarkis been beryed.
 77 And in this place þere Adam was buryed been alle þe grauys of **patriarkis**. For þere
 78 lyeth **Adam**, **Abraham**, **Isaac**, and **Iacob**, and her wyves **Eva**, **Sara**, **Rebecca**, **Lya**
 79 **and Rachel**. And vndir hem is now a fayre chirche, coueryd as a castel, þe whiche þe
 80 Sarasyns keepe riht wel. And they do þat place grete worship, for þe holy patriarkis þat
 81 lyeth þere, and they be in þe hongyng of þe hylle, and they suffre no cristyn men ne

82 Lewis to come þere ynne but yf they haue a special grace of the Sowdon. For they
 83 holdyn Cristen men and Iewes as hundys þat shulde not come in noon holy place. And
 84 it is callyd double spelunke or doble graue, for oon lyeth vpon anothyr. And þe
 85 Sarasyns callyth yt in her langage **Cariatharba**, þat is to sey, þe placis of patriarkis.
 86 And þe Iewis callyth yt **Arbothum**. And also in this vale of Ebron is a feelde where
 87 men drawe oute of þe erthe a thyng þat men calle **Cambille** and they etyn þat [fol. 9^v]
 88 thyng in stede of spicis and they beryth yt to selle. And men may not digge it so deepe
 89 ne so wyde but þat it is as fulle as it was before throuh þe grace of God.

90 How þe crosse þat Crist deyed on sprang oute of Adams mouthe.
 91 And of þe iij kernelys þat **Seth** putte vnder his fadrys tounge as þe aungil him badde,
 92 þere sprange thre fayre braunchis of lyche long, and one was **palme** and þat oþer **cedre**
 93 and þe thrydde **cyprys**. And ye shul vndirstonde þat þe crosse of oure Lorde was made
 94 of foure maner trees as here is conteyned in this vers. **In cruce sit palma, cedrus,**
 95 **cipressus, oliua.** That pece þat went riht vp fro þe herte to þe hede was of **cipris** and
 96 þat pece þat went ouer þe herte to þe whiche was nayled his handys was of **palme** and
 97 þe stok þat stode with ynne þe erthe in þe whiche they had made a morteyas was of
 98 **cedre** and þat was set in a roche on þe mount of **Caluarie** where oure Lorde was doon
 99 on þe crosse. And þe crosse was set in þat mortays in þe roche þat 'was' white of
 100 colour and a lytyl rede medelyd with al. And on þat roche droppyd þe bloode of oure
 101 Lord whan he was peyned on þe crosse, and it is callyd **Galgatha**. And on þat roche
 102 was **Adams hede** founde aftyr **Noes** flode in tokenyng þat þe synne of **Adam** shulde
 103 be boughte in þat same place. And þe table aboue his hede, whiche was a foot longe
 104 and an halfe, on þe whiche þe tytyl was wrytyn on in Hebrew, Grewe, and Latyn, þat
 105 was of **olyve**. And why þe Lewis made þe crosse of thes foure maner of trees, ye shul
 106 vndirstond hereaftyr in þe story of þe Passioun of oure Lorde Crist Ihesus.

* * *

107 [fol. 15^r] Than this floode þat perished þe erthe sore and destroyed alle þat stode vpon
 108 þe erthe, 3et God of his grace preseruyd þe holy place of **paradise terestre** þat **Adam**
 109 was ynne from þe general flode, þat yt had no poure to come there. And also þe thre
 110 braunchis þat grewe oute of Adams mowthe whiche was **palm**, **cedre** and **cypris**, God
 111 preseruyd them from alle perel, whiche grewe ful fayre and stille stode to þe tyme of
 112 Abraham.

* * *

113 [fol. 113^v] Than furthermore we rede how þe peple of Israell abode with Moyses in deserte
 114 in þe vale of Ebron where Adam was buried. And þere Moyses in his vysyoun sy3 þe iij
 115 braunchis standyng about his hede þat grewe oute of Adams mouthe. And þe next
 116 nyght aftyr þat, Moyses sy3 them in þe feelde of Elym. And than Moyses prophesyed

117 of Trinite to þe childryn of Israell. Aftyr þat þe aungil commaundyd Moyses to putt þe
 118 braunchis in þe water, and so he dyd, and þe water wax rede. And aftyr þat, Moyses
 119 toke vp þe braunchis and bare them into þe kyngdom of **Moab** to þe Mount Thabor, and
 120 þere he set them.

* * *

121 [163^v] Also we rede [fol. 164^r] in some stories how þe aungel of God aperyd to Daudid
 122 in his slepe and bad hym go to Mounte Thabor and fecche þe seyde braunchis þat grew
 123 oute of **Adams** mowthe of þe iij greynys þat Seth leyde vnder his tounge, and set them
 124 in Ierusalem. And as Daudid yede and restyd hym beyounde flum Iordan, he syȝ þe seyde
 125 braunchis stondyng abowte his hede. And þere þe aungil tolde hym þat tho braunchis
 126 they were. Than Daudid drew vp þe braunchis from þe erthe, and þere was so swete a
 127 sauour among tho iij braunchis þat alle þe peple seyde þat they were fullyllyd with ioie
 128 and blysse. **Et tunc Daudid traxit ramos extra terra et duxit secum ponendo eos**
 129 **super diuersos infirmos et omnes sanabantur.** And than Daudid bare þe seyde
 130 braunchis fourthe and touchid dyuers men of dyuers syknesses and þerby they
 131 resseyuyd helthe. For he put þe seyde braunchis vppon a worthy man whois name was
 132 **Bexillas**, whiche had þe palsye, and he was hole. And than þere cam iij men of Ethiop,
 133 whiche of kynde ar blak, and Daudid touchid them and þerwith they were made fayre and
 134 white. Also Daudid touchid a lepore with þe braunchis þat had be syke an C yere and
 135 xxxⁱⁱ. And þere aperyd a grete flame from þe braunchis, and anon he was hole. And alle
 136 þe peple be þe wey sange this songe, 'Holynes and helthe we fynde this day þat is ȝouen
 137 to al mankeende.' Than seyde þe prophete Kyng Daudid, 'These ȝerdys signyfyeth pees.
 138 And also it betokenyth þe Trinite. For þe prophetis han seyde here before þat þe sone of
 139 God shulde be bore and on a crosse he shulde dye. And þat these ȝerdys synyfy.' And
 140 thus he brought them into Ierusalem. And than he plantyt them in his propyr [fol. 164^v]
 141 orcheȝarde. And in þe nyht folwyng, þe seyde braunchis grewe togedyr into oon whiche
 142 cowde nat be disseueryd asoundyr. And than Daudid dyd do repayre his gardyn and
 143 made it more, and dyd þat tree to be gyrded abouhte with a ryng of syluer. And so Daudid
 144 made his prayour afore þe tre dayly be þe space of xxxⁱⁱ yere, and yerly made a ryng of
 145 syluer to be put therto.

* * *

146 [fol. 170^r] Than aftyr þat, Salomon edified þe **temple** þat his fadyr Daudid had begounne,
 147 whiche was xxxijⁱⁱ yer amakyng in Salomonys tyme. Than some storiȝs seyth þat þe
 148 carpenterys þat wrouht on þe temple lakkyd a beme for þe temple of xxxⁱⁱ cubytis of
 149 lengthe. Ther be ij maner of cubitys.

Templum domini.

150
 151 **Hugo de arca** seith þat þe comoun cubyte is a fote and an halfe, þat is vj spanns. But a
 152 cubyte of geometrye conteyneth vj comoun cubitys, þat is ix foote longe. And þere
 153 conde no tre be founde þat was mete þerfor, tyl at laste one aspyed þe tre þat first grewe
 154 oute of **Adam**, whiche tree Kyng Dauid brought oute of þe kyngdom of Moab and had
 155 set it in his orchezarde. And than Salomon commaundyð þe seyde tre to be felle doun
 156 þat þere myht be made a beme þerof for þe temple. And whan yt was cut and framyd
 157 aftyr þe mesure and than pullyd vp, it was gretly to shorte. And whan it was let doun
 158 ageyn, yt was long ynow acordyng to þe mesure. And whan yt was lefte vp eftesonys
 159 ageyn, yt was to shorte. Than they leyde it alonge in þe temple for þe peple to syt
 160 vpon. And þe first þat sat þeron was one hyte **Sybylle**, and some callyd her
 161 **Maxymylla**. And as sone as sche was set, þere cam a flame oute þerof and brent her
 162 clothis. And than she prophecied vnto þe lewis and seyde that on þe seyde tre, they
 163 shulde doo þere saucour to dethe. And for her trew prophesieng, [fol. 170^v] she was sore
 164 scorgyd, and be þe brestis of þe lawe, she was commaundyd to preson and aftyr þat
 165 stonyd to dethe. And aftyr þat, þe lewis of despyte made þe holy tre to be leyde ouyr a
 166 dyche for þe peple to passe vpon, þe whiche is in þe myddys of þe vale of Iosaphat,
 167 whiche is callyd **torrens Cedron**, as þe gospel seith. Than aftyr þat, þe quene of **Saba**
 168 herde of þe gouernaunce and wysdom of Kyng Salomon, and she com with grete gyftys
 169 into Ierusalem to worship hym and to haue a knowledge of hym. The whiche quene was
 170 of þe gentylys, and she knowyng þe holynes of þe tre and wold nat goo on þe tre but
 171 wadyd throuh þe water. And in maner she repreuyd Kyng Salomon because he suffryd
 172 þe holy tre to lye ouer þe dyche. And she prophecied þat Crist shulde dey þereon. Than
 173 Kyng Salomon and þe quene of Saba made þe tre to be take vp from þe dyche and be
 174 closyd in golde and syluer, and than they set þe same tre in þe dore of þe temple þat
 175 euery man þat passyd þereby shulde do reuerence þereto.

* * *

176 [fol. 174^v] **Iosephus, libro 8, capitulo 5**, seith þat **Sufac**, kynge of Egipte, spoylyd and
 177 toke awaye þe sheldes of golde þat Salomon had sette in Ierusalem. And **Roboas** sette
 178 sheldys of brasse in her stede. Also þe seyde tre whiche Salomon sette in þe dore of þe
 179 temple at þe request of þe queen of Saba whiche prophecied þat Crist shulde dey on þe
 180 seyde tre and because of his dethe, þe kyngdom of Iew'i's shulde be destroyed, þe queen
 181 warnyd Salomon hereof. And þe lewis of despyte come in þe nyght and bare awaye þe
 182 tre from þe temple [fol. 175^v] and cast it in a watyr þat men wasshed in þere flesshe þat
 183 was offeryd into þe temple for tythe, or flesshe þat was offryd at any tyme þat was new
 184 slayne, in þat watyr it wasshe clene. And for grete dispyte, þe lewis cast þe seyde tre in
 185 þat watyr. And as longe as þe tre lay there, an aungel cam thedyr euery day and mevyd
 186 þe watyr with a yerde þat meny a man dyd see. And who þat bathyd hym fyrst aftyr þat
 187 in þat watyr, was made hole of what syknes þat he hadde. And tho myraclys cowde nat

188 be hyd, for it was knowyn bothe ferre and neere. For in þe tyme of **Eliseus**, þe prophete,
 189 many a man þat watyr knewe. **Naaman** þat was of Syrus was þat tyme a foule lepur.
 190 And whan he to þat watyr cam, he was clene or he went thens, þe gospel tellyth ful
 191 welle. And also he þat was syke xxxviiiⁱⁱ yerys and more, was helyd þere whan oure
 192 Lorde seyde to hym, '**Tolle grabatum tuum et ambula.**' And abouthte þe tyme þat
 193 Crist suffryd his passioun, þe tree fletyd vppon this seyde watyr callyd **Probatice**
 194 **piscina**. And perfor men troweth þat this seyde tree was þe roode tree þat Crist dyed on.

Commentary

1 And þere Adam] This section occurs in a part of the text with the running title **Adam**, after an account of the killing of Abel and a description of the Holy Land. It is not entirely clear where the actual legend begins in the manuscript. The Latin *PPA* incorporates a short account of the killing of Abel as well, but the version of this event in *T* is much more elaborate, and appears to be mainly indebted to the Vulgate. The passage on fol. 7^v in *T* contains the first line to correspond to the Latin text of *PPA*, and has therefore been chosen as the beginning of this edition.

The Holy Cross legend in *T* is incomplete. On the preceding folios, no mention is made of God's promise of the oil of mercy to Adam, even though this is a typical feature of the legend in the Latin, which begins with

Post peccatum Ade, expulso eo de paradiso propter peccatum, dum clamaret in misericordia domini indutus perizomate, ex benignitate suscepit promissum quod in fine seculorum daret ei deus oleum misericordie.

The oil of mercy is eventually mentioned in *T*, but at a later point in the narrative than in *PPA*. Thus this narrative element is not mentioned at the point where it occurs chronologically, after the expulsion from Paradise; it is only mentioned in retrospect when Seth is sent to Paradise to attain it (cf. line 16).

4f. Anno mundi CC xxx natus est Seth] The Latin sentences seem to be a unique feature of the legend in *T*. They do not correspond to any known version of *PPA*. See also the discussion on pp. 60f. above.

15f. þat he wolde ... myhte haue hele] This passage is copied from the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels* (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, p. 8, lines 22–4). Several of the variants found in the version of *Mandeville's Travels* used in *T* suggest that the exemplar must have belonged to Seymour's subgroups 2–5 (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, pp. xvii–xxv). For example, *T* has 'grace' (line 82) instead of 'leeue' (Seymour, p. 24, line 8), and omits 'whiche is here ywrite þus' in line 94 (Seymour, p. 7, lines 21f.), and thus agrees with the variants found in subgroups 2–5 as opposed to subgroup 1.

18 my steppys] There is no mention of Eve here, while in the Latin Adam speaks of ‘vestigia mei quam matris tue’. Within vernacular traditions of the Holy Cross legend, this omission is highly unusual.

30 he wolde be deede] The Latin does not contain any reference to Adam’s wish to die, merely his wish to attain the oil of mercy.

31 Abyde thou here at this gate] The spatial positioning of the characters is slightly different in *PPA*: There, Seth is stopped by the angel before reaching the gate of Paradise, and is then instructed to go to it (‘Vade ad hostium paradisi’). After each of the three visions, Seth then comes back to tell the angel what he has seen. The version in *T* is less detailed in its description of movement.

35–8 And oute of þat ... had no savour] Residual rhyme, no corresponding passage found in London, British Library, Additional MS 31042 (*Ad*), but note that there is a lacuna in *Ad* (fols 41^{r-v}). It is therefore likely that other manuscripts of the same textual tradition as Thornton’s source did contain a passage corresponding to this rhyming section in *T*.

37 oo braunche þeron was drye] In *PPA*, the entire tree is described as bare of leaves.

40f. Than sawe he ... ganne to fle] Residual rhyme, bearing some similarity to *Ad*:

than saw Sethe an vggly syghte
aneddir rampande a lothely wyghte
he fauldide hym abowte that tree
ffor dred to þe erthe southe gane fle (*Ad*, fol. 42^{ra}, lines 11–14. Cf. *The Northern Passion*, ed. Foster, I, 151, lines 101–4.)⁴²

42 Goo ageyn and beholde wel] *T* here turns a descriptive phrase in *PPA* into direct speech, which heightens the immediacy of the situation.

43–5 and he behelde ... vp toward hevyn] Residual rhyme, corresponding to *Ad*:

he sawe abowne þat Ilke a tre
a childe late borne on to See
with credille bandis was it bowndyne
and in riche clothes wondene
and abownne the croppe fulle euyne
Of that tre tornede heuene (*Ad*, fol. 42^{ra}, lines 21–6. Cf. *The Northern Passion*, ed. Foster, I, 151, lines 111–16.)

45f. throwh þe erthe to helle yt zede] *T* omits any mention of Seth’s vision of his brother Abel’s soul in hell, which is a typical feature of *PPA*. In a similar manner, the Cornish *Ordinalia* omit any mention of Abel (Murdoch, ‘Legends of the Holy Rood in Cornish drama’, p. 26). Some French versions which omit this detail are mentioned by Prangmsma-Hajenius, *La Légende du bois de la Croix*, pp. 100f.

45–7 throw þe erthe ... he had seyn] Residual rhyme, no corresponding passage found in *Ad*. This coincides with a gap in the text of *Ad* on fols 41^{r–v}.

47–9 and prayde hym ... tre so hye] Residual rhyme, corresponding to *Ad*:

and prayede hym þat he wolde saye
 whene his ffadir sold dye
 and what þat ilke childe myghte Senfye
 that he saughe hynges so hye (*Ad*, fol. 42^{ra}, lines 35–8. Cf. *The Northern Passion*, ed. Foster, I, 151, lines 125–8.)

51–3 for he shal byen ... behytyth so largely] Residual rhyme, corresponding to *Ad*:

ffor he salle by alle the synne
 that alle his kynde es borne Ine
 and at þat tyme þat that salle bee
 Salle grace and mercy be plente
 and þat es þe oyle of Mercy
 that god highte hym so largely (*Ad*, fol. 42^{rb}, lines 6–11. Cf. *The Northern Passion*, ed. Foster, I, 152, lines 135–40.)

61–3 And of these thre kernelys ... here owne foly] This passage is copied, with some alterations, from the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels* (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, p. 8, line 30–p. 9, line 5). In *PPA*, the angel explains that the three trees will signify the Trinity, but he does not prophesy that those who come of Adam will be saved through the fruit of the tree. The inclusion of this prophecy here gives more context to the angel's gift to Seth of the three seeds, and strengthens the narrative link between the early and the late history of the tree.

64–8 And whan Seth ... dethe was come] There is textual borrowing from the version in *Ad* here, but without any interest in retaining the rhyme in this case.

he 3ode home to ffadir and dame
 and tolde adam whare he had bene
 and of þe syghtis þat he hade sene
 and how þe angelle bade hym saye
 that he solde dye the thirde daye
 when adam herde þat tythynges
 ffor Ioye he loughes a grete laghynges
 and cryede lowde als he loughes
 lorde my lyffe es lange ynoghe
 I pray the 3if thi wille it bee
 Myn lange lyfe reue þou it me
 Nevir 3itt ne loughes adame
 Bot for Ioye þat his dame dede came (*Ad*, fol. 42^{rb}, lines 25–37. Cf. *The Northern Passion*, ed. Foster, I, 152f., lines 154–66.)

71–4 on þe viij day ... redemyd] There is no analogue for the equation of the day of Adam's burial, the Annunciation, and the Crucifixion in the Latin versions of *PPA*. However, the tradition that the creation of man, the Fall, the Annunciation, and the Crucifixion took place on the same day is widespread throughout patristic literature. See *Glossa ordinaria* (Migne: *PL* CXIV, col. 239); Honorius Augustodunensis, *Hexaameron* VI (Migne: *PL* CLXXII, col. 266), see also Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum historiale* I.56; VII.45 (Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum quadruplex sive speculum maius. Tomus 4: Speculum historiale*. Facsimile of 1624 edn (repr. Graz, 1964)); and Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, ed. Maggioni, cap. L: 'De annunciatione dominica' 117 and cap. LI: 'De passione domini' 136f. (*Iacopo da Varazze: Legenda aurea*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni, 2 vols, 2nd rev. edn (Tavarnuzze, 1998)). The idea behind this is typological, reinforcing the tree of death – tree of life parallel of the legend and placing it within an even broader typological scheme.

77–86 And in this place ... callyth yt Arbothum] This passage is copied from the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels* (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, p. 24, lines 2–13).

86–9 And also in this vale ... grace of God] This passage is copied from the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels* (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, p. 24, lines 30–4).

93–8 And ye shul vndirstonde ... was of cedre] This passage is copied from the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels* (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, p. 7, lines 20–6).

94f. In cruce sit palma cedrus cipressus oliua] In the version of the legend contained in the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels*, Seth is given four grains instead of three. Consequently, this passage describes how the Cross of Christ was made out of four kinds of trees. The compiler of *T* copies that description here, but otherwise adopts the version in *PPA* in which there are three trees (cf. lines 92f.), which leads to slight incongruities. Even the more conventional version is not completely uniform, however – some versions describe the third tree as a pine (cf. Meyer, 'Die Geschichte des Kreuzholzes', pp. 37f.), while others have a palm tree as is the case in *T*. This mixture of traditions indicates very clearly that the Holy Cross legend in *T* is indebted to several traditions, and that the compiler must have copied from these versions eclectically.

98–103 on þe mount ... in þat same place] This passage is copied from the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels* (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, p. 29, lines 10–17).

103–5 And þe table ... was of olyve] This passage is copied from the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels* (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, p. 7, lines 26–8).

105f. ye shul vndirstond hereafter in þe story of þe Passioun] This reference indicates that an account of the Passion was part of the original plan of the history in *T*. Whether it was indeed included remains impossible to determine, since the manuscript is incomplete.

107 Than this floode] This part of the Holy Cross legend occurs under the running title **Sem**. It is inserted into an account of Noah's Flood, which is not reproduced here.

108f. God of his grace ... no poure to come there] This explanation as to how the three rods could survive the Flood is not contained in *PPA*. It appears that the compiler of *T* is at pains to create a consistent narrative with logical text connections.

110 whiche was palm cedre and cypris] Cf. note for lines 94f. above.

113 Than furthermore we] This part of the Holy Cross legend occurs under the running title **Phares**. It is inserted into the story of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt. It is much more condensed than typical versions of *PPA*. For instance, *PPA* recounts the sweet smell of the three rods, and how Moses uses them to heal various illnesses. These narrative elements are missing here, although the soteriological aspect is mentioned later, in the section on David (lines 129–31).

117f. Aftyr þat þe aungil ... þe water wax rede] This detail is not found in *PPA*. Other traditions of the legend (though not *PPA*) mention that Moses uses the three rods to sweeten the bitter water which he has drawn out of the rock at Mara. On this, see especially the Latin 'rood-tree' legend (Fallon, 'The Cross as tree', pp. 239–62), and the version contained in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 343 (*History of the Holy Rood-Tree*, ed. Napier, p. 4, lines 6–16). Perhaps this connection is here hinted at by mentioning that Moses put the branches in water.

121 Also we rede] This part of the Holy Cross legend occurs under the running title **David**. It is inserted after an account of David's victory against Rabath. David is with his host on the way back to Jerusalem when the angel appears to him. Compared to *PPA*, this section of the legend is, again, much condensed.

132 Bexillas] The man who is healed by the touch of the branches does not appear in *PPA*, but in 'rood-tree' versions of the legend, and is usually named Roxilus (cf. *History of the Holy Rood-Tree*, ed. Napier, p. 14; Fallon, 'The Cross as tree', p. 245).

132 iij men of Ethiop] The Ethiopians being turned white by the touch of the rods is a typical narrative element found in the 'rood-tree' tradition (cf. *History of the Holy Rood-Tree*, ed. Napier, p. 16; Fallon, 'The Cross as tree', p. 246).

135–9 And alle þe ... these 3erdys synnyfy] Residual rhyme, corresponding to *Ad*:

and alle the seke mene in the waye
 this sange than þane þay synge *and* saye
 hele nowe and hele we fynde
 This day es gyuene to alle mankynde
 than the prophete kyng dauid
 thay synnyfy bothe pese *and* grythe
 Thay synnyfy to the trynyte
 Mercy pese and charyte
 Prophetes hafe said here by forne
 that goddes sone salle be borne
 and on þe croyse he salle dye
 that thies redis synnyfy (*Ad*, fol. 43^{va}, line 38b, line 9. Cf. *The Northern Passion*, ed. Foster, I, p. 150, lines 373–84.)

146 Than aftyr þat] This part of the Holy Cross legend occurs under the running title **Salomon**. It follows a description of the rebuilding of Jerusalem under Solomon. As in the other passages, some parts of the legend here are much condensed, and stripped of some narrative details.

151f. Hugo de arca ... ix foote longe] This passage about the measurements of a cubit is copied from the *Polychronicon*, Book II, chapter 5 (*Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden, monachi Cestrensis*, ed. Churchill Babington and J. R. Lumby (London, 1964–5), II, 235) and has been added to the Holy Cross legend. This piece of information seems to have been of particular interest to the compiler, for he copies it a second time in *T*, in an account of the building of Noah's ark on fol. 12^r, lines 3–13.

160f. Sybylle ... Maxymylla] In some 'rood-tree' versions of the legend, the woman who first prophesies the destiny of the wood is called Sibilla or Sabilla, while *PPA* calls her Maximilla (Fallon, 'The Cross as tree', p. 253). In *PPA*, the second woman is called Queen Sibilla, while *T* calls her the Queen of Saba (line 167). The names Sybilla, Saba, and Maximilla are frequently confused in different versions of the legend (Murdoch, 'Legends of the Holy Rood in Cornish drama', p. 30).

165f. made þe holy tre to be leyde ouyr a dyche] In *PPA*, after Maximilla's prophecy the Jews first cast the wood into the *probatica piscina* and afterwards pull it out again, only to use it as a bridge over the river Siloe which the Queen of the South refuses to tread on. The order of these two episodes is reversed here.

166f. þe whiche is in þe myddys of þe vale of Iosaphat whiche is callyd torrens Cedron] This piece of information on the brook of Cedron is copied from the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels* (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, pp.

39, lines 22–4). In *PPA* the river over which the holy wood is used as a bridge is not identified as the brook of Cedron, but as the brook of Siloe.

172 þat Crist shulde dey þereon] The queen's prophecy in *PPA* is more cryptic: 'Judicij signum tellus sudore madescit.' The change in *T* may be a result of an effort by the compiler to explain the content of the prophecy more clearly.

176 Iosephus, libro 8] This part of the Holy Cross legend occurs under the running title **Roboam**. It follows an account of the lineage of Solomon's son Rehoboam and of his accession to power.

176–8 Iosephus, libro 8 ... brasse in her stede] These sentences are copied from the *Polychronicon*, Book II, chapter 30 (ed. Babington and Lumby, III, 19).

185–94 an aungel cam thedyr ... Probatica piscina] This description of the *probatica piscina* is copied, with slight alterations, from the Defective Version of *Mandeville's Travels* (*The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, p. 36, lines 16–21). The Defective Version has 'Tolle grabatum tuum et uade' instead of 'ambula'. The Vulgate uses both 'ambula' and 'uade' in close proximity to each other in Mark ii.9–11, and the parallel passages have both 'uade' (Matt. ix.6 and Luke v.24) and 'ambula' (John v.8), so that both versions would have been current in the medieval mind. Interestingly, although *Mandeville's Travels* offers an English translation of the Latin phrase 'Tolle grabatum tuum et ambula', there is no translation contained in *T*. This is particularly striking since Latin phrases are generally translated into English throughout this text.

190f. þe gospel tellyth ful welle] The *probatica piscina* (*Bethesda* in Hebrew) is mentioned in the New Testament in John v.2–9. There is no reference in that specific passage to Naaman the Leper, who appears, however, in II Chron. v.1–14. Naaman is cured of his leprosy by washing in the river Jordan; there is no connection with the *probatica piscina* in the Bible, nor in *Mandeville's Travels*. It is therefore likely that this change was introduced by the compiler of *T*.

194 dyed on] *PPA* includes an account of how the wood was cut into pieces and used as a Cross at the crucifixion of Christ, which is omitted in *T*. However, there are indications that the compiler did intend to include this account in his narrative (see also the comment for lines 105f. above), presumably in parts of the manuscript now lost.

NOTES

I would like to thank Professor Daniel Wakelin as well as the journal editors and anonymous reviewers for their helpful feedback on this article.

¹ Latin text and English translation quoted from *Venantius Fortunatus: Poems*, ed. and trans. Michael Roberts, DOML 46 (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 2017), pp. 70f. Echoes of the ideas in this hymn can be found in the vernacular as well, such as in *Piers Plowman* B, xviii. 358f.: ‘And as Adam and alle þoruȝ a tree deyden, / Adam and alle þoruȝ a tree shul turne to lyue’. English is not the only vernacular in which we find this theme – see, for instance, the German *Vorauer Ezzolied*, which has an even more condensed and pointed reflection: ‘von holze huob sih der tot! / von holze gevil er gote lop’ (*Das Ezzo-Lied in der Vorauer Überlieferung: Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, ed. Christoph Lange (Munich, 2014), p. 175, stanza XXI, lines 257f.).

² A concise summary of early research on the Holy Cross legend is given in Andrew Robert Miller, ‘German and Dutch versions of the legend of the wood of the Cross before Christ’ (unpub. D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 1992) pp. 1–30. Therefore, only a few crucial studies are referred to here. Early studies include Wilhelm Meyer, ‘Die Geschichte des Kreuzholzes vor Christus’, *Aus den Abhandlungen der königlichen bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (München), philos.-philol. Kl., XVI/ii (Munich, 1881), pp. 101–66; *Denkmäler provenzalischer Literatur und Sprache*, vol. I, ed. Hermann Suchier (Halle, 1883); C. Horstmann, ‘Nachträge zu den Legenden’, *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*, 41 (1887), 411–70; Adolfo Mussafia, ‘Sulla leggenda del legno della Croce’, *Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Wiener Akademie der Wissenschaften*, phil.-hist. Cl., 63 (Vienna, 1870), pp. 165–216; *Legends of the Holy Rood, Symbols of the Passion and Cross-Poems*, ed. Richard Morris, EETS, os 46 (London, 1871); *History of the Holy Rood-Tree*, ed. Arthur Napier, EETS, os 103 (London, 1894); J. R. Mozley, ‘The Vita Adae’, *Journal of Theological Studies*, 30 (1929), 121–49; id., ‘A new text of the story of the Cross’, *Journal of Theological Studies*, 31 (1930), 113–27. Esther Quinn’s study *The Quest of Seth for the Oil of Life* (Chicago, 1962) revived the interest in the legend in the twentieth century, but it is mainly concerned with the key literary motifs and their development rather than the manuscript evidence. There are several studies devoted to the Holy Cross legend in a number of vernaculars; to name only some of the most prominent, Angélique Prangsa-Hajenius, *La Légende du bois de la Croix dans la littérature française médiévale* (Assen, 1995) analyses the French legends, Mariane Overgaard, *The History of the Cross-Tree down to Christ’s Passion* (Copenhagen, 1968) examines the Icelandic legends, while Miller, ‘German and Dutch versions’ is concerned with the German and Dutch legends. Brian Murdoch, *The Apocryphal Adam and Eve in Medieval Europe: Vernacular Translations and Adaptations of the Vita Adae et Evae* (Oxford, 2009) gives a comprehensive account of the *Vita Adae et Evae* tradition in the vernacular.

³ See especially the unpublished work by Carolyn E. Jones, ‘Cursor mundi and Post Peccatum Adae: a study of textual relationships’ (unpub. Ph.D. diss., University of Miami, 1976); Miller, ‘German and Dutch versions’, and Nicole Fallon, ‘The Cross as tree: the wood-of-the-Cross legends in Middle English and Latin texts in medieval England’ (unpub. Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 2009).

⁴ Stone, *A History of the Literature*, gives an excellent summary of the debate surrounding the origin of the legend, and an evaluation of the arguments for a Jewish origin.

⁵ The most recent critical edition of the Greek text is *The Life of Adam and Eve in Greek: A Critical Edition*, ed. Johannes Tromp (Leiden, 2005). Early research on this text refers to it with the inaccurate title *Apocalypse of Moses*, following *Apocalypses apocryphae Mosis, Esdrae, Pauli, Iohannis, item Mariae dormitio*, ed. Constantin von Tischendorf (Leipzig, 1866).

⁶ The most recent critical edition is *Vita Latina Adae et Evae*, ed. Jean-Pierre Pettorelli, completed by Jean-Daniel Kaestli, *Synopsis Vitae Adae et Evae*, ed. Albert Frey, Jean-Daniel Kaestli, Bernard Outtier, and Jean-Pierre Pettorelli, 2 vols, *Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum* 18f. (Turnhout, 2012).

⁷ For an overview of editions of the Middle English text, see *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050–1500*, Vol. II, ed. J. Burke Severs (New Haven, Conn., 1970), pp. 640f.

⁸ This term is used in *History of the Holy Rood-Tree*, ed. Napier. The earliest extant representative of this tradition is found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 343.

⁹ For a fuller account, see Meyer, 'Die Geschichte des Kreuzholzes', p. 8.

¹⁰ The earliest joint version appears as an interpolation of a Holy Cross legend into the *Vita Adae et Evae*, presumably at the end of the twelfth century (Quinn, *The Quest of Seth*, p. 11). For a more detailed overview of all Latin versions of the legend, see Fallon, 'The Cross as tree', pp. 18–21.

¹¹ Meyer refers to this text as the *Legende* (Meyer, 'Die Geschichte des Kreuzholzes', p. 28). In more recent publications, the titles *Legende* and *Post peccatum Adae* tend to be used interchangeably. In the following discussion, the text will be referred to as *Post peccatum Adae* (PPA).

¹² For a list of manuscripts, see Miller, 'German and Dutch versions', pp. 129–32.

¹³ The Towneley, Chester, and Coventry plays all contain references to the 'oyle of mercy': Towneley Play 3, line 66 (*The Towneley Plays*, vol I: *Introduction and Text*, ed. Martin Stevens and A. C. Cawley, EETS, ss 13 (Oxford, 1994)), Chester Play 17, line 78 (*The Chester Mystery Cycle*, vol I: *Text*, ed. R. M. Lumiansky and David Mills, EETS, ss 3 (Oxford, 1974)), and Coventry Play 28, line 901 (*Ludus Coventriae or The Plaie called Corpus Christi*, ed. K. S. Block, EETS, ES 120 (London, 1922)).

¹⁴ On the appearance of the Holy Cross legend in the Cornish *Ordinalia*, see F. E. Halliday, *The Legend of the Rood* (London, 1955), who chose to publish the Holy Cross legend separately from the rest of the *Ordinalia*; see also Robert Longworth, *The Cornish Ordinalia: Religion and Dramaturgy* (Cambridge, 1967); Brian Murdoch, *Cornish Literature* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 49–58; and Brian Murdoch, 'Legends of the Holy Rood in Cornish drama', *Studia Celtica Japonica*, 9 (1997), 19–34.

¹⁵ Edited in B. Hill, 'The fifteenth-century prose legend of the cross before Christ', *MÆ*, 34 (1965), 203–22.

¹⁶ Edited in M. Taguchi, 'The legend of the Cross before Christ: another prose treatment in English and Anglo-Norman', *Poetica*, 45 (1996), 15–61.

¹⁷ Both the *Canticum de Creatione* and the *Life of Adam* are edited in *The Apocryphal Lives of Adam and Eve*, ed. Brian Murdoch and J. A. Tasioulas (Exeter, 2002), pp. 63–98 and pp. 35–62 respectively.

¹⁸ An origin from this area is suggested by the linguistic analysis undertaken in my D.Phil. thesis (University of Oxford).

¹⁹ I plan to provide a full description, textual, and linguistic analysis, as well as a complete edition of this manuscript elsewhere in a future publication. On this manuscript, see, amongst others, Kate Harris, 'John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*: the virtues of bad texts', in *Manuscripts and Readers in Fifteenth-Century England. The Literary Implications of Manuscript Study: Essays from the 1981 Conference at the University of York*, ed. Derek Pearsall (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 27–40; Kate Harris, 'Unnoticed extracts from Chaucer and Hoccleve: Huntington MS HM 144, Trinity College, Oxford MS D 29 and The Canterbury Tales', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, 20 (1998), 167–99; and *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050–1500*, Vol. VIII: *Chronicles and Other Historical Writing*, ed. Albert E. Hartung (New Haven, Conn., 1990), p. 2662. None of the previous publications discusses the inclusion of the Holy Cross legend in greater detail.

²⁰ *Cursor mundi*, ed. Richard Morris, EETS, OS 57, 59, 62, 66, 68, 99, 101 (1874–93).

²¹ Line numbers in brackets refer to the edition in this article (cf. pp. 65–70).

²² See on this greater detail Ernest George Mardon, 'The narrative unity of the *Cursor mundi*' (unpub. Ph.D. diss., University of Ottawa, 1967).

²³ Murdoch, 'Legends of the Holy Rood in Cornish drama', p. 32.

²⁴ This is discussed by Murdoch, *The Apocryphal Adam*, pp. 169–76.

²⁵ For a summary of the main plot elements encountered in *PPA*, as compared to other traditions of the legend, see Fallon, 'The Cross as tree', pp. 21–7.

²⁶ Meyer, 'Die Geschichte des Kreuzholzes', pp. 43f.

²⁷ Meyer, 'Die Geschichte des Kreuzholzes', pp. 37f.

²⁸ There are several editions of the Latin text. Because, as my analysis shows, the version in *T* heavily alters and edits the Latin text, it is difficult to say which of the extant Latin versions it is likely to be indebted to. This and all following quotations from the Latin *PPA* are based on Horstmann's edition ('*Nachträge zu den Legenden*', pp. 465–9).

²⁹ The number 140 also appears in the prose version in Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2125, as well as in the French version of the Holy Cross legend contained in Cambridge, University Library, MS Gg.1.1 (both edited by Taguchi, 'The legend of the Cross before Christ'). Numbers vary throughout the tradition, sometimes due to the exigencies of rhyme (cf. the Dutch *Boec van den houte*, in which Adam's abstinence lasts for 103 years: 'daerna en was Adaem met Yeuen nie / vleeschelijc in hondert jaren drie' (*Het 'Boec van den Houte'*, ed. Barbara Baert, *Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België*, LVII: 62 (Brussels, 1995), p. 84, lines 35f.). Capgrave's *Abbreuiacion of Cronicles* notes the difficulties of reconciling different chronicles' accounts of the time before Seth is born, and sets the period of Adam's abstinence at 100 years (*John Capgrave's Abbreuiacion of Cronicles*, ed. Peter J. Lucas, EETS, OS 285 (Oxford, 1983), p. 12, line 15).

³⁰ See the commentary in this article, pp. 70–6.

³¹ I have not yet been able to consult all extant manuscripts of the *PPA* tradition; however, at this point I can say with certainty that none of the 41 *PPA* manuscripts currently held in Cambridge, Oxford, London, or Munich, contains Latin marginalia which concur with *T*.

³² *The Ancient Cornish Drama*, ed. Edwin Norris, 2 vols (Oxford, 1859), I: line 869.

³³ *Arnold Immessen: Der Sündenfall*, ed. Friedrich Krage (Heidelberg, 1913), p. 133, line 1368b.

³⁴ *La Penitance Adam*, ed. Colard Mansion (Paris, 2016), p. 101. Vernacular headings appear throughout this text.

³⁵ Edited in *Het 'Boec van den Houde'*, ed. Baert.

³⁶ Since the use of information from *Mandeville's Travels* is highly selective, and since the compiler makes frequent changes to his source texts, it is difficult to tell for certain which version the compiler's exemplar contained. Collation between the different versions reveals that the compiler is most likely to have used a text of the Defective Version, and that it must have belonged to Seymour's subgroups 2–5 (*The Defective Version of Mandeville's Travels*, ed. M. C. Seymour, EETS, OS 319 (Oxford, 2002), pp. xvii–xxv).

³⁷ *The Defective Version*, ed. Seymour, p. 36, lines 17–19.

³⁸ *Ein deutsches Adambuch. Nach einer ungedruckten Handschrift der Hamburger Stadtbibliothek aus dem XV. Jahrhundert*, ed. Hans Vollmer (Hamburg, 1908). Vollmer's edition prints both the prose text of the 'Adam Book' (*Adambuch*), which is part of a *Historienbibel* (of Vollmer's class IIb), and the verse source from a number of manuscripts of the extended *Christherrechronik* which is nowadays associated with Heinrich von München (in older German scholarship long referred to as 'Schwellhandschriften'). This allows for a close comparison between verse and prose, and shows numerous instances of residual rhyme in the prose text. For further details, see Christoph Gerhardt's article 'Historienbibeln (deutsche)' in *Die Deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon*, 2nd edn, ed. Kurt Ruh (Berlin, 1977–2006), IV, 67–75; Murdoch, *The Apocryphal Adam*, pp. 169–76; and Miller, 'German and Dutch versions', pp. 347–76.

³⁹ *The Northern Passion*, ed. Frances Foster, EETS, OS 145 and 147 (London, 1913–16), II, 12. Thornton's own way of revising and augmenting his sources bears certain parallels to the techniques we can observe in *T*. For a more detailed analysis, see George R. Keiser, 'Robert Thornton: gentleman, reader and scribe', in *Robert Thornton and his Books: Essays on the Lincoln and London Thornton Manuscripts*, ed. Susanna Fein and Michael Johnston (York, 2014), pp. 67–108, and John J. Thompson, *Robert Thornton and the London Thornton Manuscript British Library MS Additional 31042* (Cambridge, 1987).

⁴⁰ London, British Library, Additional MS 31042 (*Ad*), fol. 42^{ra}, lines 21–6. Cf. the EETS edition *The Northern Passion*, ed. Foster, I, 151, lines 111–16.

⁴¹ John Ivor Carlson's study ('Scribal intentions in medieval romance: a case study of Robert Thornton', *Studies in Bibliography*, 58 (2007–8), 49–71) of Thornton's treatment of medieval romances suggests that scribal intervention to increase syntactic clarity is not uncommon in the Thornton manuscripts; however, Carlson does not observe any changes to rhyming words. Frances Foster believes that 'the long Cross story of [*Ad*] ... was not introduced by Thornton' but copied from another manuscript (*The Northern Passion*, II, 71), but this other manuscript has not yet been identified.

⁴² My transcription of this and the following passages from *Ad* is diplomatic. Abbreviations have been expanded and marked by italics.