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The Southern Version of Cursor Mundi, Vol. III

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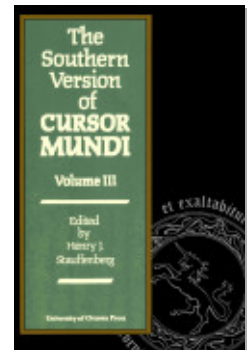
Published by University of Ottawa Press

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The Southern Version of Cursor Mundi, Vol. III.

University of Ottawa Press, 1985.

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS VOLUME

LIST OF MANUSCRIPT SIGLA

- H Arundel LVII, College of Arms, London
- T Trinity College, Cambridge, R.3.8
- L Laud Misc. 416, Bodleian Library, Oxford
- B Additional 36983, British Library, London
- C Cotton Vespasian A iii, British Library, London
- F Fairfax 14, Bodleian Library, Oxford
- G Göttingen University theol. 107^r
- E Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians
- Add Additional 31042, British Library, London

STRUCTURE OF THIS SECTION

In his edition of *CM*, Richard Morris established the following textual divisions for this section. With the exception of the parenthetical notation for ll.12713-12751, the wording employed for the following sub-sections is his.

12713-12751	(Introduction to the “sexe elde”)
12752-12915	Of John the Baptist and Christ’s Baptism
12916-13001	The Temptation
13002-13241	The Death of John the Baptist
13242-13265	The Beginning of Christ’s Ministry
13266-13358	Christ Chooses the Apostles
13359-14383	The Miracles and Sayings of Christ
14384-14775	The Obstinacy and Contrariousness of the Jews
14776-15384	The Jews Plot against Christ’s Life
15385-16016	The Betrayal and Last Hours of Christ
16017-16664	The Trial before Caiphas and Pilate
16665-17082	The Crucifixion and Burial

SOURCES

Both the generally derivative nature of *CM* and the pivotal theological significance of ll. 12713-17082, in particular, render it virtually impossible to complete an exhaustive survey of the poet's source-materials. In fact, few medieval writers, major or minor, failed to comment upon the events recounted in this section.

Despite the foregoing comments, several works may be cited with certainty regarding their influence upon this segment of the poem.

The Vulgate Bible

In her introduction to *OTSCM*, Dr. Horrall makes the following statement: "The *CM*-poet seems to use [the Vulgate] only occasionally, sometimes to correct his other sources."¹ This observation, however, does not apply to ll. 12713-17082. On the contrary, the author evinces considerable fidelity to his canonical New Testament materials. Moreover, it should be noted that whenever apocryphal incidents do occur, they are of a supplementary, illustrative nature, clearly intended to enhance the intrinsic value of the gospel narrative—not to supplant it.

Haenisch supplies a listing of the *Cursor*-poet's biblical sources.² Although reasonably accurate, this table is not wholly satisfactory. For instance, while he cites *Luc.* 3:23 as the source for the detail that Christ was baptized when "annorum tringenta," Haenisch fails to attribute the prophecy of Symeon (ll. 17051-4) to the same evangelist (2:23); instead, he includes these lines under the vague category "Reflections of the Poet." Unfortunately, many of his textual divisions reflect a conscious striving for what might be termed "architectonic convenience."

1. *OTSCM*, p. xxi, n. 62. A List of Abbreviations is included in the Explanatory Notes. Full bibliographical details are found

in the Bibliography at the end of this volume.
2. *CM*, pp. 35*-39*.

Herman's *Bible*

Herman de Valenciennes's *OF Bible* has long been acknowledged as a major source for both the Old and New Testament sections of *CM*.³ The relationship between the two works is especially evident, e.g., in such instances as their respective accounts of Christ's entry into Jerusalem (ll. 14937-15112) and their lengthy scriptural recapitulations (ll. 14398-14451).

The Old French *Cross Story*

Contained in MS BN fr. 763 (fols. 267-273), this 1783-line poem was initially recognized as a source for *CM* by A. S. Napier.⁴ Several sections furnish material for the Old Testament portion of the *Cursor*, but the OF work's influence upon the present New Testament text is principally reflected in the following episodes: l. 1569lff. (Judas and the "scalded cock"), l. 16543ff. (the Crucifixion), and l. 1686lff. (the "humatio" of the three crosses).

Vita Prothoplausti Ade

This work, more commonly known as the *Legende*, was also established as a source by A. S. Napier.⁵ Its contribution to *CM* 12713-17082 is chiefly evident on the basis of details not contained in the OF *Cross Story* in *Trad. anon.*, such as the "mira fragancia" associated with the cross-wood (16561-2).

3. This important text was edited in a series of Griefswald dissertations under the title *La Bible von Herman de Valenciennes* (Griefswald, 1914), but published in incomplete form. Karl BARTSCH's *Chrestomathie de l'ancien français*, 10th ed. (Leipzig, 1910), pp. 71-76, also furnishes an excerpt. For an extensive comparison, consult Lois BORLAND's *The Cursor Mundi and Herman's Bible*, Diss. Chicago, 1929, and her subsequent article "Herman's Bible and the *Cursor Mundi*," *Studies in Philology*, XXX (1933), 427-444. A more recent study is Philip BUEHLER's "The *Cursor Mundi* and *Herman's Bible*—Some Additional Parallels," *Studies in Philology*,

LXI (1964), 485-499. A later edition of the poem, from one manuscript, is *Li Romanz de Dieu et de sa Mère*, ed. Ina SPIELE, Publications Romanes de l'Université de Leyden, XXI (Leyden, 1975).

4. *The History of the Holy Rood Tree* (London, 1884), EETS OS 103, pp. xxiiiif. Napier published several parallel extracts to demonstrate the relation between the poems.

5. *Ibid.* The version quoted in the present edition is that of Moshe LAZAR, "La Légende de 'l'Arbre de Paradis' ou 'bois de la croix,'" *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, LXXVI (1960), 34-63.

Historia Scholastica Evangelica

Petrus Comestor's monumental work⁶ was originally accorded source-status by Haenisch.⁷ Apart from supplying a broadly authoritative exegetical structure for many medieval religious texts, the *Historia* also cautiously transmitted such non-canonical notions as John the Evangelist's identification with the bridegroom at Cana (II.13424-30; 13438-9). In some cases, Comestor may have inspired the southern redactor of *CM* to depart from the original northern reading in such significant details as the substitution of palm for pine in the composition of the rood-arbor (I.16565). Few scholars, however, would now agree with W. H. Schofield's opinion that "Comestor was the chief source of the *Cursor Mundi*."⁸

Le Chateau d'Amour

The poet himself mentions "sent Robert bok"⁹ at line 9516, thereby attributing a canonically unsubstantiated status to the venerable Grosseteste.¹⁰ Haenisch discusses this source at length with reference to II.9514-11594.¹¹ Regarding *CM* 12713-17082, the influence of the *Chateau d'Amour* is most apparent from I.16949 onward.¹²

Legenda Aurea

This well-known synaxarial compilation¹³ is discussed by Haenisch, but only as a source supplementing Isidore's *De Vita et Morte Sanctorum*.¹⁴ More specifically, he limits the *Golden Legend's* influence to the apostolic narrative inaugurated at l. 20849. Voragine's work,

6. *PL* CXCVIII, 1537ff.

7. *CM*, pp. 3*-13*.

8. *English Literature to Chaucer*, p. 76.

9. Two Anglo-Norman versions have been utilized in preparing the present text: *Robert Grosseteste's Chateau d'Amour*, ed. M. COOKE, Publications of the Caxton Society XV (1852), rpt. 1967, and *Le Chateau d'Amour de Robert Grosseteste*, ed. J. MURRAY (Paris, 1918).

10. Despite four separate—and unsuccessful—attempts at securing his canonization in 1280, 1286, 1288, and 1307, "Grosstest of Lyncolne" was popularly accorded sainthood. Cf., e.g., Robert of BRUNNE's *Handlyng Synne* I,

II.4739ff., ed. F. J. FURNIVALL, *EETS* 119 (London, 1901).

11. *CM*, pp. 23*-31*.

12. This relationship has been established by Kari SAJAVAARA in "The Use of Robert Grosseteste's *Chateau d'Amour* as a Source for the *Cursor Mundi*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, LXVIII (1967), 184-193. For an extremely authoritative discussion of related versions, see the same author's *Middle English Translations of Robert Grosseteste's Chateau d'Amour* (Helsinki, 1967).

13. The text cited is that of Th. GRAESSE (Lipsiae, 1850).

14. *CM*, pp. 47-56.

nevertheless, has been used elsewhere by the *Cursor*-poet (e.g., in his explanation of Mary's genealogy).¹⁵ Although frequently cited in the accompanying notes, the principal value of the *Legenda* in terms of the present edition is to demonstrate the currency enjoyed by numerous elements of apocryphal lore during the Middle Ages.

EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES

The editorial principles for this volume are the same as those outlined in Volume I, pp. 25-27.

In addition to the text of *Cursor Mundi* from MS H and variants from MSS TLB, this volume also contains, as Appendix B, a transcription of the hitherto unpublished Thornton fragment of *Cursor Mundi* (MS Add). Furthermore, MS B does not copy *CM*, ll.14916-17288, but instead substitutes 1140 lines from the *Meditations on the Supper of Our Lord*. A transcription of these lines from MS B appears here as Appendix C.

A NOTE ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE PASSION NARRATIVE

Lines 14933-17082 inclusive depart in several significant ways from the bi-columnar format employed in other sections. The account of the Passion is, for example, inaugurated by a large, lavishly decorated capital "O" balancing six short lines. Its elaborate ornamentation divides the two columns of text vertically, and continues horizontally across the entire top of the folio, giving the effect of a floriated "T".

From line 14967 through folio 100v (17082), the columnar transcription of the text is abandoned in favour of long lines divided internally by medial punctuation. To facilitate the preparation of this volume, as well as to correspond to the numbering of the four Morris texts, the hemistichs have been reproduced as individual units.

The scribe's original system of punctuation (incorporating the symbols //, †, and ·) has been retained in conformity with the MS.

15. L1.12733-51.



College of Arms MS Arundel LVII, folio 87v
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