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Andreas's Blooming Blood

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cruor in florem mutabitur

— Ovid, *Metamorphoses* X.728

A pivotal scene in the Old English *Andreas* comes at the end of the three-day period during which St Andrew is brutally tortured by Mermedonian cannibals, who scourge him, drag him through the streets, and draw a seemingly endless supply of blood from his body. Throughout the ordeal Andrew remains a model of resolute piety, but on the third and final day his courage begins to wane. Mindful of Christ's words on the Cross, he implores God to deliver him from his suffering. God replies by assuring Andrew that He will protect him from further torment and that in spite of present afflictions, the righteous will triumph over evil at the end of time. Then as a sign that Andrew's suffering has not gone unheeded, God directs him to turn and look at the trail of blood that his enemies have spilled on the ground:

“Geseoh nu seolfes swæðe, swa þin swat aget

þurh bangebrec blodige stige,

lic<es> lælan; no þe laðes ma

þurh daroða gedrep gedon motan,

þa þe heardra mæst hearma gefremedan.”

Pa on last beseah leoflic cempa

æfter wordcwidum wuldorcyninges;

geseh he geblowene bearwas standan

blædum gehrodene, swa he ær his blod aget. (lines 1441–49)¹

“Now behold your own path, where through the breaking of your bones and the bruising of your body, your blood has shed a gory trail. They will not be allowed to do you any more harm by the blows of their spears, those who have performed the most severe injuries to you.” Then after the King of Glory’s speech, the beloved soldier looked at the path. He saw flowering groves standing adorned with blossoms where he had earlier shed his blood.

This miracle marks a decisive turning point in the narrative. From the moment in the story when the devil appears and incites the Mermedonians to rise against him, Andrew’s enemies encounter little resistance in their campaign to overpower him. Even though Christ has repeatedly assured him that he has nothing to fear, Andrew’s suffering gets worse and worse, and he seems incapable of defending himself. Once he witnesses the eruption of blooming trees from the trail of his blood, however, he quickly recovers his strength and determination and regains the miraculous powers that he displays earlier in the poem. After praising God for coming to his rescue, he returns to prison, where God visits him and heals his wounds; then as sound of body as ever before, he unleashes the flood that subdues his captors and leads to their conversion.

One of the curiosities of this passage is that while the version of the apocryphal *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* which the poet must have based his poem on is apparently lost and we don’t know exactly what his source looked like, none of the surviving recensions of this apocryphon in Greek, Latin, Syriac, or Old English even mentions Andrew’s blood in its account of this miracle.² In the *Recensio Casanatensis*, the Latin version that is universally agreed to be closest to the poet’s presumed source, when God directs Andrew to look behind him, he sees trees spring up not from his blood but from his fallen flesh and hair:

¹ *Andreas and the Fates of the Apostles*, ed. Kenneth R. Brooks (Oxford, 1961), pp. 46–47. Translations from Old English, Latin, and Greek are mine unless otherwise indicated. My deepest thanks to Stephen Harris and Charles D. Wright for commenting on a draft of this essay, and to Karen Winstead for a stimulating correspondence on this topic, to which I am much indebted.

² On the poem’s mysterious lost source, see Claes Schaar, *Critical Studies in the Cynewulf Group*, Lund Studies in English 17 (Lund, 1949), pp. 12–24; Ellen B. Baumler, “Andrew in the City of the Cannibals: A Comparative Study of the Latin, Greek, and Old English Texts” (unpubl. PhD dissertation, Univ. of Kansas, 1985); and Frederick M. Biggs, ed., *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: The Apocrypha*, Instrumenta Anglistica Mediaevalia 1 (Kalamazoo, 2007), pp. 40–41 (with further references). Most of the extant versions of the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* are listed by Friedrich Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*, 11 vols. (Madrid, 1950–80) [hereafter *RBMA*] I and VIII, no. 201; *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*, ed. François Halkin, Subsidia Hagiographica 8a, 47, 65 (Brussels, 1951, 1969, 1984) [hereafter *BHG*]; *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis*, ed. Paul Peeters, Subsidia Hagiographica 10 (Brussels, 1910) [hereafter *BHO*]; and Maurice Geerard, *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti* (Turnhout, 1992), pp. 141–43 (no. 236).

“ ‘Amen dico tibi andreas, potes(t) celum et terra transire, quam verbum meum sit vacuum. Nunc autem respice retrorsum, et vide caro tua, et capilli tui quid fiunt.’ Cum hoc respiceret beatus andreas, apparuerunt caro et capilli sui sicut arbores florentes et fructum afferentes”³ (“ ‘Truly I say to you, Andrew, heaven and earth will pass away before my word is void. Now look back and see what has become of your flesh and hair.’ When the blessed Andrew looked back, his flesh and hair appeared to be trees, flowering and bearing fruit.”). The Greek versions likewise describe fruit-bearing trees emerging not from Andrew’s blood but from his flesh and hair:

Τότε ἦλθεν αὐτῷ φωνὴ ἑβραϊστὶ λέγουσα · ἡμέτερε Ἀνδρέα, ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσεται, οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρέλθωσιν. πρόσσχεσ οὖν καὶ θέασαι ὄπισθέν σου τὰς πεσούσας σου σάρκας καὶ τρίχας τί γέγονασιν. Καὶ στραφεὶς ὁ Ἀνδρέας εἶδεν μεγάλα δένδρα φυέντα καρποφόρα.⁴

Then a voice said to him, speaking in Hebrew: “Our Andrew, heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. Therefore look back and see what has become of your flesh and hair that have fallen behind you.” And turning around, Andrew saw great fruit trees springing forth bearing fruit.

The Syriac version, which appears to depend on a lost Greek text, similarly makes no mention of blood, though it also omits the detail of Andrew’s hair: “And when he had said these things, a voice came to him in Hebrew, saying: ‘Andrew, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. And do thou now turn and see thy flesh, which has been plucked from thee, what has become of it.’ And he looked and saw large trees, which had grown up and bore fruit.”⁵ Even the two Old English prose translations describe fruit-bearing trees growing out of Andrew’s flesh and hair:

³ *Die lateinischen Bearbeitungen der Acta Andreae et Matthiae apud Anthropophagos*, ed. Franz Blatt, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 12 (Giessen and Copenhagen, 1930), p. 87, lines 1–5.

⁴ *The Acts of Andrew and the Acts of Andrew and Matthias in the City of the Cannibals*, ed. Dennis Ronald MacDonald, Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations 33, Christian Apocrypha 1 (Atlanta, 1990), p. 148. MacDonald’s edition here agrees substantially with Maximilian Bonnet and Richard Adalbert Lipsius, eds., *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1891–1903) II.1, 108, lines 7–12; reprinted by Blatt, *Die lateinischen Bearbeitungen*, p. 86, lines 3–7.

⁵ *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, Edited from Syrian Manuscripts in the British Museum and Other Libraries*, ed. and trans. William Wright, 2 vols. (London, 1871) II, 111; see *BHO* 733.

Dus gebiddende þam halgan Andrea, Drigh(e)nes stefn wæs geworden on Ebreisc cwepende: “Min Andreas, heofon and eorðe mæg gewitan, min word næfre ne gewitaþ. Beheald æfter þe and geseoh þinne lichaman and loccas þines heafdes, hwæt hie syndon gewordenene.”

Se haliga Andreas þa lociende, he geseah geblowen treow wæstm berende and he cwæþ: “Nu ic wat, Drihten, for þon þæt þu ne forlete me.”⁶

After St Andrew had prayed in this fashion, the Lord’s voice appeared speaking in Hebrew, saying: “My Andrew, heaven and earth may pass away; my word will never pass away. Look behind you and see what has become of your flesh and the hairs of your head.” When St Andrew then looked, he saw blooming fruit-bearing trees and he said, “Now I know, Lord, that you have not abandoned me.”

In fact, the only extant version of the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* that describes trees growing out of Andrew’s blood is an abridged Armenian version (*BHO* 740; *RBMA* 201,7) which relates (in Louis Leloir’s translation) that “ils [the Mermedonians] le saisirent, le lièrent de corde aux pieds et <le> traînèrent par les rues et par les places de la cité trois jours, à tel point que tous ses os furent brisés, et que beaucoup de sang coula de son corps. Mais André cria vers le Seigneur, et aussitôt il vit des arbres poussant, pleins de fruits, à l’endroit où son saint sang avait coulé.”⁷ The rest of the tradition is completely consistent in having blooming trees emerge from Andrew’s flesh and hair, and the collective evidence from all those versions of the apocryphon seems to suggest that the image of the trees arising from Andrew’s blood in *Andreas* is a novel invention of the poet.⁸

⁶ *Bright’s Old English Grammar & Reader*, ed. Frederic G. Cassidy and Richard N. Ringler, 3rd ed. (New York, 1971), p. 216, lines 251–56. Compare the nearly identical Old English translation in Blickling Homily XIX (B3.3.1.2, LS 1.2), ed. R. Morris, *The Blickling Homilies*, EETS o.s. 58, 63, 73 (1874–80; repr. in one volume, London, 1967), p. 245, lines 3–9. On the relationship between the two Old English prose translations, see Cassidy and Ringler, *Bright’s Old English Grammar*, p. 205.

⁷ *Écrits apocryphes sur les apôtres: traduction de l’édition arménienne de Venise. I. Pierre, Paul, André, Jacques, Jean*, trans. Louis Leloir, Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum 3 (Turnhout, 1986), p. 264 (§§ 25–28). The Armenian text is ed. Chérubin Tcherakian, *Ankanon girkh arakhelakankh* (Venice, 1904). M. R. James’s paraphrase of the relevant passage reads: “And a voice said in Hebrew: My words shall not pass away: look behind thee. And he saw great fruit-bearing trees growing up where his flesh and blood had fallen” (*The Apocryphal New Testament* [Oxford, 1924], p. 457). The scene is omitted entirely in the longer Armenian version (*BHO* 741; see *Écrits apocryphes*, trans. Leloir, pp. 205–27).

⁸ For a comparative analysis of the presentations of this scene in the Latin, Greek, and Ethiopic versions of the apocryphon, see Baumler, “Andrew in the City of the Cannibals,” Table 1: “Sequence of Events According to E [the Ethiopic text] and P [the Greek],” Event 74: “The Lord turns his fallen flesh and hair into fruit trees”; Baumler’s discussion of this event appears on p. 46. Of the surviving Ethiopic versions, the longest (*BHO* 734), trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Contendings of the Apostles, Being the*

We will probably never know for sure whether the poet dreamed up this detail on his own, but if he did (and I'm going to adopt this as a working assumption in the following discussion), then it would be useful to know why he made the change and where he got the idea for it. I'll concede at the outset that the poet's seemingly innovative assertion that the trees grew out of Andrew's blood might well be viewed as not all that innovative or imaginative, since it should be obvious that even if other versions of the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* neglect to mention it, there was plenty of Andrew's blood flowing through the streets of Mermedonia. Up to this point in the story, Andrew has complained repeatedly that after being dragged through the city and across the countryside, he has left a prodigious trail of blood.⁹ In the *Recensio Casanatensis*, when Andrew prays to Christ on the third day of his torture, he cries that his flesh has been stripped and his blood has been scattered through the squares,¹⁰ and the Greek adds that his blood "flowed on the ground like water."¹¹ Statements to this effect appear in most versions of the apocryphon, and the *Andreas*-poet, with his notorious penchant for hyperbole and melodrama, has intensified these descriptions to produce an even greater impression of how much blood Andrew has lost.

Histories of the Lives and Martyrdoms and Deaths of the Twelve Apostles and Evangelists (Oxford, 1935), pp. 307–35, has a fruit-bearing tree emerge from Andrew's fallen hair and members (at p. 330), while the abridged version (*BHO* 737), trans. Budge, *The Contendings of the Apostles*, pp. 223–40, compresses this scene dramatically (at p. 236) and omits the blooming blood miracle. The scene is absent entirely from the Ethiopic version (*RBMA* 201,3–4), trans. Solomon Caesar Malan, *The Conflicts of the Holy Apostles: An Apocryphal Book of the Early Eastern Church, Translated from an Ethiopic MS.* (London, 1871), pp. 147–63. It is likewise omitted in the Arabic version (*BHO* 736), ed. Agnes Smith Lewis, *Acta Mythologica Apostolorum*, *Horae Semiticae* 3 (London, 1904), pp. 109–18 (at p. 116), translated by Lewis, *The Mythological Acts of the Apostles*, *Horae Semiticae* 4 (London, 1904), pp. 126–36 (at pp. 133–34). It is absent as well in the Croatian version (*RBMA* 201,14), ed. Biserka Grabar, "Apokrifna djela Apostolska u hrvatskoglagoljskoj literaturi," *Radovi Staroslavenskog Instituta* 6 (1967), 109–208 (at p. 199). The Coptic version (*BHO* 735; *RBMA* 201,8–9), ed. and trans. Oscar von Lemm, *Koptische apokryphe Apostelacten*, 2 vols., *Mélanges asiatiques* 10 (St Petersburg, 1890) I, 148–66 [= *Bulletin de l'Académie des Sciences de Saint-Petersbourg* 33, Nouv. sér. 1 (1890), 558–77], is fragmentary and preserves nothing of this episode. The two Arabic versions (*BHO* 738 and 739) discussed by Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, 5 vols., *Studi e testi* 118, 133, 146–47, 172 (Vatican City, 1944–53) I, 265, and Aurelio de Santos Otero, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der altslavischen Apokryphen*, 2 vols., *Patristische Texte und Studien* 20, 23 (Berlin, 1978–81) I, 69–83, are too radically different to be considered close to the Latin version that underlies *Andreas*. I have not seen the Ukrainian version (*RBMA* 201,13), ed. Ivan Franko, *Apocryfy i legendy z ukräins'kykh rukopysiv*, 5 vols. (L'vov, 1896–1910) III (1902), 126–44.

⁹ This feature of the Andrew legend may be indebted to a broader hagiographic tradition since it isn't unusual for a saint to be dragged through a city until the ground is drenched with his blood. The Ethiopic *Acts of St Mark*, a fourth- or fifth-century translation of an originally Greek apocryphon (*RBMA* 224), tells that the Egyptians attempted to stop Mark from performing miracles in Alexandria by seizing him, putting a rope around his neck, and dragging him through the city until "his flesh was falling on the ground and the stones were soaked with his blood": Getatchew Haile, "A New Ethiopic Version of the Acts of St Mark (*EMML* 1763, ff. 224r–227r)," *Analecta Bollandiana* 99 (1981), 117–34, at 133. See also the discussion of the Greek *Martyrdom of Philip* below.

¹⁰ *Die lateinischen Bearbeitungen*, ed. Blatt, p. 85, lines 17–18 (§ 28).

¹¹ *The Acts of Andrew*, ed. and trans. MacDonald, pp. 145–47 (§ 28).

At line 1238 he writes, “The body of the saint was sodden with wounds, soaked in blood. The frame of his bones was broken. Blood welled out in pulses of hot gore.” In a later passage, Andrew’s “blood surged in waves from out of his frame. He was smothered in rivers of hot blood” (lines 1275–77). The poet’s revision of this miracle to make the trees arise from Andrew’s blood is thus consistent with his exaggerated emphasis on blood elsewhere in the poem, and this recrafted image might simply be attributed to the poet’s enthusiasm for blood and gore.

One can also argue that the poet describes the trees arising from the trail of Andrew’s blood in order to recall a moment earlier in the poem where Christ reminds Andrew that while on the Cross, His side had been pierced and His blood had flowed freely on the ground (lines 964b–69a). This point has been made by Frederick Biggs, who has argued that in the blooming tree episode the poet introduces the blood image to emphasize the parallels between Andrew’s suffering and Christ’s passion, and to develop a theme found frequently in patristic and medieval literature in which Christ’s blood is interpreted as the seed from which the saints and martyrs grew.¹² The poet, in other words, has rewritten the miracle to capitalize on the thematic and symbolic significance of Andrew’s blood.

I think there is merit to these arguments, but I also think there is another reason why the poet has revised this scene, and that is because he recognized the potential to align it with a powerful concept of symbolic renewal that is well attested in a number of ancient and medieval literary texts, in each case centering on the image of a tree or flower or some other kind of plant that grows from the blood of a slain or wounded hero. Examples are worth considering from two general categories: those from mythological and folkloric traditions, and those from hagiographic literature. I’ll briefly discuss them in that order before considering how they might help us understand the blooming blood passage in *Andreas*.

Mythological and Folkloric Parallels

The oldest known story about a hero whose spilled blood gives rise to a blooming tree is an ancient Egyptian tale known as “The Two Brothers.”¹³ In the central episode of this story, which survives in a single papyrus manuscript from the thirteenth century B.C.E. and has sometimes been referred to as the

¹² Frederick M. Biggs, “The Passion of Andreas: *Andreas* 1398–1491,” *Studies in Philology* 85 (1988), 413–27. On the saints as branches that arose from the blood of Abel, see Charles D. Wright, “The Blood of Abel and the Branches of Sin: *Genesis A*, *Maxims I* and Aldhelm’s *Carmen de virginitate*,” *Anglo-Saxon England* 25 (1996), 7–19, at 10–11 n. 21.

¹³ The following summary is based on the translations by Ch. E. Moldenke, “The Oldest Fairy Tale. Translated from the Papyrus D’Orbiney, with Notes,” *Transactions of the Meriden Scientific Association* 7 (1895), 32–81 (trans. at pp. 62–71); Gaston Maspéro, *Les contes populaires de l’Égypte ancienne*, 4th ed. (Paris, 1911), pp. 3–21 [translated into English as *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt*, trans. A. S. Johns, rev. by Maspéro (New York, 1967)]; and William Kelly Simpson, *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, and Poetry*, new ed. (New Haven and London, 1972), pp. 92–107.

world's oldest fairy tale,¹⁴ the Pharaoh of Egypt becomes enamored with the wife of a youth named Bata and asks her to become his court favorite. Bata's wife complies and becomes so receptive to Pharaoh's advances that when asked about her husband, she reveals that the only way to destroy him is to cut down the acacia tree on whose flowers Bata's heart rests. When the acacia is cut down, Bata's heart falls to the ground and he dies. But his elder brother Anubis, who has been prepared for such an event, travels to the valley of the acacia, where after three years of searching, he discovers Bata's heart in the form of a dried seed. Anubis places the seed in a cup of water and pours it into his dead brother's mouth, and at once Bata returns to life. Bata then seeks revenge against his wife by transforming himself into a bull that looks in every respect like the sacred bull Apis, and he has Anubis ride him to Pharaoh's court, where Pharaoh enthusiastically receives the bull and rewards Anubis with silver and gold. Several days later the bull enters Pharaoh's harem and reveals his identity to his wife, who in a fit of horror contrives to have the bull killed. That evening, when Pharaoh is particularly attentive to her at dinner, she exacts a rash promise from him that she can have whatever she wishes. To Pharaoh's chagrin, she asks for the bull's liver. When the bull is slaughtered amid a sumptuous banquet in Pharaoh's temple, two drops of blood fall from the bull's neck, one on either side of the temple steps, and from these drops grow two large persea trees which bear the soul of Bata. Eventually, after a subsequent death and incarnation, Bata achieves his revenge by acceding to Pharaoh's throne and publicly condemning his wife. The plot thus turns on the dual themes of betrayal and revenge, but the recurrent pattern of Bata's death, resurrection, and transformation links the story to a large cycle of Mediterranean and Near Eastern renewal myths that have traditionally been seen as primitive interpretations of seasonal and agricultural change.¹⁵ Because persea

¹⁴ E.g., Moldenke, "The Oldest Fairy Tale"; W. Mannhardt, "Das älteste Märchen. Satu und Anepu oder die beiden Brüder," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde* 4 (1859), 232–59; Vladimir Stasow, "Drewnęsaja powest w miré 'Roman dwuch bratjew'" ["The Oldest Story in the World, 'The Tale of the Two Brothers'"], *Westnik Jewropi* 5 (1868), 702–32; and Susan Tower Hollis, *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers": The Oldest Fairy Tale in the World* (Norman, OK, 1990). Hollis's 2nd edition of this book, retitled *The Ancient Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers": A Mythological, Religious, Literary, and Historico-political Study* (Oakville, CT, 2008), is the fullest study of the tale.

¹⁵ The mythological background of the story was first elaborated by François Lenormant, *Les premières civilisations: études d'histoire et d'archéologie*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1874) I, 375–401. The tale is catalogued by Antti Aarne, *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography*, trans. and enlarged by Stith Thompson, FF Communications 184 (Helsinki, 1961), p. 112 (no. 318, "The Faithless Wife"). For commentary on the story and its relation to other Indo-European tales, see Maspéro, *Les contes populaires de l'Égypte ancienne*, pp. xii–xx, 1–3; Edwin Sidney Hartland, *The Legend of Perseus: A Study of Tradition in Story, Custom and Belief*, 3 vols. (London, 1894–96) I, 182–228; Pierre Saintyves [Émile Nourry], *Les vierges mères et les naissances miraculeuses* (Paris, 1908), pp. 64–66, 69–71; C. W. Von Sydow, "Den fornegyptiska sagan om de två bröderna. Ett utkast till sess historia och utveckling," *Vetenskaps-societeten i Lund Årsbok* (1930), 53–89; Waldemar Liungman, *Sagan om Bata och Anubis och den orientalisk-europeiska undersagans ursprung* (Djursholm, 1946); Stith Thompson, *The Folktale* (New York, 1946), pp. 275–76; V. Vikentiev, "Le conte égyptien des deux frères et quelques histoires

trees — the kind of trees that emerge from Bata’s blood — were sacred to the Egyptian god Osiris and have occasionally been found flanking the entrances to his temples,¹⁶ and because the sacred bull Apis was also dedicated to Osiris, some scholars read “The Two Brothers” as a story that “arose on the periphery of Osiris worship.”¹⁷ The oldest records of the Osiris myth consistently present him within a drama of death and renewal, in some cases claiming that he died every year at harvest time, then rose again in the spring along with the crops.¹⁸ In Egyptian art and funerary ritual, Osiris is sometimes represented as corn or barley, particularly through the fashioning of “corn mummies,” effigies of the god made of earth and containing seeds that eventually sprouted to indicate Osiris’s resurrection.¹⁹ Much of the Osiris myth is obscured by its antiquity, but parallels between Osiris and other vegetative deities in neighboring mythologies call attention to similar stories within a broad European mythological cycle that are strongly reminiscent of the blooming blood episode in *Andreas*.

A similar tale of renewal expressed symbolically by a plant that arises from spilled blood appears in the Greek myth of Agdestis and Attis as related by the fourth-century Christian apologist Arnobius. In Book 5 of his *Adversus nationes*, Arnobius confronts the pagan belief in the Great Mother of the Gods by critiquing the story of the hermaphroditic beast Agdestis, who was begotten of the incestuous union of Jupiter and the Great Earth Mother. Agdestis, he explains, was a creature of insatiable lust and fury whose destructive powers so troubled the gods that they devised a plot to tame him. Their plan was to put Agdestis to sleep by pouring a soporific wine into the stream from which he habitually drank, then bind him with a noose to suppress his ferocity:

apparentées: La Fille-Citron — La Fille du Marchand — Gilgamesh — Combabus — Localisation du domaine de Bata à Afka — Yamouneh — Les Cèdres,” *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Fouad I University, Cairo*, 11.2 (December 1949), 67–111; idem, “Une nouvelle version de l’ancien conte égyptien des ‘Deux Frères’: ‘Le Fils Chéri,’ conte grec: ‘Zoulvisia,’ conte arménien,” *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Fouad I University, Cairo*, 14.2 (December 1952), 97–107; and Hedwig von Roques-von Beit, *Symbolik des Märchens: Versuch einer Deutung*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Bern, 1960) II, 387–418.

¹⁶ On the connection between Osiris and persea trees, see Maspéro, *Popular Stories*, p. 18 n. 1; and E. A. Wallis Budge, *Osiris: The Egyptian Religion of Resurrection*, 2 vols. (London, 1911) I, 19, 73.

¹⁷ R. T. Rundle Clark, *Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt* (London, 1959), p. 114.

¹⁸ On this aspect of the Osiris myth, see Budge, *Osiris* I, 80 and *passim*; and Sir James George Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion*, 2 vols., Part IV of *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 3rd ed. (New York, 1935) II, 96–114.

¹⁹ Alexander Scharff, “Frühe Vorstufen zum ‘Kornosiris,’ ” *Forschungen und Fortschritte* 21–23 (Berlin, 1947), 38–39; Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris* II, 90–91; and John Gwyn Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris and His Cult*, *Studies in the History of Religions* 40 (Leiden, 1980), pp. 163–72. Osiris’s association with vegetation also extended to trees, as reflected in a spell from the Pyramid Texts which addresses him thus: “The am-tree serves thee, the nebes-tree bows its head to thee” (cited by Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris*, p. 162). Other examples are noted by James Henry Breasted, *The Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (New York, 1912), p. 22.

Necessitatis in tempore haustum accurrit Agdestis, immoderatus potionem hiantibus uenis rapit: fit ut insolita re uictus soporem in altissimum deprimatur. Adest ad insidias Liber, ex setis scientissime complicatis inum plantae inicit laqueum, parte altera proles cum ipsis genitalibus occupat. Exhalata ille uir meri corripit se impetu et adducente nexu planta suis ipse se uiribus eo quo uir erat priuat sexu. Cum discidio partium sanguis fluit inmensus, rapiuntur et combibuntur haec terra, malum repente cum pomis ex his punicum nascitur.²⁰

When he has the need to drink, Agdestis runs there (to the stream) and gulps down a draught too greedily into his gaping veins. It thus happens that, overcome by the strange sensation, he sinks into the deepest sleep. Nearby (the god) Liber lurks in ambush and casts over his foot the end of a noose that is cunningly woven with hairs, while with another part he snares him by the genitals. Once he has breathed off the power of the wine, he rouses himself violently, and pulling against the knots, he deprives himself by his own strength of that which made him a man. With the tearing asunder of these parts, there pours an immense flow of blood that is snatched up and swallowed by the earth, and from this is suddenly born a pomegranate tree laden with fruit.

At this point in the story, Nana, daughter of the river Sangarius, discovers the tree and is so enamored with the beauty of its fruit that she plucks a pomegranate and clutches it to her breast. In so doing she becomes impregnated by Agdestis and eventually gives birth to the boy Attis, whose own death years later reenacts Agdestis's self-mutilation. When Attis reaches maturity, King Midas offers his daughter in marriage to Attis and arranges for a magnificent wedding. But Agdestis, enraged at having his son torn from him, bursts into the wedding and terrorizes the guests. The consequences of his attack are as follows:

Rapit Attis fistulam, quam instigator ipse gestitabat insaniae, furiarum et ipse iam plenus, perbacchatus iactatus proicit se tandem et sub pini arbore genitalia sibi desecat dicens 'tibi Agdesti haec habe, propter quae motus tantos furialium discriminum concitasti.' Euolat cum profluio sanguinis uita, sed abscisa quae fuerant Magna legit et Mater deum, inicit his terram, ueste prius tecta erant atque inuoluta defuncti. Fluore de sanguinis uiola flos nascitur et redimitur ex hac arbos: inde natum et ortum est nunc etiam sacras uelariet et coronariet pinos. Virgo sponsa quae fuerat, quam Valerius pontifex iam nomine fuisse conscribit, exanimati pectus lanis mollioribus uelat, dat lacrimas cum Agdesti interficitque se ipsam: purpurantes in uiolas cruor

²⁰ *Arnobius aduersus nationes libri vii* V.6, ed. August Reifferscheid, CSEL 4 (Vienna, 1875), p. 178, lines 4–12.

uertitur interemptae. Mater suffodit et Iam deum, unde amygdalus nascitur amaritudinem significans funeris. Tunc arborem pinum, sub qua Attis nomine spoliauerat se uiri, in antrum suum defert et sociatis planctibus cum Agdesti tundit et sauciat pectus pausatæ circum arboris robur.²¹

Attis seizes the flute which the one who goaded them to frenzy was carrying, and being himself full of fury and storming about in a rage, he at last throws himself down beneath a pine tree and cuts off his own genitals, exclaiming: “Take these, Agdestis, for which you have incited such outbursts of mad chaos.” With the stream of blood, his life ebbs away, but the Mother of the Gods gathers the parts that had been cut off and throws earth on them, having first covered them, and wraps them in the garment of the dead. From the profusion of blood a flower is born, a violet, and entwines itself about the trees — whence the birth and origin of the custom that even now the sacred pines are veiled and garlanded. The maiden who had been his bride, whom the pontifex Valerius writes was named Ia, covers the breast of the lifeless one with soft wool, sheds tears with Agdestis, and kills herself. As she dies, her blood is transformed into purple violets. The Mother of the Gods digs under Ia, and from beneath her an almond tree is born, signifying the bitterness of burial. She then carries away the pine tree under which Attis robbed himself of his manhood and takes it to her cave, and joining in lamentations with Agdestis, she beats and wounds her breast about the trunk of the motionless tree.

As told by Arnobius, the myth of Agdestis and Attis involves three individuals who endure great suffering, mutilate themselves, and shed blood upon the ground, from which a tree or flower grows, signaling a transformation and renewal of vital energy. The fertile qualities of this energy are particularly apparent in the story of Agdestis, whose reproductive powers pass from the blood of his severed genitals into the fruit-laden pomegranate tree and thence into the fruit that impregnates Nana.²² The wounding of Agdestis, whose blood yields a fruit-bearing tree, is perhaps closest in detail to the Andrew legend, but it was the death of Attis, whose blood gave birth to violets, that was central to the Greek myth, particularly as it was elaborated in Phrygia and later in Rome. Like Osiris in Egyptian mythology, Attis was a fertility

²¹ *Arnobius adversus nationes* V.7, ed. Reifferscheid, p. 179 line 16 – p. 180 line 8. In the abbreviated version of this legend recorded by the second-century Greek geographer and travel writer Pausanias, the tree that grows out of Agdestis’s blood is an almond tree (ἀμυγδαλέα): *Pausanias, Description of Greece* VII.xvii.11, ed. and trans. W. H. S. Jones, Loeb Classical Library 272 (Cambridge, MA, 1933), pp. 268–69.

²² On Agdestis in Greek and Roman mythology, see W. H. Roscher, “Agdestis,” *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, ed. Roscher, 7 vols. in 10 (Hildesheim, 1965) I.1, cols. 100–1.

figure believed to have suffered a tragic death marked by the proliferation of flowers on the blood-soaked ground, and his death and resurrection, according to Diodorus Siculus and others, were celebrated each year in spring rituals through at least the fifth century A.D.²³ These myths of vegetative renewal were in such vogue among the Greeks that they eventually became the target of satire. Clement of Alexandria, in his survey of popular beliefs among the Greeks concerning the births and deaths of heathen gods, pokes fun at the legends that pomegranates sprang from the blood of Dionysus and that wild celery or parsley grew from the blood of the slain brother of the Corybantes.²⁴

A comparable sequence of events is reflected in Syrian rituals commemorating the death and resurrection of the youthful demi-god Adonis, whom Hippolytus of Rome and the historian Socrates both identify with Attis,²⁵ and whose story is essentially the same.²⁶ Adonis was the lover of Venus and was tragically killed by a wild boar on Mount Lebanon. To assuage Venus's grief, Zeus determined that Adonis would spend a part of each year in the underworld with Persephone and another part of the year above ground with Venus. Adonis consequently became recognized as a vegetative deity whose death each winter and resurrection each spring mirrored the cycle of the seasons. Bion, Lucian, and Ovid all tell how every spring as the rain washed the red earth down the mountains into the rivers and the sea, the crimson stain was believed to be the blood of Adonis, whose tragic death on Mount Lebanon had produced a torrent of blood out of which roses and scarlet anemones grew, and it was for this reason that the flowers returned to the mountainside each year.²⁷ The version of this story best known in the medieval

²³ Important discussions of the Attis myth include Hugo Hepding, *Attis: Seine Mythe und sein Kult* (Giessen, 1903); and Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris* I, 263–87, who speaks of Agdestis as “a sort of double of Attis” (p. 269). For more recent bibliography, see Rapp, “Attis,” in *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* I.1, cols. 715–27; and Maria Grazia Lancellotti, *Attis, between Myth and History: King, Priest and God* (Leiden, 2002).

²⁴ Clement of Alexandria, *The Exhortation to the Greeks* 2, ed. and trans. G. W. Butterworth, Loeb Classical Library 92 (Cambridge, MA, 1919), pp. 38–41.

²⁵ Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium* V.ix.8, ed. Miroslav Marcovich, *Hippolytus: Refutatio omnium haeresium*, Patristische Texte und Studien 25 (Berlin, 1986), p. 167, lines 42–44; Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica* III.xxiii.51, ed. and trans. Pierre Maraval, *Socrate de Constantinople: Histoire ecclésiastique. Livres II–III*, Sources Chrétiennes 493 (Paris, 2005), pp. 346–47.

²⁶ On the parallels between Attis and Adonis, see Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris* I, 1–56, 223–60.

²⁷ Lucian, *De dea Syria* 8, ed. and trans. J. L. Lightfoot, *Lucian: On the Syrian Goddess* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 250–53; Bion, *Epitaph on Adonis* 64–66, ed. and trans. J. D. Reed, *Bion of Smyrna: The Fragments and the Adonis*, Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 33 (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 128–29. A scholium on Theocritus, *Idyll* V.92 attributed to Nicander likewise asserts that the anemone was born from the blood of Adonis: Fr. Dübner, *Scholia in Theocritum* (Paris, 1849), p. 42. See the discussions by Wahib Atallah, *Adonis dans la littérature et l'art grecs* (Paris, 1966), pp. 244–46; P. M. C. Forbes Irving, *Metamorphosis in Greek Myths* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 279–80; and Ian Lee, “The Flower of Adonis at Eryx,” *Numismatic Chronicle* 159 (1999), 1–31, at 15–21. In Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, the flower that grows from Adonis's blood is identified only as a “purple flow'r . . . check'ed with white” (*The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans [Boston, 1974], p. 1718, line 1168). Milton combines the stories of Adonis and his Syrian counterpart Thammuz in recalling how “smooth *Adonis*

West was no doubt the one told by Ovid, who at the end of Book 10 of the *Metamorphoses* relates how after Adonis is attacked by the boar, Venus hears his dying moans and approaches, but by the time she reaches him, he is lying dead in a pool of blood. She rends her clothes and beats her breast in anguish, curses the fates, and promises that her grief will be memorialized by the fragile flowers that will emerge each year from Adonis's spilled blood:

“luctus monimenta manebunt
 semper, Adoni, mei, repetitaque mortis imago^{[L][SEP]}
 annua plangoris peraget simulamina nostri.^{[L][SEP]}
 at cruor in florem mutabitur. an tibi quondam^{[L][SEP]}
 femineos artus in olentes vertere mentas,^{[L][SEP]}
 Persephone, licuit, nobis Cinyreius heros
 invidiae mutatus erit?” sic fata cruorem^{[L][SEP]}
 nectare odorato sparsit, qui tactus ab illo^{[L][SEP]}
 intumuit sic, ut fulvo perlucida caelo^{[L][SEP]}
 surgere bulla solet, nec plena longior hora^{[L][SEP]}
 facta mora est, cum flos de sanguine concolor ortus,
 qualem, quae lento celant sub cortice granum,^{[L][SEP]}
 punica ferre solent; brevis est tamen usus in illo,^{[L][SEP]}
 namque male haerentem et nimia levitate caducum^{[L][SEP]}
 excutiunt idem, qui praestant nomina, venti.²⁸

“My grief for Adonis will be remembered forever. Every year will see his death and my lamentation reenacted in ritual form, for the blood of the hero will be transformed into a flower. Or were *you* not once allowed to change a young woman to fragrant mint, Persephone? Do you begrudge me the transformation of my beloved Adonis?” As Venus spoke, she sprinkled his blood with sweet nectar, which made it swell up like a transparent bubble that rises from the muck, and in no more than an hour a flower sprang out of that soil, blood red in color, just like the flesh that lies beneath the tough rind of the seed-hiding pomegranate. Yet brief is its season, for the winds from

from his native Rock / Ran purple to the Sea, suppos'd with blood / Of *Thammuz* yearly wounded” (*Paradise Lost* I.450–52, ed. Roy Flanagan, *The Riverside Milton* [Boston, 1998], p. 368), where *Adonis* refers not to the slain god but to the river that was thought to flow from his blood.

²⁸ Ovid, *Metamorphoses* X.725–39, ed. William S. Anderson, *P. Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoses*, Bibliotheca Teubneriana (Leipzig, 1977), pp. 252–53.

which it takes its name — the anemone — shake off those petals so lightly clinging and fated to perish.²⁹

The legend of the flowers born from Adonis's blood has of course been retold and depicted many times and is even paralleled by medieval legends of crimson flowers that grew from the blood of Christ at the foot of the Cross.³⁰

The conceit of a tree or flower born from the blood of a slain or mutilated hero also figures in a number of folktales from various parts of Europe and the Near East. A German tale recorded in the nineteenth century tells of a shepherd with magic powers who is killed by the daughter of an enemy king, only to return to life through a series of transformations. When he turns into a horse, the princess orders her cook to slay him, but the horse has given the cook instructions to assist him in his next transformation, so that when three drops of his blood fall into the cook's apron, she buries it under the eaves. The next morning a white cherry tree is found growing on the spot.³¹

A Breton tale relates that when the hero is killed, again in the form of a horse, a ball of his curdled blood is put on a stone in the sun and sprinkled with magic water. A cherry tree grows out of it, laden with fine red cherries.³²

²⁹ Charles Martin, trans., *Ovid, Metamorphoses* (New York, 2010), pp. 284–85, with some minor adjustments to phrasing and punctuation.

³⁰ See Oskar Dähnhardt, *Natursagen: Eine Sammlung naturdeutender Sagen Märchen Fabeln und Legenden*, 4 vols. (Leipzig, 1907–12) II, 227–30; F. Ohrt, *Herba, gratiâ plena: Die Legenden der älteren Segensprüche über den göttlichen Ursprung der Heil- und Zauberkräuter*, FF Communications 82 (Helsinki, 1929), pp. 10–20; Mircea Eliade, “Ierburile de sub Cruce . . .,” *Revista Fundațiilor Regale* 11 (1939), 353–69; idem, “La mandragore et les mythes de la ‘naissance miraculeuse,’ ” *Zalmoxis* 3 (1940–42), 3–48, at 22–24; idem, “Adam, le Christ et la Mandragore,” in *Mélanges d'histoire des religions offerts à Henri-Charles Puech* (Paris, 1974), pp. 611–16; Sergio Ribichini, “Metamorfosi vegetali del sangue nel mondo antico,” in *Sangue e antropologia nella letteratura cristiana: Atti della terza Settimana di Studio (Roma, 29 novembre–4 dicembre 1982)*, ed. Francesco Vattioni, 2 vols. (Rome, 1983) I, 233–47. A Celtic legend about the passion flower (*ceus-chrann*) or milkwort (*glúineach*) that grew at the foot of the Cross and became stained with Christ's blood, “hence the semblance of the cross on the flower,” is documented by Alexander Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica: Hymns and Incantations with Illustrative Notes on Words, Rites, and Customs, Dying and Obsolete: Orally Collected in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1900) II, 114–15, 244. See also Richard Folkard, *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics: Embracing the Myths, Traditions, Superstitions, and Folk-Lore of the Plant Kingdom* (London, 1884), pp. 47–48; and Seán Ó Súilleabháin, “Etiological Stories in Ireland,” in *Medieval Literature and Folklore Studies: Essays in Honor of Francis Lee Utley*, ed. Jerome Mandel and Bruce A. Rosenberg (New Brunswick, NJ, 1970), pp. 257–74, at 262 (no. F.18).

³¹ Johann Wilhelm Wolf, *Deutsche Hausmärchen*, *Volkskundliche Quellen* 3: Märchen und Schwank (Leipzig, 1851), pp. 390–96. The tale is entitled “Der Schäferssohn und die zauberische Königstochter.”

³² François-Marie Luzel, *Contes populaires de Basse-Bretagne*, 3 vols., *Les littératures populaires de toutes les nations* 25 (Paris, 1887) III, 262.

In a Hungarian tale known as “Iron Laczi,” the hero comes back from the dead and transforms himself into a horse which his enemy’s wife seeks to kill so she can eat his liver. When the horse is slain, two drops of its blood fall to the ground and give rise to a tree with golden apples.³³

A Lithuanian tale relates that a shepherd’s son is treacherously killed by the king in order to obtain his magic weapons. When the boy is struck in the heart, his blood spurts from his chest and several drops fall beneath the window of the king’s daughter, who weeps at the sight of his murder. As her tears fall to the ground and mingle with the blood-soaked earth, an apple tree grows up at an alarming rate, and its branches soon touch her window. By noon the tree is covered with blossoms, by nightfall with blood-red apples.³⁴

The well-known Turkish story of “The Lemon Girl” tells of a beautiful princess born from a lemon tree who is transformed into a dove by a jealous maidservant, who then takes the princess’s place and marries her prince. The prince takes a liking to the dove and has a cage made for her to keep her nearby, but the false princess demands that she be given the dove to eat. When the prince kills the dove in the garden, several drops of the dove’s blood fall to the earth and produce a cypress tree from which the rightful princess eventually emerges.³⁵

A variant from Asia Minor tells of a princess, also born from a tree, who is transformed into a golden fish by a wicked Moorish woman who convinces the prince to kill the fish in order to regain his bride. When three drops of the fish’s blood fall to the earth, they give birth to a cypress tree.³⁶

The hero undergoes a double transformation in the Russian tale “Ivan, Son of the Sexton,” in which a man is betrayed by his wife to the Turks and is killed. He comes back to life as a horse with a golden mane which the sultan buys. The hero’s wicked wife recognizes him, however, and has him slain. From

³³ Oskar Ludwig Bernhard Wolff, *Die schönsten Märchen und Sagen aller Zeiten und Völker* (Leipzig, 1850), pp. 218–33. An anonymous English translation was published under the title “The Fireside Stories of Hungary” in *Dublin University Magazine* 70 (1867), 575–78.

³⁴ Aleksander Borejko Chodzko, *Contes des paysans et des pâtres slaves* (Paris, 1864), pp. 349–72. Chodzko believed this story was of Indian origin.

³⁵ Margery Kent, *Fairy Tales from Turkey* (London, 1946), pp. 38–47. This is one of over 500 known variants of the much-studied tale “The Three Oranges,” indexed by Aarne, *The Types of the Folktale*, no. 408. For discussion, full bibliography, and a survey of variants, see Christine Goldberg, *The Tale of the Three Oranges*, FF Communications 263 (Helsinki, 1997); and Christine Shojaei Kawan, “Die drei Orangen [AT 408],” in *Enzyklopädie des Märchens: Handwörterbuch zur historischen und vergleichenden Erzählforschung*, ed. Kurt Ranke and Rolf Brednich, 13 vols. (New York, 1999–2007) X, 346–55.

³⁶ Johann Georg von Hahn, *Griechische und albanesische Märchen*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1864) I, 268–73 (no. 49).

the horse's blood arises a golden bull which the woman also kills, but from the head of the slaughtered bull arises an apple tree with fruit of gold.³⁷

Similar tales are recorded in a variety of languages, all with the core plot of a hero who dies, returns to life, and takes on the form of an animal (usually a horse or bull) which when later killed bleeds upon the earth and produces a tree or trees that embody the soul of the reborn hero.³⁸ In some versions, the hero dies and is buried in the earth, and is then reborn as a tree that springs from the grave.³⁹ This motif is doubled in the well-known tales of "Tristan and Iseult" and "Piramus and Thisbe," in which twin trees (or vines or flowers) grow from the graves of two tragic young lovers, and the branches intertwine as a symbol of their eternal union.⁴⁰

Probably in its own unique category is the early Irish mythological tale "The Second Battle of Mag Tuired," in which the physician god Dían Cécht murders his own son Míach in a sort of manic healing contest, then buries him, "and three hundred and sixty-five herbs grew through the grave, corresponding to the number of his joints and sinews."⁴¹

³⁷ Alfred Rambaud, *Russie épique: étude sur les chansons héroïques de la Russie traduite ou analysées pour la première fois* (Paris, 1876), pp. 377–80.

³⁸ Many of these folktale analogues were originally collected by Emmanuel Cosquin, "Un problème historique à propos du conte égyptien de *Deux Frères*," *Revue des questions historiques* 22 (1877), 502–16. They are conveniently summarized by Cosquin, *Contes populaires de Lorraine comparés avec les contes des autres provinces de France et des pays étrangers et précédés d'un essai sur l'origine et la propagation des contes populaires européens* (Paris, 1886), pp. lxi–lxii, and by Maspéro, *Les contes populaires de l'Égypte ancienne*, pp. xvi–xviii. Several analogues for the blooming blood episode in "The Two Brothers" are discussed by Andrew Lang, *Myth, Ritual, and Religion* (London, 1887), pp. 156–58.

³⁹ In addition to the examples cited by Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*, 6 vols. (Copenhagen, 1955–58), no. E631, "Reincarnation in plant (tree) growing from grave," see Sean O'Sullivan, *Folktales of Ireland* (Chicago, 1966), pp. 120–21. Of the tales indexed by Thompson under motif no. E631.0.3, "Plant from blood of slain person," those most relevant here are collected by H. F. Feilberg, *Bidrag til en ordbog over jyske almuesmål*, 4 vols. (Copenhagen, 1886–1914) II, 57a (s.v. *juletrae*); III, 866.47b (s.v. *trae*); and IV, 49a (s.v. *blod*); and by William Sherwood Fox, *Greek and Roman Mythology*, *Mythology of All Races* 1 (Boston, 1916), pp. 198, 201. For the legend of a great oak tree in Mobile, Alabama known as the Boyington Oak which sprang up from the grave of a hanged man in 1835 as proof of his innocence, see Dennis William Hauck, *Haunted Places: The National Directory. Ghostly Abodes, Sacred Sites, UFO Landings, and Other Supernatural Locations*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York, 2002), p. 5.

⁴⁰ Thompson, *Motif-Index*, no. E631.0.1, "Twining branches grow from graves of lovers." Discussion by Pierre Gallais, "Les arbres entrelacés dans les 'romans' de Tristan et le mythe de l'arbre androgyne primordial," in *Mélanges offerts à Pierre le Gentil* (Besançon, 1973), pp. 295–310; and Eleanor R. Long, "'Young Man, I Think You're Dyin': The Twining Branches Theme in the Tristan Legend and in English Tradition," *Fabula: Zeitschrift für Erzählforschung* 21 (1980), 183–99.

⁴¹ *Cath Maige Tuired: The Second Battle of Mag Tuired*, ed. and trans. Elizabeth A. Gray, *Irish Texts Society* 52 (Naas, Kildare, 1982), pp. 32–33 (§ 35). There is no mention of blood. On the 365 joints and sinews of the human body, a notion encountered in several early Irish and Anglo-Saxon (and Chinese) texts, see Thomas D. Hill, "Punishment According to the Joints of the Body in the Old English 'Soul and Body II,'" *Notes and Queries* n.s. 15 (1968), 409–10; James E. Cross and Thomas D. Hill, eds., *The*

Other stories in this same general tradition involve a hero who is not a lover, and not even a single individual, but an army of soldiers who have died on the battlefield, and from their spilled blood grow fields of blood-red flowers, a martial variation on the Attis and Adonis myths. Many will recognize this as the idea behind the poppies that surround the Grave of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey today. A much earlier example of the same idea was reported in the early seventeenth century by William Camden, who asserted that the country folk around Bartlow, Cambridgeshire had a special name for the red-berried plant that grew plentifully in a field where a battle with the Danes was supposed to have taken place during Anglo-Saxon times: they called it “Dane-wort” or “Danes-bloud” and claimed that it “blometh from their bloud.”⁴²

These stories from many times and places demonstrate an enduring fascination with concepts of cyclical renewal and rebirth through transformation, with a hero’s death and rebirth enacted by the shedding of his blood and the new plant life that emerges from it. They preserve one of the oldest and most fundamental elements of Western mythology and contribute to a rich tradition in the history of ideas which Gerhart Ladner characterized as an ideology of spiritual renewal expressed in vegetative symbols.⁴³ In the examples I’ve mentioned so far, the hero is typically a god, a magician, a warrior, a prince or princess, or a lover, but there are other examples that offer even better comparanda for the blooming blood passage in *Andreas* because in these stories the hero is a holy man.

Hagiographic Analogues

Since *Andreas* is a poem based ultimately on a work of Greek apocryphal hagiography, it would be interesting to know if the blooming blood miracle has any parallels elsewhere within the corpus of Greek apocryphal hagiography, or in other saints’ lives, and it does. I can put forward two examples from Greek hagiography of accounts of the death or mutilation of a holy man and the emergence of a plant from his spilled blood, as well as a small number of more distant parallels from Latin hagiography. The earliest

Prose Solomon and Saturn and Adrian and Ritheus (Toronto, 1982), pp. 125–26; and the ancient Chinese medical text *Ling shu* (“The Divine Pivot”), compiled probably in the first century B.C.E., ed. and trans. Paul U. Unschuld, *Huang Di Nei Jing Ling Shu: The Ancient Classic on Needle Therapy. The Complete Chinese Text with an Annotated English Translation* (Oakland, CA, 2016), pp. 47, 49, 83.

⁴² William Camden, *Britain, or A Chorographical Description of the Most Flourishing Kingdoms, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Islands Adjoyning, out of the Depth of Antiquitie* (London, 1637), p. 452. See Folkard, *Plant Lore*, p. 310.

⁴³ Gerhart B. Ladner, “Vegetation Symbolism and the Concept of Renaissance,” in *De Artibus Opuscula XL: Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. Millard Meiss (New York, 1961), pp. 303–22. Although Ladner is mainly concerned with the relationship between self-awareness and symbolic representations of renewal during the Italian Renaissance, he discusses several stories about vegetative rebirth from earlier periods, including Vergil’s account of the golden bough in *Aeneid* VI and medieval legends of the Holy Cross that involve a reflowering of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

example I can find appears in the concluding section of the fourth-century apocryphal *Acts of Philip* known as the *Martyrdom of Philip*, in which a grapevine grows out of the blood of the apostle Philip after he is tortured and executed. The *Martyrdom* relates how Philip, together with his sister Marianne and his fellow-apostle Bartholomew, are preaching in the city of Hierapolis, where Philip befriends a man named Stachys and heals a woman named Nicanora, the wife of the wicked proconsul Tyrannos. When Tyrannos learns that his wife has been consorting with Christians, he flies into a rage and orders that Philip, Marianne, and Bartholomew be seized and punished. Philip and his companions are flogged and dragged through the streets as a crowd of witnesses looks on. Then they are shut in the temple of the idol of the viper (the local deity) while Tyrannos decides on a suitable method of execution. After consulting with his priests, Tyrannos has Philip hanged upside-down from a tree outside the temple with iron hooks piercing his heels and ankles. As Philip hangs from the tree and readies himself for a martyr's death, he instructs Bartholomew to prepare his body for burial. He also asks Bartholomew to pray for him for forty days after his death, to build a church on the site of his execution, and to appoint Stachys as the church's first bishop. Philip then prophesies to Bartholomew that after his death a grapevine will grow out of his blood beneath the tree where he is hanging:

ἴδε, ὦ Βαρθολομαίε, ὅπου στάξῃ τὸ αἷμά μου ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, φυτὸν ἀνατελεῖ καὶ γενήσεται ἄμπελος καὶ ποιήσῃ καρπὸν σταφυλῆς. καὶ λαβόντες τὸν βότρυον ἀποθλίψατε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ ποτήριον, καὶ μεταλαβόντες εἰς τὴν τρίτην ἡμέραν ἀναπέμψατε εἰς ὕψος τὸ ἀμήν, ἵνα γένηται τελεία προσφορά.⁴⁴

See, O Bartholomew, where my blood will drop upon the earth, a plant will spring up and will become a vine and will produce fruit of a bunch of grapes. And having taken the bunch of grapes, press it into the cup, and having partaken of it on the third day, send up on high the Amen so that the offering may be complete.

Philip utters a final prayer to God and sends forth his spirit. Bartholomew then dutifully follows Philip's instructions, and three days later a vine emerges from Philip's blood, just as predicted:

μετὰ δὲ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἐβλάστησεν τὸ φυτὸν τῆς ἀμπέλου, ὅπου ἔσταξεν τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀποστόλου Φιλίππου. καὶ ἐποίησαν πάντα τὰ ἐντεταλμένα αὐτοῖς παρ' αὐτοῦ, ἐπὶ

⁴⁴ *Martyrdom of Philip* 37.12–17, ed. François Bovon, Bernard Bouvier, and Frédéric Amsler, *Acta Philippi: Textus*, Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum 11 (Turnhout, 1999), p. 418.

ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα προσφέροντες προσφοράς καὶ ἀδιαλείπτως εὐχόμενοι. καὶ ὠκοδόμησαν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἐκείνῳ καταστήσαντες καὶ τὸν Στάχυν ἐπίσκοπον· καὶ ἡ Νικάνορα δὲ καὶ πάντες οἱ πιστοὶ συνήγοντο καὶ οὐ δέλιπον δοξάζοντες τὸν θεὸν διὰ τὰ θαυμάσια τὰ γεγενημένα ἐπ’ αὐτούς. καὶ πᾶσα ἡ πόλις ἐπίστευσεν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ· ἐνετείλατο δὲ ὁ Βαρθολομαῖος τῷ Στάχυϊ βαπτίζειν τοὺς πιστεύοντας εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, ἵνα λέγωσιν ἀμήν.⁴⁵

After three days the plant of the vine sprouted up where the blood of the apostle Philip had dropped. And they did everything that had been commanded of them by him, offering an offering and praying without ceasing for forty days. And they built the church in that place, having appointed Stachys bishop. And Nicanora and all the faithful assembled and did not cease praising God for the wonders that had taken place among them. And the whole city believed in the name of Jesus, and Bartholomew commanded Stachys to baptize those who believed in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, so that they said Amen.

The story of Philip’s martyrdom thus concludes with a plant arising from Philip’s blood (albeit after his death), the building of a new church, and the conversion of the heathen populace, all generally paralleling events in *Andreas*.

An even closer parallel for the *Andreas* passage is the account of the martyrdom of St Therapon of Sardis, whose passion is commemorated in the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* on 26 May:

Τῇ αὐτῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἄθλησις ἑτέρου ἁγίου ἱερομάρτυρος Θεράποντος. Ὁς ἦν ἱερεὺς κατὰ τὴν μητρόπολιν Σάρδεις· καὶ διὰ τὴν ἀρίστην αὐτοῦ πολιτείαν κρατηθεὶς παρὰ τοῦ ἄρχοντος Οὐαλεριανοῦ τοὺς χριστιανοὺς διδάσκων δεσμεῖται καὶ ποινὰς ὑφίσταται. Μετὰ ταῦτα ἄγεται δέσμιος εἰς Συναὸν καὶ Ἄγκυραν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ Ἀστελῆ καλουμένου ποταμοῦ ὑπτιος ἐπ’ ἐδάφους ἀπλωθεὶς καταζαίνεται ῥάβδοις τὰς σάρκας· καὶ πλανθεῖσα ἡ γῆ τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ φυτὸν βαλάνου ἀνέδωκε μέγιστον λίαν· ὃ μέχρι τῆς σήμερον δείκνυται ἀείφυλλον ὄν, πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ἰώμενον. Καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἤχθη εἰς τὸ θέμα τῶν θρακησίων πλησίον τοῦ ποταμοῦ Ἑρμοῦ ὑπὸ τὴν

⁴⁵ *Martyrdom of Philip* 41, ed. Bovon et al., pp. 426–28.

ἐπισκοπὴν Σατάλων · καὶ πολλαῖς ὑποβληθεῖς τιμωρίαις καὶ κακώσεσι, τὸν τοῦ μαρτυρίου στέφανον ἐκομίσατο.⁴⁶

This same day [26 May] commemorates the passion of another saint, the holy martyr Therapon. He was priest in the metropolitan city of Sardis, and because he won the city over from the ruler Valerian through his excellent conduct and instructed them as Christians, he was put in chains and submitted to torture. After that he was taken prisoner to Synaos and to Ankara, and near the river called Astela he was spread out on the ground on his back and his flesh was lacerated with rods. And as the earth became enriched with his blood, it gave forth an exceedingly great fruit-bearing tree that can still be seen today, eternally green, and it heals all diseases and all illnesses. From there he was then taken to the burial ground of the Thracians by the river Hermon — of which the episcopal see was said to be Satala, consecrated under the metropolitan of Sardis — and having been subjected to many torments, he at last obtained the crown of martyrdom.

St Therapon of Sardis is not well known in the West, and his identity is muddled by the existence of two other saints by the same name (one from Cyprus, the other from Germany).⁴⁷ Yet his death by flagellation is recorded in the most important Byzantine synaxaria and menologia,⁴⁸ in several hymns,⁴⁹ and in an

⁴⁶ *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae e codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye, *Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris* (Brussels, 1902), cols. 710–11 (for 26 May). The places mentioned here are all in Lydia, western Anatolia. Synaos is the present-day Turkish city of Simav. The city identified as Ankara is probably not present-day Ankara but Ankyra Sidera, just north-east of Kilise Köy near the lake of Simav. On the geography of Therapon's itinerary, see L. Robert, *Villes d'Asie Mineure: études de géographie antique*, 2nd ed., *Études Orientales* 2 (Paris, 1962), pp. 95–96.

⁴⁷ On the cult of St Therapon of Sardis, and on the connection to his namesakes Therapon of Cyprus and Therapon of Germany, see R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin. Première partie: le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat œcuménique. Tome III: Les églises et les monastères de Constantinople* (Paris, 1953), pp. 255–56; J.-M. Sauget, "Teraponte," *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, ed. Filippo Caraffa et al., 13 vols. (Rome, 1961–70) XII, cols. 368–69; and H. Delehaye, "Saints de Chypre," *Analecta Bollandiana* 26 (1907), 161–301, who speculates (at pp. 247–49) that the saints of Cyprus and Sardis were historically the same individual, and that the cult of Therapon of Sardis branched out as the saint's relics were transferred from Satalia to Cyprus, where a church was dedicated to St Therapon.

⁴⁸ In addition to the passion notices printed here and below from the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* and the *Menologion of Basil II*, Therapon's martyrdom is also recorded in the tenth-century Typicon ed. and trans. Juan Mateos, *Le Typicon de la Grande Église*, 2 vols., *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 65 (Rome, 1962) I, 298–99 (for 25 May); and in the twelfth-century *Synaxarium Chiffletianum*, as noted by François Halkin, "Un nouveau Synaxaire byzantin: le ms. Gr. Lit. d. 6 de la Bibliothèque Bodléienne, à Oxford," in Halkin, *Recherches et documents d'hagiographie byzantine*, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 51 (Brussels, 1971), pp. 14–35 (at p. 26, for 27 May). Notices of Therapon's passion in medieval Slavic calendars and menologia are collected by Ivan Martinov, *Annus Ecclesiasticus Graeco-Slavicus* (Brussels, 1863), pp. 139–40, 334, 339, 343, 348, 350, and 354.

eleventh-century Greek metrical calendar by Christopher of Mytilene.⁵⁰ The notice of his passion in the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* is important for gauging the reception of his legend because as the largest and most influential collection of Greek saints' lives arranged for liturgical use, the *Synaxarion of Constantinople* is effectively the authoritative record of the Byzantine cult of saints. By the late tenth century it had circulated throughout Eastern churches in manuscripts so numerous that its exact age and origin are difficult to determine, but the collection can be traced at least as far back as the reign of Emperor Leo VI (886–911),⁵¹ so that the notice of Therapon's martyrdom can be dated to the opening of the tenth century at the latest. The substance of Therapon's passion narrative is also corroborated by a parallel notice in the *Menologion of Basil II* from the close of the tenth century, in which Therapon's blood yields not a fruit-bearing tree but a great evergreen oak:

Θεράπων, ὁ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἱερομάρτυς, ἱερεὺς ὑπάρχων τῆς ἐν Σάρδει ἁγίας ἐκκλησίας, καὶ διὰ τῆς διδασκαλίας αὐτοῦ πολλοὺς τῶν ἀρίστων ἐπιστρέφων ἐπὶ τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, καὶ βαπτίζων, ἐκρατήθη παρὰ τοῦ ἄρχοντος Οὐαλεριανοῦ, καὶ δεθεὶς ἀπεκλείσθη. Εἶτα τῆς φυλακῆς ἐκβληθεὶς, ἤχθη δέσμιος εἰς Συναὸν, καὶ πλησίον τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἀπλωθεὶς, καὶ δεθεὶς εἰς τέσσαρας πάλους ὕπτιος, ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ἐτύφθη σφοδρῶς, ἕως κατεξάνθησαν αἱ σάρκες αὐτοῦ τοῖς ῥαβδοῖς. Ἐκ δὲ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ πιούσα ἡ γῆ, φυτὸν βαλάνου ἀπέδωκεν μέγιστου λίαν · ὅπερ μέχρι τῆς σήμερον φαίνεται ἀείφυλλον ὄν, πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν τῶν προσερχομένων ἰώμενον.⁵²

Therapon, the holy martyr of Christ, was priest of the sacred church at Sardis, and because he converted many of the noblest citizens to our Lord Jesus Christ through his teaching and baptized them, he was seized by the ruler Valerian and locked up in chains. Then he was removed from the garrison and taken prisoner to Syanos, and he was spread out on his back near the river and was tied to four stakes and was severely beaten on the ground until his flesh was lacerated by

⁴⁹ Indexed by Henrica Follieri, *Initia Hymnorum Ecclesiae Graecae*, 5 vols. in 6, Studi e testi 211–15 bis (Vatican City, 1966) V.2, 140.

⁵⁰ *I Calendari in metro innografico di Cristoforo Mitileneo*, ed. and trans. Enrica Follieri, 2 vols., Subsidia Hagiographica 63 (Brussels, 1960) I, 439, and II, 296–98.

⁵¹ F. X. Murphy, “Synaxary,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., 15 vols. (Washington, DC, 2003), XIII, 678–79.

⁵² *Menologium Basilianum, ex editione cardinalis Albani* (PG 117, cols. 473D–476B); also printed in *Acta Sanctorum*, Mai VI (Antwerp, 1688), pp. 680–81. Neither of these passion notices is referenced in *BHG*.

rods. And suffused with his blood, the earth gave forth the most enormous oak tree, which appears eternally green up to the present day and whose green foliage cures every disease and every illness of those who approach it.

Eventually a version of this legend also passed into oral tradition and spread beyond its presumable point of origin in what is now western Turkey, for the same miracle is also reported to have occurred not at Sardis but at Sardica (now Sofia, Bulgaria), where until the beginning of the twentieth century the trunk of a great oak could be seen which local inhabitants referred to as “the tree of St Therapon,” believing it to mark the spot of his passion.⁵³ The tree had become a shrine to the saint, and pilgrims continued to travel there to obtain fragments of the tree, which were believed to possess healing powers.

In addition, a handful of legends that exemplify a similar pattern can also be found in Western Latin hagiography, although not as many as one might expect, and they aren't as close to the blooming blood scene in *Andreas* as the Greek legends of St Philip and St Therapon. Gregory of Tours relates three stories about trees that miraculously grow from the resting places of Gallic saints and martyrs: a laurel tree sprang up from the grave of St Baudillius at Nîmes,⁵⁴ a pear tree grew from the graves of St Nazarius and St Celsus,⁵⁵ and a mulberry tree rose from the spot where St Genesis of Arles was martyred by decapitation. In the story of St Genesis, as with Therapon, the faithful who sought help from Genesis carried away so many slivers of the tree that only the stump remained in Gregory's day, “still alive for those who make devout requests, and it offers similar remedies.”⁵⁶ Elsewhere, when the grave of the martyr Lucius of Cyrene was opened, three roses were seen growing from his breast; from the blood of St Tatona, who was murdered in 343 under King Sapor, a fig tree arose; lilies bloomed from the seventh-century grave of Bishop Vitalis in Salzburg; and when the tomb of the Cistercian William of Montpellier

⁵³ Hippolyte Delehaye, *The Legends of the Saints: An Introduction to Hagiography*, trans. V. M. Crawford (Notre Dame, 1961), pp. 44–45. The legend of the tree is recounted by Constantin Jireček, “Das christliche Element in der topographischen Nomenclatur der Balkanländer,” *Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Vienna*, Phil.-hist. Classe 136.11 (Vienna, 1897), pp. 54–58, who gives a first-hand description of the tree trunk and discusses the vitality of the Therapon cult in Bulgaria during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

⁵⁴ Gregory of Tours, *Liber in gloria martyrum* 77, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM 1.2 (Hanover, 1885), pp. 89–90; *Gregory of Tours, Glory of the Martyrs*, trans. Raymond Van Dam, Translated Texts for Historians 3 (Liverpool, 1988), p. 100.

⁵⁵ Gregory, *Liber in gloria martyrum* 46, ed. Krusch, pp. 69–70; *Glory of the Martyrs*, trans. Van Dam, p. 70.

⁵⁶ Gregory, *Liber in gloria martyrum* 67, ed. Krusch, p. 83; *Glory of the Martyrs*, trans. Van Dam, p. 91.

in Grande-Selve was opened, a lily was found growing from his mouth with the phrase “Ave Maria” written in gold letters on each petal.⁵⁷

Conclusions

The *Andreas*-poet was not the first person to tell a story about a hero who undergoes torture, experiences a real or symbolic death, and sheds his blood on the ground, from which a plant grows as a miraculous token of his spiritual resurrection. Versions of this tale-type go back at least to the thirteenth century B.C.E. and became an integral feature of the myths of Osiris, Agdestis, Attis, and Adonis, as well as a host of more recent folktales scattered about Europe and the Near East. The blooming blood episodes in the Greek *Martyrdom of Philip* and the passion notices for St Therapon are especially noteworthy here since they show that this ancient narrative pattern, born of Egyptian and Greek mythology, has been adapted for the literature of Christian martyrdom, and of course the Philip and Therapon stories are both relatively proximate in language and genre to the literary milieu of the original Greek *Acts of Andrew and Matthias*, the ultimate source of *Andreas*. Notice that in both the Philip and Therapon stories, as in *Andreas*, the hero is a saint who enters hostile territory and performs acts of piety, then is seized and brutally tortured by his pagan enemies. The saint’s blood seeps into the ground and gives rise to a vine or a tree (and in one version of the Therapon legend a *fruit-bearing* tree, just as in *Andreas*). Philip and Therapon don’t return to life or undergo a series of transformations like some of their mythological forebears, but the tree and vine that sprout from their spilled blood point to an unmistakable reformulation of the same regenerative motif that informs these other stories. Therapon, moreover, lives on through the curative powers of the tree that grew from his blood, and Philip lives on through the new church that is founded on the site of his martyrdom. The hero’s capacity for regeneration is also manifest in Andrew’s sudden rescue from the point of death and his miraculous return to health, and in this respect the blooming blood analogues help account for the unanticipated redirection of the narrative at this point in the poem. As Frederick Biggs has pointed out, Andrew’s flagellation and torture, his suffering for three days, and his prayer that God end his life are tell-tale signs of a traditional passion scene, one strikingly analogous to Christ’s passion. We should therefore expect Andrew to die at this point, but he comes back stronger than ever, as if resurrected, and performs a final miracle that converts his enemies. The regenerative power of Andrew’s blood thereby accomplishes a spiritual renewal that is continued and fulfilled in the baptism and spiritual rebirth of the Mermedonians. The poet offers no explanation for this

⁵⁷ The examples of Lucius, Tatona, Vitalis, and William are discussed by Heinrich Günter, *Psychologie der Legende: Studien zu einer wissenschaftlichen Heiligen-Geschichte* (Freiburg, 1949), p. 268.

dramatic reversal, but in his description of the blooming grove of fruit-bearing trees emerging from Andrew's blood, followed by his miraculous resurrection, the sequence of events conforms precisely to this primal mythological pattern.⁵⁸

An awareness of these various analogues for the blooming blood episode in *Andreas* helps explain Andrew's dramatic come-back as a symbolic resurrection, and it also gives us valuable insight into how the poet read his lost Latin source. If I am right in supposing that there was no blooming blood in the poet's source, just as there is none in most other recensions of the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias*, and if we should therefore credit the Old English poet with introducing the image of blooming trees growing out of Andrew's blood, then we have some additional questions to wrestle with. Why did the poet think it necessary to alter the scene that he encountered in his source, and what gave him the idea to make the trees arise from Andrew's blood instead of his fallen skin and hair? I don't think it is just a coincidence that the scene he created bears such a close resemblance to the blooming blood scenes in the *Martyrdom of Philip*, the notices of St Therapon's martyrdom, and even Arnobius's account of Agdestis and Attis and Ovid's account of Adonis. The *Andreas*-poet must have read or heard a story very much like these, and when he came to the blooming tree scene in his Latin source, he realized there was a problem. His Latin source author had obviously made a mistake. This is not how the miracle is supposed to work. Trees don't grow out of anybody's skin or hair.⁵⁹ That makes no sense, and it's not even an effective use of traditional Christian symbolism. What the Latin source author *should* have said is that the blooming trees grew out of Andrew's blood. It's blood, not skin or hair, that holds the power of life. Redemption comes through Christ's blood, and the Christian Church was born out of Christ's blood and the blood of the saints, not out of anyone's skin or hair. The poet knew this, and he understood how the idea of rebirth through blood could add meaning to the Andrew story, so he rewrote the scene and made Andrew's blood the vehicle of rebirth instead of his skin and hair. In so doing, he strengthened the parallel between Andrew's near-martyrdom and the passion of Christ, and he also heightened the blood and gore in the poem, which appealed to his own sensibilities. The result is a passion and resurrection scene that is ironically both new and old, a brilliant fusion of the poet's creative abilities and his understanding of the power of literary tradition.

⁵⁸ J. Flamion, *Les actes apocryphes de l'apôtre André: les actes d'André et de Mathias, de Pierre et d'André et les textes apparentés* (Louvain, 1911), pp. 258–59, observes that sudden reversals such as this which can be interpreted as the saint's resurrection are common in early apocryphal acts (including the Acts of Peter and Andrew and the Slavonic Acts of Thomas), but he attributes these to the authors' naive optimism and fondness for magic and the supernatural.

⁵⁹ There are of course numerous ancient literary texts that *liken* plants to hair, as Charles D. Wright points out to me. On the homology plants = hair, see M. L. West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth* (Oxford, 2007), p. 344. But that's not the same thing as saying that new living plants are born from dead hair.