

KIRSTEN WOLF

## The sources of *Gyðinga saga*

Relatively few of the sources for the enormous corpus of Old Norse ecclesiastical literature have yet been brought to light.<sup>1</sup> This is unfortunate, because detailed source studies would help to reveal what kinds of foreign literature were read and studied in Iceland and Norway in the late Middle Ages; they would also help to show how far the northern translators and authors were independent of their foreign sources, and how closely they followed their models.

This article presents a small contribution to the identification of sources for Old Norse religious prose. The work under discussion is the Old Norse saga of the Jews, *Gyðinga saga* (GS), from the mid-thirteenth century (Guðmundur Þorláksson 1881).<sup>2</sup> The saga records the history of the Jews from the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes (175 B.C.) to Pontius Pilate's appointment as procurator of Judaea (A.D. 26). To this two legends about Pontius Pilate and Judas Iscariot are appended along with a final chapter containing a brief account of Jewish history from Gaius' becoming emperor in A.D. 37 to Herod Agrippa's death in A.D. 44. The narrative closes with an epilogue which ascribes GS to the Icelandic priest Brandr Jónsson (d. 1264).

The saga is preserved, in its entirety or in fragments, in five vellum manuscripts and in a fair number of paper manuscripts. Of these manuscripts seven are of textual significance. The primary manuscript is AM 226 fol. (c. 1350–1370); in addition, fragments are extant in AM 655 4to XXV (c. 1300), AM 238 fol. XVII (early fourteenth century),<sup>3</sup> AM 229 fol. IV (third quarter of the fourteenth century),<sup>4</sup> DKNVSB 41 8vo (1671),<sup>5</sup> Lbs. 714 8vo (last

<sup>1</sup> Efforts have, however, been made by Collings (1969), Foote (1962); Lehmann (1937); Widding, Bekker-Nielsen, and Shook (1963). Other discussions appear in more general works on Norse literature or in smaller articles.

<sup>2</sup> I am currently preparing a new edition of the saga under the auspices of the Árni Magnússon Institute in Iceland. All translations from GS in the following are my own.

<sup>3</sup> Guðmundur Þorláksson based his edition of GS on AM 226 fol. The fragments AM 655 4to XXV and AM 238 fol. XVII were published by him as an appendix to his edition (pp. 102–111).

<sup>4</sup> Variants from the fragment AM 229 fol. IV were given by Guðmundur Þorláksson in the textual notes. For a discussion of this fragment see my article, "A Note on the Date and Provenance of AM 229 fol. IV", forthcoming in *Gripla*.

<sup>5</sup> The fragment DKNVSB 41 8vo, which was unknown to Guðmundur Þorláksson, was edited by Jón Helgason (1975); the text is found pp. 349–59.

quarter of the eighteenth century),<sup>6</sup> and Lbs. 4270 4to (1791).<sup>7</sup> AM 655 4to XXV and AM 238 fol. XVII are the oldest manuscripts and are probably not far removed from the original translation. Since they cover different sections of the saga, it is impossible to come to any definite conclusions as to their intertextual relationship. The only manuscript with which the two fragments can be compared is AM 226 fol., and this comparison reveals that GS in AM 226 fol. is reduced by about one-third. The other fragments are closely related to AM 226 fol. and belong to the abridged redaction, although in a few instances they contain material omitted in AM 226 fol.

GS is a composite work and, on the basis of its sources, it can be divided into three main parts, which will be discussed in turn in the following.

*Part I:* The first 21 chapters (pp. 1–58<sup>22</sup> in the edition) can be said to form a unit. After an introduction briefly sketching the conquest of Alexander the Great, the division of his empire, and the origin of the Seleucid Empire, a detailed account is given of Antiochus Epiphanes' wholesale oppression of the Jews and their resistance under the leadership of Mathathias and his sons, until Jewish independence was won in 142 B.C. This part of the saga is based primarily on 1 Maccabees.<sup>8</sup> The chapters of GS correspond to 1 Maccabees as follows:

- I (1–4<sup>12</sup>) – 1 Macc. 1:1–42
- II (4<sup>13</sup>–8<sup>3</sup>) – 1 Macc. 1:43–67
- III (8<sup>5</sup>–12<sup>3</sup>) – 1 Macc. 2:1–3:9
- IV (12<sup>5</sup>–16<sup>5</sup>) – 1 Macc. 3:10–4:27
- V (16<sup>7</sup>–18<sup>19</sup>) – 1 Macc. 4:28–5:15
- VI (18<sup>20</sup>–23<sup>29</sup>) – 1 Macc. 5:16–68
- VII (24<sup>1</sup>–27<sup>31</sup>) – 1 Macc. 6:1–42
- VIII (28<sup>1</sup>–31<sup>14</sup>) – 1 Macc. 6:43–7:18
- IX (31<sup>15</sup>–35<sup>29</sup>) – 1 Macc. 7:19–8:32
- X (36<sup>1</sup>–37<sup>14</sup>) – 1 Macc. 9:1–27
- XI (37<sup>15</sup>–40<sup>5</sup>) – 1 Macc. 9:28–73
- XII (40<sup>6</sup>–42<sup>16</sup>) – 1 Macc. 10:1–50
- XIII (42<sup>17</sup>–43<sup>15</sup>) – 1 Macc. 10:51–66
- XIV (43<sup>16</sup>–46<sup>10</sup>) – 1 Macc. 10:67–11:19
- XV (46<sup>11</sup>–47<sup>7</sup>) – 1 Macc. 11:20–38
- XVI (47<sup>8</sup>–49<sup>4</sup>) – 1 Macc. 11:39–66

<sup>6</sup> Discussed in my article, "An Extract of *Gyðinga saga* in Lbs. 714 8vo", forthcoming in *Opuscula*.

<sup>7</sup> Edited in my article, "*Lífssaga Pilati* in Lbs. 4270 4to", forthcoming in *Proceedings of the PMR Conference*.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Maccabees is generally considered the primary historical source for the period of Jewish history just prior to the beginning of the Christian era. It is thought to have been written by a Palestinian Jew of nationalist sympathies shortly after the death of John Hyrcanus I (104 B.C.). At the Council of Trent in 1548 its authority as part of the Canon was settled.

There are some minor discrepancies between 1 Maccabees and the Norse translation, but it should be borne in mind that the text of the Vulgate was not regularized until the end of the sixteenth century.

- XVII (49<sup>5</sup>–50<sup>16</sup>) – 1 Macc. 11:67–12:38  
 XVIII (50<sup>17</sup>–52<sup>24</sup>) – 1 Macc. 12:39–13:30  
 XIX (52<sup>25</sup>–55<sup>7</sup>) – 1 Macc. 13:31–14:49  
 XX (55<sup>8</sup>–57<sup>24</sup>) – 1 Macc. 15:1–16:10  
 XXI (57<sup>25</sup>–58<sup>22</sup>) – 1 Macc. 16:11–22

It is clear, however, that for this first part the translator also relied on other sources than 1 Maccabees. In some chapters extraneous material is very limited, while in others there is a large number of such additions or very long passages drawn from other sources. These additions are usually insertions into the context of 1 Maccabees and not replacements of passages or phrases.<sup>9</sup> An analysis of this extraneous material shows that most of it is drawn from 2 Maccabees<sup>10</sup> and Peter Comestor's biblical commentary, the *Historia Scholastica* (HS), from the third quarter of the twelfth century (*Patrologia Latina*). In some instances, however, it seems impossible to determine which of the two works is the source for the relevant addition, especially in places where the rendering is very paraphrastic, or where Comestor has adopted the 2 Maccabees text almost verbatim. In such instances I have referred to both works. The additions drawn from these sources are the following:

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| II (5 <sup>18-26</sup> ):   | The punishment of the two Jewish women who circumcise their sons. Based on 2 Macc. 6:10–11.  |
| (5 <sup>27-68</sup> ):      | The story of the martyrdom of Eleazar. Based on 2 Macc. 6:18–31.   |
| (6 <sup>8-83</sup> ):       | The story of the seven brothers and their mother. Based on 2 Macc. 7:1–41, although the Latin does not say that they were related to Eleazar as in GS (6 <sup>8-9</sup> ).                     |
| III (9 <sup>26-27</sup> ):  | The statement that the soldiers delayed their attack until the Sabbath. Based on HS, 1505C–D.  |
| (10 <sup>4-5</sup> ):       | The statement that the Jews were suffocated in their caves. Based on HS, 1505D.  |
| VI (19 <sup>25-204</sup> ): | Judas' fight with Timothy, the enemy's vision, and the release of Timothy. Based on 2 Macc. 10:29–30 and 12:24–26. Timothy's campaign is, however, different from the one described in 1 Macc. |

<sup>9</sup> An exception is chapter VII (25<sup>4-22</sup>). In his account of Antiochus' illness and death the translator digresses from 1 Maccabees, which blames the nature of Antiochus' illness and death on the shocking news of Lysias' unsuccessful campaign, and not on a chariot accident as in GS. For details on chapter I see below.

<sup>10</sup> 2 Maccabees is an epitome of a five-volume history written by a certain Jason of Cyrene in Greek during the first century B.C. The history of 2 Maccabees begins some years earlier than that of 1 Maccabees and embraces a period of c. 15 years. It emphasizes the religious aspect of the struggle and sees this as much more important than the political one. There are more prayers, the concept of martyrdom is more distinct, and so is the belief in the resurrection of the faithful and punishment for the wicked. 2 Maccabees adds important details to the events that led up to the Maccabean revolt, but otherwise it is considered less valuable as a historical source than 1 Maccabees. Along with 1 Maccabees its authority was settled in 1548.

- (22<sup>5-18</sup>): The story of the fate of Judas' soldiers, who had secretly taken booty from the Gentiles. Based on 2 Macc. 12:39-43 or HS, 1523D.
- (22<sup>18-23</sup><sup>29</sup>): The story of Onias the High Priest and Antiochus' general. Based on 2 Macc. 3:1-40.
- VII (24<sup>6</sup>): The statement that the temple was dedicated to Gefjon. Based on 2 Macc. 1:13 or HS, 1510A.
- (25<sup>4-22</sup>): Antiochus' illness. Based on 2 Macc. 9:4-26.
- VIII (29<sup>26-32</sup>): Lysias' execution of Onias. Based on 2 Macc. 13:4-8.
- IX (32<sup>1-5</sup>): Alcimus presents Demetrius with gifts. Based on 2 Macc. 14:4.
- (32<sup>10-17</sup>): Nicanor's confrontation with the Jews. Based on 2 Macc. 15:1-5 or HS, 1524A.
- (33<sup>1</sup>): "... ok rettir hond sína hina hægri til borgariNar." Based on 2 Macc. 14:32.
- (33<sup>25-34</sup><sup>4</sup>): Judas' vision before the battle. Based on 2 Macc. 15:11-16 or HS, 1524B.<sup>11</sup>
- (34<sup>10-16</sup>): The dismemberment of Nicanor's body. Based partly on 1 Macc. but with additions from 2 Macc. 15:32-37.<sup>12</sup>
- XII (40<sup>9-10</sup>): "hann var kalladr nobilis." May be taken from 2 Macc. 2:21.
- XIV (44<sup>28-31</sup>): Simon's destruction of Ioppa. Possibly based on 2 Macc. 12:9 or HS, 1523C-D, although in these texts it is Judas attacking Iamnia.

The nature and content of the additions drawn from 2 Maccabees (either directly from the Vulgate or from HS as an intermediate source) make them clearly distinguishable from the other narrative material based on 1 Maccabees, as they contain legendary material (e.g., the story of the martyred brothers and their mother), sensational material (e.g., the punishment of the two Jewish women who neglect Antiochus' decree and circumcise their sons), accounts of supernatural events (e.g., Judas' fight with Timothy and the enemy's vision before the battle), and didactic examples (e.g., the account of the fate of Judas' soldiers who secretly took booty from the Gentiles). By inserting material from 2 Maccabees the translator thus manages to add a bit of color to the plain and unadorned story in 1 Maccabees. On the other hand, these sections of the narrative become more didactic and more biased: the Jews are seen in a more favorable light than is the case in 1 Maccabees and the Gentiles are portrayed with no sympathy. The religious aspect also plays a more dominant role than in 1 Maccabees.<sup>13</sup> The additions

<sup>11</sup> This addition is found also in the fragment AM 238 fol. XVII (102<sup>4-14</sup>), which shows that in the more original version of GS additions from 2 Maccabees were incorporated.

<sup>12</sup> This addition also appears in AM 238 fol. XVII (103<sup>16-27</sup>).

<sup>13</sup> About 996-997 Aelfric wrote his third set of homilies on the lives of saints (Skeat 1881-1900), a collection of forty sermons for the church year, including, for 1 August, a translation of 1 Maccabees. Like the Icelandic translator Aelfric made extensive use of 2 Maccabees. In GS more additions drawn from 2 Maccabees (or indirectly from HS) are found than in Aelfric's rendering, but it is worth noting that all the material which Aelfric drew from 2 Maccabees is

drawn from the HS (i.e., material found only in HS and not in 2 Maccabees) are chiefly historical information; they are so factual and concise that in contrast to the more colorful additions from 2 Maccabees, they fit in very well with the brief and straightforward narrative of events characteristic of 1 Maccabees, and it is, therefore, more difficult to distinguish them from the main text.

In addition to 2 Maccabees and the HS, Flavius Josephus' *Antiquitates Judaicae* and *De Bello Judaico* have been suggested as sources for some of the extraneous material in GS.<sup>14</sup> This assertion was first made by Guðbrandur Vigfússon (1863; cf. p. 140) and later by Guðmundur Þorláksson (1881) in the introduction to his edition (p. v). The theory was, however, later refused by Storm, who claimed that all the additions were from 2 Maccabees (1886; cf. p. 254). There has been no further published research on Josephus as a possible source of the first part of GS; later commentators on this subject have merely adopted the views of these scholars.<sup>15</sup>

Although information derived from Josephus is minimal, there are certain

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also found in GS. These additions are: a) the story of the martyrdom of Eleazar (Aelfric: vv. 32–108; GS: 5<sup>27</sup>–6<sup>8</sup>), b) the story of the seven brothers and their mother (Aelfric: vv. 108–204; GS: 6<sup>8</sup>–8<sup>3</sup>), c) the account of Judas' fight with Timothy and the enemy's vision (Aelfric: vv. 481–529; GS: 19<sup>25</sup>–30), d) the story of the fate of Judas' soldiers who had secretly taken booty from the Gentiles (Aelfric: vv. 530–595; GS: 25<sup>5</sup>–18), f) the story of Onias the High Priest and Antiochus' general (Aelfric: vv. 745–811; GS: 22<sup>18</sup>–23<sup>29</sup>). The additions a, b, d, and e are in Aelfric's translation inserted in the same context as in GS. The addition f, which in Aelfric's rendering forms a kind of appendix to the translation of 1 Maccabees, is in GS appended to the story of the fate of Judas' soldiers who had secretly taken booty from the Gentiles (i.e., d). The addition c is in GS inserted in the account of Timothy and Judas' battle of Dathema; in Aelfric's rendering it is inserted immediately after the addition d.

In a Middle High German translation of 1 Maccabees by Grand Master Luder of Braunschweig from c. 1330 (Helm 1904) there are also additions drawn from 2 Maccabees, but these are few. Only one of the additions is also found in GS, i.e., the appellation "Nobilis" with Antiochus (GS: 40<sup>9</sup>–10; German: v. 1225).

<sup>14</sup> The *De Bello Judaico*, the first of four works by Josephus (d. c. A.D. 100), which have come down to us, opens with a summary of events from the time of Antiochus Epiphanes to the outbreak of the war. In his preface Josephus explains that he wrote it first in Aramaic and later translated (adapted) it into Greek. The translation was completed in or after A.D. 75. Josephus' next work, the *Antiquitates Judaicae*, was written in Greek and traces in 20 books the history of the Jews from the creation to the beginning of the Jewish war. He finished the *Antiquitates* towards the end of A.D. 93. Both works were translated into Latin by Rufinus (c. 345–410). The two other works by Josephus are the *Vita* and *In Apionem*.

<sup>15</sup> The following scholars specifically list Josephus as one of the sources: Bekker-Nielsen (1985), Berulfsen (1960), Lehmann (1937:40–41), Mogk (1904:876), Paasche (1957:445), Hermann Pálsson (1971:29), Simek and Hermann Pálsson (1987:131), Turville-Petre (1967:124). Widding (1960) is more cautious and says that Josephus may be one of the sources (p. 64). Finnur Jónsson (1920–1924, vol. 2, p. 863) does not mention Josephus as a source for GS, nor do the following scholars: Jón Helgason (1975:372), Kirby (1986:75–79), Jónas Kristjánsson (1988:144), Sigurður Nordal (1953:224), and Damsgaard Olsen (Bekker-Nielsen, Olsen, and Widding 1965:117). The most detailed study is by Fersch (1982); Fersch notes details in GS which appear only in Josephus but is reluctant to include Josephus as one of the sources for GS (pp. xiv–xv).

details in the first part of GS, which do not appear in the other sources examined and which are only recorded in the *Antiquitates Judaicae* (1595).<sup>16</sup> Thus, the story of Onias and his brother Jason (2<sup>6-25</sup>), although it is also found in 2 Maccabees (4:7-50), shows greater similarity with the one in *Antiquitates* (XII, vi [XII, v, 1]) and may be derived from it. Antiochus' plot against the sons of Ptolemy (3<sup>1-4</sup>) is given only in *Antiquitates* (XII, vii [XII, v, 2]). Similarly, the name of the commander sent by King Antiochus, "Apelles" (8<sup>23</sup>), is found only in the *Antiquitates* (XII, viii [XII, vi, 2]). In GS (9<sup>15-17</sup>) it is stated that both Mathathias and his sons are responsible for killing the king's emissary; this is the case also in *Antiquitates* (XII, viii [XII, vi, 2]) whereas in 1 Maccabees (2:25) Mathathias alone is responsible. In GS (27<sup>9-10</sup>) it says that Antiochus had his men turn their shields to the sun; this is not mentioned in 1 Maccabees or HS, but in *Antiquitates* (XII, xiii [XII, ix, 4]) it is said that the shields of gold and bronze were uncovered so that a brilliant light was given off by them. Similarly, the episode where Lysias and Antiochus conceal their true motive in calling off the siege of Jerusalem (29<sup>5-14</sup>) seems to be drawn from *Antiquitates* (XII, xiii [XII, ix, 6]). In GS (38<sup>18-20</sup>) it is stated that Bacchides thought that the Jews would not fight on the Sabbath; this information is found in *Antiquitates* (XIII, i [XIII, i, 3]). The "sioborgir" in GS (48<sup>11</sup>) may possibly have come by way of the *Antiquitates*, although Josephus more specifically has "Cilicia" (XIII, ix [XIII, v, 4]). Finally, the information at the very end of part I (58<sup>20-22</sup>) on John Hyrcanus I's popularity seems to be derived from *Antiquitates* (XIII, xiii [XIII, vii, 4]). There is no evidence of material from *De bello Judaico* in this part of GS.

Although it is possible that the above mentioned additions are drawn from the *Antiquitates*, there does not seem to be strong evidence that this work is a direct source. Josephus was certainly known in Iceland in the Middle Ages, but there are no indications that his works were actually available as early as the thirteenth century. It would seem more likely that the additions were drawn from the HS as an intermediate source. Josephus' works form one of the chief sources of the HS, and it must be emphasized that because of its great popularity, the HS existed in a variety of versions. It is thus possible, perhaps probable, that the HS from which the translator drew the supplementary material was more detailed and contained these additions.<sup>17</sup>

Special mention must also be made of some additions containing strictly

<sup>16</sup> Since this edition does not include numbering of paragraphs, I have referred in brackets to the edition of the Greek text in the Loeb Classical Library Series (1930-65).

<sup>17</sup> An investigation of the two other extant translations of the HS into Old Norse, the rendering of Samuel in AM 1056 4to IV and of Joshua in AM 226 fol. does not support this hypothesis. Both renderings are very paraphrastic in certain places, which serves to confirm that the HS on which the Icelandic translators based their text differed somewhat from the one on which Migne

factual information. The nature of this information is such that it is unlikely to have been invented by the translator or a scribe and must be based on some historical record, although no definite source text has been traced. The majority of this additional material is found in chapter I, which, on the whole, deviates considerably from the corresponding chapter in 1 Maccabees. Until 1<sup>4</sup> the translator more or less follows 1 Maccabees (1:1–4), though in a condensed form, but whereas the author of 1 Maccabees, after a brief comment on the death of Alexander and the division of his empire, leaps straight from Alexander to Antiochus IV, the translator goes into more detail on the division of the empire (1<sup>4–7</sup>) and fills the gap in the chronological order by describing the succession of power from Seleucus to his son Antiochus IV, the so-called “syndana rót” (2<sup>5</sup>; 1 Macc. 1:11). On 2<sup>6</sup> the translator again digresses from 1 Maccabees, for whereas the Latin describes – as a second cause of the Jews’ troubles – the renegade Jews who had independently appeared in Israel with a new political policy for Israel, the translator describes Onias and Jesus’ struggle for the high-priesthood (2<sup>6–25</sup>). After that the translator goes on to describe a campaign by Antiochus IV against Egypt and his defeat (2<sup>25–37</sup>); 1 Maccabees, however, gives an account of the lawless men willing to abandon Judaism (1:11–16). On 3<sup>7</sup> the translator returns to 1 Maccabees (1:20–24) and renders Antiochus IV’s capture of Jerusalem (3<sup>7–16</sup>), his expedition to Egypt (3<sup>16–25</sup>; 1 Macc. 1:16–19), and the destruction of Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup>

In other chapters material from undefined sources appears too, i.e., material unlikely to have been invented by the translator. Thus, in GS (11<sup>2</sup>) it is stated that Mathathias’ father kept the law by killing a heathen woman; this is not found in any of the source texts consulted. GS also says about Antiochus’ army that the elephants were divided fifteen to a company (27<sup>10–11</sup>) and that Judas’ army consisted of no more than seven thousand men (27<sup>6</sup>); this is not recorded in the source texts, and the same is the case where it is stated that Nicanor had 658 thousand and nine hundred men (33<sup>16</sup>). In GS it is said that “Philippus kongr atti brodur þann er Selerikus het. hans son var Demetríus. Hann hafði stockit vndan vfrídi fódur brodur síns. til Roma-borgar. ok feck þar godar viddókur. Efliz hann þadan ok ferr nu austr apr. ok kemr fyrst i Tirum. ok sidan i Askaloniam. ok sækir þær borgir vndir sik” (30<sup>4–9</sup>); the source texts do not mention that Demetrius was Philip’s nephew

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based his edition, but neither of these translations contains the kind of additional material mentioned above.

<sup>18</sup> Fersch (1982:5–6) suggests the HS (“Liber Esther” col., 1498) as the source for some of the additions in chapter I. It is true that there are parallels, but in each case there are major discrepancies between the HS and GS, or GS contains a fuller account; it would, therefore, seem unlikely that the HS is here the direct source.

or that he had been treated well in Rome, and they do not mention the two cities.<sup>19</sup> In GS it is told of Judas that he “rekr . . . Alkinum or byskupsdæmínu. þuiat hann var meiri vín konganna. enn landzmannna” (30<sup>18-20</sup>) and that Alcimus goes to King Demetrius and blames Judas for the fact that the King got no taxes from Judaea (30<sup>25-26</sup>); later it is recorded that Judas “stöckr nu undan ok hans menn. i vbygd þa sem engin afli var til. ímoti at risa. ok ser at med suik eín ok vælar er at eiga” (31<sup>11-14</sup>). The source for these pieces of information remains unknown. Similarly, the statement that when Nicanor “sækir at Gyðinga landi. þa drifa margir kaupmenn at þeim ok ætla at sæta várkaupum. a Gyðingum” (32<sup>8-10</sup>) is not found in any of the sources, nor is the reference to “kaupmennírnir” in a later passage (34<sup>9</sup>).<sup>20</sup> The stipulation that Judas makes upon his treaty with Bacchides (“at hann gialldi upp allt herfang þat er hann hafdi dregit af Iudea” [39<sup>29-30</sup>]) and the presence of messengers from Alexander (“Par varo med staddir sendimenn Alexandri kongs. ok ganga at allfast” [42<sup>4-5</sup>]) are not mentioned in the sources. The reason given in the source text for the Jews’ turning away from Demetrius is the king’s mistreatment of them and not the motive implied in GS (“Jonathas ok Símon kuaduz alldri þeim vilia veíta er drap Iudam brodur þeirra” [42<sup>5-7</sup>]).<sup>21</sup> Similarly, there is no mention in the source texts that Jonathan and his men took part in the battle against Demetrius (42<sup>10-11</sup>, 15-16) nor that Demetrius conquered also Gabal (43<sup>22</sup>).<sup>22</sup> In GS it is said that Jonathan did not bear the title of king, even though he wore “purpuram ok koronu. anulum ok gulldalk” (43<sup>14-15</sup>);<sup>23</sup> this is not mentioned in the source text nor is the statement that the foreign army was stealing from King Demetrius and that Jonathan attacked them and took their treasures (48<sup>23-26</sup>); also, none of the texts states that Demetrius’ army came to Jerusalem (48<sup>27</sup>). The “Incarcerati” (55<sup>11</sup>) clarifying the identity of Demetrius and the second name of the Roman consul Lucius, i.e., “Silla” (56<sup>5</sup>), do not appear in the sources.<sup>24</sup> In GS Simon is described as having “v. sonu. ok varo íj. vngir” (57<sup>5-6</sup>), which is not in the sources. Finally, in GS it is said of Alexander the Great that “hann var þa suikinn med eitri af sinum monnum i Babilon. Ok þa er hann hafdi sigrad Porum kong India landz, fengu þeir sua mikit gull. at hans menn gatú varla borit æ ser allt saman ok vapnín. ok þui lét hann gera þeim ollum vapn

<sup>19</sup> 1 Maccabees 7:1 has only “in civitatem maritimam”; 2 Maccabees 14:1 has “Tripolis”; and Josephus has “Tripolis in Syria” (*Antiquitates* XII, xvi [XII, x, 1]).

<sup>20</sup> The reference to the merchants does not appear in the fragment AM 238 fol. XVII and may not be original.

<sup>21</sup> This piece of information is found in AM 238 fol. XVII.

<sup>22</sup> This is found also in AM 238 fol. XVII.

<sup>23</sup> Some of this information is found in AM 238 fol. XVII; it does not say, however, that he wore “a ring and a gold pin”.

<sup>24</sup> The name Lucius Sulla does, however, occur in e.g., Sallust’s *Iugurtha* and is accordingly found in *Rómverjasaga*, where it is also rendered as Silla (p. 62 ff).



af gulli” (24<sup>11-16</sup>); the source texts do not record these details.<sup>25</sup>

*Part II:* Chapters XXI–XXXII (58<sup>23</sup>–88<sup>3</sup>) can be considered to form a middle section. They deal with John Hyrcanus, Simon’s son, and his work of conquest and expansion, the dissension among his sons, Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, the Roman intervention and rule over Judaea under the Roman governor, as well as the rise and decline of the dynasty of Herod. This section is in the main based on the HS;<sup>26</sup> the chapters of GS correspond to the HS as follows:

- XXI (58<sup>23</sup>–60<sup>3</sup>) – HS, 1525A–C
- XXII (60<sup>4</sup>–63<sup>23</sup>) – HS, 1525C–1527C
- XXIII (63<sup>24</sup>–66<sup>11</sup>) – HS, 1527C–1529C
- XXIV (66<sup>13</sup>–68<sup>28</sup>) – HS, 1529C–1530D
- XXV (69<sup>1</sup>–70<sup>14</sup>) – HS, 1531A–1531C
- XXVI (70<sup>15</sup>–71<sup>20</sup>) – HS, 1531D–1532B
- XXVII (71<sup>22</sup>–74<sup>20</sup>) – HS, 1532B–1534A
- XXVIII (74<sup>22</sup>–78<sup>5</sup>) – HS, 1534A–1535D
- XXIX (78<sup>6</sup>–80<sup>3</sup>) – HS, 1535D–1538A
- XXX (80<sup>4</sup>–82<sup>13</sup>) – HS, 1540A–1540B, 1543A–1543D, 1544D–1545C<sup>27</sup>
- XXXI (82<sup>14</sup>–86<sup>18</sup>) – HS, 1545C–1548A<sup>28</sup>
- XXXII (86<sup>19</sup>–88<sup>3</sup>) – HS, 1548A, 1549A–1551B<sup>29</sup>

As in the first part of GS, there are also in this part additions which appear to be derived from Josephus whether directly or indirectly by way of the HS (cf. part I). Thus, the statement that Jonathan, Mariamme’s brother, was seventeen years old (77<sup>2</sup>) is found in some manuscripts of the *De Bello Judaico* (Josephus 1837, I, xxii, 2). The account of Herod’s illness (83<sup>25</sup>–84<sup>13</sup>), which in the translation is much more detailed than in the HS, may also be based on this work (I, xxxiii, 5) with additional material (the stench of Herod’s breath [84<sup>6</sup>]) from *Antiquitates* (XVII, viii [XVII, vi, 5]). Finally, in GS it is said that Herod sends a message not only to Saloma, but also to “Alexandro bonda hennar” (84<sup>23</sup>); this piece of information may also be taken from the *De Bello Judaico* (I, xxxiii, 6).

As is part I, there are also in part II additions containing factual informa-

<sup>25</sup> That he was deceived by his men is, however, mentioned in the *Vita Alexandri*; that he conquered King Porus and had weapons made of gold is stated in the *Epistola Alexandri Macedonis ad Aristotelem Magistrum Suum de Itinere suo et de Situ India* (Thiel 1974: 135, 201, 204).

<sup>26</sup> In this GS resembles the Middle High German work (see n. 13) in which the history of the Jews is also continued with the help of Comestor.

<sup>27</sup> This chapter is compiled from selected passages in GS, and much of Comestor’s text has been omitted.

<sup>28</sup> As in the previous chapter the translator condenses his account and leaves out a considerable part of Comestor’s text.

<sup>29</sup> As in chapter XXX and XXXI the account in GS is abridged in relation to the HS.

tion for which no source has been found. Thus, it is said that Tholomy's real name was Timothy (59<sup>6</sup>) and that King Antiochus died nine years after Simon's death (60<sup>6</sup>); these statements are not found in the source texts examined. The Latin "Missus erat Pompeius a Romanis contra Tigranem regem Armeniæ, et Scaurum erunt præsidem Syria" (1528B) is translated as "þuiat þa hafdi Pompeius Magnus unit undir sik Syrland. Ciriam ok Armeníam" (64<sup>17-18</sup>); it is possible that the "Ciria" mentioned in the Icelandic is merely a repetition of Syria. Moreover, it is stated that Scaurus was dead by the time Gabinius was made a chieftain (66<sup>15</sup>); this information is not found in the source texts. According to GS, Antipater "sendi sonu sina til Mager. sonar Arethe kongs" (68<sup>16</sup>); HS (1530C) does not mention Mager and says only "ad Arabas cognatos."<sup>30</sup> All that HS says about the governor of Syria appointed by Julius Caesar is that he was Sextus, his relative (1531B); none of the sources consulted mention Pompey VI, nor that Pompey was Pompey the Great's son and Caesar's own grandson as in GS (69<sup>17-18</sup>). Moreover, the sources do not say that Caesar "rekr Krassum fra" (69<sup>18</sup>) when Sextus was appointed. Saloma's husband's name, which in GS is "Marítus" (77<sup>21</sup>), is not found in the source texts; it may simply be a transfer of the Latin *maritus* ("husband") taken as a proper name. In GS it is stated that Cleopatra had committed suicide when Augustus came to the island Rhodes (78<sup>16</sup>) and that Christ was born twenty-eight years after Cleopatra and Antonius had died (80<sup>9-10</sup>); this information is not found in the source texts. There is also a passage which does not appear in any of the sources: "Herodes skipar ok ecki byskupinn eptir ættgang. edr lógum Gyðinga. Hann tekr ok allan byskupsskrudann. sua at engi byskup ma sitt embætti fremía. Sliku ollu hellt Archilaus. ok Romueríar eptir hann. Herodes let ok brenna allt ættar tal Gyðinga. at æcki syniz hans ætt suíurdlig hia þeim" (81<sup>5-10</sup>).<sup>31</sup> In GS it is said that before his death Herod asked his men to gather all the most prominent Jews and "bíoda þeim til agiþtrar veítzlu" (84<sup>17-18</sup>); this does not appear in the Latin sources.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, it is stated that Antipater knew about Herod's attempt to commit suicide "þuiat hann var þar geymdr i veggínum" (85<sup>8</sup>); this does not appear in the sources either.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> It is, however, possible that "til Mager" ("to Mager") is corrupt for "til mága [sinna]" ("to [his] in-laws").

<sup>31</sup> This addition is found also in Lbs. 714 8vo (89v), which suggests that it is original. The fragments AM 229 fol. IV, DKNVSB 41 8vo, and Lbs. 4270 4to do not cover this part of the saga.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Jón Helgason (1975:366). Since this is not found in DKNVSB 41 8vo and Lbs. 714 8vo it may not be original. AM 229 fol. IV and Lbs. 4270 4to do not cover this part.

<sup>33</sup> The fragments DKNVSB 41 8vo and Lbs. 714 8vo have further additions not found in the source texts (Lbs. 4270 4to does not cover this section of GS). Thus, in GS in AM 226 fol. it is said that Alexander, Herod's son, sought his father's life, because "enga land stíorn mætti eíga vndir þeim er lita leti hæru sína" (81<sup>29-30</sup>); DKNVSB 41 8vo (225r) and Lbs. 714 8vo (90r) say that no country could have a leader who had his wife and children killed, which is not found in

*Part III:* This final section of GS gives an apocryphal story of the life of Pontius Pilate with an interpolated legend about Judas Iscariot. It is for the most part based on a certain “*historia apocrypha*”, the supposed precursor to Jacobus de Voragine’s *Legenda Aurea* (cf. Martin 1975:144; Jón Helgason 1975:361–4). The “*historia apocrypha*” is found in three publications: In 1838 Franz Joseph Mone published “*Erzählungen zu den Sagen vom Pilatus und Judas*”. Of the two versions of the Pilate legend presented here, what Mone calls “*die ausführliche prosaische Sage*” (cols. 526–529) is based on the twelfth-century Codex Ignot. 86 in Munich. This edition is not complete, however, some passages being rendered in a German summary. In 1876 Anton Schönbach discussed the Pilate legend and its development on the basis of a large number of manuscripts and editions. In the manuscript 37/45 4to in Graz from the fifteenth century Schönbach found a text identical with that of the manuscript on which Mone had based his edition, and printed the passages which Mone had rendered in German. A version of the Judas legend identical with the so-called “*historia apocrypha*” was edited by Ernst von Steinmeyer (1918) on the basis of the Codex Ignot. 86 in Munich with variants from the manuscripts 37/45 in Graz. Steinmeyer was not aware of the fact that two years earlier Baum (1916) had edited the text based on eleven manuscripts. Only one of these eleven manuscripts was known to Steinmeyer but was inaccessible to him because of the War.<sup>34</sup> The chapters of GS correspond to the source texts as follows:<sup>35</sup>

- XXXIII (88<sup>4</sup>–90<sup>20</sup>) – Mone, 526<sup>1</sup>–527<sup>34</sup>; Schönbach, 186<sup>36</sup>–187<sup>4</sup>; Mone, 527<sup>38–48</sup>.  
 XXXIV (90<sup>21</sup>–93<sup>9</sup>) – Steinmeyer, 163<sup>31</sup>–166<sup>24</sup>.  
 XXXV (93<sup>10</sup>–95<sup>2</sup>) – Mone, 527<sup>50</sup>–528<sup>20</sup>; Schönbach, 187<sup>28</sup>–188<sup>11</sup>.  
 XXXVI (95<sup>3</sup>–97<sup>22</sup>) – Schönbach, 188<sup>12</sup>–190<sup>10</sup>.  
 XXXVII (97<sup>23</sup>–99<sup>5</sup>) – See below.  
 XXXVIII (99<sup>6</sup>–100<sup>22</sup>) – Schönbach, 190<sup>10–17</sup>; Mone, 528<sup>42</sup>–529<sup>7</sup>.

In addition to the “*historia apocrypha*” it seems that the translator used other sources. Thus, King Tyrus’ wife is in GS called Anna (88<sup>17</sup>; 89<sup>5</sup>); this name is not found in any of the sources examined (cf. Jón Helgason

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HS. In GS in AM 226 fol. it says that Herod had a golden eagle placed over the highest portal of the temple of Solomon (83<sup>17–18</sup>), which agrees with HS; DKNVSB 41 8vo (225v) and Lbs. 714 8vo (91r), however, state that Herod had taken golden cherubs from the temple and placed them in his own garden, which is not found in any of the sources examined. In the description of Herod’s illness it is added in Lbs. 714 8vo that “Egesippus and Eusebius write that he did not get one but eight different illnesses” (91r); DKNVSB 41 8vo (256r) and Lbs. 714 8vo (91v) also say about Herod that he was so speech-handicapped that no one could understand what he said; finally, Lbs. 714 8vo adds that he was so thirsty that he could never quench his thirst (91v).

<sup>34</sup> Curiously enough Jón Helgason (1975) appears to have been unaware of this edition.

<sup>35</sup> For the Judas legend I refer to Steinmeyer’s edition.

1975:367).<sup>36</sup> In the account of the chest in which Judas was set adrift, GS says that Ruben, Judas' father, put pitch on the outside, that it was without a handle, and that Judas was placed inside it like Moses was (91<sup>16-18</sup>); these details do not appear in the source texts and may be taken from the Bible (Exodus 2:3; cf. Jón Helgason 1975:369, n. 1). GS also says that Ciborea, Judas' mother and wife, was depressed "er hon kom ihuilu. hia honum" and that Judas asked her the reason "einn tima er þau koma ihuilu" (92<sup>25-26</sup>); this information is not found in the source texts either.<sup>37</sup>

In the GS version of the Pilate legend there is also a passage which says that Pilate reported all the events of the Passion to Tiberius, and that Tiberius tried, without success, to induce the Senate to declare Jesus a god. Accordingly, some of the senators were put to death, others were exiled (96<sup>31-97<sup>22</sup></sup>). This information is not in the version of the legend as presented by Mone and Schönbach but appears in other versions, and it would seem reasonable to assume that it was also contained in the Latin source for the GS version of the legend.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, there is in GS a passage relating Herod Antipas' divorce, his execution of John the Baptist, and his being exiled to Vienne (90<sup>10-20</sup>); this passage is not found in Mone and Schönbach's version either.<sup>39</sup>

Finally, there is a chapter in GS (97<sup>23-99<sup>5</sup></sup>) relating that in the Temple in Jerusalem Pilate hung up a picture of Tiberius for veneration, and that he took money from the Temple to build an aqueduct. This led to a riot, which he suppressed by sending among the crowd soldiers with concealed daggers, who massacred a great number of people. Accordingly, the Jews sent a letter of complaint to the Emperor claiming that they did not want him as procurator. This information is not found in Mone and Schönbach's version either.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> This may not be original, as it does not appear in the fragments DKNVSB 41 8vo, Lbs. 714 8vo, and Lbs. 4270 4to.

<sup>37</sup> This addition is found in DKNVSB 41 8vo, but in the Old Swedish *Siællinna Thrøst* it is also stated that the married couple were lying "badhin oppa sinne sæng" when they spoke (p. 66): cf. Jón Helgason (1975:367), Wolf (1989:471).

<sup>38</sup> In the same article, however, Schönbach printed a version of the legend based on the manuscript 38/47 in Graz, which contains an account of Tiberius' efforts to induce the Senate to declare Jesus to be the true God: "post menses vero novem credidit in Christo Jesu Tiberius cesar sanus factus ab omni infirmitate processitque in senatum cum gloria imperiali jubetque senatum, qualiter uno consensu Jesum tenerent et adorarent ut verum deum ejusque statuum super imagines omnium imperatorum et omnium deorum insigniter dedicarent urbi. quod non consenciente senatu ut Christus reciperetur effervescens Tiberius cesar indignatione nimia quam plures nobilissimos ex senatu diversis cruciavit penis eo quod de Christo non acquievisset sibi" (p. 178). In this version Pilate's letter to the Emperor is mentioned in a different context.

<sup>39</sup> The account in GS is not in all instances correct. Thus, the statement that Herodias was the daughter of the Arab king does not agree with the sources which specifically say that Herod Antipas divorced the daughter of the king of Arabia in order to marry his brother's wife, Herodias. Moreover, none of the sources mention Vienne as the place of Herod's exile; *Antiquitates* has Lyons (XVIII, ix [XVIII, vii, 2]) and *De Bello Judaico* Spain (II, ix, 6).

<sup>40</sup> The passage, although less detailed, is, however, found in the *Legenda Aurea* (1965): "Nota

The obvious place to look for the above-mentioned two passages is the HS, since Jacobus refers to this work (see n. 40). The relevant passages in the HS (for 90<sup>10-20</sup> HS, 1545C, 1562A–B, 1575B–C; for 97<sup>23</sup>–99<sup>5</sup> HS, 1551C) are, however, not as detailed as they are in GS; the passages in GS are closer to those in Josephus (*Antiquitates* XVIII, vii [XVIII, v, 1–2] and XVIII, iv [XVIII, iii, 1–2]). Again, it would seem more likely that these additions were drawn from a fuller version of the HS.

The fragments DKNVSB 41 8vo, Lbs. 714 8vo, and Lbs. 4270 4to have further additions not found in the source text. Thus, in all three fragments Pilate's father's name is Atus, while in the Latin he is called Tirus. According to the Latin it is the miller, who is called Atus. Pila, who "regis nominis ignara", names her son Pilatus by compounding her own name and her father's name. In AM 226 fol. Pilate's father's name is – as in the Latin – Tirus, but his mother's name is Sopila. The miller's name is not mentioned. Since she does not know the king's name, she names her son after herself only. In DKNVSB 41 8vo it is the king, who is called Atus. Pilate's mother is named Sopilijna, and the boy is named after his father and mother, who in this version knows the king's name. In Lbs. 714 8vo and Lbs. 4270 4to the king is – as in DKNVSB 41 8vo – named Atus, and Pilate's mother is – as in the Latin – named Pila. Moreover, in the fragments Pilate's half-brother is given a name (DKNVSB 41 8vo: Sesesem; Lbs. 714 8vo and Lbs. 4270 4to: Sasem), whereas in the Latin and AM 226 fol. his name is not mentioned. In the three fragments it is also said that Veronica obtained the linen-cloth when Christ carried his cross (DKNVSB 41 8vo [262r], Lbs. 714 8vo [101r], Lbs. 4270 4to [p. 226]). Finally, after the account of the healing of Tiberius with the aid of the linen-cloth there is a passage in Lbs. 714 8vo which is not found in the Latin sources or in the other MSS of GS: "þesse Veronica, sem Dukenn hafde med christi mynd, var kvalenn til Dauds fyrer christi nafns medkenningu, og þurkade hun sier med Duknum, þá hun geck til sinnar pýnu" (101v); the source for this passage remains unknown.

Finally, chapbook material is found in Lbs. 714 8vo and Lbs. 4270 4to either to supplement or substitute parts of the narrative as it appears in the Latin and in the other GS MSS. Thus, Lbs. 714 8vo records that Pilate's father on his hunt rode after an animal and got lost from his friends, and that he by accident found a miller's house, where he stayed overnight and slept with the miller's daughter (96r, 9–22).<sup>41</sup> A section of the story of the healing

tamen, quod in hystoria scholastica legitur, quod Pylatus a Judaeis accusatus est apud Tyberium de violenta innocentium interfectione et quia Judaeis reclamantibus imagines gentilium in templo ponebat et quia pecuniam repositam in corbanam in suos redigeret usus, inde faciens aquaeductum in domum suam" (p. 234).

<sup>41</sup> Lbs. 4270 4to follows the GS version but adds the chapbook version in brackets: "(Sumir Skrifat at Atus Kongr hafi af Dyra Jacktinne i Natt Myrkre Villst Eirnsaman fra Sveinum Synum, oc Komiz inn i Eina Minlara Stofu oc Verid þar Um Nottina oc hafi hvylz hia Minlarans Dottr Pylu:)" (pp. 253<sup>23</sup>–254<sup>1</sup>).

of Tiberius in the two fragments also differs considerably from that in AM 226 fol. and DKNVSB 41 8vo. According to the Latin, AM 226 fol. and DKNVSB 41 8vo, the leprous Tiberius hears of Christ's powers in healing and sends his envoy, Albanus, to Pilate requesting that Christ be sent to him in Rome. In the two fragments the story is expanded and material has been added. Here it is Pilate's messenger, Adrianus, who tells the leprous Tiberius about Christ and his powers in healing. Adrianus also gives Tiberius a letter from Pilate saying that Christ has arisen from the dead, and accordingly Tiberius sends his envoy (Voluntianus [Lbs. 4270 4to] / Volunsianus [Lbs. 714 8vo]) to Pilate requesting that Christ be sent to him.<sup>42</sup> Since some time elapses without any communication from his messenger, he sends a second envoy, Columbanus.<sup>43</sup> Columbanus stops at "Arkata" on his journey, where he finds the first envoy, and they both travel to Jerusalem (99v, 9–100r, 24; pp. 260<sup>23</sup>–262<sup>14</sup>).

The final chapter (XXXIX) contains a survey of Jewish history from A.D. 37 to A.D. 44. The information is not all available in the HS but is found scattered in books XVIII and XIX of the *Antiquitates*. Much of the information, such as the story of Herod's persecution, Peter's deliverance,<sup>44</sup> and Herod's death may, however, have been common knowledge, and therefore not based on a literary source.

As evident from the above, GS is based on three main sources: the Maccabees, Comestor's HS, and a certain "historia apocrypha". In addition, there are indications that the translator used the works of Josephus, though whether directly or indirectly from the HS is hard to say. Finally, there are some additions for which no direct source has been identified. Some of these additions may have been common knowledge or may be the translator's or a later scribe's inventions, but others contain factual information. Whether the translator relied on additional sources to the ones listed above, or whether this information was contained in his version of the established sources must remain open.

<sup>42</sup> In the Munich-MS and in most MSS of GS he is called Albanus; in the *Legenda Aurea* he is called Volusianus. The scribe of the Graz-MS seems to have had in his original the name Albanus but must have known the name Volusianus from other sources; the first couple of times the envoy is mentioned the scribe alters the name to Volusianus, but then gives up and calls the same man Albanus (cf. Jón Helgason [1975], p. 364). In Lbs. 714 8vo the envoy is called Volunsianus, though in parenthesis it is added that "Adrer seigja Albanus" (99v, 27–100r, 1); later on in the story the scribe calls the envoy Albanus. In Lbs 4270 4to the envoy is called Voluntianus throughout.

<sup>43</sup> The comment on the name Columbanus in Lbs. 4270 4to is noteworthy: "Columbanus (:nefniz i Sumum Fræðibókum Albanus, oc gietr um at hann Eirn, Enn ecke Fleire hafí af Keysaranum Sendir Verid til Pilatum at Sækia Jesum:)" (p. 262<sup>10-12</sup>).

<sup>44</sup> The three fragments DKNVSB 41 8vo (164v), Lbs. 714 8vo (104v), and Lbs. 4270 4to (p. 270) all add a reference to Acts 12 for the account of Peter's deliverance by an angel.

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