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The Story of Joseph of Arimathea in AM 655 XXVII 4to

Although only a handful of verses refer to him in the New Testament narratives, Joseph, a noble Jewish counsellor from the city of Arimathea, plays an essential role in the dramatic events following Christ's crucifixion. Neither fully aware of the possibly prodigious outcomes, nor afraid of the wrath of his own community, Joseph played an integral part in the fulfillment of Christ's passion and burial, as foretold by Isaiah (53:9) and, by implication, in the resurrection process.¹ In contrast to the

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¹ The early church typologically connected Matthew's (27:58) account of Joseph's petition and entombment of Christ's body to the 'wealthy man' of Isaiah (53:9), who assigns a tomb to the suffering servant: 'And he shall give the ungodly for his burial, and the rich for his death: because he hath done no iniquity, neither was there deceit in his mouth'. On this subject, see for instance Wilkins (2009, 129–132). Unless otherwise stated, all quotations of the Latin Vulgate are taken from Weber et al. (2007); all English translations of its text are taken from the Douay-Rheims Bible, available at <http://drbo.org>, accessed on 27 May 2016.

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Abstract: The Story of Joseph of Arimathea extracted from the apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus* represents the earliest and most extensive amplification of the Gospels' narratives dealing with the finding of Christ's empty tomb and with the events leading to and following his resurrection. The present study aims at providing the first survey and edition of the sole surviving extract concerning Joseph's story in Icelandic translation, extant as item 5 in AM 655 XXVII 4to, a much-neglected Icelandic homiliary dating from ca. 1300 preserved at the Arnarnagðna Collection in Copenhagen. The Icelandic Story of Joseph is here compared to and tested against all the Latin and vernacular variant texts of the *Gospel of Nicodemus* that were known in Iceland by the beginning of the fourteenth century and related to the Marian and eschatological homilies transmitted along with it in AM 655 XXVII 4to. The survey is followed by a first semi-diplomatic edition of item 5 (*Af fangelsi Ioseps*), whose deficient or illegible readings have been emended on the basis of its underlying Latin source.

Keywords: Joseph of Arimathea, the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, Christ's Resurrection, Mary's Assumption, *Mariu saga*, *Niðrstigningar saga*, Skálholt Cathedral Library.

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other disciples, he courageously requests the body of Christ from Pilate, removes it from the cross, and buries it with dignity inside his own untouched sepulcher.²

Although with some discrepancies, all four gospels describe the same events regarding Christ's deposition from the cross and his entombment. The earliest account is found in Mark (15:42–47), according to whom Joseph was 'a noble counsellor' from the city of Arimathea who was 'looking for the kingdom of God'. After Christ's crucifixion, Joseph 'went in boldly to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus'; he subsequently 'wrapped him in the fine linen, and laid him in a sepulcher which was hewed out of a rock', closing it with a large stone. There are indications that Matthew, Luke, and John knew and used Mark's verses, abridging, omitting, and adjusting his information to their own ideological concerns (Lyons 2014, 10). Luke (23:50–56), for instance, adds that Joseph was a 'a good and just man' and that in the tomb where he had placed Christ's body 'never yet a man had been laid', while Matthew (27:57–61) describes Joseph as being a 'rich man' and 'a disciple of Jesus' and specifies that the sepulcher was indeed Joseph's 'own new monument'. John (19:38–42), on the other hand, stresses that Joseph kept his discipleship 'secretly for fear of the Jews' and that after Christ's removal from the cross, he together with Nicodemus, who had brought 'a mixture of myrrh and aloes' to the tomb to anoint the body, laid Christ 'in a new sepulcher' located inside a garden not far from the place of his crucifixion (Golgotha) 'wherein no man yet had been laid'.

The longest early medieval narrative about Joseph's handling of the body of Christ and that narrative's inclusion in a highly influential apocryphal text ascribed to Nicodemus may owe much to the latter reference in John. First entitled *Deeds of the Savior* and subsequently renamed after its alleged compiler, the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, or *Evangelium Nicodemi*, is traditionally divided into three narrative units relating to two separate texts. The first and older section known as *Acta Pilati* includes both canonical and apocryphal anecdotes related to the Passion of Christ (chaps. I.1–XI.2) and the story of Joseph of Arimathea (XI.3–XVII.1), whereas the more recent and considerably more imaginative narrative of the *Descensus Christi ad inferos* (XVII.2–XXVII.5) describes Christ's

² In the following discussion, I briefly present the Gospels' accounts of Joseph, as described in the Vulgate, according to the 'Markan priority' order (that is, Mark, Luke/Matthew or Matthew/Luke and John) employed for the study of the corresponding Greek verses on Joseph by Lyons (2014, 8–20). For a demonstration of the 'Markan priority' theory, see especially Osborne and Williams (2002).

harrowing and destruction of Hell, an episode only vaguely alluded to in the Scriptures but professed in the Creed.³ These two texts were in all probability combined to form a single pseudo-epigraphical gospel between the fifth and the eighth centuries, only once they were both available in Latin (Izydorczyk 1997b, 48). Already during its early circulation and throughout the Middle Ages, the *Gospel of Nicodemus* enjoyed unparalleled popularity to such an extent that it nearly attained canonical status, becoming 'part of commonplace Christian knowledge' (Izydorczyk 1997a, 16) and being virtually regarded as a 'fifth gospel' (di Paolo Healey 1985, 98). This high regard for the apocryphon is evident in the survival of over 400 medieval manuscripts dating from the eighth to the sixteenth century that transmit the Latin text.⁴

The author of the *Acta Pilati* seems to have made an attempt to harmonize the information gathered from the Gospels. In line with Luke, he describes Joseph as a 'good and righteous man', who following Mark, is said to be 'awaiting the Kingdom of God'. Furthermore, the author describes Joseph as 'holding an office' (Luke and Mark)⁵ and as a friend of Nicodemus (deduced from John).⁶ However, these relatively scarce details in the Scriptures left room for abundant literary development and creativity. The following chapters substantially expand the Gospels' narratives and describe how Joseph was imprisoned by the Jewish authorities in a dark, windowless chamber, with guards posted outside, to await execution because he had taken down and entombed the body of Christ.

³ Christ's deliverance of humankind from the dominion of Satan is hinted at twice in John (1:16; 15: 4–5); once in 1 Corinthians (1:4–7); three times in Ephesians (1:3–4; 2:10; 4:7); and once in Colossians (2:9–10). See Sperry Chafer (1984, 64). Towards the end of the fourth century, in his *Commentarius in symbolum apostolorum*, Rufinus of Aquileia (†411) quotes a baptismal Creed that already included the clause 'descendit ad inferna', whereas the Old Roman Creed notably omits it. For a discussion on the Eastern and Western Creeds and their inclusion/omission of the Descent motif, see especially MacCulloch (1930, 67–82) and Gounelle (2000, 30–31).

⁴ The copious manuscript tradition has been catalogued in Izydorczyk (1993). The following summary is based on the text of *Codex Einsidlensis*, Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek, 326 (ff. 11r–29v), written in the tenth century in Fulda and edited by Kim (1973). Its readings are indicated below with the letter K.

⁵ 'Ecce uir quidam nomine Ioseph agens curam, uir bonus et iustus. Hic non fuit consensuens uoluntatibus et accusationibus Iudaeorum, ab Arimathea ciuitate Iudae, et ipse erat expectans regnum Dei. Hic rogauit Pilatum et petiit corpus Iesu. Et deponens eum de cruce inuoluit eum in sindone munda et posuit eum in monumentum suum nouum, in quo nullus fuerat positus' (K XL.3 26/3–10).

⁶ Before Joseph was seized and imprisoned by the Jews, Joseph and Nicodemus are said to have been the only ones to speak before Pilate and the high priests in defense of Christ. Subsequently, when returning to Jerusalem from Arimathea, Joseph spends a night in the house of Nicodemus where a great feast is held in his honor.

However, when the Jews return and unseal the room after the Sabbath, they find, to their dismay, that Joseph was not in the chamber and, similarly, neither was Christ's body in the sepulcher. They immediately begin searching for Jesus, who has reportedly been seen by his disciples ascending into Heaven from the Mount of Olives. However, instead of Jesus they find Joseph in the city of Arimathea. In a letter delivered to him from the high priests, Joseph is requested to travel back to Jerusalem and tell the council of his extraordinary experience. Joseph complies with this request and eventually meets with the Council. He reports that, while he was in prison and praying to the Lord, around midnight, a great light illuminated the darkness of his room and the chamber was lifted up in the air by its four corners; he was soaked in water and gently kissed by Christ. In order to prove that he was not the prophet Elijah, with whom Joseph had initially confused him, Christ takes Joseph to his own tomb and subsequently into Joseph's own home in Arimathea, where Joseph stays for forty days while Christ goes to Galilee to preach to his disciples.

The Story of Joseph of Arimathea is one of the most frequently borrowed passages of the Latin *Evangelium Nicodemi* and, being particularly centered on Christ's ascension, it is often found embedded in homiliaries, either quoted verbatim or adopted to various degrees into a foreign narrative frame (Izydorczyk 1997b, 99–100). Moreover, there seems to have been a particular tendency throughout the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries to include the *Evangelium Nicodemi* in manuscripts collecting texts on the Assumption of Mary, possibly with the intent to strengthen the latter text's theological doctrine.⁷ As shall be seen below, Iceland is no exception to this particular tendency.

AM 655 XXVII 4to

AM 655 XXVII is a fragmentary parchment manuscript in 4to format, consisting of fourteen leaves, preserving mostly Latin homilies and treatises in Icelandic translation centered chiefly on Marian dogmas and

⁷ Izydorczyk (1993) lists nine manuscripts preserving texts on Mary's Assumption along with the *Evangelium Nicodemi*: four are from the fourteenth century (items 86, 171, 177, 317); three from the fifteenth (186, 101, 413); and only two from the thirteenth (items 346, 365). In the catalogue, they are grouped under the following rubrics: *De assumptione (beatae) Mariae (Virginis)* items 86, 177, 186, 317, 101; *Liber de assumptione Mariae*, item 101; *Sermo de assumptione beatae Mariae Virginis*, items 365, 413; *Sermo de transitu sive de assumptione sanctae Mariae*, item 346; *Tractatus de assumptione beatae Mariae Virginis*, 380. Item 171 transmits unspecified texts on the Assumption.

various anabasic and eschatological topics.⁸ Five of them (items 3, 4, 7, 8, 9) are excerpted from *Maríu saga*, whose composition has been attributed to Kygri-Björn Hjaltason (†1237/38), cleric and bishop-elect of Hólar, sometime after he attended the Fourth Lateran Council, summoned by Pope Innocent III to Rome on 11 November 1216, where he must have collected at least some of the material used for its composition.⁹

The most extensive study of AM 655 XXVII 4to to date was conducted by Hallgrímur Ámundason who, in agreement with Kristian Kålund, dates its language and script to around 1300. In contrast to Ole Widding but in agreement with Hreinn Benediktsson, Hallgrímur suggests Icelandic rather than Norwegian provenance, especially on account of the scribe's conservatism in the use of *hl* and *hr* in initial positions (1994a, 26–27). A single leaf, AM 655 XVIII 4to, seems to have been written by the same hand that wrote AM 655 XXVII 4to and may have once been part of the same manuscript (Hallgrímur J. Ámundason 1994a, 24–27). Concerning its circulation, Hallgrímur relies exclusively on a slip written by Árni Magnússon, preserved together with the manuscript, in which Árni notes that its leaves were given to him by farmer and former Skálholt student Magnús Jónsson (†1752) of Snóksdalur in Dalasýsla (Hallgrímur J. Ámundason 1994a, 2).¹⁰

The extant leaves, worn and fragmentary, belong to four quires, subsequently erroneously bound in the present order. Following the original sequence restored by Hallgrímur, the first quire transmits portions of:

⁸ Two of its previously unstudied texts (items 1 and 11) and their respective sources have only recently been re-examined and discussed by Stephen Pelle (Pelle, 2013).

⁹ As shown below, this seems to have been the case for item 7 of AM 655 XXVII, a treatise on the misery of the human condition, written by Pope Innocent III, which predates the Lateran Council by some fifteen years. The attribution of *Maríu saga* to Bishop Kygri-Björn is found in AM 398 4to, a seventeenth-century manuscript that transmits the appendix to *Guðmundar saga biskups D*, compiled from a fourteenth-century Latin original. See Jón Sigurðsson and Guðbrandur Vigfússon (1878, 186). His travel to Rome and attendance at the Council is described in the same text (*ibid.*, 96). Carl R. Unger edits two related versions of *Maríu saga* separately: he makes use of Stock Perg. 11 4to (ca. 1325–75) as base text for the first version, with variant readings from AM 232 fol. (ca. 1350), AM 633 4to (ca. 1700–1725), AM 634 4to (1700–1725), Stock Perg. 1 4to (1450–1500), and of AM 234 fol. (ca. 1340); and AM 240 IX fol. (ca. 1300) for the second, along with readings from AM 240 I fol. (1375–1400), AM 240 II fol. (1300), AM 240 X fol. (1400), XI (ca. 1275–1300), XIV (ca. 1300). The two redactions are edited in Unger (1871, 1–62, 332–401; 339–401). In the following description of its texts, I make use of Hallgrímur Ámundason (1994b) transcription of the manuscript; for the sake of consistency, I have adapted it to the editorial conventions followed for the restoration of the text *Af fangelsi Ioseps* below.

¹⁰ See also Kålund (1894, 65). During the first Icelandic census of 1703, Magnús was 27 and living at Höll in Hörðudalshreppur (Dalasýsla). See 'Magnús Jónsson' in <http://www.manntal.is>, consulted on 27 May 2016.

(a) a homiletic treatise entitled *De sex alis cherubim* (ff. 2r/1–1v/19) that describes the first of the six wings of a Seraphim in which five virtues are grouped;¹¹ (b) a fragmentary homily on Peter and Paul (ff. 1ar/1–5r/10) commenting on Christ's third appearance to his disciples at the Sea of Galilee as told in John (21:15–25);¹² and (c) excerpts from a homily on the Assumption of Mary (f. 5r/10–5v/18), possibly *De assumptione sanctae Mariae Virginis*—also known as the letter of the Pseudo-Jerome, composed in the ninth century at Corbie by its abbot Paschasius Radbertus (†865)—or a later text directly indebted to it.¹³ The second quire preserves an eschatological homily on the fate of the soul on Doomsday (ff. 3r/1–4v/19),¹⁴ which mentions the well-known division of the human body into four cardinal elements and the tripartite nature of the soul.¹⁵

¹¹ The first wing, called 'confessio', gathers 'integritas', 'firmitas', 'humilitas', and 'simplicitas'. Contrary to what is suggested by its title, the treatise describes the wings of a Seraphim, not a Cherubim, as described in the call of Isaiah (6:1–2). The Latin source underlying the Icelandic text has been recently identified by Pelle (2013, 52–58).

¹² Cf. 'Jesus mælti. Vid hann fædu sauðe mina (John 21:17). Þa bauð Dominus Petro varðvæzlo sauda sinna er han hafði aðr þrysvar iatat elsko Guðs. En þau kenningarorð er ek hefi mælt fyrir yðr lætit slíkt af at nyta sem er megoð ok kunnet Guði þok þess er er nytit af þessom orþom. En Guð sialfr læri yðr með þere kenningo allre er þer þurbit at hafa til þess at þer meget i himinriki at ælifo una með almackom Guði ok með allri himinrikis dyrð per omnia secula seculorum. Amen' (f. 5r/1–10). I have been unable to identify its direct source.

¹³ The first quire is formed by ff. 2+1+1a+5. The homily on the Assumption is found in *Mariú saga* (rubr. *Af upnumning Marie*); see Unger (1871, 57/9–58/2; 396/2–25). Both the Icelandic and Latin texts allegedly ascribe the writing to Jerome 'þar qvedr Jeronimus prestr' (f. 5r/15), according to whom, it is said, Mary's body had not been found in its grave after her death because it had been already taken up into heaven. It should nevertheless be noted that the Icelandic text quotes verbatim the Latin antiphon for the feast of the Assumption, which fuses together Song of Songs 6:9 and 6:3, rather than the Canticles per se: 'Quae est ista que ascendit sicut aurora consurgens pulcra ut luna electa ut sol terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata' (f. 5v 12/14). The letter of the Pseudo-Jerome is edited in Ripberger (1985, 97–172); the antiphon is available in Hesbert (1968, no. 4425).

¹⁴ The second quire gathers ff. 3+4. The eschatological homily is also transmitted in *Mariú saga* (rubr. *Um dal Josaphat and Framfor Marie*); see Unger (1871, 52–56; 391–395).

¹⁵ Cf. 'Hversu licamr manz er samansettr af .iiii. haufuðscepnum jordo ok vatne elde ok lopti [...] Aunden er með þreno ædle sva sem licamen með ferno þviat (hon) er racionabilis id est scynfull delectabilis id est þekkin irascibilis id est reiðul' (ff. 3r 9–11; 3v/9–12). A passage similar to the Icelandic text, which also includes the composition of the body, is found in an eighth-century Irish catechetical compilation known as *Ex dictis Sancti Hieronimi*, which states: '(Quadriformis) exterius, id est terra, aqua, aere, igni, et triformis interius, id est irascibilis, concupiscibilis, racionabilis'. See McNally (1973, 226/62–64). However, this tripartite nature of the human soul ('racionabilis', 'concupiscibilis'/'delectabilis', 'irascibilis') was a highly popular doctrine in the Middle Ages; it can be traced back to Late Antiquity and is found in numerous expositions, commented and elaborated upon in various ways. For a brief chronological review of its use, see for instance Szarmach (1984, 143–4, note 27).

The third codicological unit includes the account on the resurrection of Christ and the subsequent imprisonment of Joseph of Arimathea extracted from the Latin *Evangelium Nicodemi* (ff. 6r/1–9v/20).¹⁶ The last quire preserves various homiletic excerpts beginning with a homily on All Saints' Day (f. 10r/1–17) in which women are overtly praised for having to overcome a greater and 'unpeaceful' soul-body dichotomy in order to become saints.¹⁷ These are followed by two sermons on the Nativity of the Lord. The first stresses how Christ wept on only three occasions during his lifetime (ff. 10r/18–11r/21) and gives an explanation of the name Eve as 'woe', possibly extracted from the widely circulated ascetical treatise *De contemptu mundi sive de miseria conditionis humanae*, written by Innocent III at the turn of the thirteenth century (Howard, 1963).¹⁸ The second recounts the Annunciation to the shepherds (f. 11v/1–14) as found in Luke (2:8–14).¹⁹ There follow an exegetical treatise on peace (f. 11v/15–21), here compared to the threefold invocation of peace in the *Agnus Dei* of the divine office;²⁰ and a sermon on the importance of weeping (f. 12r/1–9), which transmits the fourth antiphon for the Second Vespers in the Common of Several Martyrs

¹⁶ The third quire consists of ff. 6+9+7+8.

¹⁷ The fragment reads: 'Nu var ofridar qveiquan i upphafi konan Eva mille Goðs ok manna ok missætis. Nu er ok en mæri agangr ok ofriðr mille andar ok licama konunnar helldr en karlamann(z) ens þviat hon er ostyrki i æðlino [...] Nu þessom aullom upptoldom svæitom [viz. licama konunnar] holldom ver til dyrdar þessa dags hatit' (f. 10r/1–5; 10–12). I have been unable to trace its source.

¹⁸ Over sin during his triumphal entry into Jerusalem in Luke (19:41), for sorrow at the grave of Lazarus in John (11:33–35), and over his own suffering during his Passion in Hebrews (5:7–9). The excerpt is found in *Mariu saga*; see Unger (1871 26/8–28/19 rubr. *Frá Augusto keisara*; 366/6–367/24 rubr. *Af Augusto keisara*). Cf. '[G]ræiter hvert barn þa synð er a lagðiz a allt ættrif ðerra Adams ok Evo af þerra ohlyðne við Guð ok scyra sva ritningat at sveinbarn hafi "A" fyrst i hliode sins graz ok merki sa stafr synð Adams en mæybarn þat hlið hennar glæp. En þessa bada stafi barnet i sinom grati "A" "E" hvarr sem fyrri fylger rauddonne ok merkir þat i þvi at barnit græter þa synðena er bæði er tynt aunnd ok likama ef æigi hræinasc þat fra enne gaumlo synð' (f. 10v/3–13). In his treatise on the misery of humankind Innocent III writes: 'Omnes nascimur ejulantes, ut nostram miseriam exprimamus. Masculus enim recenter natus dicit A, femina vero E: Dicentes E vel A, quotquot nascuntur ab Eva' PL (217, 705B).

¹⁹ Also in *Mariu saga*; cf. Unger (1871 28/21–29/9 rubr. *Frá fëbirðum*; 367/26–368/12 rubr. *Af fëbirðum*).

²⁰ The first type is called 'breast or heart peace' and is attributed to both the Virgin and the apostles who, it is said, instead of hating those who offended them, loved them for the pure sake of God. Cf. 'Þræfalldr er goðra manna friðr sa er þriu Agnus dei ero minning sunen i hverre messo. En fyrsta friðar græin hæter briostfridr æða hiarta fridr þann hafde en sæla Maria ok Guðs postolar at alldregi varo þeim þer mæingiorþer giorvar er þau hataði sina memgiordar menn hælldr ælscoþu þau menn fyrer Guðs sakar'. See also *Mariu saga*, Unger (1871 29/11–17 rubr. *Frá fëbirðum*); Unger (1871, 368/13–19 rubr. *Af fëbirðum*).

(*Absterget Deus*) derived from Revelation 21:4.²¹ Finally, there is an exposition on Gabriel's Annunciation to the Virgin as related in Luke 1:28 (ff. 12r/10–13v/21), composed by the abbot of Springiersbach, Ab-salon (†ca. 1196/1204), in the twelfth century and edited as *Sermo festi-valis* 22.²²

The Marian texts transmitted in AM 655 XXVII 4to are presented in a different order than in *Maríu saga*. Envisioned and executed as a biographical piece, the latter text relates the events and anecdotes concerning Mary's life, closely following their natural and chronological order. First, a treatise on peace emphasizes Mary's graceful human qualities, then two homilies describe her childbirth and the Nativity of Christ, and finally a group of homilies deals with her Assumption and Doomsday (in succession items 9, 7, 8, 3, 4 of AM 655 XXVII). In contrast, the focus of AM 655 XXVII 4to, rather than historical or biographical, seems to be specifically liturgical and doctrinal, giving special prominence to Mary's Assumption. As a matter of fact, the three texts that follow the two initial homilies (centered on virtues) seem to address, directly or indirectly, the same anabasic theme: *De assumptione sanctae Mariae Virginis* (item 3), to be read at the corresponding festivity of August 15; the eschatological homily on Doomsday, which contained the same *Maríu saga* preface introducing the discovery of Mary's empty tomb at the Valley of Josaphat, above which God's final Judgment is supposed to be taking place (item 4);²³ and the finding of the Christ's empty tomb, in which he was buried by Joseph of Arimathea, whose fortunes are extensively related in the *Evangelium Nicodemi* (item 5). The remaining texts are presented following the liturgical calendar: the praise of women among all saints, whose feast is celebrated on 1 November (item 6) and among whom

²¹ 'Gratom nu ok tvænnan grat oss i hiortom annan hryggðar grat meððran oss til læðrætto ok batnaðar en annan æpter þan fagnaðar ubi Deus absterget omnem lacrimam ab oculis sanctorum. Þa 'er' Guð þerrr af hvert tar af augom hæilagra manna sinna' (f. 12r1/–8). The antiphon is edited in Hesbert (1968, no. 1212). I have been unable to trace its source.

²² The last quire gathers ff. 10+11+12+13. The source of item 11 has also been identified and studied by Pelle (2013, 58–69). Pelle provides parallel readings of the Norse text and the Latin excerpts available in PL (211, 130D–131C; 131D–132B; 133A–B; 133C; 133B–C; 134A).

²³ As found in the extant corresponding passage of *Maríu saga*: 'Staðr sá er hin helga mæri María andaðiz, heitir sem aðr var sagtt, vallis Josaphat. Hann liggir a milli fialla tveggja þeira, er annað heitir Oliveti enn annað Syon [...] Ok af því fialli Oliveti steig drottinn Jesvs til himna. Þat er oc savgn heilagra ritninga, at domrinn efzti, saa drottinn dæmir vm allt mankyn, skyli þar vera vppi i loptinv yfir dalnm Josaphat'. See Unger (391/3–14). The final Judgment of the Nations at the Valley of Josaphat is announced in Joel (3:2).

Mary represents the highest example of virtue, followed by two sermons on the Nativity to be read at Christmas (items 7 and 8), the two texts on peace and the importance of weeping (items 9 and 10), and finally Absalon's exposition of the Annunciation (item 11), celebrated on 25 March.

To judge from their conjunctive errors, which naturally exclude poly-genetic errors such as omissions or misspellings that may arise independently in the transcription process (Maas 1958, 42–49), the scribe of AM 655 XXVII seems to have made use of a manuscript transmitting a second redaction of *Mariu saga*, which preserved later trivializations of the original text.²⁴ Among the manuscripts employed by Unger for his edition of the second redaction, 655 XXVII seems to share the greatest number of variant readings with both AM 234 fol. and AM 240 fol. X, respectively, available as Unger's main text and as variants in his apparatus. Moreover, 655 XXVII displays a certain number of agreements with AM 240 fol. X alone, a fragment consisting of three leaves dating from ca. 1400.²⁵

While virtually nothing is known about AM 240 fol. X,²⁶ numerous marginalia testify the ample fruition of AM 234 fol.; its 81 double-columned leaves, dating from ca. 1340, are what remains of a voluminous

²⁴ So, for instance, the passage of the antiphon for the Assumption 'que ascendit', first quoted in Latin in the text, is translated correctly with the present indicative 'er uppstigr' in the first redaction (Unger 1871, 57/30), whereas the preterit 'er uppsteig' is employed in the second redaction (Unger 1871, 396/23–24) and in AM 655 XXVII (f 5v/16). Although the conjugation of the Latin 'ascendere' displays syncretism, 'ascendit' being both the present and the perfect form of the verb, the correct Icelandic translation should be considered the present form 'er uppstigr', the referent here being the daily recurring sunrise ('aurora') above the eastern horizon. Similarly, there is a different choice of copular auxiliaries for the passive construction in the Greater Doxology, first quoted in Latin in the text, in which the first redaction translates 'in terra pax' with the subjunctive verb 'verða', 'á iörðu verði friðr' (Unger 1871, 29/8), whereas the second redaction, along with AM 655 XXVII (f. 11v/13–14), employs the subjunctive of 'vera', 'aa iorðv se friðr' (Unger 1871, 368/11). In both instances, the first redaction seems to transmit original, sounder readings.

²⁵ The following examples are the most notable agreements revealed by a complete collation of AM 655 XXVII with all the manuscripts of the second redaction available in Unger's edition and transmitting item 7, the first sermon on the Nativity (Unger 1871, 366/6–367/24; AM 655 XXVII 10r/18–11r/21). AM 655 XXVII (F) is in agreement with both AM 240 fol. X (b) and AM 234 fol. (A) against AM 240 fol. IX (E) and AM 240 fol. I (c) in the following instances: 1. 'Romaborgar ríki' (F, A, b)/'Romaborg' (E, c); 2. 'allr heimr' (F, A, b)/'allr lydr' (E, c); 3. 'keisari' (F, A, b)/'konungr' (E, c); 4. 'allan heim' (F, A, b)/'all sin ríke' (E, c); 5. 'æfnið' (F, A, b)/'efni' (E); 6. 'i hljóði' (F, A, b)/'i hlíodan' (E); 7. 'drotten alenn' (F, A, b)/'drotten fæddr' (E); 8. 'rauflaust glær' (F, A, b)/'heilitt glær' (E). It is in agreement exclusively with AM 240 fol. X (b) in these other instances: 1. 'hvert barn' (F, b)/'hvert maðr' (A, E, c); 2. 'allt ættrif' (F, b)/'ættrif' (A, E, c); 3. 'hefir' (F, b)/'hafvi' (A, E, c); 4. 'er tynt' (F, b)/'er tynd' (A, E, c).

²⁶ Kålund (1889–1894, 209) transcribes exclusively its incipit and explicit.

manuscript, collecting numerous hagiographical texts, which has for a long time belonged to the library of Skálholt Cathedral.²⁷ This connection to Skálholt is suggested both by the presence among the *Mariu jarteignir* (39vb–55vb) of the well-known Marian miracle of a priest drinking a spider from his wine chalice during mass, which is extant exclusively in AM 234 fol. and was reportedly told by the seventh bishop of Skálholt Páll Jónsson (†1211) during the Feast of the Assumption;²⁸ and by ten marginal names of Skálholt students, dating from 1640 to 1690 who, according to an oral communication given to Árni Magnússon by former Skálholt student Þormóður Torfason (†1719), dismembered the quires of AM 234 fol. during the second half of the seventeenth century in order to obtain new cover leaves for their own copybooks (Foote 2003, 12).²⁹ This seems to have been a well-established practice that affected both devotional and secular texts when the parchment leaves transmitting them were already in various stage of despair: it was common not only among young school students who would ravage torn manuscripts in the cathedral collections, but also common among wealthy descendants of the Icelandic middle class, who inherited flawed vellum from their families.

Indeed, the same unfortunate fate met AM 122 b fol., also known as *Reykjafjarðarbók*, a codex from ca. 1375–1400 that opens with *Sturlunga saga* (ff. 1r–24v).³⁰ It was owned in the seventeenth century by Árni Guðmundsson, a landowner in Hóll í Bíldudal (Barðastrandarsýsla).³¹ Because of its illegibility, between 1676 and 1679, Árni tore apart its leaves and gave them to some of his friends to be used as book covers (Már Jónsson 2010, 307). Of its remnants, leaf 17 was acquired by Mag-

²⁷ Along with the second redaction of *Mariu saga* (ff. 28vb–39vb) and *Mariu jarteignir* (39vb–55vb), AM 234 fol. transmits the first redaction of *Antónius saga* (ff. 1ra–19vb), the second redaction of *Páls saga postola* (ff. 19vb–28vb), the first redaction of *Jóns saga ens helga* (ff. 55vb–67ra), the first redaction of *Ágústínus saga* (67ra–73rb), and the first redaction of *Vitae partum* (ff. 74va–78vb), as can be gathered from Wolf (2013).

²⁸ The exemplum, recounted by Archbishop Absalon to Bishop Páll in Lund (†1201), describes a Danish priest drinking a poisonous spider from his chalice during Mass and, after the invocation and intercession of the Virgin, seeing the spider coming out of his little finger that same afternoon. The text (rubr. *Af presti i Danmork*) is edited as miracle 52 in Unger (1871, 153).

²⁹ The marginalia of AM 234 fol. are available at <http://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/da/AM02-0234>, accessed on 27 May 2016.

³⁰ Along with fragments of *Árna saga biskups* (ff. 25r–27v) and *Guðmundar saga biskups* (28r–30v).

³¹ Árni Guðmundsson was 47 during the 1703 census. See ‘Árni Guðmundsson’ in <http://manntal.is>, accessed on 27 May 2016.

nús Jónsson of Snóksdalur, who in 1704 sent it to Árni Magnússon, along with five other torn leaves, today AM 455 c I 4to, dating from ca. 1395–1425 and containing texts of the Pseudo-Vatnshyrna, that is *Víga Glúms saga* (ff. 1r–5v) and *Gísla saga Súrssonar* (ff. 2r–5v) (McKinnell 1970, 312).³² Although Árni Magnússon does not mention the date of his receipt of AM 655 XXVII 4to from Magnús Jónsson, it is highly likely that its fourteen leaves were sent to Copenhagen in the same 1704 parcel that contained AM 455 c I 4to and leaf 17 of *Reykjafjarðarbók*. Accordingly, there are three plausible ways in which Magnús might have acquired AM 655 XXVII 4to: (a) during the fourth quarter of the seventeenth century as inheritance from his family in Dalasýsla; (b) some time later during his school years, in the Cathedral library at Skálholt, while in search of parchment to bind some of his copybooks; or (c) at the turn of the eighteenth century in Dalasýsla or the Westfjords from Árni Guðmundsson, along with leaf 17 of *Reykjafjarðarbók*.

What might be deduced from the presented evidence is that the compiler of AM 655 XXVII had drawn at least part of the extant Marian homilies and treatises from a codex of *Maríu saga*, transmitting its second revised redaction; this must have been one of the ancestors of AM 234 fol., today the best representative of the second redaction, whose text might have been already available at Skálholt during the first half of the fourteenth century. Subsequently, during the seventeenth century, AM 655 XXVII was either still preserved among the remnants of Skálholt's medieval library, or it was already in circulation in the Dalasýsla/Westfjords regions. In either case, however, it seems clear that Magnús Jónsson acquired it on account of its highly compromised condition and poor readability.

The Old Norse Text

Although specific or direct scriptural references are lacking, Mary's spiritual and bodily Assumption has always been regarded as dependent upon that of Christ himself; it is through Christ's grace that her tomb remained uncorrupted and she was taken up to be united with the Re-

³² The provenance of AM 122 b fol. is noted by Árni Magnússon in AM 435 a 4to on f. 63v; that of AM 455 c I 4to on a slip accompanying the manuscript. See also Kålund (1894, 85–88; 642).

deemer in the heavenly kingdom.³³ Consequently, the insertion of Christ's Ascension as item 5 of AM 655 XXVII, absent from the corresponding passages of the two redactions of *Marín saga*, after *De assumptione* and the homily on Doomsday, should be viewed as a desire on the part of the scribe to highlight the great privilege that she was granted as a reward for her maternal contribution to the history of Salvation, most notably in reversing Eve's original curse.³⁴

The most exhaustive medieval source on Christ's Ascension and its aftermath is, as previously mentioned, the alleged historical account of Joseph of Arimathea's Christophany, related in the *Gospel of Nicodemus*. Joseph's account occupies some nineteen chapters within the middle of the narration (chaps. XI.3–XVII.1), after Christ's trial before Pilate but before his Descent into Hell. Joseph's narration accounts for around one-fifth of the entire text, and item 5 of AM 655 XXVII 4to translates precisely this section. In view of the scribe's choice to translate precisely this section of text, item 5 will hereafter be referred to and edited as *Af fangelsi Ioseps*.³⁵

It is well-known that the *Gospel of Nicodemus* was already in circulation in Iceland at the beginning of the thirteenth century. By that time at least two main redactions of the Latin text were known on the island: the so-called Troyes redaction, written in northern France during the twelfth century,³⁶ which shares major and minor variant readings with the older redaction of *Niðrstigningar saga*, a translation and partial adaptation of the *Descensus Christi ad inferos* (chaps. XVIII.1–XXVII.5);³⁷ and the

³³ It would have been inconceivable to suppose that Mary's uncorrupted and immaculate body decayed after her death. Consequently, suitable passages in the Old Testament were searched to support the dogma of her anabasis in connection with that of Christ. Two of the most commonly quoted loci were Psalm 131:8, interpreted as concurrently describing Christ's and Mary's (here referred to as the 'arca sanctificationis') assumptions, and Song of Songs 8:5, where the rising of the bride in the desert ('quae est ista quae ascendit de deserto') has also been interpreted as a pre-figuration of Mary's assumption. See discussion in Pomplun (2011, 323).

³⁴ For a review of the so-called Eve-Mary trope in the Church fathers, see for instance McNelly Kearns (2008, 218–220).

³⁵ The Icelandic text corresponds with Kim (1973, 26/7–35/15).

³⁶ The so-called Troyes redaction, first identified by Izydorczyk (1995), was named after its most representative witness, the twelfth-century Troyes, Médiathèque du Grand Troyes, 1636 (ff 90r–104v). Its text conflates reading of two different redactions: Latin A and Latin C; a first edition of it is now available in Izydorczyk and Bullitta (forthcoming). The edited text is preceded by a survey on its circulation and adaptations in the vernaculars of Europe. On the main characteristics of Latin A, B, and C, see Izydorczyk (1997, 47–53).

³⁷ The greatest survey on the reception and adaptation of the *Gospel of Nicodemus* in Medieval and Modern Scandinavia has been conducted by Wolf (1997). On the origin and

Majority Text, represented in Iceland by a single double-column leaf in Latin (Reykjavík, Þjóðminjasafn Íslands, 921), copied during the thirteenth century and transmitting around one-third of the *Descensus* (chaps. XX.3–XXIII.1), and by the second redaction of *Niðrstigningar saga*, represented by AM 238 fol. V alone, whose text has undergone a secondary learned revision on the basis of a Latin exemplar consistent with the Majority type.³⁸

Collations of *Af fangelsi Ioseps* and *Niðrstigningar saga* are not possible because no portion of the former overlaps with the latter. However, based on purely stylistic and textual evidence, the two texts seem unrelated.³⁹ The translation procedure and technique seem to vary considerably in AM 655 XXVII 4to: Latin temporal and circumstantial clauses introduced by the preposition ‘cum’, consistently rendered in *Niðrstigningar saga* with the adverb of time followed by the relative particle, ‘þa er’, are introduced in *Af fangelsi Ioseps* by the correlative conjunction and the relative particle ‘en er’, while the adverb of time is placed at beginning of the following clause ‘en er <...> þa’.⁴⁰ A considerably different choice of lexicon can also be noted: the highly recurrent perfect verb ‘factum est’ of the Latin text is rendered systematically in *Niðrstigningar saga* with ‘gørþisc’, the Icelandic medio-passive voice of the verb ‘göra’, whereas *Af fangelsi Ioseps* uses the past participle of the verb ‘verþa’, ‘orþit’.⁴¹ The treatment of Christ’s presentation at the temple by Simeon

circulation of the Old Swedish translation, compiled in Vadstena during the fourth quarter of the fourteenth century, see Bullitta (2014b). On the Latin sources consulted for the compilation of *Niðrstigningar saga*, see most recently Bullitta (2014a, 134–149) and Bullitta (forthcoming).

³⁸ A transcription of Þjóðminjasafn 921 is available in Haugen (1992, 96–100). A new edition and translation of the two redactions of *Niðrstigningar saga* is available in Bullitta (2015).

³⁹ In the following discussion, I refer to the readings of A = *Niðrstigningar saga* as transmitted in its oldest and most complete manuscript AM 645 4to (ff. 51v–55v), from circa 1225–1250; F = *Af fangelsi Iosephs* extant in AM 655 XXVII 4to (ff. 6r–9v), from ca. 1300; T = the Troyes redaction of the Latin text in its oldest form transmitted in Troyes 1636 (ff. 90r–104v), from 1150–1200; K = the Majority Text of the Latin tradition available in Kim (1973). Foliation and pagination of all discussed readings are also provided.

⁴⁰ For instance: ‘þa er ec var siúcr’ (A 52r/29) translates ‘cum essem infirmus’ (T 99r/30) or ‘þa er ec lifða a iorþo’ (A 53v/27–28) ‘cum essem in terris uiuus’ (T 99r/7–8), whereas ‘En er Iosep hafde lesit bræfit þa mæler hann’ (F 8r/15–16) renders ‘cum legisset Ieseoph dixit’ (K XV.3/5) and ‘en er þessa sogu hafðo hæyrt Yfergydingar’ (F 9r/9–10) ‘cum haec omnia audissent principes sacerdotum’ (K XVI.1 33/1).

⁴¹ As in ‘þa gørþisc þat minnilict oc merkilict’ (A 51v/30) for ‘subito facta est’ (T 99r/3), whereas ‘hafðe landscylpi mikil orþit’ (F 6v/15) translates ‘facta est terre motio’ (K XIII.1 28/4).

is also noticeably different: the compiler of *Niðrstigningar saga* translates ‘templum’ with the substantive ‘kirkio’ (A 52r/8) and refers to Simeon with the appellative ‘ens gamla’ (A 51v/22), alluding to a certain tradition which addresses him as ‘Simeon senex’, as for instance in the *Cum inducerent puerum* antiphon in the Candlemass liturgy.⁴² *Affangelsi Ioseps* renders the first referent more precisely with the first substantive ‘musteri’,⁴³ and refers twice to Simeon with the proper Scriptural appellative ‘inn gaufgi’ (F 9r/17; 9v/17), translating the Latin ‘iustus’ of Luke (2:25).⁴⁴

Additionally, *Affangelsi Ioseps* uses an accurate, sometimes even redundant, terminology when rendering the Jewish ecclesiastical orders: the Latin ‘princeps sacerdotum’ is translated in three different ways: ‘byscuparner’ (F 7v/16), ‘hofðingar kennimanna’ (7v/11–12) and ‘Yfergydingar’ (F 9r/10). ‘Diacnom’ (F 9r/14) stands for the Latin ‘Leuites’ (K XVI.1 33/6), whereas ‘sacerdos’ (K XVI.1 33/2) is translated as ‘kæn-nimenn’ (F 9r/10) or is left in the original Latin form ‘sacerdos’ (F 9r/17). Moreover, in line with the age of AM 655 XXVII, its text seems to be considerably younger than that of *Niðrstigningar saga*, especially in view of its sporadic use in AM 655 XXVII of the two most notable archaisms typical of *Niðrstigningar saga*: the redundant use of the expletive particle ‘of’ and the emphatic repetition of the personal pronoun when this is already enclitically affixed at the end of the verb ‘ec emk’.⁴⁵ The Latin source-text consulted for the composition of AM 655 XXVII is also noticeably different from a typical text of the Troyes redaction which, as previously mentioned, was known and used by the author of *Niðrstigningar saga* at the turn of the thirteenth century. A complete collation of their readings has instead revealed how *Affangelsi Ioseps* displays features of the Majority type. The following are the most significant agreements of AM 655 XXVII with the Majority Text against the Troyes redaction:

⁴² As for instance found in the Canterbury Benedictional from ca. 1030: ‘Domine Ihesu christe, qui hodierna die in nostrae carnis substantia inter homines apparens a parentibus in templo es praesentatus; quem Simeon uenerabilis senex, lumine spiritus sancti irradiatus, agnovit, suscepit, et benedixit’. See Maxwell Wolley (1917, 84). On the Candlemass liturgy in Anglo-Saxon England, see especially Bedingfield (2001, 50–72).

⁴³ ‘[O]c barc hann i kirkio’ (A 52r/8) and ‘þa er hann var i musteri boren’ (F 9r/17–18).

⁴⁴ ‘Et ecce homo erat in Hierusalem cui nomen Symeon et homo iste iustus et timoratus expectans consolationem Israhel et Spiritus Sanctus erat in eo’.

⁴⁵ The instances in AM 655 XXVII 4to are: ‘En ec minnomk hvat Guð mælti fyrer prophetam’ (F 6v/5) and ‘þa þottomk ec kenna hann’ (F 8v/20); ‘Æða hvat telit þeir <oss> a henðr of þetta’ (F 7r/8) and ‘Seg þu oss sannnende of rað þit’ (F 8v/8–9).

F 6r/14 Josep syner sic ok mæler sva.	K XII.1 27/12 Ioseph ostendit se et dixit eis.	T 95v/11–12 [S]uperuenit Ioseph de Arimathia ciuitate dicens illos.
F 6r/16–17 [O]c ranglega giort i mot rættlatom er þer havit Iesum crossfestan oc spottsærðan.	K XII.1 27/16–18 [E]t non recogitastis ne eum crucifigeretis sed et lanceastis eum.	T 95v/15 [Q]uia eum in merito crucifixistis. Nec solum hoc sed et lancea latus eius percussistis.
F 6v/20–7r/3 Hværiar varo konor þær er eingill mælti við eða hvi gerþot þeir þer ægi hantegnar. Æige vitom ver hværiar þær varo ok ægi mattom ver þer hanntaka þar er ver lagom sva sem dauþer.	K XIII.2 28/2–6 Quae sunt mulieres ille ad quas angelus locutus est? Et quare eas non tenuistis? Respondentes milites dixerunt: ‘Mulieres nescimus quae fuerunt. Et nos ut mortui facti sumus.	T 96r/13 om.
F 8r/8–9 Biðiom ver þec nu af oss ræiði oc at komer a fund þar fedra þinna ok sona þviat ver undromc miok brotfor þina hæðan.	K XV.2 32/9–11 Dignare ergo uenire ad patres tuos et ad filios tuos, quia ammirati sumus omnes de assumptione tua.	T 97r/25–26 Dignare ergo uenire ad nos quia nos erga te grauiter peccasse confitemur ualde enim admiramur de assumptione uestra.

There are few instances in which the text of AM 655 XXVII is not entirely in agreement with the *Codex Einsidlensis*, the best representative codex of the Majority type. These are mainly minor details or small editorial additions that do not alter the course of the narration and may all derive from the very source-text consulted by the Icelandic compiler. Before Joseph falls on the floor fearing the great light generated by Christ in the sealed and guarded chamber where he had been imprisoned, ‘Et uidi Iesum sicut fulgorem <...> et pre timore cecidi in terram’ (K XV.6 33/4–5), the Icelandic text inserts an additional greeting by Jesus to Joseph ‘ok sva mælandi við mic. Friðr se þer Iosep’ (F 8v/15–16). Accordingly, the source-text at this point should have included a reading such as ‘et dixit mihi. Pax tibi Ioseph’. The Icelandic text, or its source, corrects Simeon’s appellative ‘magnus sacerdos Symeon’ (K XVI.1 34/10), possibly derived from the Gregorian antiphon *Ecce sacerdos magnus*,⁴⁶ with Luke’s ‘iustus’ as found in the Vulgate ‘Simeon en gaufgi

⁴⁶ The text of the antiphon is edited in Hesbert (1970, no. 2544).

sacerdos' (F 9r/17). The number of men elected by the high priests to be sent in search for Joseph in the city of Arimathea (K XV.3 32/1 'Et elegerunt VII uiros') is changed from seven to twelve (F 8r/12 'Þa velia þeir XII menn'). Finally, Joseph asserts that he remembers the words 'Spari mer hæfmdina æg man hæfna' spoken by the Lord in Deuteronomy (32:25), saying 'En ec minnomk hvat Guð mælti fyrer prophetam') (F 6v/5), whereas K simply has 'Dixit autem Deus per prophetam' (K XII.1 27/26–27). In this context the Icelandic scribe might have been translating either the verb 'memini' or 'cognosco' from the source.⁴⁷ Moreover, there is an onerous omission of a long section of text reporting Nicodemus's speech at the Council in Jerusalem (K XV.1 31/1–21). This passage may have been deliberately omitted by the Icelandic compiler, or it may have already been absent in the source text, in order to give more prominence to the character of Joseph.

Conclusion

Affangelsi Joseps, extant as item 5 in AM 655 XXVII 4to, is a literal translation of the Story of Joseph of Arimathea recounted in the *Evangelium Nicodemi* (chaps. XI.3–XVII.1). The readings transmitted in it reveal its derivation from a Latin text of the Majority type, the most widely known and circulated version of the apocryphon, and to no other particular redaction of the text.

While it is highly likely that the scribe of AM 655 XXVII knew the first redaction of *Niðrstigningar saga*, which was already in circulation in Skálholt during the first decade of the thirteenth century, no textual or stylistic evidence supports their reciprocal dependence, and they did not make use of the same Latin source. Their core narratives and manuscript contexts also speak to a different use and function. If, on the one hand, the focus of *Niðrstigningar saga* is specifically a Christological one—traditionally portraying a warrior-like *Christus victor* forcefully conquering Satan and Hell—and is mostly found among texts relating to the miracles of saints and apostles, the bodily assumption and Christophany related in Joseph's story are specifically inserted in AM 655 XXVII to validate and substantiate Mary's own assumption. The latter is described

⁴⁷ This may be a cross-reference to the *Descensus Christi ad inferos*, in which King David recognizes his own words of Psalm 24:8 and 24:10 saying 'Ista verba clamoris cognosco' (K XXI.3 41/8–9).

in the two texts which immediately precede it in the manuscript: the discovery of Mary's empty tomb and her soul-and-body assumption into Heaven related in *De assumptione sanctae Mariae Virginis* and the final Judgment, which shall take place above Mary's own tomb, addressed in the eschatological homily, which mentions both Mary's and Christ's places of assumptions, respectively the Valley of Josaphat and the Mount of Olives.

Some of the texts in AM 655 XXVII 4to, including *Affangelsi Ioseps*, may have been composed during the second half of the thirteenth century, only after the second redaction of *Marín saga* was available and in circulation. To judge by the character of the apocryphal, mariological, and homiletic material consulted by its scribe and by its subsequent ownership, the library of Skálholt Cathedral could represent one of the most plausible candidates to have hosted its composition.

The Edited Text

The text of *Affangelsi Ioseps*, transmitted as item 5 of Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 655 XXVII (ff. 6r–9v) in codex unicus, is presented below in a semi-diplomatic transcription, partitioned into the same chapters and subchapters employed in Kim (1973) for his edition of the Majority Text.

Corrupted or unreadable sections of text are conjectured or corrected on the basis of the Latin text, whose variants are also provided in the footnotes, along with Hallgrímur Ámundason (1994b)'s readings of the manuscript (HÁ). To facilitate their identification, editorial conjectures are placed in italics. Due to wear of the parchment, a single locus (chap. XII.1) has been particularly difficult to read and conjecture; a picture of it has been provided (see line 18 in fig. 1 below). Supplied text is indicated within open angle brackets < >. Barely legible words are placed within square brackets [], whereas secondary scribal insertions, here all superscripted, are placed within insertion characters ^'. Abbreviations are expanded according to the scribe's own use and geminates indicated with single majuscule letters in the manuscript or with a single dotted consonant are transcribed as digraphs, e.g. 'hygg' for 'hyg' (chap. XV.6) and 'ovarr' for 'ovaṛ' (chap. XIII.3). The letter <v> has been replaced with <u> when it has a syllabic value and <u> has been written as <v> when it represents a consonant, e.g. 'Guð' for 'gvð' and 'viliom' for

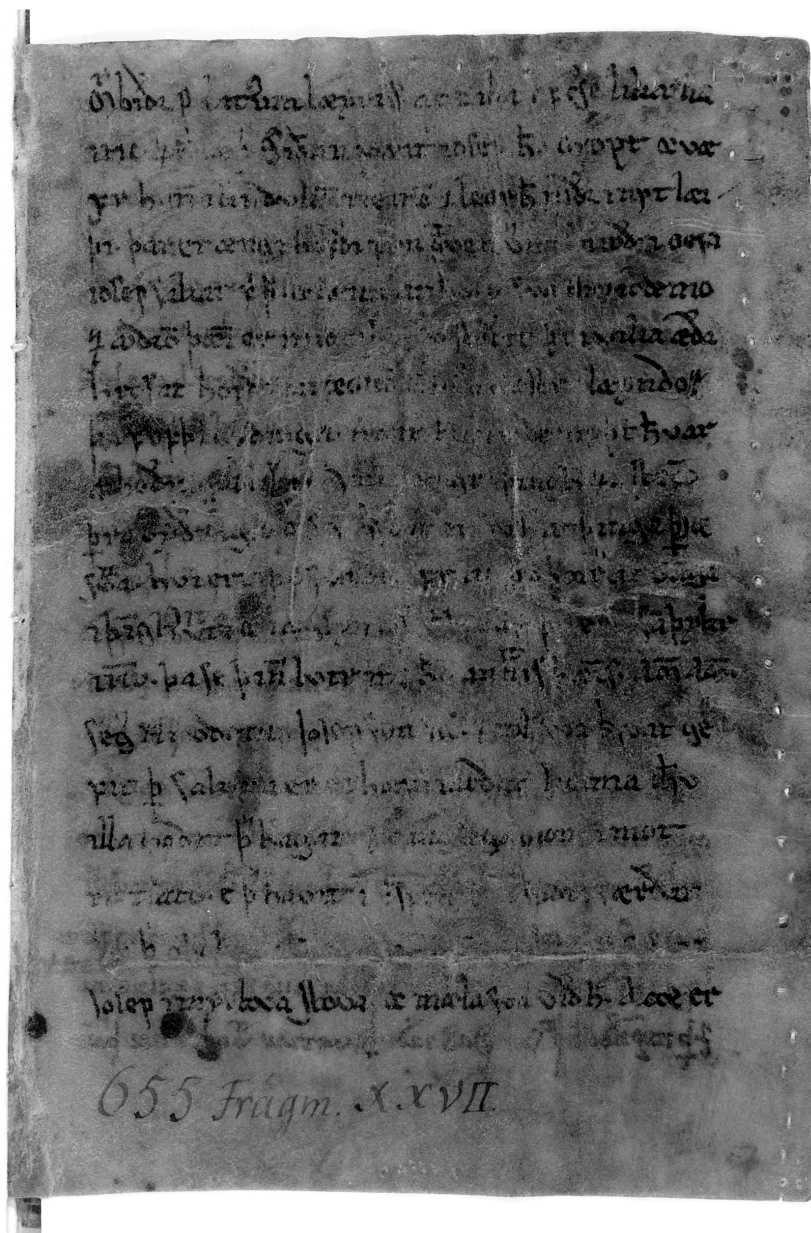


Fig. 1. Arnemagnæan Collection, AM 655 XXVII 4to, f. 6r (ca. 1300). © Photograph by permission of the Arnemagnæan Institute, Copenhagen. Photograph: Suzanne Reitz.

‘uiliom’ (chap. XIII.2). Compound words are set together when they are found disjointed in the manuscript, as ‘fyrerfaranda’ for ‘fyrer faranda’ (chap. XIII.1). Manuscript punctuation and capitalization of personal names and place names have been normalized according to modern practice. Direct literal quotations from the Bible are highlighted in italics and signaled in the left margins, whereas allusions or summaries of lengthier biblical passages are noted in the footnotes. Foliation of the manuscript is given within the transcription.

Af fangelsi Ioseps

XI.3 [6r] Maðr biðr Pilatum¹ um læyvis at taka af crosse likama Ihesu ok [*hann læyvpfi*]. Siðan væiter Iosep honom gropt oc væfr hann i lindu-kom ræinom ok legr hann niðr i nyt læipfi þar er ængi hafði f[y]rr graven v[erit].

XII.1 Iuð[a]r gefa Iosep sakar fyrer þat [er *lætr at Iesum*] sva Nicodemus ok audrom þæim er i mo[ti] hofðo stað[it] at þeira vilia æð(r)a² hrosat hofð[o iart]egnom [*hinom hæystom*]³ læyndoz þa fyrer ofriþi [Gy]ðinga næm(a) Ni[co]dem[us] þvi at hann var af ho(f)ðin[gia] *liþi*.⁴ Hann [gæ]ngr i þinghus ok stefno þeirra Gyðinga oc [segir sva. Hvat er nu her] at þinge. Þeir svara. Hvi ert þu sva di[ar]fr at þu þorer at ganga i þinghus vart oc i aug[syn] oss. Nu allz] þu ert samþykkir Ihesu þa se þinn lutr með honom [*annars hæims*].⁵ Amen Amen seger Nicodemus. Iosep syner sic [ok m]æler sva. Hvat gefit þeir sa[kir]⁶ er ec hæfi iarðat licama Ihesu illa [hafit⁷ þer] hagat ok [rang]lega giort i mot rættlatom er þer havit Iesum [cro]ssfestan [ok] spottsærðan. [*En er þeir opioðar logmenn hafðo hæyrt þessa sogu setia þeir*]⁸ Iosep i myrkvastovo⁹ oc mæla sva við hann. Æcce er [6v] nu at þer geranda fyrer sacer hatidar. En þegar er

¹ Pilatum] *emendavi* Pilatus

² æð(r)a] HÁ æða

³ iartegnom *hinom hæystom*] *conieci* K bona opera, HÁ iartegnom [0000000]æt[er]

⁴ af ho(f)ðingia *liþi*] *conieci* K princeps Iudeorum, HÁ af ho(f)ðingia li[000]

⁵ *annars hæims*] *conieci* K in futuro saeculo, HÁ *annar[hæimf

⁶ gefit þeir sakir] K contristati estis, HÁ gefit þeir [ak[000]

⁷ hafit] *emendavi* hadit

⁸ *En er þeir opioðar logmenn hafðo hæyrt þessa sogu þeir setia*] *conieci* K Haec audientes iudices adprehenderunt, HÁ En þer op [00...00] [etia

⁹ myrkvastovo] *emendavi* myrkvastova

Rom. 12:19
Dt. 32:35
Hebr. 10:3

þvatdagr liðr þa scal þic drepa ok scal eingi¹⁰ þic grava helldr scola fuglar slita hræ þin. Iosep svaraði. Þvilicom orðum mælti Golias forþom [er] hann briczlaði [G]uþi sialfom ok David. En ec minnomk hvat [Guð] mælti fyrer prophetam. *Spari mer hæfndina*¹¹ æg man [hæ]fna. Nu rekia þeir hann ræiðer i myrkvastovo¹² oc læsa hann siðan [ok] innsigla lasenn en byscuparner hafa lykklaser.

XII.2 Oc epter þvatdagenn snemma morgins ste[fna] þeir fund at raþa dauda Iosep(s) [o]k sænda til myrkvastofonnar¹³ ok ero þar hæil innsigli¹⁴ ok hus i lase. En at upplocnom durom ok lasom [f]inna þeir hvergi Iosep. En þa þiccer þæim kynium sæita ok undraz þetta miok.

XIII.1 I því bili coma þar noccurir af riddarum þæim er til varo sætter at varþvæita grofina Ihesu ok kunnu at sægia þau tyðendi at um morgin- en i otto þar sem þeir varo stadder hafðe landscylpi `mikil'¹⁵ orþit ok hofðo þeir set Guðs ængil comanda¹⁶ af himne ok sva rædder orþit at þer matto æcki at færasc helldr en dauþer kvaðusc oc engill¹⁷ hæ(y)rt¹⁸ sægia con[om] noccurum er til læiðisins kvamo Ihesum lifa ok af dauða [ri]sen ok fyrerfaranda sinom maunnom i Galileam ok þeir mynðo hann þar sia.¹⁹

XIII.2 Þa svoroðu Iuði.²⁰ Hværiar varo konor þær [7r] er engill mælti vid eða hvi gerþot þeir þer æigi hantegnar. Æige vitom ver hværiar þær varo ok æigi mattom ver þer hanntaka þar er ver lagom sva sem dauþer ok mattom æggi. Iuði svoroðu. Sva sem Guð lifer a himnom sva trum ver æigi²¹ at þeir segit satt. Riddarar svoroðu. Þat er²² van at þer truit oss þars þer truþot æigi sva morgum ok storum tacnom sem þer sað ok hæyrdot ver þa fyrer Ihesum. Væl sogþot þeir þat at Guð lifer a himnom. Sva er oc

¹⁰ eingi] HÁ engi

¹¹ hæfndina] *emendavi* hæfindina

¹² myrkvastovo] *emendavi* myrkvastoðo

¹³ myrkvastofonnar] *corr.* myrkvasterfonnar

¹⁴ innsigli] *emendavi* innsingli

¹⁵ `mikil'] *add. sup. l.*

¹⁶ comanda] *emendavi* conomanda

¹⁷ engill] HÁ engilinn

¹⁸ engill hæ(y)rt] *conieci lect. dub.* engill kaura, *K* audiuius angelum, HÁ eingill [0000]

¹⁹ I því bili ... / ... hann þar sia] cf. Mat. 28:3

²⁰ Iuði] *emendavi* iaði, HÁ *emendavit* iuði

²¹ æigi] *bis scr.*

²² post er HÁ *add.* (engi), *K* Quomodo nobis credituri estis?

hann liver sanlega ok sa hinn same Guð sem þer crossfestoð. Æða hvat telit þeir <oss>²³ a hendr of þetta hæifer yðr æigi sva farit um Iosep at þer luctoð hann i myrkvastofo oc *h[irt]id* hann nu æigi.²⁴ Sel[it] þvi fram ok synit oss Iosep lucþan i myrkvastofo en ver munom syna þa Ihesum varðvættan i stenenom. Iuði svara. Viliom ver þat ver monum visa yðr til Iosep(s) enða segit þeir til Ihesu. Þa scolod þer vita at Iosep er i bo[r]g sinne Arima[thia]. Mil(i)tes svara. Æf Iosep er i Arimathia þa [er] Ihesus i Galilea.

XIII.3 Nu leta Iuði ser raðs þvi at þeir vi[lld]o æigi at þetta q[ve]mi ovarr scuto nu fe sam[an ok ga]fo riddarum til þess at þeir segði²⁵ sec sofnat hafa ok þa meðan k[o]mit hafa læris(v)æyna Ihesu ok tekit a braut licama hans or grofenne. Nu taka þeir við þesso raði ok fe oc hallda Iudi²⁶ þessi saungn en i dag at þessa costar hafi farit.²⁷

XIV.1 Stundo sidarr hafa þeir menn comit til Iorsala [7v] Finees ken-nimaðr ok Addas logmaðr ok Aggeus²⁸ diacn ok sægia þau tiþenði²⁹ Yfergydingum at þeir qvaþoz set hafa Ihesum með postolum epter pining sina ok hæyrt hann mela vid þa ok senda þa um allan hæim at scyra menn in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti oc þeir qvaþusc ok set hafa hann upp stiga til himna.³⁰

XIV.2 Við þessa sogu varð þeim miok osvipt Iuðis [ok saugðo sva]. Gerit þeir dyrd Guði oc iatning ef þesser luter ero sanner er þeir þickiz set hafa ok hæyrt. En þer sværia umb at þetta se satt³¹ er þeir saugðo ok lætosc æigi *vitne*³² bera þa abyrgð at þægia umb slict. En hofðingar ken-nimanna taka lo[g]bok ena helgu ok leggja yfer þa oc sæira þa at segðe ængom manni þetta siðan ok gefa þeim fæ mikit enn til launar oc fa til menn at fylgia þeim þegar a brautt af Iorsolom at ækki hæfði aðrer menn mal við þa.

²³ Æða hvat telit þeir <oss>] *conieci*, *K* Nos audiimus

²⁴ *h[irt]id* hann nu æigi] *conieci* *K* non inuenistis eum, HÁ h[0]rið hann nu æigi

²⁵ segði] HÁ fegði, *K* Dicite quia vobis

²⁶ Iudi] HÁ ivði

²⁷ XIII.1, XIII.2, XIII.3] cf. Mat. 28:3–15

²⁸ Aggeus] *emendavi* Aggeas

²⁹ sægia þau tiþenði] *emendavi* þienði, *K* dixerunt, HÁ *emendavit* tiþenði

³⁰ þau tiþenði ... / ... stiga til himna] cf. Mc. 16:2–19

³¹ satt] *emendavi* sætt, *K* vera, HÁ *emendavit* satt

³² vitne] *emendavi* virllia, *K* date ei confessionem, HÁ *emendavit* vilia

XIV.3 En þæim morgum Yfergydingum³³ fær þo mikils i huga epter byscuparner³⁴ Annas ok Kayphas telia þa knæll ok kirk i þa til aftrunnar ok segia sva. Scipum ækki rað vart eða tru æpter *saugn*³⁵ hæiðenna riddara ok omerkra manna þeirra er toko fæ af oss til þess at snua sinne [8r] sogn allri. Ma oc iamfnvel vera at þeir hafi fyrr fe tekit af³⁶ Ihesu maunnom at sægia hina fyrri sogn. Nu er auðset at þeir ero menn omerker ok hvarigum truer.

XV.1 *om.*

XV.2 Stundo siðar [sp]yria þeir til Ioseps hæima i Arimathia oc verþa þeir því fegner ok er allmikil forvitne a at finna hann. Gera siðan bræf til hans a þessa læið. Friþr se þer Iosep oc aullom þinom maunnom. Misgior(t) hofom ver við *Guð oc þec*.³⁷ Biðiom ver þec nu af oss ræiði oc at komer [a] fund varn feðra þinna ok sona því at ver undromc miok brotfor þina hæðan. En nu sciliom ver at Guð hefer þic læystan undan rogi ok rongomdomi varom. Friðr [se þier Iose]p. Þu ert virþelegri ollom oss.

XV.3 Þa velia þeir XII menn til farar þeirrar vine Ioseps ok senda með bræife þesso ok sendo Iosep goða qveðio. Nu coma þesser menn a fund Iosep's' ok fa honom bræif i honð með qveþio Gydinga.³⁸ En er Iosep hafde lesit bræfit þa mæler hann. Lofaðr se Drotten Guð sa er meir scylldi under miscun[nar] væ[ng]liom sinom ok læyste mec undan uthl'Y'e(n)go bloðs mins ok tekr nu sidan astsamlega við sendimaunnom.

XV.4 Ok annan dag [8v] æpter ræizc hann til ferþar ok farar með þæim oc koma til Iorsala oc þeg[ar Iu]ði f[re]gna qvamo hans þa ganga þer i moti honom [væl] oc segia sva. Se fridr i qvamo þenni [pater]³⁹ Iosep.⁴⁰ Hann svarar. Drottens friþr se ollom lyð oc siðan kysstu⁴¹ þeir til æpt[er] þat byðr Nichodemus honom hæim með ser ok gerir dyr[lega] væi[z]lo ok mikla.

³³ Yfergydingum] HÁ yfer gyðingvm

³⁴ byscuparner] *emendavi* byscuparner

³⁵ æpter *saugn*] *conieci* æpter svangn *K* qui dixe bunt nobis, HÁ *conieci* æpter *savngn

³⁶ af] *emendavi* at, HÁ at

³⁷ við *Guð oc þec*] *conieci* *K* in Deum et in te, HÁ *om.*

³⁸ Gydingar] HÁ Gydinga

³⁹ pater] HÁ [0]r

⁴⁰ pater Ioseph] *K* pater Ioseph, HÁ [0]r

⁴¹ kysstu] *conieci* *K* osculati sunt, hverfatc, HÁ hverfasc

XV.5 Annan dag æfter er fundr st[æ]fndr [a] þæim fundi ræþa byscupar oc Nichodemus við Iosep þessa hattar. Seg þu oss sannende of rað þitt hverio faralldi þu fort hæiþan þa er ver hofþom þic [i] myrkvastofu lucþan.

XV.6 Iosep sagði. Þa er þeir hofðot m[i]c lucdan [ok] i dyflizo sættan fausto qvellit. Þa [er ec var i þvi a bæinenne]⁴² þvatdagen epter allt til nætr en um miðnættis scæð þa var sem upp sen lypti[z hornen fiogor]⁴³ af h[u]seno ok sa ec Ihesum sva sem með solarbirti⁴⁴ ok [sva] mælandi við mic. Friðr se þer Iosep. En ec fell til iarðar⁴⁵ [hræz]lo saker. Þa tok hann i honð [mer oc reiste mic þegar]⁴⁶ upp [ok] heller yfer mec [vatnesage ok þerrer mitt andlit.⁴⁷ Hann] kysser mik ok meler sva. Hræztu æigi Iosep. Hygg at þu at ec em Ihesus. Þa þottomk ec kenna hann at fullu ok mæltac. [9r] Mæistari Helias. Ihesus svaraði. Æigi em ec Helias. Ihesus em ec sa er þu⁴⁸ (hefer) gropt.⁴⁹ En ec mæltu syn þu mier læiðit ok umbunað þann er vætta þer. Þa tok hann i honð mer ok læyddi mik þangat sem ec hafda hann iarðan ok sa ec grofena toma ok duca þa er ec hafþa hann i vafðan. Þa læt ec til ok laut æc ok kenda ec Ihesum. Siþan leiddi hann mik heim i Arimathia ok mælti sva at scilnaði. Fridr sæ þeir. Gak þu ecce ór husum þinum⁵⁰ unsc liðir (ero) XL daga. En ec mun nu vitia læris(v)æyna minna.

XVI.1 En er þessa sögu hafðo hæyrt Yfergydingar ok kænnumenn þa urþo (þeir) sva i hugafuller ok otta fi(n)gner at þeir fello niðr ok nalega i o'vit.⁵¹ Æfter þat mæltu þeir sín a mille. Æigi vitom ver hvar þesso mali lender hvernig megi þetta satt vera. Ver vitom foðor⁵² ok moþor Ihesu. Æinn af diacnom svarar. Vitom ver vist frendr hans oc alla verit hafa gudrædda ok bæna hallzmenn m(i)kla ok Guði i þulega þionat ok bar

⁴² Þa er ec var a bæinenne] conieci K dum starem in oratione, HÁ [00...00]

⁴³ hornen fiogor] conieci K a quattor angulis, HÁ [0000]

⁴⁴ solarbirti] emendavi solarbriti

⁴⁵ fell til iarðar] conieci K cecidi in terra, HÁ [00...00]

⁴⁶ i honð mer oc reiste mic þegar] conieci K tenens manum meam eleuauit me de terra, HÁ i honð [00...00]

⁴⁷ ok heller yfer mec vatnesage ok þerrer mitt andlit] conieci K (et) ros aque perfudit me et extergens faciem meam, HÁ ok heller yfer mec [00...00].

⁴⁸ þu] add. sup. l.

⁴⁹ sa er þu (hefer) gropt] K cuius corpus sepelisti

⁵⁰ Gak þu ecce ór husum þinum] K non exeat de domo tua, HÁ Gak þu ecce [00] husum þinum

⁵¹ o'] add. sup. l.

⁵² foðor] corr. moðor

vitne merkilict þessom s`v`æyni⁵³ Simeon en Ga(u)fgi sacerdos þa er
 Luc. 2:29 hann var i musteri boren kyndilmesso er hann sagði sva. *Nunc dimittis
 seruuum tuum Domine secundum uerbum tuum in pace et cetera.*⁵⁴

XVI.2 Þetta taka þer nu rað[s] Iuði at þeir senda æpter þæim þrimr
 maunnom i Ga1[9v](li)lea er fyrr hofðo komet at finna þa ok tala nu við
 þa æina saman ok hallda þeir fast inne somo sogo sem fyrr oc qvadoz
 berlæga set hafa Ihesum millom lærisvæyna sinna ok siðan upp stiga til
 himins.

XVI.3 Þa segia þeir byscuparner Annas ok Ca`i`phas. Nu geriz vant ór
 at rapa logen bioða sva at þat scal allt standa ok satt vera er vitni er til Ila
 manna eða IIIa. Nu ganga til þessa mals flæiri manna vitni en sva. Hvat
 scolum nu segia hverso scolom ver nu svara. Þesso hvena at Enoch ok
 Helias varo menn þo at þeir `væro`⁵⁵ hæiðan numner til himins ok sva
 [f]inz æigi grof Moyses. Nu er þvilict þetta er þesser segia fra Ihesu en þo
 er þo þetta undarlect allt saman.

XVII.1 Iosep svarar þa. Sannlega er þetta undarlect [er] Ihesus er sen
 lifande æpter dauðan ok [upp]stiga til himna ok en fylger flæira hote ok
 mæira því at æigi hæver hann æin af dauða risit helldr æro marger aðrer
 af dauða risner með honom ok er[o] nu sæner her i Iorsolum. Nu vitom
 ver aller at hinn gaufge kennimaðr Simeon⁵⁶ at<(ti) II sono þa er baðer ero
 andaðer ok stopum ver yfer grepter þeirra. Bæggia nu ransaki[t þeir]
 læyþi þeirra ok gett ec æigi þar hittasc bæin þeira því at þeir ero nu þar i
 borg vari lifenðr ok avallt <a> bæinom ok mela.

⁵³ `v`] *add. sup. l.*

⁵⁴ *Nunc dimittis ... / ... in pace et cetera*] cf. Luc. 2:29–32

⁵⁵ `væro`] *add. sup. l.*

⁵⁶ hinn gaufgi kennimaðr Simeon] cf. Luc. 2:34

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