



Beyond the Piraeus Lion

East Norse Studies from Venice

edited by Jonathan Adams and Massimiliano Bampi

SELSKAB FOR ØSTNORDISK FILOLOGI 2017

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Jonathan Adams & Massimiliano Bampi (red.): Beyond the Piraeus Lion

Selskab for østnordisk filologi, nr. 2
Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund, nr. 594

Tilsyn: Eva Skaft Jensen
Bogen har desuden været underkastet anonym fagfællebedømmelse

Udgivet med støtte fra
Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Culturali Comparati,
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

Printed in Denmark by
Tarm Bogtryk a/s
ISBN 978-87-408-3109-2

Kommissionær: Syddansk Universitetsforlag

Omslagsdesign: Niels Jørgen Pedersen
Omslag: Cod. Holm. K 47, bl. 1r; prologen til Ivan Løveridder.
Se <http://middelaldertekster.dk/ivan-loeveridder/1>.
Originalen tilhører Kungliga biblioteket, Stockholm.

Selskab for østnordisk filologi
ostnordiskfilologi.wordpress.com
www.facebook.com/ostnordisk

Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund
Christians Brygge 1
1219 København K
ujds.dk

Syddansk Universitetsforlag
Campusvej 55
5230 Odense M
Tlf. 6615 7999
universitypress.dk

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editors would like to express their thanks to Marina Buzzoni and Ingela Hedström who co-organized the conference at Ca' Foscari University of Venice in November 2015. Our gratitude also goes to the University for supporting the conference and the work of the Society. Many participants contributed to the lively discussion and collegial atmosphere at the conference and thanks go to all those who attended. The anonymous peer-reviewers did a sterling job and provided much valuable input – we are very grateful. In addition to the reviewers, Maria Arvidsson, Simon Skovgaard Boeck, and Peter Bruun Hansen (all of the Society for Danish Language and Literature in Copenhagen) provided assistance with issues concerning Swedish, Danish, and Latin respectively – tack så mycket, mange tak & gratias multas! Furthermore, we extend a special thanks to Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund for publishing the volume with the generous support of Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Culturali Comparati at Ca' Foscari University.

*Copenhagen & Venice,
July 2017*

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II.

MANUSCRIPT STUDIES

5. VADSTENA NOVICES, PRAGUE UNIVERSITY, AND THE OLD SWEDISH *EVANGELIUM NICODEMI*

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Keywords

Old Swedish Devotional Literature; *Gospel of Nicodemus*; Latin Sources; Prague Faculty of Theology; Vadstena Abbey.

Sammanfattning: *Noviser i Vadstena, universitetet i Prag och det fornsvenska Evangelium Nicodemi*

I denna artikel undersöks uppkomsten, idiosynkrasierna, användningen och spridningen av den fornsvenska översättningen av *Nikodemusevangeliet*, en väldigt populär skrift i Nya Testamentet som avhandlar Kristi process inför Pilatus, hans begravning, korsfästelse och legendariska nedstigning till dödsriket. En mer adekvat latinsk källtext av *Evangelium Nicodemi*, som går under namnet "Troyes-redaktionen" (LatT) och som skrevs i 1100-talets Clairvaux, har identifierats och en kulturell anslutning under ett rimligtvis sent 1300-tal samt ett utbyte av handskrifter från Prags universitet till Vadstena kloster återopas grundat på kombinerade textuella och kodikologiska bevis. Sådana särdrag delas av de tre bevarade svenska handskrifterna, som kopierats i Vadstena kloster, och den enda kvarvarande böhmiska handskriften av LatT-typ producerad i Prag i slutet av 1300-talet.

Throughout centuries of biblical exegesis, scholars and novices of Christian doctrine have often speculated about the mysterious divergences and inconsistencies in the stories of the New Testament. Among other issues, theological inquiries and biblical expositions have concentrated specifically on those critical passages, supported by other liturgical and catechetical writings, that seemed to contradict, if not clash with, the divine truth revealed in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.¹

I wish to express my gratitude to Jonathan Adams and Massimiliano Bampi and to the anonymous readers of the volume for valuable comments and questions on the essay.

1 Unless otherwise stated, all quotations of the Vulgate are taken from Weber et al. 2007. All English translations of the Latin text are taken from the Douay-Rheims Bible, available at <http://drbo.org>, accessed on 24 January 2017. The Old Swedish translation, object of the present study, has recently been surveyed in Bullitta 2014b.

Why, for instance, does the early fifth-century Aquileian baptismal Creed (c. 404) assert that Christ *descendit in inferna* if the Canon only vaguely hints at his Descent and Harrowing of Hell?² While the original “descended into Hell” belief article has been retained, and is still professed, in the services of the Anglican, Lutheran, and Roman Catholic Churches, Christ’s *katabasis* and *anastasis* have always been hotly debated topics of theological and ecclesiastical discussions.³

The bulk of the anonymous apocryphal literature that flourished between late Antiquity and the High Middle Ages was specifically conceived to fill in these bewildering gaps in the Gospels’ records. If, on the one hand, the plot of the original accounts was rearranged according to the writers’ taste, then, on the other hand, numerous fictional, often unorthodox, details and anecdotes concerning the life and death of Christ also crept into the narratives. As a rule, in order for their authenticity to be validated, these texts were ascribed to certain members of Christ’s circle, who are said to have been, or claimed themselves to be, first-hand witnesses of his office and legacy. The result of this prolific activity is a highly fascinating literature that provoked and entertained medieval audiences and concurrently educated them in suitable Christian precepts and dogmas.⁴

Along with the *Infancy Gospel of the Pseudo-Matthew*, the *Gospel of Nicodemus* or *Evangelium Nicodemi*, which describes in greater detail Christ’s passion, entombment,

2 The Aquileian Creed is cited by Tyrannius Rufinus (d. 410) in his *Expositio symboli*, a commentary on the articles of the Apostles’ Creed addressed to devotees under instruction in the sacraments. The text reads: “Credo in Deo Patre omnipotente invisibili et impassibili, Et in Iesu Christo unico Filio eius Domino nostro, Qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, Crucifixus sub Pontio Pilato et sepultus, **descendit in inferna**, tertia die resurrexit a mortuis, ascendit in caelos, sedet ad dexteram Patris: inde venturus iudicare vivos et mortuos, Et in Spiritu Sancto, Sanctam ecclesiam, remissionem peccatorum, huius carnis resurrectionem”, Simonetti 1961: 135–181. In English: “I believe in God the Father almighty, invisible and impassable; And in Christ Jesus His only Son, our Lord, who was born by the Holy Spirit from the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried, **He descended to hell**, on the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended to heaven, He sits at the Father’s right hand: thence He will come to judge the living and dead; And in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Church, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the flesh”, Kelly 1955: 15.

As Rufinus notes, the articles *invisibili et impassibili*, *descendit in inferna*, and *huius carnis resurrectionem* were absent in the coeval Old Roman Creed. Subsequently, towards the middle of the seventh century, a later version of the Roman Creed would welcome the descent article with the variant *descendit ad inferos*. See the discussion in Badcock 1938: 145–146. Christ’s descent is especially alluded to in 1 Peter 3: 19–20, a passage describing his preaching to the spirits in prison: “in quo et his qui in carcere erant spiritibus veniens praedicavit qui increduli fuerant aliquando quando expectabat Dei patientia in diebus Noe cum fabricaretur arca in qua pauci id est octo animae salvae factae sunt per aquam [In which also coming He preached to those spirits that were in prison: Which had been some time incredulous, when they waited for the patience of God in the days of Noah, when the ark was a building: wherein a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water].” Christ’s victory over the devil is hinted at in 1 Corinthians 15: 54, Colossians 1: 13–4, and Hebrews 2: 14–15. See, for instance, the discussion in Morris 1965: 351–353.

3 For a convenient historical overview of the theological doctrines concerning Christ’s descent from late Antiquity until the Reformation, see most recently Lauffer 2013. On the most significant contemporary theological interpretations of the *Descensus*, see especially D’Costa 2009: 159–211 and Pistick 2016.

4 For a brief overview and modern English translations of the New Testament Apocrypha, see especially Hennecke & Schneemelcher 1991. A useful introduction is found in Lapham 2003.

and his legendary Harrowing of Hell, was undoubtedly one of the most appreciated and influential texts amongst the New Testament Apocrypha.⁵ Originally formed by two separate narratives, the older *Acta Pilati*, written in Greek, and the younger *Descensus Christi ad inferos*, composed in Latin, the pseudo-gospel allegedly attributed to a pious Pharisee, Nicodemus, took shape between the fifth and the eighth centuries, when the two texts were first conflated.⁶ The Latin apocryphon survives today in over four hundred medieval codices, an impressive number considering its presentation of extra-canonical material, even if its intrinsic character remains essentially orthodox.⁷ The text reached such great popularity that it nearly attained the status of a “fifth gospel”.⁸ Outside the Latin tradition, its appreciation is further witnessed by the numerous transpositions into the vernacular, to such an extent that its text regularly figures among the very first written records of nearly every language of medieval Europe. Unsurprisingly, three translations and adaptations of the Latin text into Old Norse, Old Danish, and Old Swedish have survived from medieval Scandinavia, although it is important to bear in mind that the three texts are considerably different from each other in terms of style, treatment of the Latin source, and literary licence.⁹

The Old Swedish rendition is known to exist in three notable manuscripts, all copied at Vadstena Abbey between the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. It survives as the very last item in A 110 at Kungliga biblioteket (the Royal Library) in Stockholm (ff. 280^r–299^r), whose second codicological unit was probably written just before 1400, whereas the first was completed in 1385.¹⁰ A 110 also transmits the very first Old Swedish translations of Birgitta’s mystical works and prayers and her first hagiographical account: the *Sermo Angelicus* (ff. 1^v–45^r); ten

5 On the fortune of the text, see especially Izydorczyk 1997a and Izydorczyk & Dubois 1997.

6 On the formation of the Latin text, see especially Izydorczyk 1997b.

7 A detailed census of the medieval manuscripts transmitting the pseudo-gospel is available in Izydorczyk 1993a.

8 See di Paolo Healey 1985 and Izydorczyk 1989: 170–176.

9 The first and most exhaustive study of the three Scandinavian adaptations of the *Evangelium Nicodemi* was undertaken by Wolf 1997. The Old Norse version of the *Evangelium Nicodemi*, which includes exclusively the *Descensus Christi ad inferos*, and is consequently known as *Niðrstigningar saga* [The Story of the Descent], was compiled in Iceland around 1200. The text was first edited in Unger 1887: 1–20. A new semi-diplomatic edition and study of the Old Norse text will be available in Bullitta forthcoming. A first edition of a separate, and previously unedited, Old Norse translation of the Latin apocryphon has been published in Bullitta 2016. The biblical and theological sources underlying *Niðrstigningar saga* have been surveyed in Bullitta 2014a. The Old Danish translation is a *knittel* verse adaptation of a Middle Low German original and survives in a single codex, *viz.* Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, A 115, written in the Lund area around 1315. The Old Danish text is edited in Brøndum-Nielsen 1955. See also discussion in Wolf 1997: 280–283.

10 The manuscript, also known as *Järteckensbok* [Book of Portents], is composed of six codicological units. The edition followed here is Klemming 1877–1878: 377–419; its readings are discussed below and indicated with the letter O. I have closely followed Klemming’s text, although I have not italicised expanded abbreviations and I have converted *ä* to *æ*, and *ø* to *o*. On the dating and material composition of A 110, see especially Kraft 1929: 25–27, Wessén 1968: 27–28.

chapters from her *Revelationes* of the so-called α -group, eight from book I and one from book IV (ff. 152^r–163^v); and her *Vita abbreviata* (ff. 235^r–249^v). The same translation is extant in E 8900 (formerly Skokloster 3 4^o) in the National Archives, which was copied around 1450–1470 and represents one of the three witnesses of the *Old Swedish Legendary*. In this context, the translation is appended (pp. 34–75) to a section of the *Legendary* concerning the life of Christ then followed by the life of St Peter and by all the other saints of the *Legendary*, arranged according to the liturgical calendar (pp. 1–33).¹¹ It has been noted that the Old Swedish *Gospel of Nicodemus* could not have possibly formed part of the original *Legendary*, since its text is absent from the other two manuscripts that transmit the *Legendary* and pre-date E 8900, that is Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, A 34 from c. 1350 and Uppsala, Universitetsbiblioteket, C 528 from the first half of the fifteenth century.¹² The third manuscript transmitting the same Old Swedish translation is A 3 at Kungliga biblioteket, all that remains of a three-volume lectionary written in 1502.¹³ Here short extracts of the first nine chapters of the Old Swedish text are found in the first volume (pp. 13–19, 72–80), where they are placed again after a section concerning Christ's passion (pp. 2–12) and are followed by excerpts of Books I, VI, and VIII of Birgitta's *Revelationes* of the α -type (pp. 20–21) and, in the following pages, by extracts from the *Old Swedish Legendary* (pp. 25, 65, 81–83, 84, 86, 88–90, 95–99, 116, 121–123, 148–149, 156).

Previous research on the Old Swedish *Evangelium Nicodemi* has sought to prove that the vernacular translation derives from the most widely circulated version of the Latin apocryphon, which, however, does not fully represent the Old Swedish text.¹⁴ This attribution to a Latin source that does not fully reflect the vernacular translation resulted from the fact that numerous manuscripts of the Latin tradition were, until recently, unknown or unstudied. The greatest survey on the copious Latin tradition of the *Evangelium Nicodemi* has been undertaken by Zbigniew Izydorzyc, who has studied and re-classified all 436 surviving manuscripts and grouped them on the basis of common incipit, explicit, lexicon, and literary motifs.¹⁵ As far as we can discern from the actual remnants of what must have been a much larger tradition, the Latin text seems to have circulated in at least four main redactions:

11 The readings of E 8900 are available in Klemming 1853: 373–411. The manuscript follows modern pagination, rather than foliation.

12 See Wolf 1997: 283. For a description of the manuscript tradition and language of the *Old Swedish Legendary*, see especially Janson 1934. Readings from Stockholm A 34 and Uppsala C 528 are available in Stephens 1847–1858.

13 The entire codex has been edited by Carlquist 2006. The manuscript follows modern pagination, rather than foliation.

14 Wolf 1997: 284.

15 See Izydorzyc 1993 and 1997b.

- LatA: the oldest and best known textual form of the apocryphon, comprising roughly 387 manuscripts and covering approx. 90 % of the entire tradition, which I have renamed the Majority Text, a nomenclature borrowed from biblical philology;¹⁶
- LatB: a text that might have originated in northern Italy, possibly during the eleventh century, which today counts twenty-five witnesses;¹⁷
- LatC: a redaction compiled in Spain in the ninth century that today comprises seven witnesses;¹⁸
- LatT: a hybrid text formed in northern France during the second half of the twelfth century through the conflation of LatA and LatC. Today, it comprises seventeen manuscripts and it is best represented by the oldest among them, Troyes 1636 (now housed at the Médiathèque), a twelfth-century codex written for the newly established Abbey of Clairvaux (est. 1115).¹⁹ Its text has for long time remained unavailable and a first critical edition has only very recently been published in Izydorczyk & Bullitta 2016.²⁰

A full collation of the Old Swedish text with the four main Latin redactions has revealed how the vernacular translation preserves all the fictional details and expansions typical of LatT, whereas in the corresponding *loci*, LatA either remains silent or addresses the same events only swiftly or superficially. To mention just a few, LatT and the Old Swedish translation describe: Pilate's wife commissioning the construction of numerous

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- 16 See the discussion in Bullitta 2014a and Bullitta forthcoming. In the following section, reference will be made to the so-called *Codex Einsiedlensis*, Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek, 362 (ff. 11^r–29^v), a manuscript transcribed in tenth-century Fulda and edited in Kim 1973. Its readings are referred below with the siglum K.
- 17 Readings of LatB are available in von Tischendorf 1853: 312–395. See also the discussion in Bullitta forthcoming.
- 18 LatC remains unedited, except for chap. 28, which is included in von Tischendorf 1853: 409–412. On the manuscript tradition, see the discussion in Haynes 2010.
- 19 The tradition was first identified in Izydorczyk 1995, where fourteen manuscripts are listed. The majority of the earliest manuscripts are of French origin: Troyes, Médiathèque du Grand Troyes, 1636 is from the twelfth century; Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 128 (39 A.T.L.); Cambridge (MA), Harvard University, Houghton Library, lat. 117 and Charleville-Mézières, Médiathèque Voyelles, 61 were written in the fourteenth century, while Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. lat. 1755 was produced in the fifteenth century. With the exception of Hannover, Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek, I 247, which dates to the fourteenth century, all other German manuscripts are from the fifteenth century: Berlin, SPK, Theol. lat. fol. 688; Berlin, SPK, Theol. lat. fol. 690; Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, HB I 119; *Halle/Saale, Archiv der Franckeschen Stiftungen, P 7; *Paderborn, Erzbischöfliche Akademische Bibliothek, Inc. 31; Wolfenbüttel, HAB, Cod. Guelf. 38.8 Aug. 2^o; Wolfenbüttel, HAB, Cod. Guelf. 83 Gud. lat. 2^o; Wolfenbüttel, HAB, Cod. Guelf. 279 Helmst. Only three manuscripts were produced outside this area: one in England, Cambridge, Trinity College 0.9.10; one in Bohemia, Cambridge, CCC, 500 at the end of the fourteenth century; and one in Italy, *Genoa, Biblioteca Universitaria, A.III.2, at the end of fifteenth. See Izydorczyk & Bullitta 2016: 573–574. The asterisk signals the three codices that did not appear in Izydorczyk 1995.
- 20 The readings from LatT, indicated below with the letter T, are taken from Izydorczyk & Bullitta 2016, where a diplomatic transcription is offered. However, for the sake of readability and convenience in the comparison of concurrent readings, I have transcribed the text with abbreviations expanded silently.

synagogues for the Jewish community;²¹ the name of Pilate’s cursor, Romanus;²² and, more dramatically, Christ’s destruction of the gates of Hell,²³ and his binding of Satan until Doomsday.²⁴ Comparison of a given vernacular text with an inadequate Latin source could lead to partial underestimation of redactor’s licence and to some extent to the decontextualization of vocabulary and phraseology. In this respect, I should like to address the restoration of material from the Canon in the Old Swedish translation:²⁵

- With the words of Matthew 26: 64, the Jews accuse Christ of being chargeable with blasphemy for having proclaimed himself the Son of God;

K 19/4–7	T 593/11–23	O 385/1–9
Super Caesarem si quis blasphemauerit, dignus est morti. Iste aduersus Deum blasphemauit. ^I	Intende iudex bone. Si quis contra cesarem blasphemauerit, dignus est morte. Quanto magis iste qui aduersus Deum blasphemat dicens se filium Dei esse. Et coniurantes eum si “tu es filius Dei” non negauit. Sed adhuc insuper blasphemans dixit nobis. “Amodo uidebitis filium hominis sedentem ad dextram uirtutis Dei et uenientem in nubibus celi.” ^{II}	Kære domare Vakta aat vm nakar hadhuetir kesarenom han hawir forskullat dødhin. myklo meer thænne som hadhuetir oc talar mote gudhi sighiandis sik vara gudz son. Ok spor thu han aat mz swornom eedh vm han ær lifuandis gudz son han nekar thz ey. Framledhis owir thz sagdhe han til var mz hadh. Æn skulin ij see mænniskionna son sitia a gudz fadhirs høgghro hand. oc atirkomandis i himilsins sky. ^{III}

- 21 T 590/22–23: “Vos nostis quia uxor mea pagana est et multas synagogas uestras edificauit [Do you know that my wife Procula is pagan and (she nevertheless) built many of your synagogues?]”, and O 381/4–6: “J vitin væl at min hustru ær en hedhnisk quinna. ok hawir byght ok styrkt margha idhra iudha kirkior [You know well that my wife is a pagan woman and has built and fortified many of your Jewish churches]”.
- 22 T 588/32–33: “Aduocans autem Pilatus cursorem nomine Romanum dixit ei [Then Pilate summoned a messenger named Romanus and said unto him]”, and O 387/18–19: “Tha calladhe pylatus en sin thiænara som hæt romanus ok sagdhe honom [Then Pilate called one of his servants who was called Romanus and said to him]”.
- 23 T 610/28–30: “et omnes porte infernales et uectes et sere in accessu eius confracte sunt et omnia locus illi et uiam dederunt [And all the infernal gates, bars, and locks are destroyed, and everything gave Him space and made Him room]”, and O 410/22–24: “Ok alle hæluitis porta lasa oc ærn grindir gingo sundir i hans tilquæmd. oc alt gaf honom rwm ok rymdo væghin [And all the doors, locks, and iron gates of Hell fell apart upon His arrival, and everything gave Him space and made room for him]”.
- 24 T 611/29–31: “et comprehensens Sathan principem tradidit eum Inferi potest<at>e colligatum [And taking hold of Prince Satan, (Christ) delivered him in fetters to the power of Hell]”, and O 412/7–8: “oc nidhir throdh dødhin mz sino valde. oc grep sathan hofðhinga. oc anduardadhe han infero diæffe i vald [And (Christ) trampled Death under foot with his power, and grasped the chiefain Satan and delivered him into the custody of the devil Inferus]”.
- 25 In the following collations, I provide the pages and lines of the editions of K, T, and O in which the readings are found. Translations into English can be found in Table Endnotes (p. 74).

- Nicodemus' first speech in defence of Christ is augmented with Peter's words to the Jews at the Second Temple in Jerusalem, taken from Acts 3: 22–23 and quotes Moses on the future coming of Chris as the Prophet;

K 21/18	T 594/14–20	O 385/1–9
[Omitted]	<p>Forsan et iste Ihesus uenit missus a Deo propheta nobis sicut dixit Moyses patribus nostris, "Prophetam suscitant dominus Deus nobis de gente nostra". Et forsan iste est Ihesus de quo hoc dicitur, "Si iste a Deo missus est ad saluationem credentium et ad exterminationem non credentium uenit". Sicut Deus ad Moysen dixit, "Si quis non audierit prophetam illum et ea que loquetur in nomine meo respuerit, exterminabitur de populo suo".^{IV}</p>	<p>Vanlica thænne sami ihesus kom wtsændir af gudhi sandir prophete swa som moyses sagdhe varom forfædhrom. Herra gudh skal opresa idhir en propheta af idhro folke. ok vanlica thænne ihesus ær thæn sami som af ær scrifuat. Ær han sændir af gudhi tha kom han for aldz folksins helso ther a han vilia tro oc til otrona manna nidhirkfal. Swa som gudh sagdhe til moysen. Hulkinn ey høre thæn prophetan ok thz han sighir i mit namn. han skal forgaas af sino folke.^V</p>

- Pilate reminds the Jews of the dreadful aftermath of Christ's death on the Cross and quotes Matthew 27: 51–54, describing, among other events, the tearing of the temple curtain, the splitting of the rocks, the opening of the tombs;

K 26/6	T 598/25–599/3	O 393/13–26
<p><i>om.</i></p>	<p>Respondens Pilatus dixit eis. “Nonne et uelum templi eclipsis factum est quod coram omnibus scissum est? Et aperta sunt sepulcra mortuorum et sicut nuntiatum est michi, a mortuis plures resurrexerunt et uisi sunt in corporibus in ciuitate nostra Iherusalem. Interrogate centurionem et eos qui cum eo erant officiales qui custodiebant Ihesum. Et perducti ante Iudeos testificati sunt dicentes. “Vere nos uidimus in morte Ihesu terre motum et mugitum terre quasi loquentem audiuiimus. Et nos uidimus homines uos resurrexisse. Et ideo credimus quia uere filius Dei erat iste Ihesus.”^{VI}</p>	<p>Pylatus swaradhe iudhomen. hwat var oc thz solhwarff at tempilsins bonadhir rifnadhe sundir for allom idhrom og-hom. oc dødhra manna grafua the ypnadho sik. oc som mik ær kunnoghat at marghe stodho op af dødha, ok varo sidhe licamlike i varom stadh iherusalem Spyryn aat höfðlingan centurionem oc thöm mz honom varo oc æmbitis mæn som hiollo vardh ok vaku om han. Tha komo thæsse alle fram fore iudhane ok vitnadho. Visselica saghom vi i ihesu christi dødth at iordhin hon skalf ok røöt som hon skulle tala ok vi saghom mænniskionar opstanda af dødha oc thy trom vi vara sant at thænne ihesus var gudz son.^{VII}</p>

- Pilate's words to the Jews in defence of Christ outside the praetorium, clearly not an integration from the Scriptures, have been reasonably considered as an idiomatic expression of the vernacular and an amplification added by the Swedish compiler in search for a more dramatic effect.²⁶ Pilates says in O 348/16–18: “Nw for stund sagdhe iak idhir. Himil oc iordh oc sool hawir iak til tygh at iak ey finna kan ena minzsta sak mz ihesu [Just now, I told you, I have heaven, earth, and the sun as testimony, that I could not find even the

²⁶ Wolf 1997: 284.

smallest fault with Jesus]”. However, the clause is fully extant in T 592/30–32: “Iam dixi vobis, testem habeo solem et celum ego quia nec unam culpam inuenio in eum [I have already told you, that I have the sun and heaven as testimony, that I do not find any fault in Him]”. In this connection, a search in the Library of Latin Texts and the Patrologia Latina Databases has revealed that the clause *testem habeo in caelis* [heaven is my witness] should be counted as an idiosyncrasy of twelfth-century Clairvaux, since it only occurs in a letter dated 1140 written by Bernard, founder of the Abbey, and addressed to the brethren of the Cistercian monastery of Tre Fontane in Rome, and possibly preceding the transcription of Troyes 1636 by a few decades.²⁷

The four additions discussed above that further emphasize the fault of the Jews throughout Christ’s trial could be naturally accounted as secondary fourteenth-century insertions on behalf of the Swedish compiler since they do not appear in a typical text of the Majority type, whereas they are typical of LatT. In this connection, it should perhaps be stressed how twelfth-century Clairvaux was a highly anti-Jewish environment. Although he opposed the infamous massacre of the Jews in the Rhine Valley (1096), Bernard was a perpetrator of Jewish stereotypes, he condemned the entire Jewish community, and openly charged it with bestiality in several of his writings.²⁸

- Translation doublets have also been attributed to the translator’s procedures,²⁹ whereas they are also extant in LatT as semi-synonymous couples.

K 32/15	T 603/8	O 400/9
honorabilis ^{VIII}	honorabilis et dilectus ^{IX}	hedhirlikin ok ælskelikin ^X

27 Leclercq & Rochais 1974–1977, vol. 8: 285: “Dilectissimis in Christo filiis nostris de Sancto Anastasio, frater Bernardus, Claraevallis vocatus abbas: salutem et devotas orationes. **TESTEM habeo in caelis** quam multum omnes vos cupiam in visceribus Iesu Christi, quanto, si fieri posset, desiderio desiderarem videre vos, non propter vos tantum, sed propter me [To our dearest sons in Christ, (the brethren) of St Anastasius, I, Brother Bernard, called Abbot of Clairvaux, wish health and my vowed prayers. **I have heaven as testimony**, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ; inasmuch that I should have longed with (much) desire to see you, had that been possible, not only on your own account, but also on my own]”. The monastery is also known as Abbey of Saints Vincent and Anastasius. On the correspondence, see for instance Holdsworth 2011: 210. The letter precedes the election of Pope Eugene III (1145–1153), former monk at Clairvaux and abbot of Tre Fontane, of five years. Eugene would commission Bernard’s preaching the year following his election and the campaign would turn out successfully.

28 See especially Berger 1972, and Stroll 1897, pp. 164–171.

29 Wolf 1997: 284.

Among the seventeen manuscripts transmitting a Latin text of the T-type, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 500 stands out for its evident affinities with A 110. A voluminous theological miscellany, CCC 500 was copied roughly in the same decades, probably between 1390 and 1410, and besides transmitting a LatT text of the *Evangelium Nicodemi*, it is the only extant manuscript from the over 400 witnesses to transmit Birgitta's *Revelationes*.³⁰ Much like A 110, extracts from her *Revelationes* (ff. 85^r–105^v) are also taken from Book I and precede the *Evangelium Nicodemi* (ff. 110^r–116^v) in the codex. The provenance of CCC 500 has remained obscure for long time and perhaps the inscription of the name of a British woman, Mary Pernham, at the bottom of f. 2^v, might have further disoriented in the search for its origins.³¹ Perhaps on account of its content, in the second half of the fifteenth century, CCC 500 was owned by the Birgittine Marienfriede (*Maria Pacis*) monastery in Elbląg (now in Poland).³² However, Nigel Morgan and Stella Panayotova have stressed how items 1 and 8, Jan Isner's *Expositio missae* (ff. 1^r–11^r) and Heinrich von Friemer's *Tractatus de quatuor instinctibus* (ff. 49^r–56^v) respectively, were texts widely circulated within the Prague university circle.³³ As a matter of fact, Isner was professor at the Faculty of Theology at Prague University from 1376,³⁴ whereas von Friemer studied theology in Prague some time earlier.³⁵ At the end of the *Evangelium Nicodemi* (on f. 116^v), a distich on indulgence mentions its owner, “vitoldus dux litwanie heres russie possessor”, Vytautas (d. 1430), Grand Duke of Lithuania at the turn of the fifteenth century.³⁶ The most plausible way for him to have obtained, or perhaps even commissioned, the manuscript is through the *Collegium lithuanorum*, also known as *Hierosolymitanum*, a student house within Prague University founded around 1400 by Queen Jadwiga of Poland to educate Lithuanian novices in theology.³⁷

Nevertheless, neither Troyes 1636 nor CCC 500 can be considered the very manuscript sources consulted by the Swedish scribe. The three lengthy omissions – due to *saut du même au même* which is typical of the Old Swedish translation – namely

30 As can be gathered from Izydorczyk 1993.

31 A summary description of the codex is available at http://dms.stanford.edu/catalog/CCC500_keywords, accessed on 22 August 2017.

32 See Izydorczyk 1993 item 47. Around the years 1618–1624, the Church books of Marienfriede in Elbląg record Richard Pernham as “concionator anglicus” and “Anglicanae ecclesiae pastor”. See Perlbach 1920: 36. Along with five other manuscripts at Corpus Christi, ms 500 might have been given to the College by Richard himself. See also the discussion concerning manuscripts 500, 503, 506, 534, 536, which are also related to the Pernhams (Morgan & Panayotova: items 133, 135, 136, 138, 139).

33 Morgan & Panayotova 2009: item 137. Isner and von Friemer's texts are edited respectively in Zawadzki 1971 and Zumkeller & Warnock 1977.

34 Betts 1969: 10.

35 Stroick 1954: 27.

36 Morgan & Panayotova 2009: 247.

37 Cardini 2007: 184.

Hell's fourth invective against Satan,³⁸ Habakkuk's canticle in praise of God,³⁹ and Tischendorf's chap. 28⁴⁰ are fully extant in the two Latin manuscripts, and it is still an open question whether these sections were also omitted in the lost Latin manuscript consulted by the Swedish scribe. It also remains unclear which among the four main redactions of Birgitta's *Revelationes*, the Italian and German-English types (β family) or the Prague and Vadstena types (π family) is extant in CCCC 500, although its origin and circulation would naturally suggest Prague as the most plausible candidate.⁴¹ Such an identification would require a full collation of CCCC 500 with all available variant readings of the Latin text of the *Revelationes*, a task that goes beyond the purpose of the present investigation, and that remains a desideratum, especially considering the early date and the very provenance of CCCC 500.

It is a well-known fact that during the last fifteen years of the fourteenth century, Prague University played a fundamental role in the validation and dissemination of Birgitta's *Revelationes*. Matthew of Kraków (d. 1410), professor of theology in Prague, was a member of the Second Commission of Inquiry appointed to validate the orthodoxy and authenticity of Birgitta's *Revelationes*. He quickly became an ardent proponent of Birgitta's visionary cause and in the years 1385–1386 delivered an eloquent speech before Pope Urban VI in Genoa, which would have substan-

38 K 44/30–36 O: “princeps Satan, auctor mortis et origo superbiae, debueras primum istius Iesu causam malam requirere. Et in quo nullam culpam cognouisti quare sine ratione iniuste eum crucifigere ausus fuisti et ad nostram regionem innocentem et iustum perduxisti, et totius mundi noxios, impios et iniustos perdidisti? [O Prince Satan, author of death and origin of pride, you must first have sought a cause of sin in this Jesus. And why when you recognized no fault in Him did you dare to unjustly crucify Him without a reason and brought Him, innocent and just, to our region, losing all the guilty, the disloyal, and the unrighteous men of the entire world?],” and T 612/21–27: “O actor mortis pessime sathan et origo superbie, debueras primum istius Ihesu causam require si esset dignus morte. Et si in eo causam mortis non inuenisses, dimitteres eum. Sed quia mortis in eo culpam non cognouisti quare sine ratione illum occidere ausus fuisti? Sed ad quid dominum Deum Ihesum, rege glorie sanctum, et ad nostram regionem innocentem et iustum huc perduxisti? Scis quid egisti. omnia perdidisti. Soli remanemus in infinita captiuitate [O author of death, dreadful Satan, and origin of pride! You must first have sought a cause of sin in this Jesus if He is worthy of death. And if you did not find any cause for death in Him, dismiss him. But since you did not recognize any guilt for death in him, why did you dare to slay him without any reason? Why have you led him, God the Lord, Jesus, the Holy King of Glory, and you have led him here, innocent and just, to our region? You know what you have done? You have lost everything. Alone we abide in endless captivity].” The Swedish reading should have been at O 413/2.

39 K 45/1–5: “Et post haec exclamauit Abacuc propheta dicens: ‘Existi salutem populi tui ad liberandum electos tuos.’ Et omnes sancti responderunt dicentes: ‘Benedictus qui uenit nomine Domini, Deus Dominus, et illuxit nobis. Amen. Alleluia.’ [And thereafter Habakkuk the prophet exclaimed saying: ‘You have departed for the salvation of your people and to set free your chosen ones.’ And all the saints answered: ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, God the Lord, and has illuminated us. Amen. Hallelujah.’],” and T 613/28–31: “Et post hec clamauit abacuch propheta dicens. Existi salutem populi tui ad liberandos electos tuos et omnes sancti responderunt dicentes. Benedictus qui uenit in nomine domini deus dominus et illuxit nobis [And thereafter Habakkuk the prophet cried out saying: ‘You have departed for the salvation of your people and to set free your chosen ones.’ And all the saints answered saying: ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, God the Lord, and has illuminated us.’]” The Swedish reading should have been at O 414/3.

40 Tischendorf's chap. 28 is edited in T 616/1–617/22.

41 On the main Latin groups of Birgitta's *Revelationes*, see the useful summary in Morris 2006: 19–21 and references there.

tially contributed to her final canonization in 1391.⁴² This notable ascendance of the Prague Faculty of Theology and its influence on Birgitta's canonization process certainly brought about an increase in the attendance of Vadstena novices at the Prague Faculty of Theology. Their affluence grew to such an extent that it has been estimated that 144 Swedish students registered at Prague University in the years 1360–1409.⁴³ The establishment and consolidation of the Prague–Vadstena route of cultural transmission in the last quarter of the fourteenth century highly influenced Swedish monastic milieu, which became progressively inspired by the *devotio bohémica*.⁴⁴ Along with this, it also determined the very typology of Latin texts imported to Sweden in those years and, ultimately, the structure and themes of their vernacular renditions. The remnants of this profitable networking are detectable in the numerous Latin manuscripts of Bohemian provenance, today part of the C-collection at Uppsala,⁴⁵ in the visual arts of that time prompted by numerous works of Bohemian craftsmanship,⁴⁶ a great example of this being the fifteenth-century Uppsala–Näs wooden statue of a seated Virgin,⁴⁷ and in the vernacular translations that may go back to specific textual traditions circulating within the Prague University circle, among these Birgitta's *Revelationes*, the *Evangelium Nicodemi*, and perhaps the Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes vitae Christi*, all integral parts of the Prague curriculum in theology.

In the case of the Old Swedish *Evangelium Nicodemi*, it is highly likely that a LatT text was imported to Sweden by Vadstena novices that were studying at the Faculty of Theology during the fourth quarter of the fourteenth century. Possibly on account of its secondary amplifications and more intriguing and exhaustive storyline, one of the ancestors of CCCC 500 might have been selected among the many versions of the apocryphon that were circulating in Prague in those years. Today, these are represented by twenty-six manuscripts transmitting the Majority Text and one exemplar for each sub-family B, C, and T.⁴⁸ It is also likely that once in Vadstena the LatT text was again preferred to the Majority Text for its translation into Old Swedish, since already a few decades later, a Latin text of the Majority type, Uppsala C 219, was owned and in circulation at the Abbey, and it is not

42 Nuding 2007: 75–89.

43 Thörnqvist 1929: 235–298.

44 Härdelin 2001: 288.

45 Hedlund 2000.

46 Tångeberg 1993.

47 Andersson 1980: 63–64.

48 Items 295–298, 300–305, 307–322; 299 being Latin B and 306 Latin C in Izydorczyk 1993. The aforementioned CCCC 500 is the sole surviving manuscript transmitting a text of the LatT type.

unlikely that the two redactions coexisted in the same scriptorium, as is often the case in other centres of learning of medieval Europe.⁴⁹

What seems however clear from the codicological context in which the Old Swedish *Evangelium Nicodemi* is found is that, much like in CCCC 500, its text seems to have been embedded in Vadstena manuscripts to substantiate sections concerning Christ's trial and passion. In line with Birgitta's mysticism, and more broadly with the Franciscan tradition of devotional piety, late-fourteenth-century Prague and Vadstena audiences were compelled to meditate and internalize Christ's unbearable agonies on the Cross as a result of humankind's wickedness, rather than to speculate on their own path to Redemption or on the eschatological and soteriological consequences of Christ's Harrowing of Hell typical of the High Scholasticism, and as is the case for its Old Norse counterpart.⁵⁰

Amongst all the centres of European learning, Prague University strenuously promoted the new type of devotional piety that was particularly dear to Birgitta, while concurrently disseminating her works throughout the West and teaching them to the new generations of clerics. It is therefore my opinion that we should perhaps first turn to the manuscripts of Prague University when in search for devotional sources that were consulted and employed in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Vadstena, especially when these have been lost forever from Swedish soil.

49 Uppsala, Universitetsbiblioteket, C 219, a collection of exempla that first belonged to Carolus Andreae [Karl Andersson], a priest in Vist (Östergötland) who entered Vadstena Abbey in 1442 and donated it to its library. The original collection of exempla was probably produced at Maçon, where the author declares to live. The abridged text *Evangelium Nicodemi* might be derived from its summary treatment in the *Legenda Aurea*. See Izydorczyk 1993: item 364, and Andersson-Schmitt, Hallberg & Hedlund 1993: 68–69.

50 See Bullitta forthcoming.

TABLE ENDNOTES

- I "If someone has blasphemed against the Emperor, he is worthy of death. He blasphemed against God."
- II "Beware, O good judge! If someone has blasphemed against the Emperor, he is worthy of death. All the more so He who blasphemes against God saying He is the Son of God. And asking Him under oath if you are the Son of God, He did not deny it. And He again blasphemed above that, saying to us: 'From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right side of God and coming on the clouds of heaven.'"
- III "Dear judge, beware that by pronouncing blasphemies against the Emperor, He has made himself deserving of death. Much more so, He who blasphemes and talks against God saying He is the Son of God. And when you ask Him under oath if He is the living Son of God, He does not deny it. Furthermore, beyond that He said to us with hatred: 'From now on you will see the Son of Men sit at the right side of God and coming on the clouds of heaven.'"
- IV "And perhaps this Jesus comes sent from God as a Prophet, like Moses said to our fathers: 'A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto us from our people.' And perhaps this Jesus is the one of whom it is said: 'If this has been sent from God, He comes for the salvation of the believers and for the banishment of the nonbelievers.' Like God said to Moses: 'Anyone who does not listen to that Prophet and who rejects what is said in my name, he shall be cut off from his people.'"
- V "Probably that same Jesus came sent from God, who has sent the Prophet, like Moses said to our ancestors: 'The Lord God shall raise up unto you a Prophet from your people.' And probably this Jesus is the same one about whom it is written: 'If He is sent from God, then He came for the salvation of all the people who want to believe in Him and for the ruin of the nonbelievers.' Like God said to Moses: 'Anyone who does not listen to that Prophet and to what He says in my name, he shall disappear from his people.'"
- VI "Pilate answered and said to them: 'Has the veil of the temple not rent and has the eclipse not occurred before everyone? And the graves of the dead were opened like it is reported to me and many dead men arose and were seen in their bodies in our city Jerusalem. Ask the centurion and those who were with him, the officials who were guarding Jesus.' Led before the Jews, they testified saying: 'Indeed, during the death of Christ we have seen the earth quaking and we have heard clearly the earth's rumble and we saw men being resurrected and therefore we believe indeed that this Jesus was the Son of God.'"
- VII "Pilate answered the Jews: 'What else was this eclipse? The temple curtain was torn before all your eyes and the tombs of dead men opened and, as it is reported to me, many men have risen from the dead and were physically seen in our city Jerusalem. Ask the chief centurion and those who were with him and the officials who were on guard and watching Jesus.' Then they all came before the Jews and testified: 'Truly, during the death of Christ we saw that the earth quaked and roared as if it were talking and we saw men being resurrected from the dead and therefore we believe it to be true that this Jesus was the Son of God.'"
- VIII "Honourable".
- IX "Honourable and beloved".
- X "Honourable and beloved".

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UK, Cambridge: Corpus Christi College, 500; Trinity College 0.9.10.

USA, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University, Houghton Library, lat. 117.

Abbreviations

K = Kim, Hack C. (ed.). 1973. *The Gospel of Nicodemus (Gesta Salvatoris): Edited from the Codex Einsidlensis, Einsiedeln Stiftsbibliothek, MS 326*. Toronto Medieval Latin Texts, 2 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies).

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Ther man hæwez hƿæd saff fraa 1er
konigh magnus oc konigh ærtus Kard.
Til dygdh oc eze vaze the wijs Mayr
Artus var ien konigh aff engeland
han gaurd fram his fæced oc brand
hæ var lofþer thir mæ eze
Och froðy engeland aff hoage bryce

Beyond the Piraeus Lion

East Norse Studies from Venice

East Norse philology – the study of Old Danish, Old Swedish, and Old Gutnish – continues to attract scholarly attention from around the world. *Beyond the Piraeus Lion* comprises fourteen articles on a vast number of topics by researchers from Scandinavia, Germany, Italy, and the USA. They are based on a selection of the papers given at the Second International Conference for East Norse Philology held at Ca' Foscari University of Venice in November 2015. The volume covers subjects ranging from codicology and material philology to text transmission and reception, from women's literacy in medieval Sweden to studies of Old Danish lexicon, and from Bible translations to Old Swedish poetics. In all, there are five sections in the volume – *Palaeography, Codicology, and Editing; Manuscript Studies; Vocabulary and Style; Literature and Writing; Bibles and Translations* – that all demonstrate the breadth and vitality of East Norse philology.

The book is the second volume published by Selskab for Østnordisk Filologi · Sällskap för östnordisk filologi, established in Uppsala in 2013.

UJDS



il dygdh oc eze vaze the wijs Mayr