

*Saints and their Legacies
in Medieval Iceland*

Edited by
Dario Bullitta and Kirsten Wolf

D. S. BREWER

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The Tuscan Provenance of *Framfǫr Maríu*

Dario Bullitta

hverr er þesse sva miklo dyrlegre en adrar Ct 6:9
er vppsteig sva sem vprisande dags brvn Ct 6:3
fogr sem tungl valið sem sol
ogorlig sem skipot fylking hermanna

*Vespers antiphon for the Feast of the Assumption (August 15)*¹

Untouched by original sin, Mary of Nazareth attained unrivaled popularity in the history of Christianity with a cult that is exceeded only by that of Christ himself. Mary is still the most honored and venerated saint in the Roman Catholic Church, a highly privileged status testified to by her eminent degree of worship² and by her countless poetic epithets, tutelary titles, scriptural typologies, and honorific salutations.³

¹ The verses are embedded in a fragmentary Assumption homily extant as item 3 of Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 655 XXVII 4to (c. 1300), folio 5v/15–8 ('Who is she so much more glorious than any other [saint] that ascends as the rising dawn, fair as the moon, elect as the sun, terrible as an army set in array.') The antiphon conflates the Song of Songs 6:9 and 6:3, traditionally depicting the rising of the bride in the desert, which in Marian exegesis have been interpreted as a prefiguration of the ascent of the Virgin. On the Assumption fragment, see especially Dario Bullitta, 'The Story of Joseph of Arimathea in AM 655 XXVII 4to', *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 131 (2016), pp. 47–74, p. 52, and Stephen Pelle's essay in the present volume, p.44, footnote 49. Unless otherwise stated, all translations are my own.

² This is theologically defined as *cultus hyperduliae* ('cult of highermost veneration'), one that greatly exceeds the regular *cultus duliae* ('cult of veneration') the worship of all other saints and angels; it is second only to the *cultus latrariae* ('cult of worship'), the adoration of God in his Trinitarian form. See, for instance, the discussion in Leo Scheffczyk, *Maria: Mutter und Gefährtin Christi* (Augsburg: Sankt Ulrich Verlag, 2003), pp. 201–13.

³ A first atlas of Mary's epithets is available in Nicholas Joseph Santoro, *Mary in Our Life: Atlas of the Names and Titles of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and Their Place in Marian Devotion* (Missouri: Bloomington, 2001).

More than fifty formal and informal Marian titles are collected in the petitions of the *Litaniae Lauretanae*, the most widely disseminated praises and supplications to the Virgin that officially became part of the rosary ritual from the last quarter of the sixteenth century.⁴ Among these, four invocations have a profound rhetorical and theological poignancy, since they profess the great Marian dogmas of divine motherhood, perpetual virginity, immaculate conception, and glorious Assumption. They were proclaimed as truth by four ecclesiastical decrees: 'Sancta Dei Genetrix' ('Holy Bearer of God') [≈ 'Deipara' ('Bearer of God') Council of Ephesus, AD 431]; 'Maria Semper Virgo' ('Mary Ever Virgin') [≈ 'Semper Virgo' ('Ever Virgin') Lateran Synod, AD 649]; 'Regina sine labe concepta' ('Queen conceived without sin') [≈ 'In primo instanti suae conceptionis [...] ab omni originalis culpae labe praeservatam immunem' ('In the first instance of her conception [...] she was preserved free from all stain of original sin') *Infallibilis Deus*, 1854]; and 'Regina in caelum assumpta' ('Queen assumed into heaven') [≈ 'Corpore et anima ad supernam Caeli gloriam eveheretur, ubi Regina refulgeret ad eiusdem sui Filii dexteram, immortalis saeculorum Regis' ('She might be taken up body and soul to the glory of heaven, where as Queen she sits in splendor at the right hand of her Son, the immortal King of the Ages') *Munificentissimus Deus*, 1950].⁵

Despite the late date of *Munificentissimus Deus*, attempts to promote Mary's bodily assumption date back as far as Late Antiquity, when an impressive number of hymns, sermons, and apocryphal narratives describing Mary's death and departure into Paradise were first composed. The *Clavis Apocryphorum* counts sixty-four surviving apocrypha written in Syriac, Greek, Coptic, Arabic, Ethiopic, Latin, Georgian, Armenian, and Irish which, at least in the early stages, seem to make no specific distinction between the words *dormitio* ('dormition'), *ascensio* ('ascension'), and *transitus* ('transit').⁶ Although they differ considerably in terms of style, tone, and literary motifs, they all share the same fundamental conviction:

⁴ The litanies came to be known as 'Lauretan', since they were first associated with the Basilica of the Holy House in Loreto (Marche), a shrine on the Adriatic Coast of Italy, the walls of which are believed to be identical to those of the Holy House in Nazareth, where the Virgin grew up and received the angelic announcement. The Marian titles were added to the litanies both before and after the official approval of the text on the part of Pope Sixus V (1521–1590) in 1587. For a philological and historical survey, see, for instance, Angelo De Santi, *Le Litanie Lauretane: studio storico critico*, 2nd rev. ed. (Rome: La civiltà cattolica, 1897).

⁵ The texts of the four councils are available in the *Enchiridion symbolorum. Compendium der Glaubensbekenntnisse und kirchlichen Lehrentscheidungen*, ed. and trans. Heinrich Denzinger and Peter Hünermann, 45th rev. ed. (Freiburg: EDB, 2017), §§ 250, 427, 2803, and 3902, respectively.

⁶ Maurice Geerard, *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti*, CCSA (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), pp. 74–95.

as the immaculate Ark of the New Covenant and the purest Vessel that had once contained the Word of God made flesh (Exodus 25:11–21), Mary's body could not suffer the death and decay of any other ordinary body.⁷ Among the New Testament apocrypha concerning Mary's death and Assumption, a pseudo-epigraphical narrative entitled *Transitus Mariae* and attributed to Joseph of Arimathea has been the subject of major disagreements among scholars, who have searched for specific evidence that could throw light on its date, provenance, and underlying sources.⁸

This essay traces the provenance and circulation of the Old Norse translation of Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus Mariae*. It is argued that the presence of variant readings typical of a newly identified 'Tuscan redaction' in that text indicates that its lost manuscript source was a Latin codex circulating in Florence during the second quarter of the fifteenth century. The lost volume might have been acquired by the English Bishop of Hólar Jón Vilhjálmsón Craxton (d. 1440) during his visit to Pope Eugene IV (1383–1447) in Florence in the years 1433–1436 and later sent by him to Iceland with other codices of English provenance in order to settle part of his debts contracted with the Hólar diocese. Finally, two previously unnoticed scenes depicting the *Transitus Mariae* as related by the Pseudo-Joseph of Arimathea are identified in coeval English alabaster altarpieces from the churches of Hítardalur (Mýrasýsla) and Möðruvellir (Eyjafjörður).

The *Transitus Mariae* of Pseudo-Joseph of Arimathea

The standard text of Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* opens with a short preface reporting that sometime before Christ's Passion, the Virgin asked her son about her own death and begged him to be informed of it three days in advance.⁹ While in prayer in Jerusalem during the second year after Christ's ascension, Mary is visited by an unnamed angel, who salutes her with a palm and foretells her death. Mary informs Joseph of Arimathea and her relatives of the angelic visit and subsequently washes herself and dresses in queenly robes, while attended by three

⁷ On Mary as the new Ark of the Covenant, see, for instance, John Seward, *Redeemer in the Womb: Jesus Living in Mary* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), especially pp. 27–31 and 125–27.

⁸ As noted in *The Apocryphal Gospels of Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. and trans. Mary Clayton. Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 26 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 99.

⁹ The following is a synopsis of the text available *Apocalypses Apocryphae: Mosis, Esdrae, Pauli, Iohannis, item Mariae dormitio, additis Evangeliorum et actuum Apocryphorum supplementis*, ed. Konstantin von Tischendorf (Leipzig: Mendelssohn, 1866, repr. Hildesheim: George Olms, 1966), pp. 113–23. It is based on Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 4363, fols 24r–54r (Italy, c. 1200–1300) with variant readings from Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, O 35 sup., fols 99r–103r (Italy, c. 1300–1325).

virgins named Sepphora, Abigea, and Zaël. The following day, John the Evangelist is transported from the city of Ephesus to the Queen's chamber amid rain and thunder, and so are all other disciples except Thomas Didymus.¹⁰ Mary reveals to them the reason for their unexpected rapture, and they sit at her deathbed with great vigil fires, singing psalms and canticles. The following day at the third hour (the same time when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles), Christ descends with a host of angels, and the soul of Mary is elevated in a flood of light, while the entire earth shakes and the city of Jerusalem witnesses the event. Concurrently, Satan enters the bodies of some Jerusalemites and forces them to burn Mary's body; however, the culprits are immediately struck blind and begin to bang their heads against the walls and clash with each other. In fear, the Apostles transfer Mary's body from Mount Zion to the Valley of Josaphat. Midway, a certain Jew named Ruben attempts to overturn Mary's bier, and to everyone's alarm his hands wither all the way to the elbow. He implores the Apostles to spare him and make him Christian. At the Apostles' intercessional prayer, Ruben is instantly healed and baptized and immediately leaves the scene proclaiming Christ. While Mary's body is lying in the tomb, a great light shines over the Apostles, who fall with their faces on the ground without realizing that a group of angels has already taken Mary's body to heaven. At this point, Thomas is brought to the Mount of Olives from India, where he had begun his apostolic mission. He alone is able to witness with astonishment Mary's bodily departure into heaven, and when he prays that she grant him blessings, the girdle used by the Apostles to gird her robe on her deathbed comes down from above. When Thomas arrives at the Valley of Josaphat, Peter rebukes him again for acting like a misbeliever, but after they have rolled away a heavy stone, they all realize that Mary's sepulcher is empty. Subsequently, Thomas relates his wondrous encounter with the Virgin on the Mount of Olives and reveals Mary's girdle to the Apostles as evidence of his truthfulness. Finally, peace is restored among the Apostles, who are brought back to their lands on clouds while glorifying the name of the Lord. The narrative ends with an epilogue in which Joseph of Arimathea states his authorship and his role as a first-hand witness of the aforementioned wonders.

Several scholars have attempted to propose suitable sources that might indicate the date and provenance of the Latin text. Perhaps because of

¹⁰ Sixteen of them are mentioned: John the Evangelist and his brother James the Greater, Peter and Paul, Andrew, Philip, Luke, Barnabas, Bartholomew and Matthew, Matthias surnamed Justus, Simon the Canaanite, Jude and his brother (either James the Just or Joseph), Nicodemus, and Maximianus (presumably Maximinus of Aix [1st century], one of the legendary seventy-two disciples of Christ, who arrived in Marseilles with Lazarus, Mary Magdalene, and Martha). See *ibid.*, p. 116.

its indisputable oriental themes and echoes, Konstantin von Tischendorf considered the Latin text of Pseudo-Joseph older than the widely disseminated Latin *Transitus* by Pseudo-Melito of Sardis and consequently edited the texts as *Transitus A* and *Transitus B*.¹¹ Martin Jugie proposed two Greek texts as possible sources: the *Liber de Dormitione Mariae* by Pseudo-John the Theologian (that is, the Apostle)¹² and the seventh-century *Homily on the Dormition* by John of Thessalonica (d. c. AD 630).¹³ He highlighted parallels with what he believed to be a coeval text, the early eighth-century *Letter IX to Titus* (Paul's companion and bishop of Crete) of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (c. AD 650–725), which survives only in an Armenian translation.¹⁴ Montague A. James was the first scholar to associate Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* with the so-called *Sacra Cintola* (Mary's alleged 'Holy Girdle'), the twelfth-century relic preserved in the homonymous chapel of the Prato Cathedral, and suggested that Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* must be a late Italian work of fiction written no earlier than the thirteenth century.¹⁵ Simon Claude Mimouni advanced the theory that the Latin compiler consulted either the Greek *Liber de Dormitione Mariae* by Pseudo-John or the sixth-century Syriac or Arabic apocryphon known as *Six Books*, and that he might have had access to the latter through John of Thessalonica's *Homily on the Dormition*.¹⁶ Most

¹¹ See discussion *ibid.*, pp. xxxiv–xlvi. *Transitus A* and *Transitus B* are edited on pp. 113–23 and 124–36, respectively. Pseudo-Melito's text is now universally recognized as being the earliest text among the Latin Dormition narratives and is commonly dated to the fifth century, since it locates Mary's house on the Mount of Olives, a topographical dissimilarity with the later tradition, which places her house on Mount Zion. See especially the discussion in Stephen J. Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption*. Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 35–36 and references there. The Latin text is available in *Ein neuer "Transitus Mariae" des Pseudo-Melito. Textkritische Ausgabe und Darlegung der Bedeutung dieser ursprünglicheren Fassung für Apokryphenforschung und lateinische und deutsche Dichtung des Mittelalters*, ed. Monika Haibach-Reinische. Bibliotheca Assumptionis B. Virginis Mariae 5 (Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1962).

¹² The text is edited *ibid.*, pp. 95–112.

¹³ The text is available in *Homéliez Mariales byzantines: Textes grecs édités et traduits en latin*, ed. Martin Jugie, 2 vols, *Patrologia Orientalis* 16/3; 19/3 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1921–1925, repr. Turnhout: Brepols, 1990) II (1990), pp. 375–405.

¹⁴ Most evidently, both texts identify Mary's burial place in Gethsemane. A German translation of the text is available in Paul Vetter, 'Das apokryphe Schreiben Dionysius des Areopagiten an Titus über Aufnahme Mariä aus dem Armenischen Übersetzt', *Theologische Quartalschrift* 69 (1887), pp. 133–38. See the discussion in Martin Jugie, *La mort et l'assomption de la Sainte Vierge: Étude historico-doctrinale*. Studi e Testi 114 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944), pp. 156–57.

¹⁵ *The Apocryphal New Testament*, trans. Montague R. James (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 209 and 218.

¹⁶ The *Six Books* are the oldest narrative among the 'Bethlehem' Dormition

importantly, Mimouni stresses how no mention of Mary's girdle can be traced to before the seventh century and argues that the identification of Mary's tomb in the Valley of Josaphat is typical of Coptic texts and traditions. He also maintains that at the end of the twelfth century, Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* would have been consciously used to justify the presence of the notable relic in Prato.¹⁷ More recently, Stephen J. Shoemaker has dated the text to between the middle of the sixth and the middle of the eighth century and classified it as part of the 'Late Apostle' tradition, according to which one of the Apostles is delayed in his journey to Mary's burial but sees her body rising to heaven as he approaches Jerusalem. In some versions, Mary gives the Apostle her girdle, while other traditions describe it as her burial robe. According to Shoemaker, the 'Late Apostle' tradition developed in order to defend the finding of the Marian burial relics.¹⁸ Finally, on account of certain monastic elements like indulgence, prayers, forgiveness of sins, and the unusual mention of the legendary first bishop of Aix-en-Provence Maximinus among the disciples who attended Mary's Dormition, Bogusław Kochaniewicz argued that the text might have been composed in a French Cistercian monastery toward the end of the twelfth century.¹⁹ Whereas certain topoi and topographical details might be ascribed to specific oriental or, less convincingly, French traditions, it is demonstrated below that the provenance of the Latin manuscripts, the complete absence of ancient Greek translations, and the lack of any vernacular redaction prior to the early fourteenth century corroborate James' hypothesis that in its present textual form this version of the Latin *Transitus* was produced in early thirteenth-century Italy.

Framfǫr Maríu

The most detailed account describing Mary's bodily Assumption in Iceland is found in the Old Norse translation of Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* edited under the title *Framfǫr Maríu*.²⁰ The vernacular

traditions. The text is available with facing English translation in, *Apocrypha Syriaca*, ed. and trans. Agnes Smith-Lewis. *Studia sinaitica* 11 (London: C. J. Clay, 1902), pp. 12–69. A new critical edition of the Syriac text is currently being prepared by Stephen J. Shoemaker for the CCSA. See also the discussion in Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions*, p. 146.

¹⁷ See the discussion in Simon Claude Mimouni, *Dormition et assumption de Marie: Histoire des traditions anciennes*. *Théologie historique* 98 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1995), pp. 289–93.

¹⁸ See Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions*, pp. 67–68.

¹⁹ Bogusław Kochaniewicz, 'Il *Transitus Mariae* dello Pseudo-Giuseppe da Arimatea – un apocrifo di origine italiana?', *Angelicum* 82 (2005), pp. 99–121, at p. 120.

²⁰ As recently demonstrated by Najork, prior to the fifteenth century, learned

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text survives in codex unicus as the most recent item included in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 232 fol., a miscellaneous and composite codex consisting of 121 double-column parchment leaves written and assembled in Iceland in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The first codicological unit was written around 1300 and preserves a defective text of *Barlaams saga ok Jósafats* (fols 1ra/1–54rb/37).²¹ The second codicological unit was copied around 1350 and transmits the older redaction of *Mariu saga* expanded with a collection of miracles (fols 55ra/1–83rb/39)²² and the second redaction of *Jóns saga baptista* (fols 86ra/1–107vb/34).²³ A third section dated to around 1370 preserves a deficient text of the sole redaction of *Heilagra feðra áfi* or *Vitae Patrum* (fols 108ra/1–121va/12).²⁴ A fourth unit consisting of two leaves transmitting *Framfǫr Maríu* (fols 84r/1–85b/34) was added sometime in the fifteenth century to serve as an appendix to

Icelanders appear to have expressed two distinct theological views on the bodily Assumption of the Virgin. A first approach was one of cautious skepticism, as testified to by an excerpt of Paschasius Radbertus' (AD 785–865) *Cogites me* that is shared by the second homily in the *Icelandic Homily Book* (c. 1200), the thirty-first homily in the *Norwegian Homily Book* (c. 1200), *Mariu saga I* (c. 1325–1715), and *Mariu saga II* (c. 1300–1450). See Daniel Najork, 'Translating Marian Doctrine into the Vernacular: The Bodily Assumption in Middle English and Old Norse-Icelandic Literature' (Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 2014), pp. 120–50. To his list, a hitherto unpublished homily on the Assumption extant in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 655 XXVII 4to [fol. 5r/15–5v/19 (c. 1300)], the text of which is probably derived from *Mariu saga I*, should be added. See the discussion in Bullitta, 'The Story of Joseph', p. 52. A second favorable Icelandic view dates to the middle of the fourteenth century, when some exponents of the 'Northern Icelandic Benedictine School' evoked sections of Elisabeth of Schönau's *Visio de resurrectione Beate Virginis Marie* in *Guðmundar saga byskups C*, *Guðmundar saga byskups D*, and in the universal chronicle extant in Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 764 4to (c. 1376–1386). See Najork, 'Translating Marian Doctrine', pp. 151–79.

²¹ See the discussion in *Barlaams ok Josaphats saga*, ed. Magnus Rindal. *Norrøne tekster 4* (Oslo: Norsk historisk kjeldeskrift-institutt, 1981), pp. 24–25. The text in AM 232 fol. is edited *ibid.*, pp. 214–33; its readings are indicated in the apparatus with the siglum B.

²² See *Mariu saga: Legender om Jomfru Maria og hendes jertegn*, ed. Carl R. Unger (Christiania [Oslo]: Brøgger & Christie, 1871), I, pp. 65/4–152. Variants of AM 232 fol. are indicated with the siglum B.

²³ The text of *Jóns saga baptista* in AM 232 fol. is edited in *Postola sögur: Legendariske fortællinger om apostlernes liv, deres kamp for kristendommens udbredelse samt deres martyrdød*, ed. Carl R. Unger (Christiania [Oslo]: Bentzen, 1874), pp. 850/20–931.

²⁴ Variant readings of *Heilagra feðra áfi* in AM 232 fol. (designated B) are available *ibid.*, pp. 335–671.

Mariu saga.²⁵ In addition, the verso page (fol. 54v/1–5) originally left blank after the transcription of *Barlaams saga ok Jósafats* is now occupied by a *Skuldareikningr*, an inventory of the outstanding debts contracted by Jón Ketilsson (1380–1432), *sveinn* ('attendant') of the English Bishop of Hólar Jón Vilhjálmsson Craxton (d. 1440).²⁶ The inventory does not provide a specific date but must have been compiled shortly after the bishop's death in 1440.²⁷ The most reliable information we have on AM 232 fol. is provided by Árni Magnússon (1663–1730) in his own catalogue, where he records its acquisition in 1689 from Magnús Jónsson from Leirá (1679–1733). Magnús, who later became rector of Skálholt, was at that time a student of theology at the University of Copenhagen.²⁸ In turn, Magnús had obtained the codex from Sveinn Torfason (c. 1662–1725) *klausturhaldari* ('proprietor') of the Benedictine Abbey of Munkaþverá.²⁹ Sveinn informed Árni that he had found the codex in one of the chests of the monastery, and subsequently Guðbrandur Björnsson (1657–1733) informed Árni that the volume had once belonged to his father Björn Magnússon (1626–1697), *sýslumaður* ('magistrate') of Munkaþverá until the end of the seventeenth century.³⁰

Bokin er in folio, komin til min 1698. fra Magnufe Jonsfyne fra Leyrä. enn til hans fra Sveine Torfafyne. hefr til forna vered i eigu Biorns Magnusonar ä Munkaþverä. *id certum est*, og lærde þä Gudbrandur Biornsson ä henne ad lesa. Baarlams Sogu etc. folio feck eg af Magnuse Jonssyne. þä hann var Studiosus i Kaupenhafn. Magnus hafdi feinged hana af Sveine Torfasyne. Sveinn sagde mier sidan, ad hun hefdi fundist burt kostud i Klaustur husunum ä Munkaþverä. Eg spurdi Gudbrand Biorns son um þessa Barlaams Sogu. Sagde hann, ad nefnd Saga in folio hefdi fyrrum vered ä Munka þverä i eigu fedr sins, og gat til, ad Sveinn Torfason mundi bokina funded hafa þar i hirdslum einhverium. Ber þessu so ollu saman.

- ²⁵ Ole Widding and Hans Bekker-Nielsen, 'An Old Norse Translation of the *Transitus Mariae*', *Mediaeval Studies* 23 (1961), pp. 329–33. A modern English translation of the text is available in Najork, 'Translating Marian Doctrine', pp. 245–52.
- ²⁶ On October 8 1429, Jón Vilhjálmsson Craxton granted Jón Ketilsson occupancy of the church farm of Nes in Aðaldalur, Suður-Þingeyjarsýsla, for a year. See *DI* 4, p. 432. Jón was the son of Ketill Pálsson (1350–1398) and nephew of Björn Þorleifsson at Hof (d. 1395). See the discussion in *DI* 5, p. 826.
- ²⁷ The text of the *Skuldareikningr* is available in *DI* 4, no. 661.
- ²⁸ Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 435 a 4to, fols 9v–10r.
- ²⁹ Along with Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 291 4to containing *Jómsvíkinga saga*. See the discussion in Peter G. Foote, 'Notes on Some Linguistic Features in AM 291 4to', *Íslenzk tunga – Lingua Islandica* 1 (1959), pp. 26–46, at p. 29.
- ³⁰ See Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 435 a 4to (fols 9v–10r) at Handrit, <https://handrit.is/da/manuscript/view/da/AM02-232>, last accessed October 5 2020.

The Tuscan Provenance of Framfór Maríu

[The book is in folio (format). It came into my possession in 1698 (when it was given to me) by Magnús Jónsson from Lejrá and to him by Sveinn Torfason. It had previously been in the possession of Björn Magnússon at Munkaþverá. *This is certain.* There Guðbrandur Björnsson learned to read from it *Barlaams saga (ok Jósafats)* etc. I received this folio (manuscript) from Magnús Jónsson when he was a student in Copenhagen. Magnús had received it from Sveinn Torfason. Sveinn later told me that it was cast away in the cloister house at Munkaþverá. I asked Guðbrandur Björnsson about this *Barlaams saga* (manuscript). He said that the aforementioned saga in folio (format) had previously been in Munkaþverá in the possession of his father and observed that Sveinn Torfason might have found the book there in some chest. So this (gathered information) is all in agreement.]

Four of the sixteenth-century pen trials and signatures – Björn, Benedikt, Sigurður Jónsson, and Jón prestr – that occupy the right column, the upper, and lower margin of the last leaf containing the *Framfór Maríu* (fol. 85v) may be identified by considering Björn Magnússon's paternal ancestry. Björn's grandfather, Björn Benediktsson (1561–1617), who was magistrate of Munkaþverá, might have inherited AM 232 fol. from his father and grandfather, Benedikt ríki Halldórsson (1534–1604) and Halldór Benediktsson (1510–1582), respectively. In the second half of the sixteenth century, Benedikt and Halldór were proprietors of Möðruvellir (Hörgárdalur), the former Augustinian house of canons, and their possessions included landed properties, subsidiary farms, and naturally its manuscript holdings. If this identification is correct, Sigurður Jónsson might be identical with Sigurður Jónsson nicknamed Priorsson (b. 1510), the first proprietor of Möðruvellir after the Reformation, and Jón prestr might be Sigurður's father, Jón Finnbogason (1480–1546), the last Catholic prior of the Augustinian house, who served as a priest in Múli in Aðaldalur until 1524.³¹

In this connection, it should be noted that despite its small size, Möðruvellir boasted an impressively assorted library, and that in the middle of the fifteenth century Mary's miracles were prominent hagiographical texts. The well-known 1461 inventory of the monastery lists eighty-six volumes written in Latin and Old Norse (see examples in Table 1). Although the Latin list first mentions the *Constitutiones canonicorum regularium* and Augustine's *De consensu Evangelistarum*, clearly reflecting the scriptural, doctrinal, and ethical concerns of an Augustinian house of canons, the very first volume among the vernacular holdings is a collection of Marian miracles, only followed by a codex transmitting *Agústínuss saga*.³²

³¹ See Ragnar Ólafsson, 'Bogi Benediktsson, Fræðimaður og ættfræðingur Staðarfelli, Fellströnd, Dalasýslu', *Fréttabréf Ættfræðifélagsins* 27/4 (2009), pp. 15–23, at p. 22.

³² See *DI* 5, pp. 288–90.

FIRST VOLUMES IN THE MÖÐRUVELLIR INVENTORY (1461)

<i>Latin volumes</i>	<i>Norse volumes</i>
Petta j latinbókum.	Þessar norrænv bækur.
institutiones ordinis canonicorum	miraculum bok vorar frv.
regularium j þrimur bokum.	augustinus saga.
augustinus de consensu iijor	postula saugur.
ewangelistarum.	martinus saga
Grecissimus (sic!).	vincencius saga.
Racionale divinatorum officiorum.	þfabiani oc sebastiani. ³⁴
Casus quinque librorum decre-	
talivm. ³³	

The canons' interest in miracles ascribed to Mary – which in the specific case of AM 232 fol. also included Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* as the final miracle performed by the Virgin – was evidently a result of the dedication of their church. According to the same inventory, the church at Möðruvellir monastery was consecrated by Bishop Jörundur Þorsteinsson (d. 1313) of Hólar on August 16, the day after the Solemnity of Mary's Assumption.³⁵

It should also be noted that whereas the Benedictine monasteries of Munkaþverá and Þingeyrar were governed by abbots and enjoyed a certain degree of freedom from the bishop, the canons regular at Möðruvellir were closely associated with the cathedral and were formally more reliant on the bishop of Hólar.³⁶ The northern bishopric seems to have cultivated economic interest in the small house of canons mostly because of its vicinity to the nearby Gásir, the most important international trading

³³ ('This [much] in Latin books: *Constitutiones Canonicorum regularium Ordinis Sancti Augustini* in three books; Augustine's *De consensu Evangelistarum libri quattuor*; [Eberhard of Béthune's] *Graecismus*; [Guillaume Durand's] *Rationale divinatorum officiorum*; [Gregory IX's] *Decretales*.)

³⁴ ('These Norse books: *Mariú saga ok jarteignir*; *Ágústínuss saga*; *Postula sögur*; *Marteins saga byskups*; *Vincentíuss saga*; *Fabíanuss ok Sebastiánuss saga* [not extant].)

³⁵ 'Dedicacio Ecclesie a modrvuollum j horgardal næsta dag epter assumcionem beate marie uirginis' (*DI* 5, p. 290 ('The dedication of the Church [of the monastery] at Möðruvellir in Hörgárdalur [falls] on the day following the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.') Moreover, within the properties of the cloister, a bushy area in farm Áss bore the name *Mariuhrís* ('Mary's brushwood.') It is said to be located between two woodlands named Auðbrekkuskógur and Vindheimaskógur. See *DI* 5, p. 290.

³⁶ See, for instance, Elín Ósk Hreiðarsdóttir and Þóra Pétursdóttir, *Fornleifaskráning í Arnarneshreppi* (Reykjavík: Fornleifastofnun Íslands, 2008), I, p. 15, and Orri Vésteinsson, *Möðruvellir í Hörgárdal: Fornleifakönnun* (Reykjavík: Fornleifastofnun Íslands, 2001), p. 11.

post in northern Iceland in the Middle Ages.³⁷ Such tight connections with the cathedral would naturally result in more frequent visits and a more attentive control over the scriptorium on the part of the bishop of Hólar.

In his catalogue, Árni Magnússon noted affinities between AM 232 fol. and Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 635 4to, a voluminous post-medieval paper manuscript containing *Maríu saga* II and some 230 Marian miracles. The codex was written by the minister and prolific scribe Eyjólfur Björnsson in Árnessýsla (1666–1746) during the first quarter of the eighteenth century and is most likely a copy of a now-lost medieval antigraph transcribed in Fljótsdalshreppur (eastern Iceland).³⁸ Árni describes it as follows: ‘*Mariu Saga* in 4to. Komin fra Valþjófsftadar kirkiu i Fliotsdals herade 1705. Er álika og fu sem er aptanvid Barlaams Sogu komna ur förum Biorns Magnusfonar’³⁹ (*‘Maríu saga* in 4to [format]. It came [into my possession] in 1705 from the Valþjófsstaðir Church in the Fljótsdalur district. It is similar to that [manuscript] transmitting *Barlaams saga*, which came [into my possession] from the possessions of Björn Magnússon.’) Árni’s connection of AM 635 4to with AM 232 fol. is further confirmed by a previously unnoticed Latin rubric to a Marian miracle, number 175 in the codex (fols 176v–178r, paginated 352–355), which reads: ‘*de hijs que facta sunt in transitu Marie*’ (*‘About those things that have occurred in the Transitus Mariae’*) (See Fig. 3.1).⁴⁰

Miracle 175 is one of the translated Latin exempla included in Hélinand of Froidmont’s (1160–1229) *Chronicon*, a world-history, which includes an adventurous pilgrimage undertaken by the canons of Laon in 1113. The Laon clerics escaped from their city because of a popular insurrection against the bishop and traveled through northern France and southern England with the shrine of the Virgin, which until then had been preserved in the Laon cathedral, and toured with it in order to raise funds to rebuild their church. While sailing through the Channel, their ship was attacked by pirates, who tried to steal Mary’s ‘feretro’ (‘shrine’). As the pirates drew near, a Laon priest named Boso (*fl.* c. 1080–1120) ascended the highest point of the stern, raised the reliquary, and called upon Christ and the Virgin. Suddenly, a furious wind struck the pirate ship and broke the mast, which fell and killed one of the

³⁷ See the discussion in Ramona Harrison, ‘Connecting the Land and the Sea at Gásir: International Exchange and Long-Term Eyjafjörður Ecodynamics in Medieval Iceland’, in *Human Ecodynamics in the North Atlantic: A Collaborative Model of Humans and Nature through Space and Time*, ed. Ramona Harrison and Ruth A. Maher (London: Lexington Books, 2014), pp. 131–32.

³⁸ See Handrit, at <https://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/AM04-0635>, last accessed October 5 2020.

³⁹ See AM 435 a 4to, fol. 12.

⁴⁰ The Norse miracle is edited in *Mariu saga*, ed. Unger, II, pp. 645–46. The readings of AM 635 4to are indicated in the apparatus with the siglum D.

miokk ciluie mod' heilags kemigij. Heijz
 þu sagdi þu þin miltazta mod' myrkuu. salk
 va ek ep þu vilt' þa myrkuu ga mz in. at s
 þu þin helgi montan' þeck sina syn. gep' þu
 in z fros minia augna. s at ek maetti en an.
 an tja þa þitt sk'n þ' þin ek fundadi. Ðin þu
 þep' þitta sagt mz gt. bid' þu at þ' vatn e' hel.
 g' domu' v' þuegn' z. vi bor' en þs augu. en e' þ'
 v' gt. Ðek' þu ap vatninn. z vak' at þa uotina
 en þæm þ' helgu' domu'. vni miginu þk þu syn
 sina. wid kloft' heilags audomari. vð heif
 þu mox þu mz þ' v' þædd at auun þu þd v'
 vifin.

De þyl q fca s intusitu garie.
 a Hatid' degi mci ewe. kuou þz t' huit
 sands. z stigu þ' en skip. z mz þin mg.
 kaupm e' þ' t' engidz at kaupn vll. z hopdu
 mz s. mein en ccc. mka þæxt selþ. væntdi
 at

FIGURE 3.1 Rubric to Marian miracle 175. Copenhagen, Den
 Arnamagnæanske Samling, AM 635 4to folio 176v (p. 352).
 © Den Arnamagnæanske Samling. Photo by permission of Den
 Arnamagnæanske Samling.

pirates. Subsequently, the Laon ship made it to shore.⁴¹ The medieval scribe at Valþjófsstaðir (or one of his predecessors) seems to have made a logical connection between Ruben's attempt to steal Mary's shrine when it was brought by the Apostles from Mount Zion to the Valley of Josaphat and the pirates' attempt to steal the Laon reliquary in 1133.

On the basis of the evidence provided by the manuscript material, knowledge in Iceland of the *Transitus* story as recounted by Pseudo-Joseph of Arimathea does not seem to pre-date 1440 and the transcription of the *Framfǫr Mariú* in AM 232 fol. This is clear from both the absence of the above-mentioned rubric in Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, Holm perg 1 4to (c. 1450–1500) – the only other manuscript to transmit miracle 175 – where the exemplum is simply rubricated as 'Af Koldistano' ('About Coldistanus' [fl. c. 1080–1120]) after the helmsman of the vessel.⁴²

The Lombard and Tuscan redactions

When the two fifteenth-century leaves (fols 84r–85v) preserving *Framfǫr Mariú* were first edited by Ole Widding and Hans Bekker-Nielsen,⁴³ the Latin text of Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus Mariae* was at that time only available in Tischendorf's outdated 1866 edition.⁴⁴ Tischendorf made use of three Italian manuscripts: A = Vaticanus latinus 4363; B = Ambrosianus O 35; C = what he generically names Laurentianus, a manuscript today known as Gaddi 208.⁴⁵ Widding and Bekker-Nielsen recognized Tischendorf's Laurentianus as the closest version to the Norse text but also expressed doubts about the adequacy of his transcription. While Tischendorf's work has been fundamental for the early knowledge of New Testament Apocrypha in

⁴¹ The Latin text is discussed in J.S.P. Tatlock, 'The English Journey of the Laon Canons', *Speculum* 8 (1933), pp. 454–65. The Norse text corresponds to PL 212, cols 1013A–1014A. Both Icelandic manuscripts are surveyed in Gabriel Turville-Petre, 'Legends of England in Icelandic Manuscripts', in *Nine Norse Studies*. Viking Society for Northern Research 5 (London: University College of London, Viking Society for Northern Research, 1971), pp. 64–71. However, he erroneously identifies the Latin author as Hermann of Tournai (1095–1147). See discussion *ibid.*, p. 66.

⁴² Holm perg 1 4to was used by Unger as the main text of his edition, where it is indicated with the siglum E. See *Mariu saga*, ed. Unger, II, pp. 645–46.

⁴³ Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'An Old Norse Translation of the *Transitus Mariae*'.

⁴⁴ *Apocalypses Apocryphae*, ed. von Tischendorf, pp. 113–23.

⁴⁵ A codex that he consulted for his edition of a later version of the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew* (B-text). See *Evangelia Apocrypha: Adhibitis plurimis codicibus graecis et latinis maximam partem nunc primum consultis atque ineditorum copia insignibus*, ed. Konstantin von Tischendorf, 2nd rev ed. (Lipsiae [Leipzig]: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1876), pp. 54–112 and the discussion below, p. 77 note 53.

both Greek and Latin, his texts are often eclectic or inconsistent with the manuscript sources, and his outline of the tradition is far from complete.

I have since then worked on a new census of Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* and have identified eight more manuscripts. Upon closer inspection, the Latin tradition could be better divided into two main sub-families, characterized by shared scenes and literary motifs that were read and transcribed in two distinct geographical areas: one that spread throughout northern Italy and partially France, and another that circulated exclusively in central Italy. A first unembellished 'Lombard Redaction' preserves an older and more fluid text and typically starts with the incipit 'In illo tempore antequam Dominus ad Passionem veniret' ('At that time, before our Lord came to the Passion'). It includes eight manuscripts dating from the beginning of the thirteenth to the end of the fourteenth century. The oldest of them, Milan 430, was copied in Lombardy and pre-dates Vatican 4363, Tischendorf's A codex, by about a century.

LATIN MANUSCRIPTS OF THE LOMBARD REDACTION

Milan 430	Milan, Archivio storico civico e Biblioteca Trivulziana, Triv. 430, fols 57v–70v (northern Italy, c. 1200–1250)
Chantilly 733	Chantilly, Bibliothèque et archives du Musée Condé, 733 [olim 1080], fols 46v–48r (France, c. 1200–1330)
Brescia C VII 17	Brescia, Biblioteca civica Queriniana, Manoscritti C.VII.17, fols 59v–65v (Brescia, c. 1275–1300)
Vatican 4363	Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Vat. lat. 4363, fols 24r–54r. Tisch A (Italy, c. 1300–1400)
Florence 15 12	Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana Plut.15. dext.12, fols 20v–21v. Epitome (Florence, c. 1200–1300)
Milan O 35	Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana O 35 sup., 99r–103r. Tisch B (Italy, c. 1300–1325)
Rome 1728	Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, Manoscritti 1728, fols 11r–14r (Italy, c. 1300–1400)
Bern 271	Bern, Burgerbibliothek 271, fols 41r–42v and 44r–45r (Metz, c. 1300–1400)

A second, substantially amplified Tuscan Redaction, named after the place of production of its earliest codex, Gaddi 208, opens with a slightly different wording: 'Tempore illo quo Dominus ad Passionem suam venire debet' ('At that time, when the Lord had to come to his Passion.') It is preserved in three manuscripts copied somewhere between Florence and Rome during the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries.

The Tuscan Provenance of Framfōr Mariú

LATIN MANUSCRIPTS OF THE TUSCAN REDACTION

- Gaddi 208 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana
Gaddi 208, fols 57v–61v. Tisch C (Florence, c. 1300–1400)
- Chase 105 Chicago, Newberry Library
Chase 105, fols 13r–16v (Rome/Florence, c. 1450–1500)
- Paris 1192 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France
Latin 1192, fols 96v–104v (St Peter, Vatican City, c. 1475–1500)

A further testimony to the circulation of Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* is its indirect medieval transmission in the vernaculars of Europe. The Lombard redaction is represented by an Old Veronese translation known as *Transito della Vergine*, transmitted in a manuscript from the beginning of the fourteenth century;⁴⁶ a translation in the Tuscan vernacular of the first section of the so-called *Historia cinguli gloriose Virginis Mariae*, a Latin narrative describing the arrival of holy relic in Prato, which is preserved in five manuscripts from the middle of the fifteenth century;⁴⁷ the *Vera Relazione della Cintola* in the Florentine vernacular, also describing the arrival of the relic in Prato; and a text first printed by the Dominican monk Serafino Razzi (1531–1613) in Florence in 1593.⁴⁸ Outside of Italy, I have been able to identify only

⁴⁶ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, It. Z 13 (olim 4744). Its affiliation with the Lombard redaction can be deduced from its incipit: 'In quel tempo, inanci che l' Segnor ala pasion vegneso, et intre molte parole le quale la mare al filioli domandaso dela soa morto, començà a pregar con cotal dolceça de parlar' ('In that time, before the Lord came to the Passion, among many words asked by the mother to her Son about her death, she started praying with such sweetness of speech.') See Anna Cornagliotti, 'Un volgarizzamento del *Transitus Pseudo-Josephi de Arimathea* in dialetto veronese', in *Atti dell' Accademia delle scienze di Torino. Classe di scienze fisiche, matematiche e naturali* 113 (1979), pp. 197–217, p. 199

⁴⁷ Prato, Biblioteca Roncioniana, 84, Q.II.2 (c. 1428); Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magliabechiano XXXVII, 323 (c. 1350); Melun, Bibliothèque municipale, 20 (c. 1450); Florence, Biblioteca Moreniana, Moreni 144, (c. 1600–1700); Prato, Biblioteca Roncioniana, 125, Q-III-33 (c. 1745). The text is available in *Historia cinguli gloriose virginis Marie: una storia del XIII secolo*, ed. and trans. Marco Pratesi, Quaderni di Hagiographica 15 (Florence: SIMSEL Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2018). The incipit of Latin text in Prato 84 Q.II.2 on folio 2r reads: 'Igitur antequam Dominum (*sic!*) Jhesus Christus ad passionem venire rogauit eum humiliter mater sua' ('Therefore, before the Lord Jesus Christ came to (his) Passion, his mother asked him humbly.') A translation of the same text in Tuscan vernacular is available in the same manuscript on folios 17v–29v, as may be gathered by its title on folio 17v 'Eadem historia vulgariçata' ('That same story vulgarized.') See the description of the manuscript in Manus at <https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/>, last accessed October 5 2020.

⁴⁸ The *Vera Relazione* is reportedly translated from a medieval Latin manuscript

two vernacular renditions preserved as *codices unici* directly indebted to the Tuscan redaction. These are *Framfȝor Mariu*, composed around the middle of the fifteenth century, and a Middle English text extant in Oxford, All Souls College, 26 (fols 1r–5v), which consists of five paper leaves translated into English at Westminster Abbey in 1485 that has only recently been made available in a first critical edition.⁴⁹

The visual arts are also part of the indirect tradition of Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* and can be regarded as tangible evidence of the circulation of the two redactions. The most eminent example of the knowledge of the Lombard text is represented by the *Assunzione della Vergine*, an oil on canvas in the Cartolari-Nichesola Chapel of the Verona Cathedral, completed by Titian (c. 1488–1576) around 1535.⁵⁰ In the altarpiece, Mary is depicted ascending to heaven supported by clouds and encircled by cherubim with hands folded in prayer. Thomas is represented among the Apostles holding the fallen girdle in his left hand. The miracle takes place in solemn silence, and there is hardly any

once preserved in the Prato Cathedral, which might be one of the ancestors of Prato Q.II.2 [84]. Its readings are also of the Lombard type, as may be gathered from the crucial passage in which Thomas receives the Holy Girdle: 'Et essendo, in quell'ora il beatissimo Apostolo San Tommaso, miracolosamente stato trasferito dall'India nel Monte Oliveto: Et veggendo la Madre di Dio quindi andarsene verso il cielo, incominciò dopo di lei a gridare, quasi un'altro Eliseo dopo Elia, Madre mia Santa, Madre immacolata, Madre benedetta, se io hò trovato grazia nel cospetto vostro, rallegratemi per la vostra santa misericordia, dandomi qualche segno della vostra sacra assunzione in cielo, acciò che io possa ai fratelli miei coaposoli dimostrarlo' ('And, at that time, the most blessed Apostle Saint Thomas having been miraculously transferred from India to the Mount of Olives, and seeing the Mother of God departing towards heaven, he started screaming, almost like another Eliseus after Elijah: "My Holy Mother, Immaculate Mother, Blessed Mother, if I have found grace in your sight, delight me by your holy mercy, by giving me some sign of your sacred Assumption into heaven, so that I may demonstrate it to my brothers [and] co-apostles."') Giovanni Bensi, *La cintura della Madonna* (Prato: Società Pratese di Storia Patria, 2017), pp. 55–6. The same story in the Tuscan vernacular is also extant in Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magliabechiano XXXV.236, a sixteenth-century copy of a manuscript from Lucca, as evident from Manus <https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/>, last accessed October 5 2020.

⁴⁹ The Latin text was translated by an otherwise unidentified scribe, as stated in the rubric 'Laten in to Englyssh by Ro. Sukare þe yere of grace 1485 in Westmynstre' ('Translated into English by Ro. Sukare [fl. c. 1450–1500] [in] the year of grace 1485 at Westminster.') See Daniel Najork, 'The Middle English Translation of the *Transitus Mariae* Attributed to Joseph of Arimathea: An Edition of Oxford, All Souls College, MS 26', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 117/4 (2018), pp. 478–504.

⁵⁰ See, for instance, Hans Tietze, *Titian: The Paintings and Drawings with Three Hundred Illustrations* (London: Phaidon, 1950), pp. 35–37.

link between the Apostles standing in the foreground and the Virgin portrayed in ascensional motion.

Conversely, the most renowned depiction of the Tuscan *Transitus* is that included in a series of frescos known as *Le Storie della Vergine e della Cintola* in the Sacro Cingolo Chapel of the Prato Cathedral, which portray well-known apocryphal scenes of the Virgin including her birth, infancy, dormition, and transit, as well as the legendary arrival of the holy girdle in Prato from Jerusalem.⁵¹ The frescos were executed in the years 1392–1395 by Agnolo Gaddi (1350–1396), one of the most accomplished Florentine painters of his time. In Gaddi's fresco, Mary is clearly represented in the Tuscan fashion with a benevolent face, mercifully delivering her girdle to Thomas, who has just climbed the Mount of Olives all by himself and is the only Apostle occupying the foreground scene.

It is very likely that Agnolo consulted the oldest surviving copy of the Tuscan *Transitus* before painting the chapel. As evident from its call number, Gaddi 208, which contains the oldest surviving *Transitus* text of the Tuscan type and is preceded by an expanded version of the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew*,⁵² the dominant source for pictorial cycles of the life of Mary in the Late Middle Ages⁵³ was owned by Agnolo's nephew, Angelo di Zenobio Gaddi (1398–1474), who was Prior of Florence in the first half of the fifteenth century.⁵⁴

⁵¹ See most recently Isabella Lapi Ballerini, *Agnolo Gaddi e la Cappella della Cintola: La storia, l'arte, il restauro* (Florence: Polistampa, 2009).

⁵² Edited by Tischendorf as B text and here interpolated with sections of the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*. See *Evangelia Apocrypha*, ed. von Tischendorf, pp. 54–112.

⁵³ The codex, consisting of sixty-six leaves, contains only three items. It begins with excerpts of Giles of Rome's (1243–1316) *Capitula fidei Christiane*, a brief theological compendium concerning the creation of angels, heaven, hell, planets, the ages of the world, and so forth (fols 1r–28v); it continues with the *Liber de ortu beatae Mariae et infantia Salvatoris* contaminated with *Evangelium Thomae de infantia Salvatoris* (fols 29r–57r); and it ends with the Tuscan redaction of the *Transitus Mariae Virginis* by Pseudo-Joseph of Arimathea (57v–61v). Item 1 was previously unidentified. On item 2, see especially *Libri de natiuitate Mariae: Pseudo-Matthaei Evangelium Textus et Commentarius*, ed. Jan Gijssels. CCSA 9 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), pp. 183–84, where it is named R²b2.

⁵⁴ The ownership is provided by the note 'liber Angeli zenobii de gaddis cciij' on fol. 62r (upper margin) ('The Book of Angelo di Zenobio Gaddi CCIII.') Angelo inherited an impressive number of codices from his family. His library, later enriched by the possessions of his heirs in the eighteenth century, reached the impressive number of over 1400 volumes, when the entire collection was acquired by the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana. See the entry 'Angelo Gaddi' in *Enciclopedia Treccani*, at <http://www.treccani.it/>, last accessed 5 October 2020. For a useful historical overview of the Gaddi family, see the entry 'Gaddi di Firenze' in Demostene Tiribilli-Giuliani, *Sommario storico delle famiglie celebri toscane compilato da Demostene*

Textual features of the Tuscan redaction

Framfjor Mariu represents the oldest surviving adaptation of the Tuscan redaction into any vernacular of Europe and preserves all of its typical expansions and distinguishing features. Most notably, it includes the Tuscan prologue, in which it is specified that when Christ was brought to his passion, the Virgin prayed to him daily that he might inform her of her impending death.

<i>The Lombard Redaction</i>	<i>The Tuscan Redaction</i>	<i>Framfjor Mariu</i>
In tempore illo antequam Dominus ad passionem veniret et inter multa verba quae mater filio inquisivit de suo transitu inter- rogare coepit eum tali affamine. ⁵⁵	Tempore illo quo Dominus ad passionem suam uenire debebat inter multa uerba de quibus eius gloriosa mater ipsum cotidie deprecabatur de suo transitu cepit eum rogare tunc tali modo. ⁵⁶	I þann sama tima sem Drottin vor herra Jesus Christus kom til sinar pisslar. Ok jmille anarra orda beidde hans dyrdligazta moder hann ath segia seir [!] af sinne framfor ok byriar sua sina bæn. ⁵⁷

In chapter 5, the Tuscan text and *Framfjor Mariu* specify that before Mary's death, Joseph of Arimathea hosted the Virgin in his own house, serving her and watching over her day and night, and Joseph's kinsmen are mentioned among the people immediately informed by Joseph of her death.

Tiribilli-Giuliani di Pisa riveduto dal cav. Luigi Passerini, 2 vols (Florence: Diligenti, 1862), II. For the sake of consistency, in the following collations, I have limited the punctuation and capitalized *nomina sacra*, Marian appellations, place-names, and titles of texts according to modern practice.

⁵⁵ ('At that time, before our Lord came to the Passion, among the many words that the mother asked (her) son, she began to question Him about her [own] transit with such address.') Vatican 4363 112/1-3. The readings Vatican 4363 are taken from Tischendorf's edition.

⁵⁶ ('At that time, when the Lord had to come to his passion, among the many words about which his glorious mother begged daily, she then began to enquire of Him about her transit in this way.') Gaddi 208 57v/1-4.

⁵⁷ ('At that same time, when Our Lord Jesus Christ came to his passion, among other words, His most glorious mother begged Him to tell her about her transit and her prayer begins thus.') AM 232 329/22-25.

The Tuscan Provenance of Framfǫr Mariú

<i>The Lombard Redaction</i>	<i>The Tuscan Redaction</i>	<i>Framfǫr Mariú</i>
Tunc vocavit Ioseph de Arimathia civitate et alios discipulos Domini quibus congregatis et propinquis et notis nuntiavit transitum suum omnibus illic astantibus. ⁵⁸	Tunc Ioseph ab Arimathia ciuitate qui ipsam gloriosam Virginem Mariam die ac nocte semper in domo sua serviebat et custodiebat omnibus suis notis ac propinquis et parentibus et omnibus astantibus transitum beate Virginis Marie denuntiauit. ⁵⁹	Enn þann man er Ioseph heit [!] af þeim stad er aramattia heiter. geymde j sinum husum nött ok dag jumfrv Mariam. ok þionade henne kungiorde ollum sinum vinum kyningium ok navngum. ok ollum þar saman komnum framfaur heilagrar Marie. ⁶⁰

Thomas' miraculous acquisition of the holy girdle, the climax of the narrative recounted in chapter 17, is also substantially different. The Lombard redaction briefly describes Thomas being transported instantaneously onto the Mount of Olives, assisting with astonishment in Mary's transit, and asking her to mercifully give him joy.

Subsequently, Mary's girdle is said to have been dropped from above. In the Tuscan redaction and in *Framfǫr Mariú*, this passage is thoroughly reformulated with the addition of graphic details that produce a more dramatic effect. Thomas is said to have intentionally gone to assist Mary's transit by climbing the Mount of Olives, and while witnessing the miracle he beseeches Mary with a great voice not to dismiss him, as he had come a long way to see her. It is related that the Virgin Mary mercifully granted Thomas his wish and personally handed him her girdle.

⁵⁸ ('Then [Mary] called Joseph from the city of Arimathea and other disciples of the Lord, who had gathered with relatives and acquaintances [and] announced her transit to all those who were standing there.') Vatican 4363 115/4-7.

⁵⁹ ('Then Joseph from the city of Arimathea, who served and guarded that glorious Virgin Mary day and night in his house, announced the transit of the blessed Virgin Mary to all his acquaintances, relatives, and parents, and all those standing [there.']) Gaddi 208 58r/14-17.

⁶⁰ ('And that man who is called Joseph, from that place which is called Arimathea, guarded and served the Virgin Mary night and day in his house, announced the transit of the holy Mary to all his friends, relatives, and neighbors, and all those who had gathered there together.') AM 232 330/15-18.

<i>The Lombard Redaction</i>	<i>The Tuscan Redaction</i>	<i>Framfōr Mariu</i>
Tunc beatissimus Thomas subito ductus est ad Montem Oliveti et vidit beatissimum corpus petere celum coepitque clamare et dicere. O Mater Sancta Mater Benedicta Mater Immaculata. Si inveni gratiam modo quia video te laetificata servum tuum per tuam misericordiam quia ad celum pergis. Tunc zona qua apostoli corpus sanctissimum praecinxerant beato Thomae de celo iacta est. ⁶¹	Tunc beatus Thomas cum ascenderet in Montem Oliueti uidit corpus sancte Dei genitricis celum petere cepit clamare flendo uoce magna. Mater Sancta Mater Immaculata Mater Benedicta. Uenio te uidere quomodo me dimictis quia uideo te in celum ascendere. Per tuam sanctam miseri- cordiam letifica me filium tuum. Tunc illa gloriosa Virgo Maria exaudiuit eum et misit sibi de celo zonam de qua sancti apostoli precinxerant eam quia accipiens et obsculans et magnas gratias Deo referens uenit in Valle Josaphat. ⁶²	Þann tid er heilagur Thomas kom afialled Oleueti þa sa hann likama heilagrar Guds Modr fram fara efter veginum. Þa tok hann ath grata. ok kalla harri ravst. Heyr þu blezud moder eg kem til þin ath sia þic. Þui firilætur þu mic. Þvi eg sie firi þina miskun þic vpphafna til himin- Rikis. gled þu mic þinn þrael. Þa heyrde hin Heilaga Maria hann ok sende honum linda sinn. med huerium postolarner hauf(du) gyrt hana. Huern hann medtok ok kyste ok gerde Gudi þacker. ⁶³

⁶¹ ('Then the most blessed Thomas is immediately transported unto the Mount of Olives, and he saw the most blessed body heading for the sky. And [he] began to cry out, saying: "O holy mother, blessed mother, immaculate mother! If now I have found [your] grace, since I see you, give joy to your servant by your mercy, as you proceed towards the sky". Then the belt with which the Apostles had girt the most holy body was cast from the sky unto the blessed Thomas.') Vatican 4363 119/17–22.

⁶² ('Then as the blessed Thomas was ascending unto the Mount of Olives, he saw the body of the holy bearer of God heading for the sky, he began to cry out weeping with a great voice: "Holy mother, immaculate mother, blessed mother. [If] I have come to see you, why do you dismiss me, since I can see you ascending into the sky? By your mercy, delight me, your son!" Then that glorious Virgin Mary heard him [and] from the sky she divested herself of the belt with which the Apostles had girt her, and having received it, he kissed it and giving thanks to the Lord he arrived to the Valley of Josaphat.')] Gaddi 60r/4–11.

⁶³ ('At that time, when St Thomas came to the Mount of Olives, he saw the body of the holy mother of God transiting along the way. Then he began to cry and called out with great voice: "Listen, blessed mother, I come to you to see you. Why do you despise me since by your grace I see you raised up into heaven? Gladden me your servant!" Then the holy mother heard him and sent him her

The Tuscan Provenance of Framfǫr Maríu

A fourth substantial divergence is found at the very end of the text. After the epilogue, in which Joseph of Arimathea claims authorship of the text, the Lombard redaction ends the narrative with a few exhortatory lines in which the readers and the audience are invited to pray to the Virgin, so that she may be mindful of them in the sight of Christ. The Tuscan redaction expands this invocation by assigning to the text of the *Transitus* and the physical manuscript containing it, an apotropaic (evil-averting) property. It is said that whoever keeps or owns the work, either him/himself or her/herself or in his/her house – be he a cleric, a layman, or a woman – shall not be harmed by the devil, nor shall his/her son be a lunatic, possessed, deaf, or blind, and no one in his/her house will suffer great poverty or sudden death.

<i>The Lombard Redaction</i>	<i>The Tuscan Redaction</i>	<i>Framfǫr Maríu</i>
Cuius assumptio hodie per universum mundum veneratur et colitur ipsam precemur assidue ut sit memor nostri ante piissimum suum Filium in celo cui laus est et gloria per infinita secula saeculorum. Amen. ⁶⁴	Et sciat unusquisque Christianus quod ille qui hoc scriptum secum habuerit uel in domo sua siue sit clericus uel laicus uel femina diabolus non nocebit ei. Eius filius non erit lunaticus nec demoniacus nec surdus nec cecus. In domo eius non (erit) magna inopia nec morte subitanea non peribit. De quacumque tribulacione clamauerit ad eam exaudietur in die obitus sui cum suis sanctis et uirginibus in suo auditorio eam habebit. Deprecor ego assidue ut ipsa piissima ac misericordissima regina semper sit (memor) mei et omnium in se credencium ac sperancium ante	Pui hefer vor Herra Jesus Christus þa nad til gefid ath huer sa sem þetta skrif hefer jsinum husum. klerkr eda leikmadr eda kuinna ath dioful skal honum eigi granda. ok huer er skrifar eda skrifa lætur. less eda heyrrer. less eda lætur læsa hann skal audlazit jngaungu himinrikis. Ok j hueriu husi sem jnne er framfarar skrift himinrikis drottningar Marie. ef þar fædizt barn skal þat eigi vera dauft. ne blint. ok eigi tungla mein hafa. eigi dioful ott. ne mallaust verda eigi bradum dauda deyia. ok j þess manz hus(i) skal eigi micil fataekt vera. Ok jhuerre naud er þeir kalla til hennar reittvisliga. mun hon þeim vidhialp veita. Suo ok sinne dauda stund mvn hon med

girdle with which the Apostles had girt her, which he received, kissed, and gave thanks to the Lord.) AM 232 331/41–47.

⁶⁴ ('Whose Assumption is venerated and honored today through the entire world. Let us pray her assiduously so that she may be mindful of us before her

The Tuscan Redaction
[continued]

piissimum Filium suum Dominum
Nostrum Ihesum Christum
qui cum Patre a Spiritu Sancto
uiuít et regnat Deus per infinita
secula seculorum. Amen.
Explicit Transitus Beate Mariae
Virginis. Sit pax legenti sit gratia
digna petenti. Qui legent hunc
sermonem saluetur.⁶⁵

Framfjor Maríu
[continued]

Guds einglum ok himinrikis
hirdsueitvm naleg vera þeim til
hialpar. Þui bidium vær þa enu
millduztv drotting himins ok jardar ath
se vor minnileg. ok allra sig truandum
ok treystvndum firi sinum blezada
syni j ollum vorum naudsynium. Ok
þvi er oss megi mestv verda bædi firi
lif ok sal. þann sama faugnaud virðizt
oss ath veita almattigur Gud med sine
haleitre modr. huer er lifer ok riker.
einn gud j þreningu. vm allar verallder
verallda. amen.⁶⁶

most pious son in heaven. To whom be praise and glory throughout endless ages. Amen.) Vatican 4363 123/1–4.

⁶⁵ ('And may every Christian know that whoever will have this writing with himself, be he a cleric, a layman or a woman, the devil will not harm him. His son will neither be a lunatic nor possessed, deaf or blind. In his house there will be no great indigence and he will not die of a sudden death. In any tribulation he will invoke her and will be heard, and in the day of his death, she will welcome him under her protection with her saints and virgins. I pray assiduously that the most pious and merciful Virgin may always be mindful of me and of all those who believe and have hope [in her] before her most gracious son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father and with the Holy Spirit throughout endless ages. Amen. [Here] ends the *Transitus Beate Mariae Virginis*. May peace be with the readers and grace with those who are seeking worthy things. May those who read this sermon be saved.') Gaddi 61v/6–24.

⁶⁶ ('Thus our Lord Jesus Christ has granted by the grace that anyone who has this writing in his house, [be he] a cleric, a layman, or a woman, the devil shall not hurt him. And whoever writes or commissions the writing, reads or hears, reads or commissions its reading, he shall win the entrance into the kingdom of heaven. And in each house that contains the account of the *Transitus* of the queen of heaven Mary, if there a child is born, he shall not be a deaf nor blind, nor shall he suffer lunacy and possession, or become mute or die suddenly. And in this man's house there shall be no great poverty. And in every distress, in which they invoke her justly, she will show them assistance. Thus, also in the moment of their death, she will be near them with God's angels and the hosts of heaven to help. Thus we beseech the mildest queen of heaven and earth to be mindful of us and of all of those who believe and have hope [in her] before her blessed son in all our needs. And this may be to us the best value for both [our] life and [our] soul. Together with his sublime mother, may almighty God see fit to grant us that same joy, who lives and reigns, one God in Trinity, throughout endless ages. Amen.') AM 232 333/1–15.

The Tuscan Provenance of Framfōr Maríu

In their edition of *Framfōr Maríu*, Widding and Bekker-Nielsen relied exclusively on Tischendorf's transcription of the Laurentianus. Although they were unaware that his codex was in fact Gaddi 208, they noted – through a search in the slips of the *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* – a significant disagreement in chapter 2 and argued that the dative construction 'med himinrikis krauptum' ('with the virtues of heaven') must have translated the Latin 'cum virtutibus' ('with virtues') rather than 'cum virginibus' ('with virgins') as in Tischendorf's text.⁶⁷ Their conjecture is correct, since the text in Gaddi 208 reads 'cum virtutibus.'

<i>Tisch Laurentianus</i>	<i>Gaddi 208</i>	<i>Framfōr Maríu</i>
cum meis discipulis atque angelis et archangelis atque virginibus . ⁶⁸	cum meis discipulis atque angelis et archangelis atque virtutibus . ⁶⁹	med minum lærisueinum. einglum. haufudeinglum ok med himinrikis krauptum . ⁷⁰

This represents a typical idiosyncrasy of the Tuscan redaction that might have arisen in the Tuscan text during the fourteenth century through a simple paleographical confusion of letters. Tischendorf's 'virginibus' is, in fact, the correct primitive reading of the Lombard redaction, which frequently influenced his transcription of Gaddi 208, since he made use of the Lombard readings of Vatican 4363 as a base text for his collations. I have counted at least thirty-three inconsistencies between Tischendorf's transcription of the Laurentianus and the *Transitus* text transmitted in Gaddi 208, and while some are certainly silent emendations, mostly of grammatical nature,⁷¹ others are his own genuine misreadings.⁷² However,

⁶⁷ Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'An Old Norse Translation of the *Transitus Mariae*', p. 328.

⁶⁸ ('With my disciples, angels, archangels, and virgins.') Vatican 4363 114/11.

⁶⁹ ('With my disciples, angels, archangels, and virtues.') Gaddi 208 57v/21.

⁷⁰ ('With my disciples, angels, archangels, and the virtues of Heaven.') AM 232 329/40.

⁷¹ Gaddi 208 'propter'/TischLaur 'propterea' (chapter 2); Gaddi 208 'in celum ascendam'/TischLaur 'in celo ascendam' (chapter 2); Gaddi 208 'et semper'/TischLaur 'atque' (chapter 2); Gaddi 208 'deferente'/TischLaur 'deferens' (chapter 4); Gaddi 208 'pluuia'/TischLaur 'pluiiam' (chapter 5); Gaddi 208 'quibus'/TischLaur 'qui' (chapter 8); Gaddi 208 'ceperunt'/TischLaur 'cepit' (chapter 9); Gaddi 208 'suam'/TischLaur 'suas' (chapter 11); Gaddi 208 'Domino'/TischLaur 'Domini' (chapter 13); Gaddi 208 'in valle'/TischLaur 'vallem' (chapter 14); Gaddi 208 'cadentes'/TischLaur 'cadens' (chapter 16); Gaddi 208 'zona'/TischLaur 'zonam' (chapter 17); Gaddi 208 'tetigisti'/TischLaur 'tetigisses' (chapter 19).

⁷² Gaddi 208 'Tunc fili dilecte'/TischLaur *om.* (chapter 1); Gaddi 208 'Quomodo te deseram'/TischLaur 'quoniam' (chapter 2); Gaddi 208 'angelus'/TischLaur 'angelus meus' (chapter 2); Gaddi 208 'custodiet'/TischLaur 'custodiuit' (chapter

the possibility cannot be excluded that Tischendorf worked on another, still unidentified, Florentine manuscript from the Laurentian Library.

In either case, Gaddi 208 remains the most authoritative, the best representative codex of the Tuscan redaction, and the most adequate Latin text for the collations of the Norse readings, since Chase 105 is characterized by numerous innovations and Paris 1192 by several omissions or abbreviations of the original readings. There is a certain degree of separation, however, between Gaddi 208 and the remaining manuscripts of the Tuscan family. Since Gaddi 208's disagreements with the rest of the Tuscan family are, in fact, agreements with the older Lombard text, it is highly likely that these represent later fifteenth-century developments within the Tuscan tradition (see examples in Appendix). Most notable among them is an expansion of the last hortative lines of the epilogue, in which scribes, readers, listeners, and commissioners of the copying and reading of the *Transitus* are said to be worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven.

(24) Gaddi 208	Chase 105	Paris 1192	Oxford 26	AM 232
Et sciat	Vt sciat	Et sciat	And y wol	Þui hefer
unusquisque	unusquisque	unusquisque	þat ye be	vor herra
Christianus	Christianus	Christianus	sekir without	jesus christus
que ille qui	que ille qui	quod ille	dout þat	þa nad til
hoc scriptum	hoc scriptum	qui habuerit	who so euyr	gefid ath
secum	secum	hanc scrip-	crysten man	huer sa sem
habuerit uel	habuerit uel	turas secum	or woman be	þetta skrif
in domo	in domo sua	uel ipsam in	he clerke or	hefer jsinum
sua siue	siue clericus	domo sua	layman, þe	husum. klerkr
sit clericus	siue laycus	tenerunt siue	whych hath	eda leikmadr
uel laicus	uel femina eis	clericus sit	þis wrytyng	eda kuinna
uel femina	non nocebit	uel laycus	vp on hym or	ath dioful skal
diabolus non	diabolus et	et homo uel	in his hous,	honum eigi
nocebit. ⁷³	qui scripserit	femina	þe wycked	granda. ok

2); Gaddi 208 'atque virtutibus'/TischLaur 'atque virginibus' (chapter 2); Gaddi 208 'separabit'/TischLaur 'separabitur' (chapter 2); Gaddi 208 'dando sibi'/TischLaur 'dando' (chapter 6); Gaddi 208 'ostium talami'/TischLaur 'ostium' (chapter 7); Gaddi 208 'Phylippus'/TischLaur 'Paulus' (chapter 8); Gaddi 208 'vos homines'/TischLaur 'vos omnes' (chapter 9); Gaddi 208 'a corpore meo'/TischLaur 'a corpore' (chapter 10); Gaddi 208 'cum'/TischLaur 'quando' (chapter 11); Gaddi 208 'rapere'/TischLaur 'capere' (chapter 13); Gaddi 208 'uexabatur'/TischLaur 'versare' (chapter 13); Gaddi 208 'sancte'/TischLaur 'sanctissime' (chapter 14); Gaddi 208 'poterat'/TischLaur 'volebat' (chapter 14); Gaddi 208 'pectora'/TischLaur 'corpora' (chapter 18); Gaddi 208 'suppositus'/TischLaur 'superpositus' (chapter 19); Gaddi 208 'uacuum non manna'/TischLaur 'uacuum' (chapter 19); Gaddi 208 'retinui'/TischLaur 'continui' (chapter 24).

⁷³ ('And may every Christian know that whoever will have this writing with him, or in his house, be he a cleric, a layman, or a woman, the devil will not harm him.') Gaddi 208 61r/6–9.

The Tuscan Provenance of Framfōr Mariú

uel scribi	dyabolus ei	spirite	huer er skrifar
fecerit aut	nocere non	enmy of al	eda skrifa
qui legerit	poterit et qui	mankynde	lætur. less
uel audierit	eam scripserit	shal neuyr	eda heyrer.
legere in	uel scribi	noye hym.	less eda lætur
Dei regnum	fecerit uel	And who so	læsa hann
introyre	legerit uel	writeth it or	skal audlazit
merebitur	legi fecerit	do it wryte,	jngaungu
et in	merebitur	redyth it or do	himinrikis.
quacumque	intrare	it to be redde,	Ok j hueriu
domo in qua	regnum Dei.	or heryth it	husi sem jnne
fuerit lectus	Et nascetur in	redde, shal	er, framfarar
transitus	ea filius. ⁷⁵	in þe mene	skrift
beate Marie		seson and	himinrikis
Uirginis et		tyme deserue	drottningar
nascetur ibi. ⁷⁴		þe kyndhom	marie. ef þar
		of heuyn. ⁷⁶	fædzit barn. ⁷⁷

There are only two instances in which *Framfōr Mariú* preserves older and more correct readings that are in agreement with Gaddi 208 against subsequent corruptions of the Tuscan redaction.

⁷⁴ ('And may every Christian know that whoever will have this writing with him or in his house, be he a cleric, a layman, or a woman, the devil will not harm him. And whoever will write or commission the writing, whoever will read it or will hear it read will deserve to enter the kingdom of God. In whatever house in which the *Transitus Beatae Mariae Virginis* will be read and there will be born.') Chase 105 16r/27–16v/3.

⁷⁵ ('And may every Christian know that whoever will have these writings with him or will keep them in his house, be he a cleric, a layman, a man, or a woman, the devil will not be able to harm him [or her]. And whoever will write or commission the writing, whoever will read it or will have it read will deserve to enter the kingdom of God. And if a son will be born.') Paris 1192 104r/2–11.

⁷⁶ ('And I want you to be certain without doubt that whosoever, [be this person] a Christian man or a woman, be he a cleric or a layman, that [person] who has this writing with him or in his house, the wicked spirit, enemy of all mankind, will never hurt him. And whoever writes it or has it written, reads it, or has it read, or hears it read, shall in the main season and time deserve the kingdom of heaven.') Oxford 26 504/13–19.

⁷⁷ ('For this reason Our Lord Jesus Christ has granted this mercy that anyone who has this writing in his house, [be he] a cleric, a layman, or a woman, the devil shall not hurt him. And whoever writes or commissions the writing, reads or hears, reads or commissions the reading, he shall win the entrance into the kingdom of heaven. And in each house wherein there is this *Transitus* writing of the queen of heaven Mary, if there is born a child.') AM 232 333/1–6.

(8) Gaddi 208	Chase 105	Paris 1192	Oxford 26	AM 232
Judas. ⁷⁸	Lucas. ⁷⁹	Luchas. ⁸⁰	sen Luce. ⁸¹	Judas thaddeus. ⁸²
(8) Gaddi 208	Chase 105	Paris 1192	Oxford 26	AM 232
et alij multi quos nominare non possum. ⁸³	et alij multi qui ad hec conuenerat. ⁸⁴	et omnes alij discipuli Domini. ⁸⁵	om.	ok adrer sua marger at vier faum alldri nofnum talit. ⁸⁶

Tuscan provenance

With respect to the provenance of the Latin source text, Widding and Bekker-Nielsen suggested that a codex containing Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* might have been brought back to Iceland from Italy by a pilgrim on his return from Rome.⁸⁷ Although this is one of the most probable circumstances for the acquisition of numerous other Latin texts, considering the limited circulation of the Tuscan redaction, it seems more likely that the individual who acquired this version of the *Transitus* was either a high dignitary or a bishop. Corroborating evidence is provided by the provenance and ownership of the four surviving manuscripts outside of Iceland. Gaddi 208 belongs to the aforementioned family of priors and acclaimed painters in Florence and later cardinals in Rome. Chase 105 bears the arms of the Orsini, a Roman family that counts numerous cardinals and three popes among its offspring,⁸⁸ as well as that of the Pagni Bordoni, a patrician family from Pescia (near Pistoia, Tuscany), which had among its family members ambassadors and notaries in both

⁷⁸ ('Jude.') Gaddi 208 58v/17.

⁷⁹ ('Luke.') Chase 105 14r/14.

⁸⁰ ('Luke.') Paris 1192 99r/16.

⁸¹ ('St Luke.') Oxford 26 500/1.

⁸² ('Jude Thaddeus.') AM 232 330/36.

⁸³ ('And many others, whom I cannot name.') Gaddi 208 58v/19.

⁸⁴ ('And many others, who had convened for this purpose.') Chase 105 14r/14–15.

⁸⁵ ('And all the other disciples of the Lord.') Paris 1192 99r/15–16.

⁸⁶ ('And others, so many that we would be never able to enumerate their names.') AM 232 330/37–38.

⁸⁷ Widding and Bekker-Nielsen, 'An Old Norse Translation of the *Transitus Mariae*', p. 329.

⁸⁸ See the description in Paul Saenger, *A Catalogue of the Pre-1500 Western Manuscript Books at the Newberry Library* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), no. 105, p. 221a. For information about the Orsini family, see, for instance, George L. William, *Papal Genealogy: The Families and Descendants of the Popes* (London: McFarland, 1998), pp. 36–37 and 126–27.

Florence and Rome.⁸⁹ Additionally, Oxford 26 was copied at Westminster Abbey and Paris 1192 at St Peter's Basilica.⁹⁰ Such elite circles and prestigious centers of production of manuscripts would not have been easily accessible to any ordinary Icelandic pilgrim traveling to Rome.

The first half of the fifteenth century was a period of great turmoil in church history. Four controversial ecumenical councils – dealing mostly with ecclesiastical issues concerning conciliarism and Papal supremacy – were summoned in less than four decades, and three of them took place partially in Tuscany. In 1409, the Council of Pisa first attempted to resolve the Western Schism by deposing Benedict XIII (1328–1403), Antipope in Avignon, and Gregory XII (1335–1417), the Pope of Rome.⁹¹ The Schism ended only with the following Council of Constance held in 1414–1418, when the resignation of the remaining papal claimants was accepted and Pope Martin V (1369–1431) was elected.⁹² Subsequently, the Council of Pavia-Siena, which took place in 1423–24, represented an inconclusive stage in the Conciliar movement; although it did not qualify as an ecumenical council, it published four antihetical decrees, especially against the Hussites and the Wyclifites.⁹³ Finally, the Council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence, which began in Basel in 1431 and ended in Rome in 1445, was appointed by Pope Martin V to address Church reform. In Florence and Rome in particular, decrees of union with the Eastern Churches of Greece, Armenia, Egypt, Bosnia, Syria, and Cyprus were approved. All decisions taken during this council were in the form of bulls, since the subsequent Pope, Eugene IV (1383–1447) – who at that time was in exile

⁸⁹ For information about the Pagni Bordoni family, see, for instance, Louis A. Waldman, 'Patronage, Lineage, and Self-Promotion in Maso da San Friano's Naples "Double Portrait"', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (2005), pp. 149–72, at pp. 153–56 and the voice 'Pagni, Lorenzo' in the Enciclopedia Treccani, at <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia>, last accessed October 5, 2020, and references there.

⁹⁰ On Paris 1192, see Abbé V. Leroquais, *Les livres d'Heures manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale*, 3 vols (Paris: Protat Frères, 1927), I, no. 56, p. 141, and the BnF archive description at <https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/>, last accessed October 5 2020.

⁹¹ For information about the validity of Pisa as a general council, see the discussion in Aldo Landi, *Il papa deposto (Pisa 1409): L'idea conciliare nel Grande Scisma* (Turin: Claudiana, 1985).

⁹² The measures adopted at Constance are discussed and edited in Philip Stump, *The Reforms of the Council of Constance (1414–1418)*. Studies in the History of Christian Thought 53 (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

⁹³ A detailed history of the council, along with a collection of letters, decrees, and reports are available in Walter Brandmüller, *Das Konzil von Pavia-Siena, 1432–1424*, 2 vols. Vorreformationsgeschichtliche Forschungen 16 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1974). A useful overview is available in Thomas Ferguson, 'The Council of Pavia-Siena and Medieval Conciliarism', *Journal of Religious History* 25/1 (2001), pp. 1–19.

in Florence as a result of his struggle with the Council of Basel (where he remained for about ten years) – presided over the sessions in person.⁹⁴ The council was attended by Byzantine and Roman delegations, and the Catholic Church was represented by a great number of cardinals, bishops, abbots, priors, generals of religious orders, doctors of theology, and doctors of canon law, who had gathered from all over Europe.

While the Scandinavian presence in Basel was limited – the council was attended only by the Swedish Bishop Nils Ragvaldsson of Växjö (c. 1380–1448) and the Danish Ulrik Stygge of Aarhus (d. 1449), since Eric of Pomerania (1382–1459) did not nominate any representatives from Norway, Iceland, or Greenland – Nordic delegations in Ferrara were non-existent.⁹⁵ Interestingly, the situation was different in Florence, where the former Atlantic colonies of Norway were represented by at least two bishops. In 1433, Eugene IV, who at that time was in exile in Florence, appointed a Dominican friar called Bartolomeus de S. Ypolito (*fl.* c. 1400–1450) as nominal bishop of the see of Garðar in Greenland; he seems to have remained in Florence to serve the Pope at least until 1435.⁹⁶ In those years, the aforementioned English Bishop of Hólar, Jón Vilhjálmsson Craxton, arrived in Florence to persuade Eugene IV to promote him to the vacant see of Skálholt and to suggest a Carmelite monk and fellow Englishman, Jón Bloxwich (d. 1440), as his possible successor at Hólar. Jón's mission was successful, as both Englishmen were appointed to the proposed Icelandic bishoprics on January 5 and 10 1435, respectively.⁹⁷ In the spring of 1436, Jón Vilhjálmsson Craxton returned to England only to prepare to leave again for Iceland in order to assume his new office at Skálholt. However, in 1437, the Dano-Norwegian authorities appointed the Dutch Gozewijn Comhaer (1375–1447), son of a goldsmith at the court of Eric of Pomerania, bishop of Skálholt.⁹⁸ Jón was in England and had

⁹⁴ The secondary literature on the Council of Basel is vast. See most recently the collection of essays in Michiel Decaluwe, Thomas M. Izbicki, and Gerald Christianson, eds, *A Companion to the Council of Basel*. Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 74 (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

⁹⁵ See the discussion in Kirsten A. Seaver, *Maps, Myths, and Men: The Story of the Vinland Map* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 135–39 and references there. For information about the Scandinavian presence at the four councils, see especially Beata Losman, *Norden och Reformkonsilierna, 1408–1449*. *Studia Historica Gothoburgensia* 11 (Gothenborg: Akademisk avhandling, 1970).

⁹⁶ After the death of Michael, Bartholomeus was appointed bishop of Garðar. The document is dated September 24 1433, and it is available in *Afgifter fra den norske kirkeprovis til det Apostoliske kammer og Kardinalkollegiet 1311-1523 efter optegnelser i de pavelige arkiver*, ed. Gustav Storm (Christiania [Oslo], Kommission hos H. Aschehoug & Co., 1897), pp. 86–87.

⁹⁷ Both letters were written in Florence and are edited in *DI* 8, nos 26 and 27, respectively.

⁹⁸ See Gryt Anne Piebenga, 'Gozewijn Comhaer – Carthusian and Modern

numerous debts to pay back to the Hólar cathedral. Three nearly identical letters, written at Westminster and Windsor Castle between 1436 and 1438 and signed by King Henry VI of England (1421–1471), allowed Jón to send four ships to Iceland ‘cum victualibus ac aliis bonis et rebus’ (‘with victuals and other goods and things’) to relinquish part of his financial woe.⁹⁹ However, in 1440, Jón died at St Thomas’ Hospital in the London Borough of Southwark and thus did not return to Iceland.¹⁰⁰ It is highly likely that among the goods and documents sent in these English ships to the Hólar bishopric there were volumes of English provenance, both in Latin and English, as well as Latin codices collected by Jón in Florence during his recent visit to Eugene IV. In fact, there is evidence that the lost Latin and Middle English manuscript sources underlying two coeval texts produced in the Hólar scriptorium, *Páls leizla* and the collection of anecdotes and exempla known as *Miðaldaævintýri*, were Latin and Middle English codices copied in the Midlands during the first three decades of the fifteenth century.¹⁰¹ Circumstantial evidence is also provided by the Icelandic acquisition of sacred art from England. Among the fourteen surviving alabaster triptychs of English provenance, the four altarpieces depicting the Joys of the Virgin – Annunciation, Nativity, Resurrection, Ascension of the Lord/ Assumption of the Virgin, Coronation of the Virgin – from the churches of Munkaþverá (Danmarks Nationalmuseet, no. 20504 [c. 1420–1440]),

Devout’, in *Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489), and Northern Humanism*, ed. Fokke Akkerman, Gerda C. Huisman, and Arie Johan Vanderjagt. Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History 40 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), pp. 187–90.

⁹⁹ One ship on November 22 1436 (letter signed at Westminster), another on January 29 1438 (letter signed at Windsor), and two ships on February 18 1438 (letter signed at Westminster). The diplomas are edited in *DI* 4, nos 602, 613, and 614. The diploma is also available in *Foedera, conventiones, literæ, et cujuscunque generis acta publica, inter reges Angliæ et alios quosvis imperatores, reges, pontifices, principes, vel communitates, ab ineunte sæculo duodecimo, viz. ab anno 1101, ad nostra usque tempore habita aut tractata; ex autographis, infra secretiores Archivorum regiorum thesaurarias, per multa sæcula reconditis, fideliter exscripta*, ed. Thomas Rymer, 20 vols (London: J. Tonson, 1739–1745), X, p. 682. Online version at <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/rymer-foedera/vol10/pp682-695>, accessed October 5 2020.

¹⁰⁰ ‘And the seide Bisshope [...] was taken in of Almus into saint Thomas Spittel in Suthwerk and yere died’ (‘And the said bishop was taken in of alms into the St Thomas’ Hospital of Southwark and there he died.’) See *DI* 16, no. 149, at p. 361/7–12. For information about Jón Craxton’s death, see Eleanora M. Carus-Wilson, ‘The Iceland Trade’, in *Studies in English Trade in the 15th Century*, ed. Elieen Power and Michael M. Postan (London: Routledge, 1933, repr. London: Routledge, 2010), p. 170.

¹⁰¹ The two source texts might have been produced in the Midlands. See the discussion in *Páls leizla: The Vision of St Paul*, ed. and trans. Dario Bullitta. Viking Society Texts (London: University College London, Viking Society for Northern Research, 2017), pp. xliii–xlvi, and *The Story of Jonatas in Iceland*, ed. Peter A. Jorgensen. Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, Rit 45 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 1997), p. xciv, note 56.



FIGURE 3.2 Assumption of the Virgin. Detail from the English alabaster triptych of the Möðruvellir Church in Eyjafjörður (Nottinghamshire c. 1450–1460) previously at the Minjasafnið á Akureyri. Photo by Ívar Brynjólfsson. Published with permission.

Hítardalur in Mýrasýsla (Þjóðminjasafn Íslands, Þjms. 3617–3622 [c. 1450–1460]), Kirkjubær (Þjóðminjasafn Íslands, Þjms. 4635 [c. 1450–1470]), and Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður (previously at the Minjasafnið á Akureyri, now restored at church in Möðruvellir in Eyjafjörður [c. 1450–1460]),¹⁰² are all coeval with the now-lost manuscript sources of English provenance and were all produced in the same region: the Midlands, more specifically Nottinghamshire.¹⁰³ Such a route of cultural transmission was naturally

¹⁰² A detail of the Coronation of the Virgin of the Möðruvellir altarpiece is displayed in the cover image.

¹⁰³ The altarpieces are surveyed in Bera Nordal, 'Skrá um enskar alabastursmyndir frá miðöldum sem varðveist hafa á Íslandi', *Árbók hins íslenska fornleifafélags* 85 (1986), pp. 85–128 and Francis Cheetham, *English Medieval Alabasters with a Catalogue of the Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (Oxford: Phaidon and Christie's Limited; 1984, repr. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 57–58.

The Tuscan Provenance of Framfór Maríu

favored by the intense trade of stockfish with the East Anglian ports, most notably King's Lynn and Yarmouth (Norfolk).¹⁰⁴ Interestingly, while the four altarpieces all include the coronation of the Virgin, only the Hítardalur and Möðruvellir (see Fig. 3.2) triptychs represent Mary's assumption into heaven with details that are typical of the Pseudo-Joseph's story. On the bottom left side of the panel, Thomas is dressed in episcopal vestments and is holding onto Mary's girdle, whereas on the right side the Jew Ruben is wearing the trousers of a layman while holding Mary's robe with his right hand and imploring her with his left. The Möðruvellir altarpiece – which unlike Hítardalur tryptic still preserves all of its original colors – depicts the holy girdle in green in conformity with the *Sacra cintola* relic preserved in the Prato Cathedral. Such previously unnoticed details confirm that towards the middle of the fifteenth century, there was an interest in Mary's assumption and the holy girdle story among Icelandic clergy and laypeople. The altarpiece at Möðruvellir is probably the one donated to that church by Margrét Vigfúsdóttir (c. 1406–1486), whose family is commemorated at Canterbury Cathedral.¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, conclusions may be drawn with regard to the features of the source text underlying *Framfór Maríu*. The Latin exemplar was most certainly a typical text of the Tuscan type produced in Florence or its surroundings in the first half of the fifteenth century; that is, after the production of Gaddi 208 but before the completion of Chase 105, Paris 1192, and Oxford 26, since their readings preserve an even later stage of corruption. The Council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence in 1431 might have facilitated the acquisition of this secondary version of Pseudo-Joseph's *Transitus* by English and Icelandic bishops, who were in search of a rare text that included all the graphic details typical of the Tuscan frescos and paintings of that time. The English bishop of Hólar, Jón Vilhjálmsson Craxton, seems to be the most plausible candidate, both because he was in Florence during the Council and because *Framfór Maríu* coexists in AM 232 fol. with a list of debts – the *Skuldareikningr* preserved as item 2 of the codex – contracted by his attendant, Jón Ketilsson, during

¹⁰⁴ See most recently the discussion in Anna Agnarsdóttir, 'Iceland's "English Century" and East Anglia's North Sea World', in *East Anglia and Its North Sea World in the Middle Ages*, ed. David Bates and Robert Liddiard (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), pp. 204–17.

¹⁰⁵ The Hítardalur altarpiece (Djms. 3617–3622) is mentioned in *DI* 5, pp. 406–08, which places its acquisition between 1463 and 1469. Margrét's donation of the altarpiece can be dated from the Möðruvellir *máldagi* ('church register') to 1461, namely during the sixteen years since the visitation of the Norwegian Bishop Gottskálk Kæneksson of Hólar (r. 1442–1447). See *DI* 5, pp. 307–08.

Craxton's episcopate. Accordingly, Jón's return from Florence in 1437 might be taken as a reasonable *post quem* date for the composition of the Norse translation.

In the years immediately following 1440, that is, after Craxton's death, AM 232 fol. must have been in the Hólar scriptorium where the *Skuldareikningr* was housed. In the following decades, the codex may have been brought to Möðruvellir by one of the later bishops of Hólar, presumably the Norwegian Óláfr Rognvaldsson who held the northern diocese in the years 1450–1495, primarily because the canons regular had a specific interest in Marian miracles and Assumption texts and artifacts on account of the dedication of their church, which was on August 16, the day following the Feast for the Assumption of the Virgin.¹⁰⁶ At Möðruvellir, AM 232 fol. appears to have been read, scribbled on, and signed several times. Subsequently, in the second half of the sixteenth century and after the Reformation, the volume may have been deposited at Munkaþverá by one of the ancestors of its seventeenth-century proprietor Björn Magnússon (1626–1697). At Munkaþverá, the leaves of AM 232 fol. seem to have remained unread and nearly forgotten in one of the chests of the monastery for well over a century.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ On Óláfr's eventful episcopacy, see most recently *Páls leizla*, ed. and trans. Bullitta, pp. xlv–xlvi.

¹⁰⁷ I wish to thank to Gabriele Cocco, Margaret Cormack, Carla Falluomini, Daniel Najork, Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, Stephen Pelle, Kirsten Wolf, and Charles D. Wright for reading over earlier drafts of this chapter. I am most grateful to Fabrizio D. Raschella for accompanying me on a most illuminating and pleasant study trip to the Prato Cathedral and the Palazzo Pretorio Museum in Prato (Tuscany). I dedicate this study to him.

Appendix

Major Readings of the Tuscan Redaction

<i>(1) Gaddi 208</i>	<i>Chase 105</i>	<i>Paris 1192</i>	<i>Oxford 26</i>	<i>Franzfor Mariu</i>
O fili carissime. (‘O dearest Son.’)	O fili dulcissime. (‘O sweetest Son.’)	O fili dulcissime. (‘O sweetest Son.’)	O þu swettest flour. (‘O sweetest flower.’)	Heyr þu minn sætazte son. (‘Listen, my sweetest Son.’)
cum tuis angelis. (‘With your angels.’)	cum tuis sanctis angelis et archangelis. (‘With your holy angels and archangels.’)	cum tuis sanctis angelis et archangelis. (‘With your holy angels and archangels.’)	with þin holy angelis and archangelis. (‘With your holy angels and archangels.’)	med þinum einglum ok haufudeinglum. (‘With your angels and archangels.’)
O aula templi Dei vivi. (‘O court of the temple of the living God.’)	Ora templum Dei vivi. (‘Pray the temple of the living God.’)	Quia templum Dei vivi. (‘Because the temple of the living God.’)	O þu holy temple of god. (‘O you holy temple of God.’)	Heyr þu mustere eilifs guds. (‘Listen, temple of eternal God.’)

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(1) <i>Gaddi</i> 208	<i>Chase</i> 105	<i>Paris</i> 1192	<i>Oxford</i> 26	<i>Framfór Mariu</i>
per eum angelum. (‘Through him, [the] angel.’)	per meum angelum. (‘Through my angel.’)	<i>om.</i> (‘By my angel.’)	by myn angelis. (‘For the arrival of my angel.’)	firi tilkuomv eingils mins. (‘He said to his brethren.’)
dixit fratribus suis. (‘He said to his brethren.’)	dixit eis. (‘He said to them.’)	Dixit. (‘He said.’)	said to þem. (‘He said to them.’)	talade sua til þeirra sem komner vorv. (‘He talked thus to those who had come there.’)
uolebant eius Santissimum corpus destruere atque conburere. (‘They wanted to destroy and burn her most holy body.’)	uolebant eius corpus Santissimum deferre atque conburere. (‘They wanted to bring down and burn her most holy body.’)	uolebant Santissimum corpus detinere atque conburere. (‘They wanted to retain and burn her most holy body.’)	wold atake þe holy body of our lady and acast it in þe fire. (‘They wanted take the holy body of Our Lady and cast it into the fire.’)	þvi þeir villdu lífsgíarna hennar líkama fordrífa ok vppbrenna. (‘Since they eagerly wanted to destroy and burn up her body.’)

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(1) <i>Gaddi 208</i>	<i>Chase 105</i>	<i>Paris 1192</i>	<i>Oxford 26</i>	<i>Framför Mariu</i>
Sanctissimus corpus in terra iacere.	Sanctissimus corpus in terra iactare.	Sanctissimus corpus tangere.	wold apulled and cast adoun þe holy body of our lady to þe ground.	villdi kasta hennar líkama niðr ajord.
(‘Throw to the ground that most holy body.’)	(‘Cast to the ground that most holy body.’)	(‘Touch that most holy body.’)	(‘They wanted to pull and cast the most holy body of Our Lady to the ground.’)	(‘They wanted cast down her body to the ground.’)
illa turbam.	aliam turbam.	aliam turbam.	and many mo.	ok anan lyd micin.
(‘That multitude.’)	(‘Another multitude.’)	(‘Another multitude.’)	(‘And many more.’)	(‘And another great multitude.’)

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HOLY BISHOPS

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Latin Oratory at the Edge of the World:
The Fragments of Gizurr Hallsson's
**Gesta Scalotensis ecclesie presulum*
and the **Vita sancti Thorlaci*

Gottskálf Jenson

On the second day of Christmas in 1193, as the burial ceremony of Bishop Þorlákr Þórhallsson (1133–1193) was coming to an end, the aged lawspeaker of Iceland Gizurr Hallsson (c. 1116–1206) gave a long and elaborate funeral speech in the graveyard of Skálholt Cathedral. In his speech, he summarized the history of the Skálholt diocese and concluded with a short account of the life of the soon-to-be holy man. The best source for the contents of this oration is the B-redaction of *Þorláks saga helga*, which includes an excerpt from the speech itself, in which Gizurr reputedly said:¹

Ek hefi hér verit nokkurum sinnum staddr þá er þau tíðendi hafa gorkt er þessum eru lík. Fimm byskupar hafa hér verit niðr settir at mér hjáveranda. Fyrst Þorlákr byskup Runólfsson, þá Ketill byskup, en síðan Magnús byskup, eftir þat Kloengr byskup, en nú Þorlákr byskup. Ek hefi ok talat hér nokkur orð, þá (er) þessir atburðir hafa gorkt, sem siðvenja er til í qðrum lönðum yfir tiginna manna grepti. En málaefni hafa verit jafnan stórliga góð, því at þeir hafa allir verit inir mestu merkismenn í sínum byskupsdómi. Ok er gott á þat at minnast at varri grein ok at soðn várra forellra, um þá byskupa er hér hafa verit fyrir vára daga ok á várum dögum, at sá þykkir hverjum beztr sem kunnast er. En svá dýrligir menn sem þeir hafa verit allir þá er þat þó eitt sér hversu Þorlákr hefir sik til búit biskupstignar, langt frá því sem allir aðrir.

¹ *Biskupa sögur II: Hungroaka, Þorláks saga byskups in elzta, Jarleinabók Þorláks byskups in forna, Þorláks saga byskups yngri, Jarleinabók Þorláks byskups önnur, Þorláks saga byskups C, Þorláks saga byskups E, Páls saga byskups, Ísleifs þátr byskups, Latínubrot um Þorlák byskups*, ed. Ásdis Egilsdóttir. Íslenzk fornrit 16 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 2002), pp. 190–91.

[Several times before I have found myself here in this place, when events have transpired that were similar to the present occasion. Five bishops have been buried here in my presence. First Bishop Þorlákr, son of Runólfr, then Bishop Ketill, later Bishop Magnús, after that Bishop Kloengr, and now Bishop Þorlákr. I have also spoken a few words here, when these events took place, as is customary in other countries at the burial of noble men. The subject-matter has always been outstanding, because these men have all proven excellent in the office of bishop. And it is good to be able to state, based on my own observation and on what my ancestors have told concerning the bishops who have been here (in Skálholt) before and during our time, that each likes most the one he knew best. But even though these men have all been illustrious, nevertheless the manner in which Þorlákr prepared himself for the dignity of a bishop is unique, far exceeding all the others.]

The excerpt continues with an appraisal of Bishop Þorlákr and a survey of his career within the Church, somewhat reminiscent of the beginning of the Latin lessons about him preserved in the *Breviarium Nidrosiense*.² This citation, which is introduced by the saga narrator as being related from memory – ‘vil ek geta nokkurra orða, segir sá er söguna setti, þeira er hann talaði ok mér ganga sízt ór minni’ (‘I wish to mention some words he spoke, says he who composed the saga, that have particularly stuck in my memory’) – contains only the basic elements of Gizurr’s funerary speech, which was ‘langt ørendi ok fagrt um þau tíðendi er gørsk hōfðu’ (‘a long and beautiful speech about those events that had transpired’). Enough, however, is said for the reader to recognize the form of this oration as a celebration of the lives of the first bishops of Skálholt, who reputedly were all excellent in their office, culminating with an account of Bishop Þorlákr of Skálholt, who outshone them all in glory.³

² *Breviarium Nidrosiense*, ed. Hans Buvarp and Baltzer M. Børsum, 2 vols (Oslo: Børsums forlag og antikvariat, 1964), I, fols v/r–vi/r.

³ Gizurr speaks of five bishops, at whose funerals he has given orations in Skálholt. Only four of these were bishops of Skálholt, the fifth being Bishop Ketill Þorsteinsson (1075–1145) of Hólar, who died in Skálholt. *Biskupa sögur II*, ed. Ásdís Egilsdóttir, pp. 30–31. In chapter 89 of *Guðmundar saga A*, it is mentioned in passing that Gizurr gave a speech at the burial of the ‘nun’ Ketilbjörg (d. c. 1201), who was a resident at Skálholt, presumably as an anchoress. *Guðmundar sögur biskups I, Ævi Guðmundar biskups, Guðmundar saga A*, ed. Stefán Karlsson. Editiones Arnarnagnæanæ, Ser. B, vol. 6 (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde & Bagger, 1983), p. 117. This is the sixth funeral speech held in Skálholt by Gizurr, of which there is mention in our sources.