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FRAGMENTS
OF AN ICELANDIC CHRISTMAS SERMON
BASED ON TWO SERMONS
OF VINCENT FERRER

1. Introduction

To the extent that medieval Icelandic sermons and sermon manuscripts give any clues at all about their authors and audiences, these clues nearly always point to either the Benedictines or the Augustinians. Thomas N. Hall summarizes:

Institutionally [the Old West Norse sermons'] affiliations are almost wholly with Benedictine and Augustinian foundations, since these are the orders that dominated the Norwegian and Icelandic churches until well into the thirteenth century, whereas the Danish and Swedish corpora reflect a much greater influence from the French mendicant orders.¹

Textual evidence in support of this conclusion is not hard to find. For instance, the Icelandic Homily Book (Holm Perg. 4to no. 15; ca. 1200), the most important early Icelandic preaching manuscript, contains a chapter from the Benedictine Rule apparently intended to serve as a kind of homily.² The works of several important Augustinian authors, especially Victorines, were known in Iceland from an early date.³ A sermon by the

1 Thomas N. Hall, "Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons," *The Sermon*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle, *Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental*, vols. 81–83 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 667.

2 *The Icelandic Homily Book: Perg. 15 4^o in the Royal Library, Stockholm*, ed. Andrea de Leeuw van Weenen, *Icelandic Manuscripts, Series in Quarto*, vol. 3 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 1993), 89r–89v and introduction p. 15. See Joan Turville-Petre, "Sources of the Vernacular Homily in England, Norway and Iceland," *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 75 (1960), 170–71.

3 Hans Bekker-Nielsen, "The Victorines and Their Influence on Old Norse Literature," *The Fifth Viking Congress: Tórshavn, July 1965*, ed. Bjarni Niclasen (Tórshavn: Føroya Landsstyri et al., 1968), 32–36.

Victorine author Absalon of Springiersbach (d. ca. 1200) was the main source of a homily surviving in AM 655 XXVII 4to (ca. 1300) and AM 624 4to (ca. 1500),⁴ and a homily in AM 696 XXX 4to (1400–1500) is based on a chapter of the *Liber exceptionum* by Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173) or some closely related text.⁵

But the traditional narrative of Benedictine/Augustinian dominance may not be the whole story. I have argued elsewhere that current scholarly conceptions of the nature of medieval Icelandic preaching rely on an incomplete assessment of the corpus. Many sermons that survive in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century manuscript fragments — and that could provide valuable evidence about vernacular preaching in Iceland in the later Middle Ages — remain unstudied and unedited.⁶ Admittedly, it seems unlikely that enough new evidence will surface to present a serious challenge to the idea that the primary influences on Icelandic preaching were Benedictine and Augustinian. Nevertheless, there are some indications from other genres of late medieval Icelandic religious literature that the possibility of influence from the mendicant orders, particularly the Dominicans, on Icelandic sermons should not be entirely discounted.

While there was never a significant Dominican presence in Iceland, the importation of manuscripts and early printed books containing works by Dominican authors — including Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, Raymond of Pennafort, and Hugh Ripelin — ensured that elements of Dominican spirituality had some currency among the Icelandic clergy.⁷

4 See Stephen Pelle, “Twelfth-Century Sources for Old Norse Homilies: New Evidence from AM 655 XXVII 4to,” *Gripla* 24 (2013): 58–70, and “An Old Norse Homily and Two Homiletic Fragments from AM 624 4to,” *Gripla* 27 (2016): 263–81. For a study and edition of AM 655 XXVII 4to, see Hallgrímur J. Ámundason, “AM 655 XXVII 4to: Útgáfa, stafagerð, stafsetning” (B.A. thesis, University of Iceland, 1994).

5 *Liber exceptionum: texte critique avec introduction, notes et tables*, ed. Jean Châtillon (Paris: J. Vrin, 1958), 252–53 (part 2, III.4). The texts in AM 696 XXX 4to have never been thoroughly examined; I hope to edit them in the near future.

6 Pelle, “Twelfth-Century Sources,” 45–49.

7 Especially for the later period, see Marianne E. Kalinke, *The Book of Reykjahólar: The Last of the Great Medieval Legendaries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 34–35, 263. On Hugh Ripelin, see Ian McDougall, “Latin Sources of the Old Icelandic *Speculum Penitentis*,” *Opuscula* 10 (1996): 136–185 (esp. 140–41), and Emil Olmer, *Boksamlingar på Island, 1179–1490* (Gothenburg: Wald. Zachrisson, 1902), no. 45 (p. 12) and no. 251 (p. 52). For the knowledge of Raymond of Pennafort’s penitential *summa*, see Olmer, *Boksamlingar*, nos. 236–37 (p. 49) and Hörður Ágústsson, “Bækur,” in *Skálholt: skráði og*

Hugh Ripelin's *Compendium theologiae veritatis*, for instance, was an important source for the Icelandic *Speculum penitentis*, among other texts.⁸ Norwegians and other European clerics who traveled to Iceland were also possible conduits of Dominican influence. Such was the case with Jón Halldórsson (d. 1339), who was a Dominican brother in Bergen before becoming bishop of Skálholt in 1322 and who seems to have been involved in the composition of a number of Old Norse *exempla* as well as *Klári saga*.⁹ One might also note the great collection of saints' lives surviving in Reykjahólabók (Holm Perg. fol. no. 3, ca. 1530–1540), whose closest analogues are found in German legendaries of Dominican origin.¹⁰

In the present article, I call attention to a sermon that demonstrates that, by the end of the medieval period at least, the influence of Dominican authors on Icelandic religious literature could extend to preaching as well. This sermon, surviving in two previously unedited fragments from the early sixteenth century, draws on Latin versions of two of the sermons of the famous Valencian Dominican preacher Vincent Ferrer.

áhöld, ed. Kristján Eldjárn and Hörður Ágústsson (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1992), 309–10. Other Dominicans whose works appear in surviving Skálholt book-lists include Bartholomew of San Concordio, Bernard Gui, Johannes Nider, John of Genoa, Vincent of Beauvais, and William of Paris (Hörður Ágústsson, "Bækur," 308–9, 311–12, 317–18, 320–22; cf. Olmer, *Boksamlingar*, nos. 235, 238, 239). A Hólar book-list from 1525 records copies of the works of Aquinas and Albertus Magnus (DI IX, 298; Sverrir Tómasson, *Formálar íslenskra sagnaritara á miðöldum: Rannsókn bókmenntahefðar*, Rit 33 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, 1988), 31).

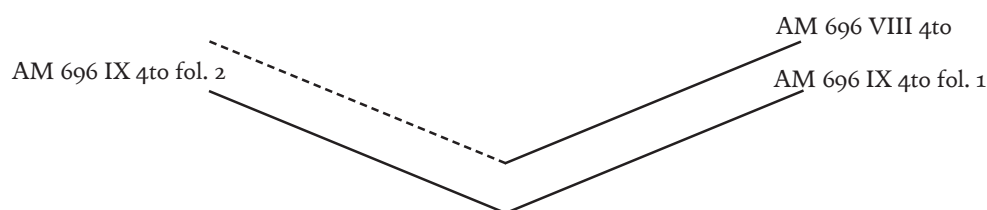
8 See McDougall, "Latin Sources" and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, "Dómsdagslýsing í AM 764 4to," *Opuscula* 10 (1996): 186–93. In addition to these works and others discussed by McDougall (144–45), unedited fragments of what seems to have been an Old Norse treatise on the sacraments in AM 686 a 4to (ca. 1400) also depend on the *Compendium*. The fragments are worn and difficult to read, but Latin quotations from at least three chapters of book VI of the *Compendium* (VI.9 on baptism and VI.20 and VI.21 on confession) can be clearly identified in the digital images available online (<https://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/da/AM04-0686-a>, accessed 20 June 2018). Kristian Kålund had identified the contents of AM 686 a 4to as "Íslenzkar homilíur" (*Katalog over den Arnemagnæanske håndskriftsamling*, vol. 2 (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1894), 101 [item 1710]); this was repeated by Trygve Knudsen, "Homiliebøger," in *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder fra vikingetid til reformationstid*, vol. 6 (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1961), col. 659.

9 See, most recently, Shaun F. D. Hughes, "The Old Norse *Exempla* as Arbiters of Gender Roles in Medieval Iceland," in *New Norse Studies: Essays on the Literature and Culture of Medieval Scandinavia*, ed. Jeffrey Turco, Islandica 58 (Ithaca: Cornell University Library, 2015), 255–300, esp. 257–58, 271, and 281.

10 Kalinke, *The Book of Reykjahólar*, 3–4, 26, 198, *et passim*.

2. Manuscripts and scribe

The sermon in question survives in the manuscript fragments AM 696 VIII 4to and AM 696 IX 4to, both now in Reykjavík.¹¹ The former is a single leaf, rather worn and missing at least a line of text at the top of each side; the latter is a bifolium, somewhat less worn, but with significant portions of the vellum cut away, so that about a third of the text on fol. 1 and more than two thirds of the text on fol. 2 are missing. Kålund, who correctly identified the text in AM 696 IX 4to as a sermon for Christmas, also made the note “æmnet synes beslægtet med indholdet af 696 VIII,” and he dated both fragments to the fifteenth century.¹² In the first of these judgments he was correct, since AM 696 VIII 4to and AM 696 IX 4to are, in fact, two fragments from the same copy of the same text: AM 696 IX 4to fol. 1r picks up where the verso of AM 696 VIII 4to leaves off, and AM 696 IX 4to fol. 2 contains material that (as the source identification below proves) comes from an earlier part of the same sermon. Text is missing between AM 696 IX 4to fol. 2v and the recto of AM 696 VIII 4to, so that the construction of the gathering from which the fragments were taken can be partly imagined as follows, where solid lines represent surviving leaves and dotted lines represent lost leaves:



At least one leaf, with which AM 696 VIII 4to would have formed a bifolium, must be missing. Whether one or more other inner bifolia have been lost immediately before the recto of AM 696 VIII 4to can only be guessed at, since the amount of text missing from the sermon would depend on how closely the Icelandic author followed his source.¹³

¹¹ Digital images of AM 696 VIII 4to are available at <http://handrit.is/en/manuscript/view/is/AM04-0696-VIII>, accessed 20 June 2018.

¹² Kålund, *Katalog*, vol. 2, 112 (item 1741); see also Hall, “Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons,” 703–4 (items 32 and 33), where AM 696 VIII 4to is, for reasons unclear, described as a “sermon on the Passion.”

¹³ The main Latin source sermon is quite long, and over 1000 words of it fall into the section

Kålund's dating of AM 696 VIII and IX 4to to the fifteenth century has since been revised, and the *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog*, citing a personal communication from Stefán Karlsson, now dates the fragments to 1500–1550.¹⁴ Stefán Karlsson also noticed that the fragments were written in the same hand as AM 661 4to, a manuscript of *Stefanus saga*.¹⁵ This identification gives us a possible clue as to where the scribe of our sermon was working. The copy of *Stefanus saga* in AM 661 4to begins: "Hier byriar vpp savgv vírdulígs herra Stephani prothomartírís. patroni Snoksdals kirkiv."¹⁶ It was presumably this introductory statement that led Árni Magnússon to conclude that the manuscript "hefur, óefad, til forna vered eign Snoksdals kirkíu."¹⁷ This seems a reasonable inference, since it would be odd for the scribe to mention the church of Snóksdalur if he were not connected to it in some way. It is likely, then, that AM 696 VIII and IX 4to were written in or around Snóksdalur in Dalasýsla, or at the very least somewhere in the diocese of Skálholt, to which the church of Snóksdalur belonged. Árni Magnússon does not record how he acquired the two sermon fragments. He received AM 661 4to from Árni Hákonarson from Vatnshorn in Dalasýsla (ca. 1660–1690), with whom he studied in Copenhagen,¹⁸ but there is no indication that AM 696 VIII and IX 4to share that provenance.

corresponding to the lacuna in the Icelandic sermon. If all of this material was adapted by the Icelandic author, more leaves must be missing from the inside of the gathering.

- 14 See the catalogue at <http://onpweb.nfi.sc.ku.dk/ms/coll4.htm>, accessed 20 June 2018.
- 15 Marianne E. Kalinke, "Stefanus saga in Reykjahólabók," *Gripla* 9 (1995): 134 n. 7.
- 16 Kålund, *Katalog*, vol. 2, 74 (item 1654); recorded in the apparatus of the edition of *Stefanus saga* in *Heilagra manna sögur*, ed. C.R. Unger, vol. 2 (Oslo: Bentzen, 1877), 287.
- 17 Árni Magnússon, *Arne Magnussons i AM. 435 A-B, 4to indeholdte Håndskriftfortegnelser, med to Tillæg*, ed. Kommissionen for det Arnemagnæanske Legat (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1909), 12; recorded in Kålund, *Katalog*, vol. 2, 74.
- 18 Árni Magnússon, *Håndskriftfortegnelser*, 12; Jonna Louis-Jensen, "Árni Hákonarson fra Vatnshorn," *Sagnaping helgað Jónasi Kristjánssyni sjötugum 10. apríl, 1994*, ed. Gísli Sigurðsson et al., vol. 2 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1994), 515–25; Páll Eggert Ólason, *Íslenzkar æviskrár frá landnámstímum til ársloka 1940*, vol. 1 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1948), 47. On other manuscripts received from Árni Hákonarson, see Sture Hast, *Pappershandskrifterna till Harðar saga*, Bibliotheca Arnemagnæana 23 (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1960), 140; Jón Helgason, "Sylloge sagarum. Resenii bibliotheca. Vatnshyrna," *Opuscula* 8 (1985): 50–1; and Jon Gunnar Jørgensen, *The Lost Vellum Kringla*, trans. Sian Grønlie, Bibliotheca Arnemagnæana 45 (Copenhagen: Reitzel, 2007), 191–95.

3. Structure and style of the sermon

So little survives of AM 696 IX 4to fol. 2, which contains the beginning of the extant part of the sermon, that it is difficult to follow the text without the aid of its source (see section 4 below), which here offers an extended allegory comparing the state of mankind before the coming of Christ to a besieged city. After a substantial lacuna, the sermon picks up again on the recto of AM 696 VIII 4to, where we find a discussion of how we can take the Christ-child, Mary, and Joseph into our homes in two ways (AM 696 VIII 4to 1r5 “med tuefalldre grein”): spiritually, by repenting of and confessing our sins, and physically, by receiving the poor into our homes and caring for them. This is followed by an *exemplum* (AM 696 VIII 4to 1r16 “eitt dæme”) describing how a merchant in France (AM 696 VIII 4to 1r17 “i uallande”) would invite into his home every Christmas Eve an old man and a young woman with a child, in commemoration of the Holy Family. This merchant is rewarded by being granted, in the hour of his death, a vision of Christ, Mary, and Joseph, who assure him that they will welcome him into their heavenly home. This section provides rare evidence of the use of *exempla* in medieval Icelandic preaching.¹⁹

The remainder of AM 696 VIII 4to and most of fol. 1 of AM 696 IX 4to are a retelling of the birth of Christ, which includes conversations between Mary and Joseph and their joyful prayers to the newborn Savior. The surviving portion of the sermon breaks off with Mary entreating God the Father to fill her breasts with milk so that she can feed his Son. These imaginative conversations and prayers of Mary and Joseph, none of which has any Biblical basis, are perhaps the most striking characteristic of the sermon’s style. A noteworthy element in these episodes of direct speech (and one that is taken over from the sermon’s Latin source) is their frequent use of second-person plural pronominal forms in respectful address to a single person. Examples can be found in Joseph’s speech to Mary (AM 696 VIII 4to 1r19 “blezad[a m]ey, huada ogurlig birte stendur

19 See Hughes, “Old Norse Exempla,” esp. 260–71. Though collections of Icelandic *exempla* appear in several late medieval manuscripts, their actual incorporation into surviving preaching texts is not well documented. The introduction and part of the conclusion of another *exemplum* survive in an Icelandic sermon fragment in AM 687 c 1 4to and AM 667 XVII 4to (ca. 1500–1540), where the term *dæmi* is also used, see Stephen Pelle, “An Unedited Sermon from the Eve of the Icelandic Reformation,” *Opuscula* 16 (2018): 142.

af yduare asionu”), in Mary’s replies to Joseph (AM 696 IX 4to 1r4 “bere þier aungua ...”), and in Mary’s prayer to God the Father (AM 696 IX 4to 1v22 “þier síait ollum skepnum fædu”). Except in formal speech to royalty, these so-called *þéringar* were uncommon in Icelandic before the fifteenth century.²⁰ It is interesting that, while Mary and Joseph use *þér* in their dialogue with each other, they both use *þú* when speaking to the newborn Christ (even though the Latin source has *vos*). Perhaps the Icelandic author felt that using the formal pronoun here would detract from the tenderness of the scene.

The language of the sermon is otherwise unremarkable, except for the presence of several loanwords from the mainland Scandinavian languages, most of which derive ultimately from Middle Low or Middle High German. Examples include the following:

heimugliga “secretly” (← MLG *heimelik*) — AM 696 IX 4to 2v16²¹
skjalliga “with certainty, honestly” (cf. ODan *schællegæ*, OSw, *skiällikä*) — AM 696 VIII 4to 1r8 *skíæliga*²²
strax “immediately” (← MLG *stra[c]kes*) — AM 696 VIII 4to 1v21²³
traktéra “treat” (← MHG *traktieren*) — AM 696 VIII 4to 1r14 *tracterít*²⁴

Loans of this type are usually attributed to the influence of the Low German-speaking Hanseatic League in the late medieval period, although

20 Björn K. Þórólfsson, *Um íslenskar orðmyndir á 14. og 15. öld og breytingar þeirra úr fornmálinu með viðauka um nýjungar í orðmyndum á 16. öld og síðar* (Reykjavík: Félagsprentsmiðjan, 1925), 42; see Stefán Karlsson, *The Icelandic Language*, trans. Rory McTurk (London: Short Run Press, 2004), 28.

21 Christian Westergård-Nielsen, *Låneordene i det 16. århundredes trykte islandske litteratur*, Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 6 (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1946), 152–53; Sigfús Blöndal, *Íslandsk-Dansk Ordbog* (Reykjavík, 1920–24), 313; Veturliði Óskarsson, *Middelnedertyske låneord i islandsk diplomsprog frem til år 1500*, Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 43 (Copenhagen: Reitzel, 2003), 254.

22 Westergård-Nielsen, *Låneordene*, 302–3; Finn Hødnebo, *Ordbog over Det gamle norske Sprog: Rettelser og Tillegg* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1972), 322; Sigfús Blöndal, *Íslandsk-Dansk Ordbog*, 731; cf. Veturliði Óskarsson, *Middelnedertyske låneord*, 44 n. 30.

23 Westergård-Nielsen, *Låneordene*, 329; Hødnebo, *Ordbog*, 352; Sigfús Blöndal, *Íslandsk-Dansk Ordbog*, 810; Veturliði Óskarsson, *Middelnedertyske låneord*, 324.

24 Westergård-Nielsen, *Låneordene*, 347; Sigfús Blöndal, *Íslandsk-Dansk Ordbog*, 865; Veturliði Óskarsson, *Middelnedertyske låneord*, 176–77; Oskar Bandle, *Die Sprache der Guðbrandsbiblíja*, Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 17 (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1956), 429.

some borrowing of German theological and ecclesiastical terms occurred earlier.²⁵ With so little of the text surviving it is difficult to judge the significance of these loans, but it may be noted that they seem to occur with less frequency in this text than in certain late medieval Icelandic works known to have been translated from Low German sources, such as *Saga heilagrar Önnu* and most of *Reykjahólabók*.²⁶

4. Sources

The sermon found in AM 696 VIII and IX 4to is based on two sermons by Vincent Ferrer (1350–1419) – the first for Christmas Eve, from which the Icelandic author took the *exemplum* of the merchant, and the second for Christmas Day, from which almost all of the other surviving material in the Icelandic text derives. Ferrer, a Dominican friar from Valencia, was one of the most renowned preachers of the later Middle Ages, delivering sermons to large audiences not only on the Iberian Peninsula but also in France, Brittany, Switzerland, and Italy.²⁷ As Sánchez has described, Ferrer’s preaching was innovative in that it incorporated a popular tone and rhetorical directness into the (by then traditional) Scholastic, thematic sermon structure:

[I]n my opinion, Ferrer’s sermons do not differ in their essential structure from those of his contemporaries. His preaching is always *thematica*; he practices *divisio* and focusses on *dilatatio*. What does

25 See Veturliði Óskarsson, “Om hanesprogets påvirkning på islandsk administrativt sprog i senmiddelalderen,” *Útnordur: West Nordic Standardisation and Variation*, ed. Kristján Árnason (Reykjavík: University of Iceland, 2003), 163–78; Alaric Hall, “Jón the Fleming: Low German in Thirteenth-Century Norway and Fourteenth-Century Iceland,” *Leeds Working Papers in Linguistics and Phonetics* 18 (2013): 1–33.

26 *Saga heilagrar Önnu*, ed. Kirsten Wolf, Rit 52 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, 2001), esp. cxv–cxxxv; Kalinke, *The Book of Reykjahólar*, 45–124. Even in works translated from Low German, many Low German loans were employed without a precedent in the source text; see Dario Bullitta, “Prestiti basso tedeschi nella *Saga heilagrar Önnu*: i termini senza modello testuale” in *Le rune: epigrafia e letteratura*, ed. Vittorio Dolcetti Corazza and Renato Gendre, Bibliotheca Germanica: Studi e testi 26 (Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 2009), 303–23.

27 For a recent account of Ferrer’s career, see Philip Daileader, *Saint Vincent Ferrer, his World and Life: Religion and Society in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), esp. 191–99.

really distinguish his works is his rhetorical simplicity, that is, a rhetoric adapted to the people's taste, without complex scholastic reasonings and tiring disquisitions.²⁸

The existence of the sermon in AM 696 VIII and IX 4to shows that, *mutatis mutandis*, such a style could be as attractive to Icelanders as to Valencians or Castilians.

The recording and textual transmission of the sermons of Vincent Ferrer were complex processes. While there is no universal agreement among scholars as to the language(s) Ferrer used while addressing audiences in various locations across Europe, it seems likely that he always preached in his native Valencian dialect of Catalan. In most cases, notes of his sermons were written down in shorthand, either as he preached them or shortly thereafter, by one or more *reportatores* who were assigned to this task.²⁹ These *reportationes* were then expanded, rewritten, abbreviated, and rearranged in various ways by the *reportatores* themselves as well as by other editors and scribes. As a result, some manuscripts preserve only short outlines or sketches, while others contain fully fleshed-out sermons. A further complication stems from the fact that the sermons were sometimes preserved in the language in which they were delivered, i.e. Valencian/Catalan, and sometimes translated into Latin or Castilian.³⁰

28 Manuel Ambrosio Sánchez Sánchez, "Vernacular Preaching in Spanish, Portuguese and Catalan," *The Sermon*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle, *Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental*, vols. 81–83 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 804–5.

29 Notable exceptions include the Lenten sermons preached in Valencia in 1413, which "Ferrer likely dictated ... as a preparatory exercise for the following day's sermons" (Katherine Lindeman, "Fighting Words: Vengeance, Jews, and Saint Vicent Ferrer in Late-Medieval Valencia," *Speculum* 91 (2016): 694–95; see Josep Sanchis Sivera, *Quaresma de sant Vicent Ferrer, predicada a València l'any 1413* (Barcelona, 1927), xxvi n. 2).

30 See Daileader, *Saint Vincent Ferrer*, 191–92, 197–99; Sánchez, "Vernacular Preaching," 831–834. For sermons by Ferrer preserved in Castilian, see Pedro M. Cátedra García, *Sermón, sociedad y literatura en la Edad Media: San Vicente Ferrer en Castilla (1411–1412) — estudio bibliográfico, literario y edición de los textos inéditos* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Cultura y Turismo, 1994). A thorough report of manuscripts containing notes of Ferrer's sermons and an account of the surviving sermon corpus can be found, respectively, in Josep Perarnau i Espelt, "Els Manuscrits d'esquemes i de notes de sermons de sant Vicent Ferrer," *Arxiu dels textos catalans antics* 18 (1999): 157–398; and in Perarnau, "Aportació a un inventari de sermons de sant Vicenç Ferrer: temes bíblics, títols i divisions esquemàtiques," *Arxiu dels textos catalans antics* 18 (1999): 479–811.

Icelandic text from AM 696 VIII 4to 1v7–AM 696 IX 4to 1r5	Perugia, Convento dei Domenicani MS 477 ³¹	MS of Valencia, Real Colegio y Seminario del Corpus Christi ³²	Latin text from early printed editions ³³	Castilian version in Madrid, Real Academia Española MS 294 ³⁴
Fyrir ena þríðiu grein uar þerse fæðing helgud með mætte hins hæsta guds. Þúi þa enn blezada mey María uar j þersu almenneligu huse og j þeirre faneytre sæng er josep hafde upp buít af halme eda heye sem eg sagda, þa kende hun a sier at þa uar míog nær fæðingunne. Enn ecki kende hun sier sem adrar kuinnur. Þúi j mote fæðingunne hafa þær sott og sorg og allz kyns eynder. og suo faulna þær upp sem naren. Enn þerse en agtætaza mey María hafde oll aumnur teíkn þa er leid at fæðingunne. fyrst hafde hun suo sæta glede j sínu hiarta og h[imn]esk[a] huggan at þat kann eingin	3 ^m declaratur quia, adveniente hora partus sui, non permisit Virgo advocari obstetrices.	Ad terciam conclusionem, quod per Deum fuit <i>altament celebrado</i> . Nam cum ipsa Virgo staret [pregnata] inter porticum et Iosep prope bestias respiciendo quod de virgine Maria exiebat magnus resplendor et <i>claridat</i> mittendo radios sicut stelle, et dixit quod si volebat partire, et dixit Virgo quod sic, nam signa habebat partus de consolationibus et confortacionibus, non de miseriis, et doloribus, et tribulacionibus, et manticellis, sicut habent alie mulieres, et tunc dixit Iosep surgendo: “Ergo vadam pro partera et nutrice que adiuvet vos, etc. Et Virgo dixit: “Pater,	Tertia conclusio dicit quod ista benedicta natiuitas fuit per Deum celebrata potenter. Virgine Maria existente in illa porticu, ut dixit [<i>other editions</i> : dixi], in medio paramentorum, circa mediam noctem uenit hora partus, quam sensit uirgo Maria non sicut ceterae mulieres, quia priusquam sentiunt partum, habent dolores, miserias, & tristitias in corpore, & facies mortificatur. Sed uirgo Maria habuit alia signa, scilicet illuminationes singulares, consolationes & dulcedines cordis & delectationes maximas magis quam ceterae, & facies eius resplenduit. Quod uidens	La tercera conclusion es que esta santa e bendicha natiuidat fue por nuestro Señor Dios [potente] -mente çelebrada. E esto fue que, como estava allý la Rreyna de paráyso en aquel portalete entre el buey e el asno, catad que vino la ora de la media noche, que era la ora del parir, e bien sabedes que a la hora del parto suelen venir algunas señaes, así como dolores o miserias. Mas catad que a la Virgen María nin le vinieron dolores nin miserias, mas antes le venieron muy muchas consolaciones, ca toda se fenchía de resplendor en tanto que la su cara estava toda mudada.

mannlig tunga at greína. Híer med sk[e]in he[n]jar andlít suo fagurt sem sol, enn er jøsep sa þat þa talar h[ann] til. blezad[a] mley, huada ogurlig birte stend- ur af yduare asionu. hun suarar, fader ... er suo nær komít fæðingunne. jøsep reís þa upp strax og uíllde utue[ga] [OOOO] sagde s[uo] t[íll] h[OOOOOO] —— h[OOO]. s[uo] sk[al] og eingínn mier hia f[OOO] —— [jo]sep seger þa blezad mey ecki eru þ[íer] —— giord. hun suarar. bere þíer aungua —— gud sialfur mun til sía med mier	non faciatís quia sicut adiutorium a cuius [<i>for</i> alicuius?] creature in conceptione non interve- nit nec in partu,” etc.	Ioseph dixit: “Benedicta, quid est hoc?” Respondit: “Pater, modo uenit hora partus mei.” Ioseph surrexit subito ut uoc- aret obstetrices. Sed uirgo prohibuit eum dicens: “Pater, sicut in conceptione nulla creatura fecit aliquid, sic nec etiam in natiuitate.” Cogitate quomodo dixit Ioseph: “Benedicta, uos non estis super hoc experta neque ego &c.” Et uirgo: “Pater, non curetis, quia pater celestis prouidebit,” id est Deus.	E catad que Jøsep, que aquesto veyá, varuntó en el su coraçón que quería parir, e dixo: “Bendicha e gloriosa, ¿queredes paryr?” E dixo ella: “Señor, sí.” E dixo él: “Pues, bendicha, quiero yr a buscar algunas mugieres que vengan aquí a estar conusco.” E dixo ella: “Señor, non curedes de llamar a ninguno.” E dixo él: “¿E si, bendicha, llamare siquiera la partera?” Ella dixo: “Non, señor, ca como non fue mester en la conçepción compañia alguna, tanpoco será mester agora en el nasçimiento.
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- 31 *Sermonario de Perugia (Convento dei Domenicani, ms. 477)*, ed. Francisco M. Gimeno Blay and María Luz Mandingorra Llavata, trans. Daniel Gozalbo Gimeno (Valencia: Ajuntament de Valencia, 2006), 111.
- 32 *Sermones: Transcripción del manuscrito del Real Colegio y Seminario del Corpus Christi de Valencia*, ed. and trans. Francisco M. Gimeno Blay and María Luz Mandingorra Llavata (Valencia: Ajuntament de Valencia, 2002), 628.
- 33 *Beati Vincentii ... Sermones hyemales*, ed. Damián Díaz (Lyon, 1558), 162. The text of this edition is widely available online and has only minor differences from the late-fifteenth-century imprints.
- 34 *Cátedra, Sermón*, 516/321–335.

Many of Ferrer's sermons, therefore, circulated not only in multiple more or less abbreviated versions but also in multiple languages, and the two sermons on which the Icelandic text in AM 696 VIII and IX 4to was based are no exception. The Christmas sermon (theme: *Natus est vobis* [Lk 2:11]) survives in several Latin versions — one of which formed the basis of the text found in the early printed editions of Ferrer's sermons, which began to appear in the 1470s³⁵ — as well as in one Castilian version and one (still unedited) Catalan version.³⁶ The Christmas Eve sermon likewise survives in multiple versions and in all three languages.³⁷ To be able to compare the Icelandic sermon to its source, then, we must first determine which version of that source the Icelandic author had before him. It is of course unlikely that the Castilian or Catalan versions of these sermons would have been available in Iceland, since these seem to have had a limited circulation and would have been of little use outside the Iberian Peninsula and southern France.³⁸ We are therefore left with the Latin versions of the texts. In the table above I present a passage of the Icelandic sermon alongside the corresponding passages in the three Latin versions of Ferrer's Christmas sermon that have so far appeared in print, as well as the Castilian version for the sake of comparison.

The short note found in the Perugia manuscript obviously could not have given rise to the corresponding section of the Icelandic sermon. The version of the Valencia manuscript also could not have been the source, since, in addition to lacking details shared by the Icelandic text and the other, longer versions, it is ordered differently. For instance, in the Icelandic sermon Joseph questions Mary after the signs that she is about to give birth have already been described, while in the Valencia manuscript Joseph asks Mary whether she is ready to give birth before most of these signs are listed. The general order of the Icelandic sermon conforms to

35 Catédra, *Sermón*, 89; Daileader, *Saint Vincent Ferrer*, 194.

36 Catédra, *Sermón*, 147–51; Perarnau, "Aportació," 671–72; Perarnau, "Manuscripts," 202; Josep Sanchis Sivera, *Estudis d'història cultural* (Barcelona: Abadía de Montserrat, 1999), 220–21.

37 Perarnau, "Aportació," 644–45; Perarnau, "Manuscripts," 166, 202, 231; Sanchis, *Estudis*, 220.

38 For a list of the most important Latin and vernacular manuscripts of Ferrer's sermons, see Perarnau, "Aportació," 479–80. The contents of the manuscripts are discussed in detail in the remainder of Perarnau's article.

that of the Latin in the early printed editions of Ferrer's sermons, and these two texts also share numerous similarities in wording not found in the other versions, e.g. "sem eg sagda" $\approx$ "ut dixi," "Maria hafde oll aunnur teíkn" $\approx$ "Maria habuit alia signa," etc. Finally, there is the fact that Latin manuscripts like those of Perugia and Valencia — which represent an early stage in the transmission of Ferrer's sermons that is closer to the original *reportationes* — seem to have been primarily local productions, and it is very unlikely that any of Ferrer's sermons would have reached Iceland except in the kind of standardized version represented by the early imprints. In fact, inventories of the book holdings of the cathedral of Skálholt record that the library possessed two imprints of Ferrer's sermons, a 1488 Strasbourg edition and a 1518 Lyon edition.³⁹ Ferrer's writings would have been of no interest to the later Protestant bishops of Skálholt, so both of these imprints must have been acquired before the diocese became Lutheran around 1540.

In light of the East Norse loanwords in AM 696 VIII and IX 4to, one more possibility must be ruled out before we can conclude that the sermon was based on the Latin text found in the early printed editions of Vincent Ferrer's sermons. This is the possibility of a Danish intermediary, namely the sermon cycle known as *Jærtegnspostil*, completed in 1515 by Christiørn Pedersen (d. 1554), canon of Lund.⁴⁰ Icelandic translations of parts of *Jærtegnspostil* are found in two sixteenth-century Icelandic manuscript fragments, AM 238 XXIX fol. and AM 696 XVII 4to (both 1520–40).⁴¹ Pedersen based one of his Christmas sermons on the same sermon by Ferrer on which most of the Icelandic text depends.⁴² However, a comparison of the two vernacular texts with the Latin makes it clear that the

39 See Kalinke (who mistakenly identifies the 1518 edition as a London production), *The Book of Reykjabólar*, 34–35, 263. These volumes are recorded in several seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century inventories; see Hörður Ágústsson, "Bækur," 294, 298, 299, 300, 304, 319–20. A 1525 book-list from Hólar records "ein stor sermons bok er heiter vincencius" (presumably containing at least part of Ferrer's *sermones de tempore*), as well as "sermones vincencii de sanctis æ einne litille bok" (DI IX, 298).

40 On Pedersen and his works see Anne Riising, *Danmarks middelalderlige prædiken* (Copenhagen: Gad, 1969), 60–3.

41 Stefán Karlsson, "Brudstykker af Christiørn Pedersens Jærtegnspostil i islandsk oversættelse," *Opuscula* 4 (1970): 211–56.

42 Riising, *Danmarks middelalderlige prædiken*, 483; see also 61–2.

Icelandic cannot depend on the Danish, which is significantly different in many places, including the passage discussed above:

Om midnatiss tide, da fornam jomfru Maria aff den Helliandz besynderlige naade at hun da føde skulle Ihesum verdenss frelsere. Thii bleff hun ganske glad oc løstig baade aff hw och hierte mer en hwn nogen tid vered hagde i alle sine dage, oc henniss ansict skynde som en sol. Da sagde Iosep, “O velsignede iomfru, huad betyder dette?” Hun suarede gladelige, “Nu skal ieg føde Gudz søn.” Thi stod han hastelige op oc vilde gonge i byen effter qwinder som skulde vered hoss hende paa den tiid. Hwn forbød hannum ath gonge noger stedz thii det gjorde hende inthet behoff at haffue qwindfolk hoss sig som qwinder plege at haffue. Oc sagde hwn igen til Iosep, “Ligerwiss som ieg vndfick hannwm met løst och glæde saa skal ieg oc føde hannwm met alder største glæde oc frygd for vden alt ve oc sorg.” Josep suarede, “Iegh vil gøre effter ederss vilge alderhelligste iomfru, thii i vide bedre hworlediss det skal være en iegh.”⁴³

Pedersen leaves out the specification that the sermon is now entering its third part, the brief description of the *porticus* in which Mary and Joseph are staying, and the summary of the usual symptoms of childbirth, which are all present in the Icelandic and Latin versions. His account of Mary's conversation with Joseph immediately before Christ's birth differs in several details. Finally, Pedersen does not include the *exemplum* about the merchant from Ferrer's Christmas Eve sermon. While the sermon in AM 696 VIII and IX 4to cannot, therefore, have been based on *Jærtegnspostil*, there nevertheless remain certain points of verbal agreement between these two texts – for example the simile by which it is said that Mary's face shone like the sun (“suo fagurt sem sol” / “som en sol”) – which cannot be explained by recourse to any known version of the Latin source. Even the Castilian version of Ferrer's Christmas sermon occasionally shares otherwise unique readings with the Icelandic text, as when it is specified that the enemies of the besieged city of the parable in the first part of the sermon made use of siege engines (AM 696 IX 4to 2r4 “uiguelum” /

43 Christiern Pedersen, *Danske Skrifter: Første Bind – Postillens Vinterpart*, ed. C.J. Brandt and K.Th. Fenger (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1850), 79–80.

“engaños”).⁴⁴ Such agreements are primarily interesting not because they prove that these three vernacular versions of Ferrer’s sermon have any textual relationship to each other, but because they show that preachers in Spain, Denmark, and Iceland were, in some cases at least, making use of a common store of imagery to elaborate on their sources.

The *exemplum* about the hospitality of the merchant in the Icelandic text is noteworthy for several reasons.⁴⁵ First, as I mentioned above, it is drawn from a Christmas Eve sermon by Vincent Ferrer instead of the Christmas sermon on which the Icelandic text is otherwise based.⁴⁶ Second, it not only augments but replaces a portion of that Christmas sermon, which the Icelandic author removes to make room for it. The relevant Latin version of Ferrer’s Christmas sermon here criticizes those who, rather than properly preparing to welcome Jesus into the houses of their bodies in the form of the Eucharist through fasting and confession, instead defile themselves with sins and rich foods.⁴⁷ This rebuke, along with any

44 Catedral, *Sermón*, 508/42.

45 I consider it to be sufficiently proved at this point that the Icelandic author was drawing on the Latin text of Vincent Ferrer’s sermons found in the early printed editions. Latin versions of the merchant *exemplum* also appear in the Perugia and Valencia manuscripts discussed above, but these have little bearing on the Icelandic text. The Perugia manuscript – again preserving only an outline of the relevant sermon – simply has the note “Exemplum hic de mercatore invitante annuatim die crastina aliquem pauperem antiquum, et aliquam juvenulam habentem parvulum” (*Œuvres de Saint Vincent Ferrier: Tome Second*, ed. Père Fages [Paris: Picard, 1909], 193; *Sermonario de Perugia*, 110). The version in the Valencia manuscript is fuller, but, critically, leaves out the appearance of the Holy Family to the merchant before his death: “Et ideo, iusta [= iuxta] hoc do vobis unum consilium quod observabat quidam mercator Valencie, et credo quod sit salvus, nam talia opera faciebat ut tali die sicut cras qui est Nativitas Dei Christi, quod invitatis duos pauperes, scilicet quendam hominem et quendam iuvenem que habeat filium parvulum ut etiam portetur in brachiis, et detis eis ad comedendum, nam virgo Maria significabatur per mulierem et Ioseph per senem, et Christus per filium parvulum...” (*Sermones*, 623; for the same passage in another Valencian manuscript, see *Œuvres de Saint Vincent Ferrier: Tome Second*, 202–3).

46 The Icelandic author was not alone in removing this *exemplum* from its original context. Around the year 1600, the same *exemplum* was excerpted from Ferrer’s sermon and inserted in a slightly modified form into the *Vita della beatissima Vergine madre di Dio* by the Italian Jesuit Lorenzo Maselli. It occurs on p. 140 of the 1606 Naples printing of the work.

47 Ferrer, *Sermones hyemales*, 162: “Virgo grauida de filio Dei est hostia consecrata quam ducit sacerdos ut Ioseph. Quis uestrum recepit eam communicando deuote? Credo quod nullus. De bono consilio debebatis sibi preparare domum conscientie per contritionem, confessionem & satisfactionem. Sed multi excusant se ut Iudei dicentes: Ego habeo recipere unum magnum militem scilicet dominum Caponem, dominum Hedum, dominum Porcum.

mention of the Eucharist, is totally absent from the Icelandic text. Finally, the setting of the *exemplum* has changed in the Icelandic text. Ferrer says that the merchant was a resident of his own home town of Valencia, a “mercator Valentinus,”⁴⁸ but the Icelandic sermon calls him a merchant in France, “kaupmann j uallande” (AM 696 VIII 4to 1r17). The phonological similarity between Latin *Valentinus* “Valencian” and Icelandic *Valland* “France” is probably partly responsible for this change. However, rather than simply a poor translation, I would suggest that the relocation of the story from Valencia to *Valland* may have been purposeful. The name of the city of Valencia, if it was known at all to the audience of the Icelandic sermon, would have held little meaning for them, and the less specific and better-known setting of France would likely have been easier to visualize.

5. Date and conclusions

Based on the evidence here presented about the sources of the sermon in AM 696 VIII and IX 4to and its language, we are now in a position to draw some conclusions about the date of its composition. Vincent Ferrer began his career as an itinerant preacher in 1399, and the first manuscript witness to the Christmas Eve and Christmas sermons that were to eventually become the sources of the Icelandic text dates from 1407.⁴⁹ However, the standardization of Ferrer’s sermons did not begin until 1416, and since the Icelandic sermon derives from this standardized version, 1416 must be considered the real *terminus post quem* of the Icelandic text.⁵⁰ It is likely, though, that the sermon was written a good deal later than this, probably in the later decades of the fifteenth century or the early decades of the sixteenth. The dates of the first recorded appearances of some of the sermon’s German/East Norse loanwords suggest that the sermon was probably not written much earlier than around 1460. The word *heimugliga*, for instance,

Alius dicit: Ego habeo recipere magnam dominam nobilem scilicet dominam Gallinam, alius dominam Perdicem &c. Sed nolunt recipere dominum Iesum Christum.” This passage remains mostly intact in Pedersen’s *Jærtegnspostil* (*Danske Skrifter*, 79) and in the Castilian version of the sermon (Cátedra, *Sermón*, 515/291–309).

48 Ferrer, *Sermones hyemales*, 157; “mercator Valencie” in the Valencia manuscript (see n. 45 above).

49 Daileader, *Saint Vincent Ferrer*, 34–5; Perarnau, “Manuscrits,” 197.

50 Catédra, *Sermón*, 89; Daileader, *Saint Vincent Ferrer*, 194.

is first recorded in a document dated 1464, and *strax* first occurs in 1463.⁵¹ Other late-fifteenth-century neologisms in the sermon, not borrowed from German or East Norse, include *útvega* “provide, procure” (AM 696 IX 4to 1v12; first appearance dated ca. 1500) and *neinstaðar* “nowhere, in no way” (AM 696 IX 4to 1r8; first attested 1477).⁵² A *terminus ante quem* for the sermon would be around 1540, at which point the diocese of Skálholt — where, as discussed above, AM 696 VIII and IX 4to were probably written — became Lutheran. Whether the sermon was originally composed in the Skálholt diocese is not possible to determine.

The sermon in AM 696 VIII and IX 4to is the only Icelandic preaching text hitherto brought to light that is demonstrably based on a Dominican source. The importance of this connection should not be overstated — of course, the works of Vincent Ferrer had an impact far beyond Dominican houses and foundations, especially after the invention of the printing press. Nevertheless, this source identification remains significant, in that it provides further evidence of the participation of Icelandic clergy in the wider intellectual and spiritual life of Europe in the late medieval and very early modern period. More such indications will surely be found when the remaining unedited Icelandic sermon fragments are given due attention.

6. Edition

Editorial conventions employed below are based on those described in “Leiðbeiningar um frágang greina” §14, in *Gripla* 10 (1998). Spellings of expanded abbreviations (printed in italics) follow scribal orthography as much as possible. OOOO enclosed in brackets represent characters that are visible but indecipherable, while a triple em-dash (—) represents text lost where the vellum has been cut away. Large lacunae due to loss of folia are represented by ellipses. Square brackets enclose reconstructed text; where such reconstructions are more speculative and rely on comparison with the Latin source, superscript question marks appear within the left bracket. Canceled words are marked by |...|. Supralineal additions are placed within insertion marks (‘...’). Manuscript punctuation and capitali-

⁵¹ Veturliði Óskarsson, *Middelnedertyske låneord*, 254, 324.

⁵² See *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog* s.vv. See also the textual note to AM 696 VIII 4to 1v19 below.

zation are retained. A few textual notes and an *apparatus fontium* with the relevant passages from Vincent Ferrer's sermons are printed directly below the text. In sections of the the *apparatus fontium* corresponding to badly damaged parts of the Icelandic sermon, Latin words for which equivalents can be identified in the surviving text are underlined.⁵³

Text

[AM 696 IX 4to 2r] ... fde j [O] t [O] ——— |² uar um setin [O] ——— |³ þeir striddu ——— |⁴ og uíguelum ——— |⁵inne og aung—— |⁶ sat at borg—— |⁷ borgínne, kong —— |⁸ sína menn l—— |⁹ er upp burt—— |¹⁰ at kongurinn si[[?]alfur] —— |¹¹ og frelsa þ[[?]au] —— |¹² urdu borgar[menn] —— |¹³ ast til kongsi[ns] —— |¹⁴mur fyrir þersa st—— |¹⁵ hreinum o—— [adam] |¹⁶ og eua bitu —— |¹⁷ uor líufe la[[?]usnare] —— |¹⁸ n[O]t Allzm—— |¹⁹ hugga sínn —— |²⁰ at skília —— [hei]|²¹lax anda —— |²² og frelsa [AM 696 IX 4to 2v] —— f [OOO] sinum |² —— og frelsa oss. |³ —— e Eg bid þig |⁴ —— þat kom dauid og |⁵ —— t og kom þu og |⁶ —— til heilags |⁷ [anda] —— leika [O]t hann |⁸ —— seigia til |⁹ —— Ríkis at tak |¹⁰ —— a sendizt |¹¹ —— [h]ímínn til [OO] |¹² —— [esa]yas suo seiger |¹³ —— [him]narner og þu |¹⁴ —— [so]gdu kom þu |¹⁵ —— [kon]gur gud heyrd |¹⁶ —— heímugliga |¹⁷ —— til jardRíkis j kuad |¹⁸ —— langaf[o]stu |¹⁹ —— durs og j [se]nd|²⁰ —— [heila]x anda um |²¹ —— mey María |²² —— a girntizt hun ... [AM 696 VIII 4to 1r] [OOOOOO] þ h[OOO] at þi[er] sevt j þeirre samre fyrirdæmíngu |² med þeim gyðingunum, Takít þier nu j ydur herberge vorn |³ herra og hans sígnudu modur Mariam og josep. Mætte nockur |⁴ ad þui spyría huernen hann mætte þau nu taka j sín |⁵ herberge, þar suarazt suo til. þier megít þat giora med tuef|⁶alldre grein, fyrir ena fyrstu grein take þier uorn herra og |⁷ hans ble-

53 Part of this research was presented at the Eleventh Annual Fiske Conference on Medieval Icelandic Studies (Cornell University, June 2016), the organizers and attendees of which I thank for their questions and comments. Special thanks are owed to Megan Gilge for her advice on the problematic word *nau* in the sermon below, to Katherine Lindeman for her corrections and improvements to the parts of the article dealing with Vincent Ferrer, and to the *Gripla* reviewers for their insightful comments. I am also grateful to the Árni Magnússon Institute for providing digital images of AM 696 VIII and IX 4to, and particularly to Haukur Þorgeirsson, who provided valuable assistance when I consulted the manuscripts in person in September 2015.

zudu modur j ydur herberge og þar med josep ef þier |⁸ idrest allra yduarra
 synda, Epter þat jate þier þær skíæliga |⁹ fyrir kennemannenum, og þar med
 giorre þier gude næu fyrir oll þau |¹⁰ uond uerk er þier hafit framít hingat til.
 enn fordazt |¹¹ frammueígis at fremía daudligar synder. Fyrir adra |¹² grein
 take þier gudson og hans helguztu moder og josep j ydur |¹³ herberge er þier
 takit fataæka menn j Gvdz nafne og |¹⁴ tracterít þa uel, og þætte mier líklíkt at
 þat myndí huerr |¹⁵ og eirn giora at minzta kostí nu j dag. at hysa fat|¹⁶æka og
 fæda þa uel, þui uíl eg segía ydur upp a eítt |¹⁷ dæme. Þar uar eirn kaupmann
 j uallande at hann tok j uan|¹⁸da sinn at huert og eítt affangakued fyrir jol
 tok hann |¹⁹ j sín herberge eirn gamlann mann og eína unga konu |²⁰ med
 barne og giorde þeim ollum godan beina, giorde hann þetta |²¹ j þa mínning
 at þau josep og jungfru maría med þeirra [AM 696 VIII 4to 1v] [O]ott[O]
 þa er hann leide til bana af þ[er]su life. [O] h [OO] og [OOO]|²[O]e um s[i]na
 heimuon. þa kom at honum hín en helgazta Maria |³ halldande a sínum sig-
 nada syne og josep og sogdu til ens |⁴ síuka, fyrir þann skyld at þu hefur tekit
 oss huert ar og eítt af|⁵fangadags kuellid j fat[æ]kum monnum j þín herberge.
 þar fyrir sk|⁶ulum uær nu taka þik j himnaRike og ueíta þier jlífa sælu |⁷ fyrir
 utan enda. Fyrir ena þridíu grein uar þerse fæding helgud |⁸ med mætte
 hins hæsta guds. þui þa enn blezada mey |⁹ María uar j þersu almennelígu
 huse og j þeirre faneytre sæng er |¹⁰ josep hafde upp buít af halme eda heye
 sem eg sag|¹¹da, þa kende hun a sier at þa uar míog nær fædingunne. |¹² Enn
 ecki kende hun sier sem adrar kuinnur. þui j mote fædingun|¹³ne hafa þær
 sott og sorg og allz kyns eynder. og suo fau|¹⁴lna þær upp sem naren. Enn
 þerse en agíætazta mey |¹⁵ Maria hafde oll aunnur þmein| teíkn þa er leid
 at fæd|¹⁶ingunne. fyrst hafde hun suo sæta glede j sínu hiarta |¹⁷ og h[imn]
 esk[a] huggan at þat kann eíngen mannlig tunga at greína. |¹⁸ Hier med
 sk[e]in he[nn]ar andlít suo fagurt sem sol, enn er josep |¹⁹ sa þat þa talar
 h[ann] til. blezad[a m]ey, huada ogurlig birte ste|²⁰ndur af yduare asionu.
 hun suar[ar], fader [OO] er suo nær komít |²¹ fædingunne. josep reís þa
 upp strax og uíllde utue[ga] [AM 696 IX 4to 1r] [OOOO] sagde s[uo] t[í]l
 h[OOOOOO] ——— |² h[OOO]. s[uo] sk[al] og eingínn mier hia f[OOO] ———
 [jo]|³sep seger þa blezad mey ecki eru þ[ier] ——— |⁴ giord. hun suarar. bere
 þier aungua ——— |⁵ gud sialfur mun til síá med mier. Lítlu |⁶ epter at hun
 hafde |⁶ þetta mællt þa kom fæding uor[s] blez[ada] ——— |⁷ a þa |⁷ mynd
 sem þa solargeíslín skin j geg[n] ——— |⁸ suo at þat spíllízt huerge neinsta-
 dar ——— |⁹ Gudzsonur ut um gullígt port sínar sætuztu ——— [s]|¹⁰pilltum

hennar jongfrudom. og er hann uar fæd[ur] ——— [²med þeim] |¹¹ hætti sem
sagt uar. þa tok hun hann a ——— |¹²um hondum og beygde bæde sín kn`i`e
——— |¹³ Heyr þu hinn gaufugligazte G[²udzsonur, uel ertu] |¹⁴ kominn af
hímne til jardar fyrir heils[u] ——— |¹⁵síns. þu ert bæde sannur gud og sannur
[madur] ——— [²skapare] |¹⁶ mín j guddomenum, enn minn sæt[²azte sonur
j manndomenum] |¹⁷ hun kyste þa a fæturna a honum j þ[a minning at hann
uar] |¹⁸ sannur gud. þa kyste hun a hondurnar [a honum j þa minn]|¹⁹ing at
hann uar skapare allra hluta. hun [kyste] ——— |²⁰inn a honum j þa mín-
ning. at hann uar h——— |²¹ þa til hans uel .c. sínnum. þat seígía su[mer]
——— |²² talade suo til hans. þu ert drottinn Gud [²minn] ——— [AM 696
IX 4to 1v] ——— [O]g[OOO] gr[a]ta [OOO] |² ——— mi[er] at bídía til [OOO]
|³ ——— sem hofudfedurner |⁴ ——— [OO] [lo]ngan tima, josep fiell |⁵ ———
heídur og lof og dyrd se þier drottin ——— [²uei]|⁶tande syndugum manne at
sía þina |⁷ ——— [O] sem hafa girntuzt at sía kongar og spa|⁸[menn] ———te.
Þa tok þetta íd blezada ung|⁹[²barn] ——— [sa]ker kulda. josep kueikte
upp |¹⁰ ——— hann keypte. en hin blezada Maria gior|¹¹[de] ——— og uafde
þar jnnan j sinn sígnada |¹² ——— þa utuega einhuería þa konu er |¹³ ———
briostunum at gefa þersu blezudu |¹⁴ ——— en hin blezada María bannade
honum þat |¹⁵ ——— huernen skulu þier þa fara med ydarn en |¹⁶ ———
[b]lezada jungfru, þar hinu mestu |¹⁷ ———t su jumfru sem alldri hefur
mann þydz |¹⁸ ——— j sínum briostum, hin sígnada Maria |¹⁹ ——— mun sía
fyrir fædzlu sonar síns. Sidan |²⁰ ——— [b]æde blezad kne. og bad til Gudz
fodurs |²¹ ——— [þier] og eg eigum ockur eírn son bæde. þui bidur |²² ———
þier síait ollum skepnum fædu, suo ...

Notes

AM 696 IX 4to 2r18 Allzm...] Perhaps for a form of *allsmektugur*? See Westergård-Nielsen, *Låneordene*, 9.

AM 696 VIII 4to 1r9 næu] I am unsure of the meaning of this word. Perhaps for *nægju*, acc.sg. of *nægja* (cf. Blöndal, *Islandsk-Dansk Ordbog*, s.v.), with the sense “satisfaction”?

AM 696 VIII 4to 1r17 kaupmann] MS -mⁿ; perhaps to be expanded as -*madur*, but see Westergård-Nielsen, *Låneordene*, 216; Björn K. Þórólfsson, *Um íslenskar orðmyndir*, 27.

AM 696 VIII 4to 1r18 affangakued] *sic*, for *atfangakveld*.

AM 696 VIII 4to 1v6 jlifa] See *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog* and Hødnebo, *Ordbog* s.v. *ílif*.

AM 696 VIII 4to 1v19 huada] Probably an error for a form of *hvaðan*; less plausibly, the new, indeclinable interrogative *hvaða*, the appearance of which is dated to the sixteenth century by Björn K. Þórólfsson, *Um íslenskar orðmyndir*, 47, 102.

AM 696 IX 4to 1v9 [sa]ker kulda] About half of the letter preceding the first *k* is visible, and it seems unusually shaped for an *a*, but (*fyrir*) *saker kulda* would seem to be demanded by the Latin *propter frigus*.

Sources

AM 696 IX 4to 2r 1–13] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 158): Noueritis quod fuit quedam magna & nobilis ciuitas optime populata, que fuit ab inimicis crudeliter obcessa impugnantibus eam omni genere armorum, intantum quod eis deficiebant cibaria, tantum durauit obsidio, nec inimici uolebant eos recipere ad uitam, nec misericordiam facere aliquam, imo occidebant eos statim. Sciens autem hoc rex & dominus ciuitatis secrete misit nuntios & litteras ciuitati, eis intimando quod ipse ueniret ad eos personaliter & liberaret eos cum esset potens. De quo ciues fuerunt multum gauisi, & ardentem quotidie expectabant eius aduentum.

AM 696 IX 4to 2r 14–22] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 158–159): Recte ita fuit de isto mundo. Ciuitas ista magna & nobilis fuit & est natura humana. O & quis posset numerare quot ciuitates & habitatores in ea ab Adam usque ad natiuitatem Christi, cum transierunt secundum aliquos doctores ultra quinque millia annorum?... Deus autem dominus huius mundi, uolens consolari ciues, secrete misit nuntios, scilicet sanctos patriarchas & prophetas, cum literis suis nuntiando eis quod ipse met personaliter ueniret ad liberandum eos....

AM 696 IX 4to 2v 1–11] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 159): ... [C]iues & habitatores ciuitatis mittebant sibi supplicationes, scilicet deuotas orationes, ut ueniret & liberaret ciuitatem. Primo

uenit Moyses dicens Deo patri: *Obsecro domine mitte quem missurus es* (Ex 4:13) prout promisisti. Secundo *Dauid* ex parte ciuitatis totius dicens filio: *Domine excita potentiam tuam & ueni ut saluos facias nos* (Ps 79:3). Tertio Salomon dicens *spiritui sancto*: *Mitte illam de celis sanctis tuis & a sede magnitudinis tue, ut mecum sit & mecum laboret* (Sap 9:10), scilicet contra inimicos. Nota *mitte illam*, scilicet personam Christi in carne humana, que *mittitur* a patre & spiritu sancto quantum ad humanitatem.

AM 696 IX 4to 2v 12–22] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 159): Quarto *Esaias* dicens: *Vtinam disrumperes celum & descenderes* (Is 64:1). Alii dicebant: *Veni domine & noli tardare, relaxa facinora plebis tue Israel*. Rex autem, auditis his supplicationibus, misit secrete unum nuntium ciuitati qui diceret ex parte sua: *Apparebit in finem, non mentietur. Si moram fecerit expecta illum, quia ueniens ueniet & non tardabit* (Hab 2:3).... Viam ueniendi incepit ipse in die sue conceptionis. Ideo feruentissime *desiderabatur* a beata *uirgine* matre sua & sancto Ioseph qui quotidie computabant dietas cupientes uidere diem ingressus sui in hunc mundum....

AM 696 VIII 4to 1r 1–2] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 162): Vtinam uos non sitis in eadem condemnatione uel crudelitate cum Iudeis....

AM 696 VIII 4to 1r 5–11] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 162; *significantly expanded in the Icelandic*): De bono consilio debetis sibi preparare domum conscientie per contritionem, confessionem, & satisfactionem....

AM 696 VIII 4to 1r 16–1v7] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Vigilia Natiuitatis* (*Sermones hyemales*, 157): Ideo si uultis habere societatem istam uobiscum, faciatis sicut faciebat unus mercator Valentinus, qui quolibet anno in die natiuitatis inuitabat unum pauperem senem & aliquam mulierem habentem filium paruulum, qui representabant sibi uirginem cum filio & Ioseph. De quo fuit reuelatum, quod in morte apparuerunt sibi uirgo cum filio et Ioseph, dicentes: “Quia recipisti nos in domo tua, ideo nos recipimus te in domo nostra.”

AM 696 VIII 4to 1v 7–18] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 162): Tertia conclusio dicit quod ista benedicta natiuitas fuit per Deum celebrata potenter. Virgine Maria existente in illa porticu, ut dixit

[*for dixi*], in medio paramentorum, circa mediam noctem uenit hora partus, quam sensit uirgo Maria non sicut ceterae mulieres, quia priusquam sentiunt partum, habent dolores, miseriae, & tristitiae in corpore, & facies mortificatur. Sed uirgo Maria habuit alia signa, scilicet illuminationes singulares, consolationes & dulcedines cordis & delectationes maximas magis quam ceterae, & facies eius resplenduit. (*See also Sermo in Nativitate, 161, where it is specified that the porticus is in uia publica, and that Joseph de modica palea fecit lectum regine celi.*)

AM 696 VIII 4to 1v 18–AM 696 IX 4to 1r 5] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 162): Quod uidens Ioseph dixit: “Benedicta, quid est hoc?” Respondit: “Pater, modo uenit hora partus mei.” Ioseph surrexit subito ut uocaret obstetrices. Sed uirgo prohibuit eum dicens: “Pater, sicut in conceptione nulla creatura fecit aliquid, sic nec etiam in natiuitate.” Cogitate quomodo dixit Ioseph: “Benedicta, uos non estis super hoc experta neque ego &c.” Et uirgo: “Pater, non curetis, quia pater celestis prouidebit,” id est Deus...

AM 696 IX 4to 1r 5–10] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 162): [S]ubito sicut radius solis transit per fenestram uitream sine fractione, sic Christus sol iustitiae transiuit per portam uteri uirginalis sine aliqua fractione & corruptione, tanquam sponsus de thalamo suo.

AM 696 IX 4to 1r 10–22] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 162–163): Quem uirgo recepit manibus propriis genibus flexis, cum maxima reuerentia & ueneratione adorando ipsum & dicendo: “O Domine, uos bene ueneritis de celo in terram pro saluatione hominum. O Domine desiderate a sanctis patriarchis & prophetis, adoro uos, quia inquantum Deus estis creator meus, inquantum homo estis filius meus.” & osculabatur eum modo in pedibus tanquam Deum, modo in ore tanquam filium, modo in manibus tanquam creatorem omnium rerum, modo in fronte tanquam filium suum dicens: “O Domine, tantam gratiam mihi fecistis,” adorauitque eum centum uicibus. Et ut quidam dicunt ait: “Tu es dominus Deus meus, tu es redemptor meus, tu es filius meus dilectus.”...

AM 696 IX 4to 1v 1–8] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 163): Ioseph autem flens pre gaudio dicebat: “Benedicta, per-mitte mihi adorare filium tuum & filium Dei tandiu desideratum &c.” Dic

quomodo adorabat eum dicens: “O Domine, tantam gratiam mihi fecistis, quod reges & prophete uoluerunt uos uidere & non uiderunt, & mihi peccatori fecistis tantam gratiam ut uos uideam”.

AM 696 IX 4to 1v 8–11] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 163): Tunc infans propter frigus incepit flere. Statim Ioseph calefecit panniculos, & uirgo inuoluit.

AM 696 IX 4to 1v 12–22] Vincent Ferrer, *Sermo in Nativitate* (*Sermones hyemales*, 163): Deinde Ioseph uoluit uocare aliquam mulierem que lactaret &c., sed uirgo prohibuit. Ad quam Ioseph: “Benedicta, quid facietis, quia non habetis uos lac? Dicunt medici quod ab eadem radice procedunt lac & proles. Ideo mulier que non cognouit uirum non habet lac.” Respondit uirgo: “Pater, Deus prouidebit.” Tunc uirgo flexis genibus orauit Deum patrem dicens: “Deus pater, uos & ego habemus unum filium communem. Ideo uos qui prouidetis omnibus creaturis prouideatis sibi de lacte.” Tunc subito ubera uirginis fuerunt plena lacte de celo sibi misso....

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SUMMARY

Fragments of an Icelandic Christmas Sermon
Based on Two Sermons of Vincent Ferrer

Keywords: Homilies, sermons, Vincent Ferrer, Dominicans, Christmas, *exempla*, edition

This article is an edition and study of an Icelandic sermon that survives in the manuscript fragments AM 696 VIII and IX 4to, both from the first half of the sixteenth century and possibly copied in or around Snóksdalur. The Icelandic text is based on two Latin sermons by the Valencian Dominican friar Vincent Ferrer (1350–1419). Judging by the Icelandic sermon’s source and vocabulary, it is likely that it was composed in the late fifteenth century or early sixteenth century. The sermon is significant because it is the only known Icelandic preaching text based on the works of a Dominican author, and also because it provides valuable evidence of the use of *exempla* in medieval Icelandic preaching.

ÁGRIP

Brot úr íslenskri jólapredikun
byggðri á tveimur predikunum eftir Vincent Ferrer

Lykilorð: Hómiliur, predikanir, Vincent Ferrer, svartmunkar, jól, miðaldaævintýri, útgáfa

Hér er birt útgáfa og rannsókn á íslenskri predikun sem varðveist hefur í handritabrotunum AM 696 VIII og IX 4to sem bæði eru frá fyrri helmingi 16. aldar og mögulega skrifuð í eða nálægt Snóksdal. Íslenski textinn er byggður á tveimur latneskum predikunum eftir svartmunkinn Vincent Ferrer (1350–1419) frá Valensíu. Af uppruna og orðaforða íslensku predikunarinnar má ráða að hún sé líklega sett saman seint á 15. öld eða snemma á þeirri 16. Predikunin er mikilvæg vegna þess að hún er eini þekkti íslenski predikunartextinn sem byggður er á verkum svartmunks, og einnig vegna þess að hún færir okkur mikilvæga heimild um notkun *exempla*, eða ævintýra, í íslenskum predikunum á miðöldum.

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