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## TWELFTH-CENTURY SOURCES FOR OLD NORSE HOMILIES

New Evidence from AM 655 XXVII 4to

### 1. Introduction

WHILE MUCH WORK remains to be done on the sources of the major, early Old Norse homily manuscripts, the general characteristics and theological background of these collections have been fairly well explored. In 1993, David McDougall summed up the results of scholarly inquiry into the sources of the Icelandic Homily Book (Stockholm, Kungliga Biblioteket, Perg. 15 4to; ca. 1200),<sup>1</sup> the Norwegian Homily Book (AM 619 4to; ca. 1200–1225),<sup>2</sup> and other important early manuscripts. The following is a selection of his major points:

Whole and partial sources for many of the texts in AM 619 4to and Stock. Perg. 4to no. 15 have been identified among the works of Augustine, Maximus of Turin, Fulgentius of Ruspe, Caesarius of Arles, Gregory the Great, Bede, Ambrosius Autpertus, Paschasius Radbert, Haymo of Auxerre, and Honorius Augustodunensis... Much of the source material exploited by the Scandinavian homilists was available in standard homiliaries, such as those compiled by Alan of Farfa (before 770) and Paul the Deacon (ca. 790), but the homilists doubtless made use of other sorts of collections as well. Stock. Perg. 4to no. 15, for instance, contains a close translation of a penitential sermon that circulated in the “Pembroke-type” homiliary,

- 1 *The Icelandic Homily Book: Perg. 15 4<sup>o</sup> in the Royal Library, Stockholm*, ed. Andrea de Leeuw van Weenen, *Icelandic Manuscripts, Series in Quarto*, vol. 3 (Reykjavik: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi, 1993). See pp. 7–15 of her introduction for a summary of the manuscript’s contents and sources.
- 2 *Gamla Norsk homiliebok: Cod. AM 619 4<sup>o</sup>*, ed. Gustav Indrebø (Oslo: Jacob Dybwad, 1931).

a Carolingian preacher's anthology most fully represented by the 11th-century Anglo-Saxon MS Cambridge, Pembroke College 25...<sup>3</sup> Vernacular sermons and sermon fragments are also preserved in many other early Icelandic MSS. AM 677 4to (ca. 1200) contains ten homilies from what was probably a complete translation of Gregory the Great's forty *Homiliae in evangelia*. The miscellany of learned and theological writings in the AM 544 4to section of *Hauksbók* includes a sermon based on the Old English homily *De falsis diis* by Ælfric of Eynsham [and] a tract on the evils of sorcery partially related to the same author's *De auguriis*.<sup>4</sup>

Since the publication of McDougall's article, most source study on the Old Norse homilies has continued along the lines that he summarized. Important advances have been made in exploring English — especially Anglo-Saxon — influences on the Norse homiletic corpus.<sup>5</sup> Though some-

- 3 On this sermon see also Joan Turville-Petre, "Translations of a Lost Penitential Homily," *Traditio* 19 (1963): 51–78; and Helen Spencer, "Vernacular and Latin Versions of a Sermon for Lent: 'A Lost Penitential Homily' Found," *Mediaeval Studies* 44 (1982): 271–305.
- 4 David McDougall, "Homilies (West Norse)," in *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Phillip Pulsiano et al., Garland Encyclopedias of the Middle Ages, vol. 1 (New York: Garland, 1993), 290–91. A bibliography of source studies can be found on pp. 291–92 of the same article. For an earlier, but still useful, study, see Joan Turville-Petre, "Sources of the Vernacular Homily in England, Norway, and Iceland," *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 75 (1960): 168–82.
- 5 The most important works in this regard are two articles by Christopher Abram: "Anglo-Saxon Influence in the Old Norwegian Homily Book," *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 14 (2004): 1–35; "Anglo-Saxon Homilies in Their Scandinavian Context," in *The Old English Homily: Precedent, Practice, and Appropriation*, ed. Aaron J. Kleist, Studies in the Early Middle Ages, vol. 17 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 425–44. More recent contributions that focus on a later period of influence include two articles by Aidan Conti: "The Old Norse Afterlife of Ralph d'Escures's *Homilia de assumptione Mariae*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 107 (2008): 215–38; "Gammelt og nytt i homiliebokens prekenunivers," in *Vår eldste bok: Skrift, miljø og biletebruk i den norske homilieboka*, ed. Odd Einar Haugen and Åslaug Ommundsen, Bibliotheca Nordica, vol. 3 (Oslo: Novus, 2010), 165–86. The second article is significant in that it is the first to compare the Norwegian Homily Book to English vernacular collections of its own time, rather than to significantly earlier Latin or Old English works. Conti's critical summary of scholarly attitudes toward the Norwegian Homily Book (pp. 166–67) can be justly applied to the study of the Old Norse homiletic corpus as a whole: "I det store og hele har forskerne studert Gammelnorsk homiliebok i et tilbakeskuende perspektiv. Særlig i Skandinavia har mye arbeid med kildene og følgelig med bokens intellektuelle og teologiske bakgrunn kretset rundt dens forhold til karolingiske og angelsaksiske modeller. De som studerer prekenvirksomhet og prekener i Skandinavia i høy- eller senmiddelalder-

what less work has been done on identifying new patristic sources, we can now add at least one more name, John Chrysostom, to the impressive list of early Christian authors whose works were known to the Old Norse homilists.<sup>6</sup>

The nature of the sources and analogues discovered to date and the fact that several of the pieces in the earliest Icelandic and Norwegian collections continued to be copied into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have led Thomas N. Hall to characterize the Old West Norse homiletic corpus as “conservative,” “backward-looking,” and “antiquarian.”<sup>7</sup> The latest Latin author generally mentioned among major influences on the genre is the early twelfth-century homilist and encyclopedist Honorius Augustodunensis, but most of the identified Latin sources are a good deal earlier than him.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, Hans Bekker-Nielsen was of the opinion that, in terms of adapting earlier authorities, “Icelandic and Norwegian churchmen seem to have stopped with confidence at the time of Charlemagne.”<sup>9</sup> While the generalizations of Hall and, to a lesser extent, Bekker-Nielsen are arguably valid for the earliest homily collections, scholars would do

ren, hopper derimot gjerne over Gammelnorsk homilieboek og Islandsk homilieboek fordi de ikke ser dem som relevante for senere prekenforfatteres arbeid (særlig tiggermunkene i Nord-Europa).” A notable exception is the work of Oddmund Hjelde (*Norsk preken i det 12. århundre: studier i Gammel Norsk homilieboek* [Oslo: (s.n.), 1990], especially 94–98, 404–405), who attempts to take the works of several twelfth-century Latin authors into account in his study of the Norwegian Homily Book. See also the work of David McDougall (“Studies in the Prose Style of the Old Icelandic and Old Norwegian Homily Books” [Ph.D. diss., University College London, 1983], 686–707), who shows that the sermon “Postola mál” from the Icelandic Homily Book was partially adapted from a homily by Bruno of Segni (d. c. 1123).

- 6 Stephen Pelle, “A New Source for Part of an Old Icelandic Christmas Homily,” *Saga-Book* 36 (2012): 102–116.
- 7 Thomas N. Hall, “Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons,” in *The Sermon*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle, *Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental*, vols. 81–83 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 669.
- 8 In addition to Hall, “Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons,” 669, see Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, “Prose of Christian Instruction,” in *A Companion to Old Norse-Icelandic Literature and Culture*, ed. Rory McTurk, *Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture*, vol. 31 (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 340. An exception, again, is Hjelde, *Norsk preken*, 404–405.
- 9 Hans Bekker-Nielsen, “The French Influence on Ecclesiastical Literature in Old Norse,” in *Les relations littéraires franco-scandinaves au Moyen Âge: Actes du Colloque de Liège, avril 1972*, Bibliothèque de la Faculté de philosophie et lettres de l’Université de Liège, vol. 208 (Paris: Société d’Édition “Les Belles Lettres,” 1975), 144. Bekker-Nielsen makes an important exception for the Victorines, who will be discussed below.

well to question the assumption that antiquarianism was the guiding principle behind the composition of all Old Norse homilies, regardless of the dates of the manuscripts in which they survive. We know, for example, that those who worked in other genres of Old Norse religious literature in the high and late Middle Ages drew heavily on contemporary European sources, and it would be surprising if Icelandic and Norwegian homilists refrained from using newer works while Biblical commentators<sup>10</sup> and writers of penitential literature<sup>11</sup> embraced them.

The commonly-held opinion that the Old Norse homiletic corpus was chronologically homogeneous, fundamentally unchanged from the twelfth century to the mid-sixteenth, is partly based on the aforementioned presence of copies of very early texts in very late manuscripts. For instance, the so-called Stave Church Homily, the most thoroughly-studied of the Old Norse homilies, survives in four manuscripts, including the earliest extant Old Norse homily manuscript (AM 237 a fol.; ca. 1150) and one of the latest (AM 624 4to; ca. 1500).<sup>12</sup> The sustained interest in such texts

- 10 *Stjórn* explicitly cites the *Speculum historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais and the *Historia scholastica* of Peter Comestor, as C.R. Unger recognized and discussed in the introduction to his edition (*Stjorn: Gammelnorsk bibelhistorie fra verdens skabelse til det babyloniske fangenskap* [Oslo: Feilberg og Landmark, 1862], iii–xv). For a summary and discussion of the sources of *Stjórn*, see Ian J. Kirby, *Bible Translation in Old Norse*, Université de Lausanne, Publications de la faculté des lettres, vol. 27 (Geneva: Droz, 1986), 53–54, 61–64. For a more extensive treatment of the work’s sources, see Reidar Astås, *An Old Norse Biblical Compilation: Studies in Stjórn*, American University Studies, Series 7, Theology and Religion, vol. 109 (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), 18–27, 69–97. This monograph is based on the same author’s *Et bibelverk fra middelalderen: Studier i Stjórn*, 2 vols. (Oslo: Novus, 1987).
- 11 See Ian McDougall, “Latin Sources of the Old Icelandic *Speculum Penitentis*,” *Opuscula* 10 (1996): 136–85. See also Reidar Astås, “From Old Nordic to Early Modern Nordic: The Language of the Translations I: Icelandic and Norwegian Translations,” in *The Nordic Languages*, ed. Oskar Bandle et al., vol. 2, Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft, vol. 22 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2005), 1195–1201.
- 12 *Messuskýringar: Liturgísk symbolik frá den norsk-íslandske kyrkja i millomalderen*, ed. Oluf Kolsrud (Oslo: Dybwad, 1952), 85–107. See Hall, “Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons,” 676–77, 691, and 702–703. An important study of the homily is that of Gabriel Turville-Petre, “The Old Norse Homily on the Dedication,” in *Nine Norse Studies*, Viking Society for Northern Research, Text Series, vol. 5 (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 1972), 79–101. Sydney Louise Sims has called the AM 624 text of the Stave Church Homily “the clearest possible demonstration of the continuity of Old Norse homiletic prose, despite changing stylistic fashions in other genres” (“Relative Chronology and Homiletic Style in the Old Icelandic Homily Book” [Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1986], 84–85). For a brief discussion of other early homilies that survive in late manuscripts, see Hall, “Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons,” 674–77.

over the course of several centuries is certainly significant. However, while late copies of earlier works and late texts that depend on early sources have been well studied, few of the other homilies in the younger manuscripts have been given any attention. As a result, we presently lack the evidence to evaluate the scholarly assumption that the better known, more conservative texts are truly representative of the later Old Norse homilies as a whole. The partial or full contents of about a dozen of the 33 manuscripts identified as containing Old Norse homilies remain unpublished.<sup>13</sup> Many of these unedited homilies are fragmentary, and the manuscript pages on which they survive are often damaged or faded. Their mangled condition and their relatively late dates — nearly all are from 1300 or later, and many are from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries — do not make these texts very attractive targets for many editors. However, the late homilies must be studied if we are to determine whether the Old Norse homiletic corpus remained as static in terms of sources and style throughout the Middle Ages as has often been assumed. As an introduction and invitation to further study of these overlooked texts, I here examine the major sources of two pieces from a homiletic manuscript written ca. 1300.

## 2. An Overview of AM 655 XXVII 4to

Kristian Kålund's catalogue describes AM 655 XXVII 4to as a collection of fragmentary Icelandic homilies from ca. 1300.<sup>14</sup> The contents of the

- 13 The list in Hall, "Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons," 689–704 is the best and most complete summary of these. To this list one must add the Norwegian homiletic fragment surviving in Oslo, Riksarkivet, Nor. fragm. 101 (ca. 1200), which Hall overlooked, cf. Odd Einar Haugen and Åslaug Ommundsen, "Nye blikk på homilieboka," in *Vår eldste bok*, 17. At the same time, one could perhaps remove Hall's item 24 (Linköping, Stifts- och landsbibliotek, Link. T. 180; ca. 1450), which contains Dominican sermons in Brigittine Middle Norwegian and thus has more in common with late medieval Swedish and Danish preaching traditions than with the rest of the published Old West Norse homiletic corpus. However, the many unedited, late Old West Norse homilies must undergo further study before we can be certain that the medieval West Norse and East Norse homiletic corpora were really as unrelated to each other as scholars have assumed. For the Linköping collection, see *Svenska medeltidspostillor, delarna 6 och 7*, ed. Bertil Ejder, Samlingar utgivna av Svenska Fornskriftsällskapet, vol. 23, parts 6–7 (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1974).
- 14 Kristian Kålund, *Katalog over den Arnemagnæanske håndskriftsamling*, vol. 2 (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1894), 65 (item 1646); see also Hall, "Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons," 698 (item 10).

manuscript have not been published, but Hallgrímur Ámundason edited the texts and made a detailed description of the manuscript, its language, and its orthography in his 1994 B.A. thesis.<sup>15</sup> As I can add little to his thorough discussion of the manuscript, I summarize his findings below for the benefit of those without access to his work.

Árni Magnússon noted on a slip now attached to the manuscript that he obtained AM 655 XXVII 4to “fra Magnuse Jons syne i Snoksdal.”<sup>16</sup> The manuscript consists of 12 relatively intact leaves (Hallgrímur’s fols. 2–13) and 2 fragmentary ones (his fols. 1 and 1a), which were originally arranged in four quires. The leaves, all of which are in a rather poor state of preservation, were bound in the wrong sequence, but the original order of the texts is restored in Hallgrímur’s edition. The manuscript contains 11 texts, nearly all of which are fragmentary. The present essay is concerned mainly with items 1 and 11, which are, respectively, an enumeration of Christian virtues and a homily for the Annunciation. The remaining texts in the manuscript indicate a strong Marian focus. Items 3 (for the Assumption), 4 (an eschatological sermon), 7, 8, and 9 (apparently all for Christmas) are closely related to parts of *Mariu saga*.<sup>17</sup> Other pieces include part of an Old Norse translation of the Gospel of Nicodemus (item 5),<sup>18</sup> the end

15 Hallgrímur Ámundason, “AM 655 XXVII 4to: Útgáfa, stafagerð, stafsetning” (B.A. thesis, University of Iceland, 1994). I thank Hallgrímur for providing me with an electronic copy. In this copy, the different sections of the thesis are individually paginated. Therefore, when citing from the thesis in the following pages, I will clarify whether I am citing from his introduction (“Inngangur”) or the edition proper (“Útgáfa”).

16 On the life of Magnús Jónsson see Páll Eggert Ólason, *Íslenzkar æviskrár frá landnámstímum til ársloka 1940*, vol. 3 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1950), 434–435.

17 According to Hallgrímur, (“AM 655 XXVII 4to,” “Inngangur,” 4), the correspondences to C.R. Unger’s edition of *Mariu saga* (*Mariu saga: Legender om jomfru Maria og hendes jartegn* [Oslo: Brøgger and Christie, 1871]) are as follows: item 3 ≈ Unger, 57, l. 9 – 58, l. 2 and 396, ll. 2–25; item 4 ≈ Unger, 52–56 and 391–95; item 7 ≈ Unger, 26, l. 8 – 28, l. 19 and 366, l. 6 – 367, l. 24; item 8 ≈ Unger, 28, l. 21 – 29, l. 9 and 367, l. 26 – 368, l. 12; item 9 ≈ Unger, 29, ll. 11–17 and 368, ll. 13–19. If these texts represent a purposeful adaptation of parts of *Mariu saga* as “sermones” (the scribe’s own term), they are, as far as I know, unique, and raise new questions about that work’s circulation and use. Some relationship with the homiletic corpus was already suggested by the discovery that at least one homily was incorporated into *Mariu saga* (Hall, “Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons,” 675). See also *Icelandic Homily Book*, 7–8; Hall, “Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons,” 678.

18 This text is not discussed in Kirsten Wolf’s important article, “The Influence of the *Evangelium Nicodemi* on Norse Literature: A Survey,” *Mediaeval Studies* 55 (1993): 219–42. Significantly, the AM 655 XXVII 4to version of the Gospel of Nicodemus seems to be the only Old West Norse text to contain the *Gesta Pilati* section of the apocryphon as well as

of a homily on Sts. Peter and Paul (item 2), the end of an All Saints' Day homily (item 6),<sup>19</sup> and the end of a homily dealing with the importance of weeping (item 10). It is possible that these leaves and the single leaf now surviving as AM 655 XVIII 4to,<sup>20</sup> which seems to have been written by the same hand, were originally part of the same manuscript, but this cannot at present be proved.<sup>21</sup>

After a detailed investigation of the manuscript's language and orthography, Hallgrímur concurs with Kålund and others that AM 655 XXVII 4to was composed around 1300 or a little before. Not surprisingly, the different texts on the surviving leaves seem to vary somewhat in date of composition. The manuscript's provenance is a more complicated issue. Earlier scholars held competing opinions about whether the manuscript was Norwegian or Icelandic. Hallgrímur comes down firmly on the side of the latter, deciding that the phonological evidence (especially the usual preservation of initial *h* before *l* or *r*) indicates a provenance in Iceland.<sup>22</sup> The possible audience of the manuscript and the institutional milieu in which it may have been composed have not yet been examined. Any useful study into such matters requires both a good edition of AM 655 XXVII 4to, which Hallgrímur has completed but not yet published, and detailed studies of the texts themselves, which remain desiderata.

the *Descensus Christi ad inferos*, and its relationship to the better known Norse version of the Gospel of Nicodemus, *Niðrstignings saga*, deserves further study.

- 19 This homily shows some influence from the popular pseudo-Bedan All Saints' Day sermon "Legimus in ecclesiasticis historiis." Compare the conclusion of the Norse homily with an excerpt from the beginning of the Latin one: "Einkum til þess at þat boetisk i þessa dags haldi ok af þváisk er mishaldit verðr á qðrum hátíðum fyrir óroekðar sakir eða óvizku eða nauðsynja" (fol. 10r, ll. 12–15; Hallgrímur Ámundason, "AM 655 XXVII 4to," "Útgáfa," 11–12 [normalized]); "[D]ecretum est ... ut quicquid humana fragilitas per ignorantiam uel negligentiam seu per occupationem rei secularis in solemnitate sanctorum minus plene peregisset in hac sancta obseruatione solueretur" (James E. Cross, "Legimus in ecclesiasticis historiis": A Sermon for All Saints, and Its Use in Old English Prose," *Traditio* 33 [1977], 106, ll. 12, 14–16). See also Stephen Pelle, "A Latin Model for an Old English Homiletic Fragment," *Philological Quarterly* 91 (2013): 496–97.
- 20 About which see Hall, "Old Norse-Icelandic Sermons," 699 (item 13). The fragment is edited both in Hallgrímur Ámundason's thesis and in Konráð Gíslason, *Um frum-þarta íslenzkrar tíngu í fornöld* (Copenhagen: S. Trier, 1846), lxxviii–lxxxii.
- 21 This paragraph is a highly selective summary of Hallgrímur Ámundason, "AM 655 XXVII 4to," "Inngangur," 2–5.
- 22 Hallgrímur Ámundason, "AM 655 XXVII 4to," "Inngangur," 24–27.

### 3. AM 655 XXVII 4to, item 1

The first text in the extant portion of AM 655 XXVII 4to is an enumeration and description of virtues, which uses the five feathers on each of the six wings of the seraphim<sup>23</sup> as an organizational schema and, one presumes, a mnemonic aid. The surviving part of the text begins on fol. 2r–2v, which is badly faded, and continues on 1r–1v. The latter leaf, which is also faded, was at some point torn in half lengthwise, with the result that only about half the text from the leaf survives, and nearly every clause is defective. The text lacks a title, but the introductory quality of its incipit (“⟨S⟩eraphim dicitur alas senas habere, því er þetta birtit at angelus hafði sex vængi. [fol. 2r, ll. 1–3]”<sup>24</sup>) and the fact that a large space has been left for a rubricated initial suggest that nothing has been lost from the beginning. The text certainly ends imperfectly, since only the first three of the seraphim’s six wings are mentioned. Whether the piece can be properly called a homily is unclear. Even when complete, it was probably little more than a list of thirty virtues in six categories, which hardly seems appropriate for oral delivery. Still, most of the other surviving texts in the manuscript are either homilies or could easily be adapted for preaching, and it is possible that a preacher may have found some use for a succinct and organized summary of Christian virtues, even if only for private meditation and inspiration.

The source of item 1 of AM 655 XXVII 4to is a popular twelfth-century Latin treatise entitled *De sex alis cherubim*.<sup>25</sup> Like its Old Norse descendant, the text categorizes and lists the virtues that Christians should imitate using the wings of the seraphim (not, as one would assume from its conventional title, the cherubim) as a kind of mnemonic device and, in some

23 The origin for the belief that the seraphim have six wings is Isaiah 6:1–2: “in anno quo mortuus est rex Ozias vidi Dominum sedentem super solium excelsum et elevatum et ea quae sub eo erant implebant templum. seraphin stabant super illud sex alae uni et sex alae alteri duabus velabant faciem eius et duabus velabant pedes eius et duabus volabant.” All Biblical citations are from *Biblia sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem*, 5th ed., ed. Robert Weber and Roger Gryson (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007).

24 Hallgrímur Ámundason, “AM 655 XXVII 4to,” “Útgáfa,” 1 (normalized).

25 The text is edited in *PL* 210, cols. 269A–280C. The Brepols *In principio* database (accessed July 11, 2013) lists about twenty-five manuscripts, mostly from England and France, which must represent only a small fraction of the text’s circulation. The database is available online (to subscribers) at <http://apps.brepolis.net/inpr/Main.aspx>.



illustrated copies, a visual aid.<sup>26</sup> Determining the authorship of *De sex alis cherubim* has posed significant problems for scholars, many of whom, following an attribution found in some manuscripts and repeated in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, have claimed that Alan of Lille (ca. 1130–1203) wrote the work.<sup>27</sup> Fuller, more recent investigations of the treatise's origins have thoroughly debunked this attribution, and have instead focused on the English Augustinian writer Clement of Llanthony (d. ca. 1176), to whom the work is ascribed in some early manuscripts.<sup>28</sup> Further complicating matters, an introductory discussion of the seraphim in Isaiah 6 found in some texts of the treatise, including the one printed by Migne, has been sourced to the *De arca Noe morali* of the earlier twelfth-century theologian Hugh of St. Victor, who is not a likely candidate for the authorship of the rest of the work.<sup>29</sup>

Below I list the correspondences between Migne's text of *De sex alis cherubim* and the portion of AM 655 XXVII 4to, item 1 that survives on the comparatively well preserved fol. 2r–2v.<sup>30</sup> Conveniently, this part of the Old Norse text corresponds almost exactly to the Latin description of the seraph's first "wing." In citing from Hallgrímur Ámundason's edition in this article, I have normalized his diplomatic transcription of the Old

26 See, for example, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 66 (s. xii/xiii), p. 100; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 459 (s. xiii), fol. 109r. The images are available online (to subscribers) through the *Parker Library on the Web* project, accessed July 11, 2013, <http://parkerweb.stanford.edu>.

27 See, e.g., Bella Millett, "Ancrene Wisse and the Conditions of Confession," *English Studies* 80 (1999): 207; Suzanne Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris in the Chronica Majora*, California Studies in the History of Art, vol. 21 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 318. On the life and career of Alan of Lille, see L. Hödl, "Alanus ab Insulis," in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1980), col. 268.

28 *Alain de Lille: Textes inédits*, Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny ed., (Paris: J. Vrin, 1965), 155. See also the introduction to an English translation of the work by Steven Chase, *Angelic Spirituality: Medieval Perspectives on the Ways of Angels*, Classics in Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 2002), 121–22. On Clement of Llanthony, see G.R. Evans, "Llanthony, Clement of (d. in or after 1176)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004–), accessed July 11, 2013, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/5600.

29 See Chase, *Angelic Spirituality*, 121–23. Such complexities in the work's tradition have probably contributed to its not being edited since Migne. There is little reason to assume that the PL version of *De sex alis cherubim* accurately represents the manuscript tradition, or that it was particularly close to the version behind the Old Norse text, but since Migne's is the only edition widely available, I have made use of it here.

30 All citations of item 1 are from Hallgrímur Ámundason, "AM 655 XXVII 4to," "Útgáfa," 1–2.

Norse but have left the Latin unaltered (with the exception of expanding abbreviations) in order to give an accurate picture of the Latinity of the scribe and his exemplar(s). Punctuation and capitalization are my own. Old Norse text is in Roman type, Latin quotations in italics. Hallgrímur's emendations are compared with the manuscript readings in the footnotes (with the original orthography preserved), and his restorations of illegible letters appear in angle brackets. My own references and emendations are given in parentheses. Ellipses in the citations of item 1 replace passages that are either difficult to decipher due to loss of text or that have no obvious connection to the Latin. Square brackets enclose illegible letters or those lost to manuscript damage; I restore these letters in some places where the reading can be reconstructed with confidence, either from the structure of the sentence or through comparison with the source.

*Prima alas angeli* [\*\*\*\*\*] Fimm e(r)u raðir fjaðranna í væng[\*\*\*\*\*]<sup>31</sup> røðin eða fjøðrin þessa vængs er v[eritas \*], at seg(ja) í j(á)tningunni sem hann kann sannast... (fol. 2r, ll. 7–10)

*Secunda penna integritas, id est* heil-leikr, þat er at h[on] sé heil ok óskerð í alla staði... (fol. 2r, ll. 13–14)

*Tertia penna firmitas, id est* styrkleikr, því at styrk á at vera játningin ok efanarlaus, ok ef svá er, þá takask tíu spellahlutir ór hugskotum: *cor sim[\*\*]ns, id est* óframi, ótti, fyrirlitning prestsins, órvilnan, ofvilnan, þafvizens sanna.<sup>†32</sup> óvizka, gleym-

*Prima ala est confessio...* Hujus alæ penna prima est veritas, quæ omnem excludit simulationem; vera namque non ficta, non simulata debet esse confessio. (*PL* 210, cols. 273A–273B)

*Secunda penna, integritas est, quæ* decurtationem excludit, et divisionem. Integra enim debet esse confessio, non decurtata, non divisa. (*PL* 210, col. 273B)

*Tertia penna est firmitas, quia fortis et firma debet esse confessio.* Hæc firmitas, decem quæ confessionem impediunt, expellit. Quæ sunt illa? Pudor, timor, contemptus presbyteri, desperatio, præsumptio, perversitas, ignorantia, obli-

31 Hallgrímur Ámundason conjectures “fyrsta,” almost certainly correctly.

32 I cannot interpret these words with any confidence. Presuming an exact correspondence to *De sex alis cherubim*, they should translate Latin “perversitas,” but I can make no sense of the phrase in this way. The words could perhaps be added to the previous item in the

ing, na(u)ðsyn—ok má hon enn<sup>33</sup>  
metask til sakvarna ef mikil kann  
verða. (fol. 2v, ll. 6–12)

*Quarta penna humilitas, id est* lítil-  
læti. Lítillæti skal fylgja skriptagang  
fyrst í brjóstinu þess er sín mein  
vill játa ok bæta, svá í tungunni ok  
orðunum, svá ok í líkamanum ok  
látæðinu. (fol. 2v, ll. 12–16)

*Quinta penna, id est simplicitas, id*  
*est* at verja eigi sakar fyrir sik eða  
minnka þær umfram rétt. Nú vill sjá  
væ(n)gr allr saman með sínum fimm  
fjórðrum, at skriptagangr manns sé  
sannr, *id est* án gildingi... (fol. 2v, ll.  
16–19)

vio, negligentia et necessitas, quæ  
sola excusabilis est. (PL 210, cols.  
273D–274A)

Quarta penna est humilitas, quæ  
typum superbix excludit. Mens  
humilis, lingua humilis, vultus  
humilis, debet esse confitentis. (PL  
210, col. 274B)

Quinta penna est simplicitas. Hæc  
propriam infirmitatem, propriam  
ignorantiam, propriam accusat mali-  
tiam, nihil defendens, nihil excusans,  
nihil attenuans. Vera igitur, integra,  
firma, humilis et simplex debet esse  
confessio. Vera, sine simulatione...  
Hæc est prima ala cum pennis suis.  
(PL 210, cols. 274B–274C)

If the presence of the Latin names of the seraphic virtues in the Old Norse text is strong evidence of a relationship, the nearly exact correspondences between the “tíu spellahlutir” and the “decem quæ confessionem impediunt” from the treatise provide conclusive proof.<sup>34</sup> Still, the Norse text is

list to produce “ofvilnan af vitsins sanna” (“overconfidence/presumption in the [?] of one’s intelligence”), but “sanna” remains problematic. Alternatively, Hallgrímur has suggested, via personal correspondence, that one might instead attach the words to the list’s next item, giving “afvitsins sanna óvizka” (“the unwisdom of not knowing”), although this would presume both the loss of a term translating “perversitas” and the existence of a neuter noun “afvit,” apparently unattested elsewhere.

33 For “enn” perhaps read “ein,” adapting Latin “sola.”

34 “óframi” = “pudor”; “ótti” = “timor”; “fyrirlitning prestsins” = “contemptus presbyteri”; “órvilnan” = “desperatio”; “ofvilnan” = “præsumptio”; “óvizka” = “ignorantia”; “gleyming” = “oblivio”; “na(u)ðsyn” = “necessitas”. The Latin “negligentia” was either omitted by the Icelandic author or has dropped out of the Old Norse text through a scribal error. On related lists of this sort, see Millett, “*Ancrene Wisse*”; Bella Millett, “The Pastoral Context of the Trinity and Lambeth Homilies,” in *Essays in Manuscript Geography: Vernacular Manuscripts of the English West Midlands from the Conquest to the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Wendy Scase, Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe, vol. 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 48–50.

far from a slavish translation of *De sex alis cherubim*, and it significantly includes some Latin phrases that are absent from its source.<sup>35</sup> It is, therefore, possible that the author of the Old Norse piece was working from some intermediate text which contained the Latin words not accounted for in the original treatise, although it is just as likely that he added them himself, since he must have had a firm grasp of Latin to adapt his source in the first place.

The following pages of AM 655 XXVII 4to (now fol. 1r–1v) are, as I mentioned above, badly damaged. Any correspondences with *De sex alis cherubim* are consequently harder to identify. The following fragmentary excerpts nonetheless prove that the author of the Norse text continued to follow the same Latin source:

<i>Secunda ala satis</i> ... (fol. 1r, l. 10)	<i>De Satisfactione. Ala secunda. Satisfactio est, inunctæ pœnitentiæ expletiva exsecutio, vel, peccatorum condigna correptio et correctio. (PL 210, col. 275D)</i>
...[prima p]enna aflát synda (fol. 1r, l. 11)	Prima penna hujus alæ est peccati abrenuntiatio ... (PL 210, col. 276B)
...[secund]a <sup>36</sup> penna un[***] (fol. 1r, l. 15)	Secunda penna est lacrymarum effusio. (PL 210, col. 276D)
...[terti]a <sup>37</sup> penna carnis maceracio, id est meinlæt[i]... (fol. 1r, l. 19 – fol. 1v, l. 1)	Tertia penna est carnis maceratio. (PL 210, col. 276D)
<i>Quarta penna elemos</i> ⟨y⟩... (fol. 1v, l. 3)	Quarta penna est elemosynarum largitio. (PL 210, col. 276D)

35 Note especially the incipit, “⟨S⟩eraphim dicitur alas senas habere.” Hallgrímur Ámundason (“Útgáfa,” 1) argues that “cor sim[\*\*]ns” is a garbled form of “cor timens,” which is also unparalleled in Migne’s text of *De sex alis cherubim*. The first characters may perhaps be “con-” instead. I admit that I am unable to make much sense of the manuscript here regardless of how the third letter is read, but if the word does begin with “con-” we might understand “confitentis” or “confitentium.”

36 Only the “i<sup>a</sup>” of the presumed “ii<sup>a</sup>” is visible.

37 Hallgrímur partially restores to “⟨i<sup>a</sup>⟩.”

- id est oratio*, biðja sér líkna[r]... (fol. 1v, l. 9) Quinta penna est orationis devotio. (PL 210, col. 276D)
- mendica id est re[\*]*<sup>38</sup>... (fol. 1v, l. 17) Tertia ala est carnis munditia. (PL 210, col. 276D)
- Podicicia id est sc...* þat augum er þik G... (fol. 1v, ll. 18–19) Hujus alæ penna prima est, visus pudicitia. (PL 210, col. 276D)

It is, of course, difficult to imagine the circumstances behind this Old Norse adaptation of *De sex alis cherubim* when the only witness to the adaptation survives in such a fragmentary state. Nevertheless, the apparent deterioration of the Latin quotations in the Norse text may provide some evidence of its relative date. Some of these, such as “mendica” for “munditia,” are so severely garbled that their original meanings would scarcely be recoverable without a knowledge of their source.<sup>39</sup> Such errors prove that the scribe of AM 655 XXVII 4to could not himself have been translating from *De sex alis cherubim* and suggest that this text was at least one or two copies removed from the original Old Norse adaptation of the work. Since our manuscript has been dated to ca. 1300, we can assume that *De sex alis cherubim* was probably known and used in Iceland no later than the mid-thirteenth century. Given the dates of its surviving manuscripts, many of which are from the thirteenth century,<sup>40</sup> *De sex alis cherubim* seems to have been at the height of its popularity around this time. Indeed, around the middle of the century Matthew Paris (ca. 1200–1259) was borrowing from the Latin treatise in his *Chronica maiora*.<sup>41</sup> The Old Norse adaptation of *De sex alis cherubim* in AM 655 XXVII 4to, therefore, suggests a greater re-

38 Probably to be read “(h)reinlífi.”

39 See also “alas” (fol. 2r, l. 7) for “ala” and the bizarre spelling “Podicicia” (fol. 1v, l. 18) for “pudicitia.”

40 Of the four manuscripts of the text in the library of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, for example, three (CCCC 356, 459, and 481) are securely dated to the thirteenth century. The remaining manuscript, CCCC 66, is from either the twelfth or the thirteenth century. For descriptions and images, see the *Parker Library on the Web* project, accessed July 11, 2013, <http://parkerweb.stanford.edu>.

41 *Matthæi Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica maiora*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, vol. 3 (London: Longman, 1876), 134. See also Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris in the Chronica Majora*, 316–19. On Paris’s life, see Simon Lloyd and Rebecca Reader, “Paris, Matthew (c. 1200–1259),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004–), accessed July 11, 2013, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/21268.

sponsiveness to contemporary theological trends in mainland Europe than is often credited to the authors of Old Norse homiletic literature. Further indications of this use of newer sources can be found in item 11 of the same manuscript, which I discuss below.

#### 4. AM 655 XXVII 4to, item 11

Item 11, the last piece in AM 655 XXVII 4to, is found on fols. 12r–13v. It ends imperfectly, but its surviving portion is better preserved than many of the other texts in the manuscript. The piece is clearly a homily. It has a rubricated title designating it for the Feast of the Annunciation and consists of a phrase-by-phrase interpretation of the angel's greeting to Mary in Luke 1:28. Unlike most of the other Marian homilies in the manuscript, the text is not drawn from any known version of *Mariu saga*. The homilist's exposition is structured on a series of careful threefold divisions: the three types of peace Christ brought to the world (section **a**, below), the three types of grace (**c–f**), the three kinds of gifts that filled Mary (**g**), and the relationship of each of the three Persons of the Trinity to the Blessed Virgin (**h**). Therefore, while not based on the Biblical *distinctiones* characteristic of contemporary scholastic sermons, the homily and its high degree of organization and theological nuance do strike the reader as rather more modern than the texts one finds in the Icelandic and Norwegian Homily Books, which are generally of a more hortatory and moralizing tone.<sup>42</sup> Such stylistic differences can be explained by comparing the homily to its hitherto undiscovered source, a sermon by the twelfth-century abbot Absalon of Springiersbach.

Scholars have been trying to piece together the details of Absalon's life for centuries, and several issues remain unsettled. What is certain is that he was a canon at the Abbey of Saint-Victor in Paris for several years before he was appointed abbot of the Augustinian monastery in Springiersbach, near Trier, sometime around 1193.<sup>43</sup> Beyond this, little is known for sure.

42 For interesting and highly relevant analyses of the influence of the scholastic or "thematic" sermon style on English vernacular homilies from ca. 1200, see Millett, "Pastoral Context"; Bella Millett, "The Discontinuity of English Prose: Structural Innovation in the Trinity and Lambeth Homilies," in *Text and Language in Medieval English Prose: A Festschrift for Tadao Kubouchi*, ed. Jacek Fisiak et al. (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2005), 129–50.

43 Dominique Poirel, "L'école de Saint-Victor au Moyen Âge: bilan d'un demi-siècle historiographique," *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 156 (1998): 201–202; Gabriele Ziegler,

Opinions on the date of his death range from 1196 to 1204, and nearly every year in between seems to have its partisans.<sup>44</sup> Much of this confusion derives from the apparent conflation by some scholars of Absalon of Springiersbach with another Absalon, who was abbot of Saint-Victor from 1198 to 1203.<sup>45</sup> If, as Poirel asserts, the election of Absalon's successor as abbot of Springiersbach was occasioned by his death, he must have died in 1196.<sup>46</sup> If, however, he lost his position because he retired or was deposed, he may have lived until 1204, as Ziegler proposes.<sup>47</sup>

Absalon's literary remains include a series of fifty sermons for the feast days of the liturgical year.<sup>48</sup> These *Sermones festuales* survive in manuscripts from both Trier and Saint-Victor, as well as in libraries as far afield as Madrid and Milan.<sup>49</sup> Absalon seems to have composed or revised at least some of them at Springiersbach, since he gives the German translation of a Latin term in one of them.<sup>50</sup> The sermons are quite learned and display an impressive familiarity with classical philosophy and literature, patristics, and the works of his predecessors at the school of Saint-Victor.<sup>51</sup> Absalon's exegetical approach is highly allegorical and numerical, and many of his sermons are based on consecutive or nested sets of two-, three-, and fourfold divisions: "Sunt etenim tres cœli, quos Christum secundum humanam naturam ascendisse fidei devotione tenendum est..."; "Quatuor enim sunt in bove per quæ doctoribus Ecclesiæ recte comparatur..."; and so on.<sup>52</sup>

*Augustinus als Vorbild der Predigt des Absalon von Springiersbach* (Würzburg: Augustinus-Verlag, 1998), 45–46.

44 Poirel, "L'école de Saint-Victor," 201–202; Ziegler, *Augustinus als Vorbild*, 45–46; Pierre Courcelle, "La culture antique d'Absalon de Saint-Victor," *Journal des savants* (1972): 270.

45 Courcelle ("La culture antique") makes this error, as do many earlier scholars, including Fourier Bonnard in his *Histoire de l'Abbaye royale et de l'ordre des chanoines réguliers de Saint-Victor de Paris*, vol. 1 (Paris: A. Savaète, 1904), 269. Poirel ("L'école de Saint-Victor") and Ziegler (*Augustinus als Vorbild*) correctly distinguish between the two, as does J. Prelog, "Absalon v. Springiersbach," in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 1: col. 55.

46 Poirel, "L'école de Saint-Victor," 202.

47 Ziegler, *Augustinus als Vorbild*, 46.

48 *PL* 211, cols. 11A–294D.

49 Ziegler, *Augustinus als Vorbild*, 51. See also the comments of Casimir Oudin, which Migne uses as a preface to the *Sermones festuales* in *PL* 211.

50 *PL* 211, col. 181C. See Poirel, "L'école de Saint-Victor," 202.

51 On Absalon's style see especially Courcelle, "La culture antique" and Ziegler, *Augustinus als Vorbild*.

52 *PL* 211, cols. 182D and 261A.

Three of Absalon's *Sermones festuales*, Migne's sermons 20–22, are designated for the Feast of the Annunciation. The last of these is the source of most of the surviving portion of the Old Norse Annunciation homily that is now item 11 of AM 655 XXVII 4to. The part of the Norse homily now extant in this manuscript draws selectively from the first part of *Sermo festivalis* 22, which is an exposition of the words "Ave Maria gratia plena, dominus tecum." Absalon's sermon does not continue up to the last words of the angel's greeting, "benedicta tu in mulieribus." The final part of the Old Norse homily, however, does discuss this phrase, and its author seems to have moved on to a different text for his explanation of it. This second source may have been a sermon by Peter Chrysologus (see section i, below), but unfortunately the homily ends imperfectly before providing enough evidence for a conclusive comparison.

In the table below I give the full text of the surviving portion of the Old Norse Annunciation homily from AM 655 XXVII 4to in parallel with selections from the Latin sermon of Absalon of Springiersbach.<sup>53</sup> I have divided both into nine sections, a through i, in order to facilitate comparison, and I have rearranged the order of several excerpts from the latter so that they line up more precisely with the Old Norse sentences which depend on them. Despite the Icelandic author's freedom with his source material, however, his dependence on Absalon's sermon is clear. Any necessary comments are given as footnotes.

<u>AM 655 XXVII 4to Annunciation Homily</u>	<u>Absalon of Springiersbach – Sermo Festivalis 22, "In annunciatione beatae Mariae"</u>
<i>Annunciatio Sancte Marie</i>	
(a) <A>ve Maria gratia plena Dominus tecum. þrennar kveðjur hittask í helgum guðspjöllum: sjálfs Krists við postola eptir (...)⁵⁴; engils við Mariam⁵⁵; Mariae við	(a) [T]res salutationes celebres in evangelica serie invenimus. Salutatur enim Christus discipulos suos cum dicit: <i>Pax vobis</i> (Luke 24:36). Salutatur angelus Mariam cum di-

53 All citations of item 11 are from Hallgrímur Ámundason, "AM 655 XXVII 4to," "Útgáfa," 14–16.

54 There is no gap in the manuscript, but it seems likely from the phrasing of the passage that some words, perhaps "upprisu hans," have dropped out.

55 Wherever Mary's name retains its Latin declension in the manuscript, I keep the Latin form. Where the name is declined as an Old Norse noun, I retain and normalize the Old Norse form. Except in Latin quotations, I consider the nominative form in *-a* to be Old Norse.



Elisabeth.<sup>56</sup> Þat sýnir þrennar sáttargerð(ar) ok samþykki þá er varð í hingatburði Krists. Þá varð friðr milli Guðs ok manna, millum englanna ok manna, milli sjálfra manna,<sup>57</sup> því at missætti varð meðal Guðs ok manna af óhlýðni ok eplaáti<sup>58</sup> Evu, missætti meðal engla ok manna fyrir dróttnan djöfuls er hann haf(ð)i á mǫnnum eptir syndina, missætti ok meðal Gyðings ok heiðingjans í trúhaldi ok siða. Þetta missætti snerisk allt í samþykki fyrir mey ok móður Mariam,<sup>59</sup> svá sem þat hófsk fyrir allra móður Evu. Þat sýnir ofgat ok bakferlat nafnit Evu (i) kveðjunni engil(s)ins við Máriú, því at *Eva* ofgask er *Ave* er sagt. (fol. 12r, l. 10 – fol. 12v, l. 6)

cit: *Ave, Maria, gratia plena* (**Luke 1:28**). *Salutat Maria Elisabeth sicut legimus: quia ascendit Maria in montana cum festinatione in domum Zachariæ, et salutavit Elisabeth* (Luke 1:39–40). Hac triplici salutatione triplex concordia nobis significata est, videlicet Dei ad hominem, angeli ad hominem, hominis ad hominem. Discordabat enim Deus ab homine propter peccatum primæ prævaricationis. Discordabat angelus ab homine, quia, cum conservi in obsequio Dei esse debuissent, homo se subdiderat domino diaboli. Discordabat homo ab homine, Judæus a gentili, eo quod iste Deum, ille vero idola coleret.... Hæc concordia, ut puto, in hoc etiam significata est, quod nomen primæ matris, id est Eva, mutatur in verbum salutationis .... Quando ergo nomine illo converso Mariæ dicitur: *Ave*, per hoc datur intelligi quoniam, per beatam Virginem, et culpa in veniam, et pœna in gloriam commutata est. (*PL* 211, cols. 130D–131C)

56 The manuscript has the problematic spelling “ælisabæN”; I have adopted the Vulgate form.

57 A list of the ways in which Christ brought peace to the world was a standard element of Christmas and Easter homilies throughout the Middle Ages. See, for instance, a ca. 1400 Middle English sermon from Worcester, Cathedral Library F. 10, which states that Christ’s passion and defeat of the devil “made loue & pes be-twix God & man, betwix man & aungelis, 3e, & be-twix man & man” (*Three Middle English Sermons from the Worcester Chapter Manuscript F. 10*, ed. D.M. Grisdale [Kendal: Titus Wilson, 1939], 49).

58 “æpli ate” *scripsit* Hallgrímur; MS “æpli aten”.

59 “MaRiam” *scripsit* Hallgrímur; MS “MaRieam”.

(b) Mária þýðisk svá sem sjávar stjarna, því at svá sem stjarnan er leiðarvísir farmönnum í hafi ok kennir þeim rétta leið til hafnar, svá <er> hin helga mæri Mária ørugg leiðvísan til himneskrar hafnar ok paradísar hvíldar öllum þeim er válkask í bylgjum ok boðum<sup>60</sup> veraldar þessar ok til hennar vilja líta ok hennar dæmum vilja fylgja, þat er lítillætis<sup>61</sup> vegr ok hreinlífis gata. (fol. 12v, ll. 6–13)

(c) *Gracia plena*: full af miskunn. Fyllin<g> er eigi eins háttar. Fyllin<g> er sú ein er kallask skaplig, sem þá er hús<sup>62</sup> er alskipat ok fullt af mönnum. Nú þótt þat heiti fullt, þá er þat þó eigi svá fullt at eigi sé rúm í húsinu hjá mönnum. (fol. 12v, ll. 13–18)

(d) Með þvílíku móti váru Guðs miskunnar fullir sjálfir postolarnir, at með þeim var rúm hjá til sy<n>darinnar, því at þeir máttu

(b) Maria, quod interpretatur, maris stella.... Sicut enim stella hæc navigantibus in mari rectæ viæ inditium est, sic et Maria in hoc mundo tortuose viventibus, aliis rectam viam bonæ operationis, aliis rectam viam humilitatis, aliis rectam viam castitatis ostendit. (PL 211, cols. 131D–132B)

(c) Sed quid magnum, quid supereminens Virgini matri attribuitur, cum dicitur gratia plena?... [H]æc distinctio adhibenda est, quod est plenitudo æqua, est plenitudo apta, est plenitudo superfluens sive effusa.... Plenitudo vero apta est, quæ replet secundum rei congruentiam, ut cum dicitur: Civitas vel Ecclesia plena populo, non quod ibi nullus locus vacuus relinquatur, sed quia secundum congruentiam ibi existentes loco sufficiunt... (PL 211, col. 133A–B)

(d) In cæteris sanctis plenitudo apta fuit, non quod peccare non potuerint, quia et apostoli excutere pulverem pedum jussi

60 “boðom” *scripsit* Hallgrímur; MS “boðon”.

61 “lítillætif” *scripsit* Hallgrímur; MS “lítillætifif”.

62 The replacement of the more urban terms “civitas” and “ecclesia” with “hús” is interesting, and may be an attempt to accommodate the text to the Icelandic landscape. The inspiration for Absalon’s Latin example was perhaps Lamentations 1:1: “Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo.”

misgera. Því var þeim boðit at s[ka]ka<sup>63</sup> fótas(au)r<sup>64</sup> sinn á þá menn er í mót risu kenningum þeira, en sínar syndir, þær er þeir máttu eigi forðask fyrir návistu sakir heimsins, skyldu á hina falla er þeim veittu mótgang ok mei⟨n⟩gerðir.<sup>65</sup> (fol. 12v, l. 18 – fol. 13r, l. 3)

(e) Fyllin⟨g⟩ er sú ǫnnur er kallask jafnlig, sem þá er ker eitt eða kerald er framfullt af vatni<sup>66</sup> eða ǫ⟨ð⟩rum legi; þat er sem þat kallask þá fullt, því at þar eru þá ǫll rúm full. Þess háttar varð<sup>67</sup> Guðs miskunnar full sjálf dróttni⟨n⟩gin Már⟨i⟩a við kveðju engilsins, því at þangat til var rúm með henni til syndarinnar, en

sunt (**Matthew 10:14**), sed quoniam gratiæ plenitudinem sufficientem ad salutem acceperunt. (*PL* 211, col. 133C)

(e) Plenitudo æqua est, cum in re impleta nihil vacuum relinquitur, ut in mensura vini vel olei.... In beata virgine Maria plenitudo æqua fuit, quoniam spiritali gratia in tantum repleta est, quod in ea nihil vacuum, id est nullus peccandi locus remansit. Ex quo enim Christum concepit, adeo est confirmata, quod peccare non potuit. (*PL* 211, col. 133B–C)

63 The second two letters are unclear in the manuscript. Hallgrímur Ámundason (“AM 655 XXVII 4to,” “Útgáfa,” 15) believed that the ambiguous part of the word “er að því er best verður séð annaðhvort *a* eða *at*.” In fact, since the word translates “excutere,” we should almost certainly understand “skaka” (“fcaka” in the original orthography).

64 As Hallgrímur (“AM 655 XXVII 4to,” “Útgáfa,” 15) notes, it is unclear how one might understand the apparent manuscript reading, “fota fcor.” The difficulty is eliminated, however, if we understand the middle two letters of the word as either an unusual form of the *a* ligature or a scribal error for it. Old Norse “fóta-sauri” would be a perfect translation of Latin “pulverem pedum.” Cleasby and Vigfússon claim that the term is attested in the *Postola sögur* (*An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. [Oxford: Clarendon, 1957], s.v. “fóta-saurr”), but I admit I have been unable to track down their reference. [I have, however, been able to confirm the reading proposed here by comparing the AM 655 XXVII 4to Annunciation homily with a version of the same text in AM 624 4to, in which the second element of this word is clearly “saur” (p. 235, l. 23). On this manuscript, see the postscript at the end of this article.]

65 The Old Norse homilist helpfully provides an interpretation of Christ’s command that the apostles shake the dust from their feet upon leaving towns that do not listen to their teaching. The relevance of this command to the ability of the apostles to sin is left somewhat opaque in Absalon’s sermon.

66 The replacement of wine and oil in the Latin text with water in the Old Norse may be another sign that the Icelandic author was trying to avoid references less familiar to a Northern European audience.

67 “varð” *scripsit* Hallgrímur; MS “varað”.

ekki þaðan frá; því at þangat til mátti hon misgera, en þaðan frá mátti hon eigi misgera þótt hon he(f)ði viljat. (fol. 13r, ll. 3–12)

(f) Fylling hin þriðja kallask yfirfallandi, sem þá er mællir <er> fullr eða annat ílát af mjólvi eða þvílíku qðru<sup>68</sup> svá at yfir fellr á alla vega. Þar til at jafna er fylling miskunnar sú er með sjálfum Guði er, því at sú er umfram of alla mæling ok endimark, því at allir helgir menn ok svá allir vér hofum þat eitt g(ó)ðs ok gæfu, máttar ok miskunnar er vér hofum af ómældri ok yfirfallandi alla vega hans eilífri miskunn. (fol. 13r, l. 12–20)

(g) Dróttningin Mária var sannliga full miskunnar ok allrar gæzku andligrar, því at at tilkomanda helgum anda oðlaðisk hon ein á meðal allra kvenna þá tígn allrar náttúrunnar sem hin fyrsta konan Eva hafði<sup>69</sup> í paradísu <á>ðr hon misgerði. Full var hon ok andligra mis<ku>n(nar)gíafa,<sup>70</sup> því at at holdguðum í hennar kviði Guðs syni mátti hon aldregi misgera síðan,

(f) Plenitudo superfluens est, quando res quæ implet, mensuræ capacitatem excedit... In Christo plenitudo superfluens fuit, quia ipse accepit gratiam sine mensura, ita ut de plenitudine ejus nos omnes acciperemus. (PL 211, col. 133B–C)

(g) Excellenter ergo Mariæ dictum est, gratia plena. Est autem gratia naturalium bonorum, est gratia spiritualium charismatum, et est gratia cœlestium donorum. Plena gratia fuit naturalium bonorum, quoniam Spiritu sancto ei superveniente, integritatem naturalium secundum dignitatem primæ conditionis sola inter filias Evæ accepit: Plena fuit gratia spiritualium charismatum,

68 “aðro” *scripsit* Hallgrímur; MS “arðo”.

69 “hafði” *scripsit* Hallgrímur; MS “hafðe hafði”.

70 The manuscript reading “mis<cu>ngíafa” is emended to “gíafa” by Hallgrímur and is, as far as I know, unattested elsewhere. We should probably understand a form of “miskunnargjöf,” twelve attestations of which are recorded in the *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog* database, accessed July 11, 2013, <http://www.onp.ku.dk/webart/m/mi/54639ckron.htm>. The term would be an appropriate rendering of “charismatum,” especially if the author of the Old Norse homily were trying to preserve Absalon’s distinction between “charismatum” (“mis<ku>n(nar)gíafa”) and “donorum” (“guðgíafa”).

sem engi hefir mátt mannanna hvárki áðr né síðan. Full var hon ok himneskra guðgjafa, því at engi hefir sét, engi hefir bergt, engi hefir kennt jafnalgørliga, jafnalogliga<sup>71</sup> hversu fagrligr, hversu dýrligr, hversu soetr Guð er í alla staði í sínum almætti.<sup>72</sup> (fol. 13r, l. 21 – fol. 13v, l. 13)

**(h)** *Dominus tecum.* Dróttinn faðir er með þér, því at þú ert hans brúðr, getandi hans son. Dróttinn sonrinn er með þér, sá er getask mun í þínum kviði, því at þú ert hans móðir. Dróttinn heilagr andi er með þér, af þess krafti er getnaðrinn sjá gerisk, því at þú ert hans unnasta. (fol. 13v, ll. 13–19)

**(i)** *Benedicta tu in mulieribus,* því at þolvanaratkvæðit, þat er Eva hlaut af Guði fyrir sinn mi(s)verka ok á fell síðan alla hennar ætt... (fol. 13v, ll. 19–21)

quoniam Christo incarnato amplius peccare non potuit. Cœlestium donorum gratia plena fuit, quia virtute contemplandi quodammodo patriæ donata est. (PL 211, col. 133C–D)

**(h)** *Dominus tecum.* Dominus Pater tecum, quia tu sponsa ejus: Dominus Filius tecum, quia tu mater ejus: Dominus Spiritus sanctus tecum, quia tu amica ejus.... Pater ergo tecum, cujus Filium conceptura: Filius tecum, quem conceptura: Spiritus sanctus tecum, de quo conceptura es. (PL 211, col. 134A)

**(i)** No parallel in Absalon's sermon (but cf. Peter Chrysologus, *sermo* 140, 'De annuntiatione D. Mariae Virginis': *Benedicta tu in mulieribus.* Quia in quibus Eva maledicta puniebat viscera, tunc in illis gaudet, honoratur, suspicitur Maria benedicta. [PL 52, col. 576B])

71 "ianm alaGlega" (?= "jafnalhugliga") *scripsit* Hallgrímur; MS "ianm algaGlega." Hallgrímur has suggested to me that the manuscript reading might also be emended to "ianm alglaGlega" (= "jafnalgloggiga") (e-mail message to author, July 3, 2013).

72 Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:9: "sed sicut scriptum est quod oculus non vidit nec auris audivit nec in cor hominis ascendit quae praeeparavit Deus his qui diligunt illum."

While the author of the Old Norse homily clearly depended on Absalon of Springiersbach, a comparison of the two texts reveals a great deal of originality in his adaptation. In addition to the changes discussed in the footnotes above (nn. 62, 65, and 66), he frequently introduces alliterative phrases, which are perhaps the most striking element of his style. Notable instances include “mey ok móður” (fol. 12v, ll. 2–3), “himneskrar hafnar” (fol. 12v, l. 10), “bylgjum ok boðum” (fol. 12v, l. 11), “mótgang ok mei⟨n⟩gerðir” (fol. 13r, l. 3), “g⟨ó⟩ðs ok gæfu” (fol. 13r, ll. 18–19), and “mátar ok miskunnar” (fol. 13r, l. 19). None of these have any precedent in the Latin source. One cannot help but be reminded of the style of the Old English homilists, especially Wulfstan, whose two-stress prose rhythm and penchant for alliteration often achieve a similar effect: “Eac sceal apspringan wide ⁊ side sacu ⁊ clacu, hol ⁊ hete ⁊ rypera reafiac, here ⁊ hunger, bryne ⁊ blodgyte ⁊ styrnlíce styrunga, stric ⁊ steorfa ⁊ fela ungelimpa.”<sup>73</sup> Similarities to the Wulfstanian style have been noticed in other Old Norse homilies, and Old English works likely influenced the genre from its beginnings,<sup>74</sup> but there is no reason to attribute the alliterative style in this homily to a foreign source. Such verbal ornamentation could have suggested itself to anyone with a knowledge of Old Norse poetic traditions or even of a high Latin prose style.<sup>75</sup>

Despite his relative obscurity, it is not surprising that at least one of the works of Absalon of Springiersbach came to influence an Old Norse

73 *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, ed. Dorothy Bethurum (Oxford: Clarendon, 1957), 140, ll. 102–104.

74 See especially Abram, “Anglo-Saxon Homilies,” 438. A more recent but highly problematic study of Wulfstan’s influence on Old Norse homilies is Olav Tveito, “Wulfstan av York og norrøne homilier,” in *Vår eldste bok*, 187–215.

75 For an example of part of an Old Norse homily that can be scanned as verse, see McDougall, “Homilies,” 290. For a discussion of alliteration in the Icelandic and Norwegian Homily Books and its possible vernacular and Latin models, see David McDougall, “Studies in the Prose Style,” 26–42, 98–127. On the various types of Old Norse prose style and the influence of Latin, see Þorleifur Hauksson and Þórir Óskarsson, *Íslensk stílfraði* (Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 1994), 169–82. For a discussion of the style of the Icelandic Homily Book, see pp. 197–209 of the same volume. On alliterative couplets in medieval Icelandic prose, see especially Þorleifur Hauksson and Þórir Óskarsson, *Íslensk stílfraði*, 192, 201, 208, 231. On the popularity and logic of such variations in Old Norse religious prose, see also Astås, *Old Norse Biblical Compilation*, 111–12; Laura Tomassini, “Latin Influence on Old Norse Religious Prose Style: Hypothesis on the Composition and Textual Tradition of the Homily *Nativitas Sancte Marie*,” *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 61 (1995): 353–54.

homilist. Absalon's connection to medieval Scandinavia can be explained by the years he spent at the Abbey of Saint-Victor. As early as 1904, Fourier Bonnard described close connections between Scandinavian clerics, particularly Norwegians, and the monastery.<sup>76</sup> These relationships were further explored by Hans Bekker-Nielsen, Oddmund Hjelde, and Gunnar Harðarson, who have discussed the influence of the Victorine school on Norwegian and Icelandic religious literature. The works of at least four other Victorines are known to have been used by Old Norse authors: Hugh (d. 1141), Richard (d. 1173), Adam (d. 1192), and Godfrey (d. 1194).<sup>77</sup> Indeed, the Victorines are the only significant exception that Bekker-Nielsen makes to his assertion that the sources of Old Norse religious literature were primarily Carolingian or earlier.<sup>78</sup> While, until now, there has been little direct evidence of Victorine influence on Old Norse preaching,<sup>79</sup> it seems that Hjelde was on the right track when he proposed that “[d]et er rimelig at også prekenen i Norge er influert av denne verdifulle åndsstrøm [i.e., of the school of Saint-Victor] i det 12. århundret.”<sup>80</sup>

76 Bonnard, *Histoire de l'Abbaye*, 1: 55, 153, 214–15. See also Kirby, *Bible Translation*, 7, 13, 30.

77 Hans Bekker-Nielsen, “The Victorines and Their Influence on Old Norse Literature,” in *The Fifth Viking Congress: Tórshavn, July 1965*, ed. Bjarni Niqlasen (Tórshavn: Føroya Landsstyri et al., 1968), 33–36; Hjelde, *Norsk preken*, 97–98 and *Kirkens budskap i sagatiden* (Oslo: Solum, 1995), 28. See also Kirby, *Bible Translation*, 62–64. The fullest recent treatment of Victorine influence in Norway and Iceland is Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité en Scandinavie médiévale: la traduction norroise du De arria animae de Hugues de Saint-Victor*, Bibliotheca Victorina, vol. 5 (Paris: Brepols, 1995), 20–37. Significantly, Gunnar (pp. 34–35) notes that Victorine Mariological ideas seem to have had a greater influence on texts written in Old Norse than on Scandinavian Latin works. For further references on Victorine influence in Scandinavia, see Astås, *Old Norse Biblical Compilation*, 163–64, n. 2. The supposed intellectual decline of the Abbey of Saint-Victor in the wake of the abbacy of Ernisius/Ervisius (deposed in 1172) caused Chatillon to label Richard “le dernier des grands victorins,” but the Old Norse adaptations of the works of Adam of Saint-Victor, Godfrey of Saint-Victor, and Absalon of Springiersbach show that the Victorines continued to exercise a notable influence, at least on Scandinavian clerics. See Jean Chatillon, “La culture de l'école de Saint-Victor au 12e siècle,” in *Entretiens sur la Renaissance du 12e siècle*, ed. Maurice de Gandillac and Édouard Jeuneau (Paris: Mouton, 1968), 169.

78 Bekker-Nielsen, “The French Influence on Ecclesiastical Literature in Old Norse,” 144.

79 Gunnar Harðarson (*Littérature et spiritualité*, 33) has said that possible signs of Victorine influence in the Icelandic and Norwegian Homily Books are not “assez concret[s] pour être incontestable[s],” but no such doubts are called for in the case of the AM 655 XXVII Annunciation homily.

80 Hjelde, *Norsk preken*, 98.

Like the use of *De sex alis cherubim* by the author of the first item in the manuscript, the fact that the last text in AM 655 XXVII 4to depends on a late twelfth-century Latin source indicates that some of the writers of the later Old Norse homilies, like those who wrote other types of religious literature in Old Norse, were attuned to contemporary theological trends. Just as *De sex alis cherubim* was being copied and used elsewhere around the same time it was adapted into Old Norse, the Annunciation sermon by Absalon of Springiersbach seems to have had a wide influence as well. Most of a sermon included in the Middle High German “Leipziger Sammlung” (preserved in a fourteenth-century manuscript but compiled from a number of twelfth- and thirteenth-century exemplars) derives from the Latin sermon.<sup>81</sup> Material from Absalon’s text was also incorporated into the *De laudibus beatae Mariae* by French author Richard of Saint-Laurent (d. after 1245).<sup>82</sup> The first book of this large and influential compendium of Marian devotional material borrows heavily from Absalon’s sermon in its discussion of the angel’s address to Mary.<sup>83</sup> The Old Norse homily certainly does not depend on *De laudibus*, since it includes material from Absalon’s sermon that Richard omits, nor does it show any close relation to the Middle High German text. However, the fact that all three works draw on the same

81 *Altdeutsche Predigten*, ed. Anton E. Schönbach, vol. 1 (Graz: Styria, 1886), 78–82. The dependence of this text on Absalon’s sermon begins on Schönbach’s p. 79, l. 18 and has never, to my knowledge, been noted or described. On the “Leipziger Sammlung,” see Volker Mertens, “Studien zu den ‘Leipziger Predigten,’” *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 107 (1985): 240–66.

82 The work has often been attributed to Albertus Magnus, but Henri Omont (“Richard de Saint-Laurent et le *Liber de laudibus Beatae Mariae*,” *Bibliothèque de l’École des chartes* 42 [1881]: 503–504) proved definitively that Richard of Saint-Laurent was its author.

83 Compare, for instance, the beginning of Absalon’s sermon (section a above) with the opening of book 1, cap. 1 of the *De laudibus*: “Tres salutationes celebriores cæteris in Evangelio reperimus. Prima est Gabrielis Archangeli ad Mariam, Luc. I, 28. Secunda, Mariæ ad Elizabeth, Luc. I, 20. Tertia Christi ad Apostolos post resurrectionem, de qua agitur, Joan. XX, 19, quæ sæpius ab ipso Domino legitur repetita. Hac autem triplici salutatione triplex concordia designatur, videlicet Angeli ad hominem per primam, hominis ad hominem per secundam, Dei ad hominem per tertiam” (*Alberti Magni opera omnia*, ed. Auguste and Émile Borgnet, vol. 36 [Paris: Vives, 1898], 5). Richard seems to have known the identity of his source, since another excerpt from the sermon is accompanied by the marginal note “Abbas absalon” both in the incunable (*Opus insigne de laudibus beate Marie virginis, alias Mariale appellatum*, ed. Martin Flach [Strasbourg, 1493], fol. 10r) and in at least one early manuscript (Troyes, Bibliothèque municipale 828 [s. xiii/xiv], vol. 1, fol. 12r). The latter is described and digitized on the website of the Bibliothèque municipale of Troyes, accessed July 1, 2013, <http://patrimoine.grand-troyes.fr>.



source shows that the author of the Old Norse homily was familiar with the same texts as thirteenth-century religious writers in mainland Europe.

## 5. Conclusions

The evidence of AM 655 XXVII 4to therefore suggests that not all later Old Norse homilists were content with simply copying or imitating early medieval texts, and that they considered more modern texts to be at least potentially useful for the pastoral care of their audiences. If this attitude was common among preachers in later medieval Norway and Iceland, we must also view younger copies of the earliest Old Norse homilies in a different light. If Old Norse homilists preached from the sermons of authors like Absalon of Springiersbach, the fact that they also continued to preach from the older texts may not indicate antiquarian tendencies, but rather that they considered these texts to be as relevant and useful to their congregations as the newer works. However, whether there are more traces of the use of Latin works from the twelfth century and later in the Old Norse homiletic corpus remains to be seen. An investigation of these matters will require editions and studies of neglected homily manuscripts, especially those of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. I hope that this essay stimulates some interest in such texts, since it appears that there remains a great deal to find in them.<sup>84</sup>

## 6. Postscript

After submitting the present article, I was able to identify another, complete copy of the Old Norse Annunciation homily that I discuss in section 4. This copy survives on pp. 235–238 of AM 624 4to (ca. 1500). I hope to edit this text, together with some other unpublished homiletic works from the same manuscript, in the near future. I have not yet been able to make

<sup>84</sup> I owe thanks to Hallgrímur Ámundason, who gave advice on a number of points and also kindly provided me with a copy of his B.A. thesis, of which I make extensive use above. I am also grateful to the Arnamagnæan Institute in Copenhagen for providing me with digital images of AM 655 XXVII 4to. David McDougall, Ian McDougall, and Andy Orchard gave useful feedback on earlier versions of this essay. Finally, I thank the organizers and participants of the 7th Annual Fiske Conference on Medieval Icelandic Studies at Cornell University, where I presented part of my research.

a detailed comparison between the AM 655 XXVII and AM 624 versions of the homily, and consequently I have not noted the readings of the latter manuscript in the discussion above (with the exception of footnote 64, where the AM 624 reading gives necessary support for an emendation). Furthermore, the concluding portion of the homily, which survives in AM 624 but not in AM 655 XXVII, does not seem to draw on Absalon's *Sermo festivalis* 22 as the rest of the homily does, and so provides little new information about the Icelandic homilist's adaptation of this source.

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## EFNISÁGRIP

Tólftu aldar heimildir að baki fornorrænum hómílium: uppsprettur AM 655 XXVII 4to

*Lykilorð*: Hómíliur, latneskar heimildir, *De sex alis cherubim*, boðun Maríu, Absalon Sprinckirbacensis.

Rannsóknir á efniviði og uppsprettum norrænna hómíliá hafa nær allar einblínt á texta sem ritaðir voru fyrir 1200 eða varðveittir eru í eldri handritum, íslenskum og norskum. Jafnan er unnt að sýna fram á að þessir elstu textar styðist við rit kirkjuféðranna eða önnur latnesk rit ármíðalda. Hins vegar er mikið rannsóknarverk óunnið hvað varðar hómíliur sem varðveittar eru í yngri miðaldahandritum, s.s. AM 655 XXVII 4to sem talið frá um 1300; í greininni er gerð grein fyrir latneskum fyriryndum tveggja textahluta þess. Hinn fyrri,

óheil upptalning kristinna dyggða, sækir efni sitt í *De sex alis cherubim*, tólftu aldar ritgerð sem er að líkindum eftir Clement frá Llanthony. Hinn síðari, hómíla um boðun Maríu, er að mestu byggður á latneskri predikun hins viktorínska Absalons frá Springiersbach frá síðari hluta tólftu aldar. Áhrif þessara latnesku heimilda á íslenskar hómilíur benda til þess að íslenskir hómilíuhöfundar hafi ekki allir verið jafnihaldssamir í efnistöfum og fræðimenn hafa jafnan vera látið og að þeir hafi þvert á móti nýtt sér óhikað yngri eða samtímalega guðfræði og hómilíur.

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