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Leiðarvísir. Its Genre and Sources, with Particular Reference to the Description of Rome

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Abstract: PhD Thesis, University of Durham 2012

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This thesis examines *Leiðarvísir*, a medieval itinerary from Iceland to the Holy Land. The itinerary indicates stops and distances, but is also rich in significant information on the places along the route. *Leiðarvísir* has been attributed to the twelfth-century Abbot Nikulás of the Benedictine abbey of Munkaþverá in Iceland and the text has been considered to be a travel account based on the direct experiences gained by the abbot during a journey. An analysis, however, of all the datable *termini* present in the itinerary demonstrates that the attribution of the whole itinerary to Nikulás cannot be maintained.

Having taken into consideration the most relevant criteria and definitions required to categorise a text as 'travel writing' and as a 'travel account', this thesis will then show that *Leiðarvísir* does not share any of the distinguishing genre features typical of a travel account, and that it should rather be classified as an impersonal guide. Finally, the thesis focuses on the description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir*, putting it in the context of other medieval descriptions of Rome. Not only does this contextualization make evident that the description of Rome is largely based on written sources, but it also proves that some of its details are incompatible with a twelfth-century dating and with its attribution to Nikulás. It emerges that *Leiðarvísir* is a work composed by an erudite scholar using written sources, and that it was probably successively enriched and updated with relevant information by one or more later scribes.

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

University of Durham

Department of English Studies

2012

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Abbreviations used

CCCM = Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis

CCSL = Corpus Christianorum Series Latina

CSEL = Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum

DLE = Descriptio Lateranensis ecclesiae

IEUR = Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae

ÍF = Íslenzk Fornrit

MUR = Mirabilia urbis Romae

PG = Migne, Jacques Paul (ed.). 1857-1866. *Patrologiae cursus completus: series graeca*, 161 vols (Paris: Migne).

PL = Migne, Jacques Paul (ed.). 1844-1864. *Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina*, 221 vols (Paris: Migne).

VZ = Valentini, Roberto, and Giuseppe Zucchetti (eds.). 1940-53. *Codice topografico della citta di Roma*, Fonti per la storia d'Italia 81, 88, 90, 91, 4 vols (Rome: Tipografia del Senato).

Acknowledgements

For Vittorio Marani,

my Father,

who sailed to where

er mare è tanto fonno,

e nun se tocca.

Introduction

This thesis originates from a first impression that turned out not to be misleading. It took some years of extensive research to strengthen that first impression and base it on scholarly arguments, but it eventually proved to be right. When it comes to finding a partner, first impressions count – and a doctoral thesis is a long-term partner demanding constant and often undivided attention.

Having developed an interest in the topography of medieval Rome, in 2005 I was reading descriptions of contemporary pilgrims and travellers who came *ad limina apostolorum*. Encountering *Leiðarvísir* was inevitable. I had often found references to this Old Norse 'itinerary' from Iceland to Holy Land, so I knew that it also contained an extensive description of Rome. Scholars concur in defining *Leiðarvísir* as an account written by Nikulás, first abbot of the Benedictine abbey of Munkaþverá in northern Iceland. There is widespread agreement that Abbot Nikulás wrote this 'travel account' shortly after his return from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the late fifties of the twelfth century, and that the text is largely based on the direct experiences he had gained during that journey. When I first read *Leiðarvísir*, I was immediately captivated by the variety of information in this fascinating text: not only does it contain detailed descriptions of distances, times and stopping places of routes and alternative routes to Rome and to the Holy Land (which a medieval traveller could follow perfectly to their destination), but it also intersperses this geographical information with both historical references and fantastic stories and anecdotes.

And yet, fascinated as I was, my first impression was that *Leiðarvísir* did not look at all to me like a travel account. It did not bear that Wittgensteinian 'family resemblance' that one can notice between many of the accounts written by medieval travellers and pilgrims I had been working on. It seemed to me an erudite text drawing largely on written sources, rather than a travelogue based on the subjective experiences of an individual journey. The present thesis originates from a closer examination and development of that initial reflection.

The first step was to select a section of the itinerary in order to analyse it in detail so as to ascertain the possible influence of written sources. The natural choice was to focus on the description of Rome, the most extensive city description in *Leiðarvísir*. Not only had I already conducted some researches into medieval travel

accounts, but I could also rely on a direct knowledge of my native city (where I was then still living). A comparison between the description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir* and some of the most popular medieval descriptions and guides to Rome, as well as references to Rome in the hagiographic tradition, produced encouraging preliminary results. These were presented in a paper given in 2006 at the Thirteenth International Saga Conference in Durham. The following year that paper became the basis for the project of this doctoral dissertation.

My research is based on a twin-track methodological approach. On the one hand, I have taken into consideration the vast literature on the subject, in order to identify the most relevant criteria and definitions accepted by scholars to categorise a text as 'travel writing' and as a 'travel account'. These criteria and definitions have been applied to medieval travel accounts and to *Leiðarvísir*. It has emerged that *Leiðarvísir* does not share any of the distinguishing features typical of a travel account, but that it should rather be classified as an impersonal guide.

On the other hand, I have focused on the description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir*, trying to put it in the context of other relevant descriptions of Rome. In addition to the many sources containing historical or geographical information about the city of Rome, I have taken into consideration texts describing the city more specifically, such as medieval guides and descriptions of the city, but also accounts of medieval travellers. Not only has this contextualization made evident that the description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir* is largely based on written sources, but it has also shown that some of its details are incompatible with a twelfth-century dating and with its attribution to Nikulás.

The structure of the thesis follows the tracks along which the research has been carried out. Chapter 1 serves the function of a general introduction to *Leiðarvísir*. After a review of the scholarship, it describes the manuscript tradition of the itinerary and the primary sources referring to Abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá. Chapter 1 also includes a geographical description of the routes indicated in the itinerary. This has been provided in order to have an internal reference in the present thesis, but also to summarise some of the most important questions discussed by scholars, giving the corresponding modern names of the toponyms listed in the itinerary. A digital pan-map (Marani 2011: http://g.co/maps/czvzx) can be consulted as a help to locating the place-names mentioned in the itinerary. Initially, I created this pan-map only to collect notes and observations on the geography of the itinerary,

but I soon realized that it was far more detailed and effective than any traditional map could be. The description of the entire itinerary has also made it possible to consider the datable *termini* of the itinerary all together. It has emerged that several items of information disseminated in the itinerary are historically incompatible with a mid-twelfth-century dating of *Leiðarvísir* and, consequently, that its attribution to Abbot Nikulás is extremely problematic. This is discussed at the end of Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 considers the question of the genre of *Leiðarvísir*, giving a theoretical background for its classification and providing textual comparisons with medieval travel accounts. It will be shown that *Leiðarvísir* should be classified as an impersonal guide to the Holy Land and not as a travel account composed by an individual traveller on the basis of his personal experiences. Identification of the written sources used by *Leiðarvísir* for the description of the Holy Land would have exceeded the purposes (and the limits) of the present work, but some relevant textual parallels between *Leiðarvísir* and twelfth- and thirteenth-century Latin guides are given by way of example at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 3 examines the description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir*. A large part of the chapter is dedicated to an analysis of the descriptions of St John Lateran and of St Peter's. These are the richest in detail in *Leiðarvísir* and have therefore made it possible to identify more precisely written sources or analogues of the Icelandic itinerary. *Leiðarvísir* has been compared not only with Latin sources, but also with relevant references to and descriptions of the city of Rome present in Old Norse sources. A translation of the entire description of Rome has been given at the beginning of Chapter 3 for internal reference, and to give an overview of its structure. While the most relevant conclusions drawn in Chapter 2 are summarised at its end, the conclusions of Chapter 3 are included in the general conclusions of this thesis (Chapter 4). All translations in the text are mine unless otherwise indicated. Quotations from secondary sources in languages other than English are given in translation in the text, with a footnote giving the original in full. When relevant terms or definitions are discussed, the original is given in the text

Drafts of §3.7.2, 3.10, §3.14 and §3.16 have been accepted for publication as separate articles (Marani 2009 and Marani 2012, forthcoming). Although Marani (2012) shows that the list of the Lateran relics in *Leiðarvísir* could not be the work of Nikulás, neither article considers the problematic nature of the dating of the entire itinerary and the attribution to Nikulás is still maintained, as they focus on single

passages in the description of Rome. Questioning the authorship and the genre of the itinerary would have gone far beyond the purposes and the size of a single article: it has grown to a Ph.D. thesis.

1 *Leiðarvísir* and Abbot Nikulás

For the last two centuries, *Leiðarvísir* has been the subject of great interest by scholars from a variety of disciplines: not only Old Norse scholars, but also historians, geographers, toponymists and scholars of pilgrimage have studied and analysed this work. Since numerous references to the literature on the itinerary will be made in the course of the first Chapter, it can be useful to give a short picture of the most important scholarly contributions to *Leiðarvísir*. The complete title of the work is *Leiðarvísir ok borgaskipan,* 'itinerary and list of cities' (§1.2.1). The traditional 'short title' *Leiðarvísir,* which is commonly adopted among scholars, will be used hereafter.

1.1 A Review of Scholarship on *Leiðarvísir*

In the eighteenth century, we find a noteworthy reference to *Leiðarvísir* in the *Historia literaria Islandiae* by Hálfdan Einarsson (1786: 134), where he mentions a *Tractatus geographicus* preserved in the Arnamagnæan Library. Hálfdan Einarsson does not consider *Leiðarvísir* an autonomous text within this geographical treatise but, interestingly, distinguishes between the author of the *Tractatus* and Abbot Nikulás: according to the *explicit* (see §1.2.1) the author would have received *ex ore Nicolai Abbatis*, 'from Abbot Nikulás's lips', the *notitiam*, 'the information', on which the treatise is grounded (Hálfdan Einarsson 1786: 134). Finnur Jónsson, bishop of Skálholt, in his *Historia ecclesiastica Islandiae* (1772-78: IV 41) refers to Abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá as a *non incelebris poëta*, 'a poet not unknown to fame', but not as the author of *Leiðarvísir*; Finnur Jónsson (1772-78: IV 30-31) was the first to hypothesize the existence of a 'second' Abbot Nikulás of Þingeyrar, to whom, however, he does not attribute *Leiðarvísir*. In his *Historie af Danmark*, Peter Frederik Suhm (1792: 47, 109) transcribed from MS AM 194 8vo (the only manuscript containing the whole itinerary, see §1.2) some significant passages of the geographical treatise and of *Leiðarvísir*, attributing the whole *Geographia* to Abbot Nikulás.

The first complete edition of *Leiðarvísir* was published in 1821 by Erich Christian Werlauff in his *Symbolae ad geographiam medii ævi ex monumentis islandicis*. Werlauff, who also edited the description of Europe preceding the

itinerary in the manuscript (Werlauff 1821: 9-15), translated the text into Latin as well as providing it with a valuable commentary. Werlauff attributed *Leiðarvísir* to Nikulás Sæmundarson abbot of Þingeyrar; although he also suggests interesting references by *Leiðarvísir* to written sources, Werlauff implies in his notes that the itinerary was based on Abbot Nikulás's direct experiences. Werlauff's comments, which had a long-lasting influence on scholars, were thus mainly focused on checking the historicity of the facts narrated in the text and on identifying the places that it mentions. This tendency to interpret *Leiðarvísir* as an account of a real journey, identifying the geographical correspondences of its stops along the itinerary, has prevailed in almost all the following secondary literature (see §2.1). Carl Christian Rafn included in the *Antiquités Russes* (1850-52: 405-415) a part of Werlauff's text of *Leiðarvísir,* adding notes and comments. Paul Riant (1865: 80-92) described in his *Expéditions et pèlerinages des scandinaves en Terre Sainte* the route to the Holy Land included in *Leiðarvísir* as an example of the *Rómavegr*, 'the route to Rome', which was one of the possible itineraries chosen by Scandinavian pilgrims. In his *Den oldnorske og oldislanske litteraturs historie*, Finnur Jónsson (1894-1902: II 116, 948) considers Nikulás an important figure in twelfth-century Iceland, highlighting that his *Leiðarvísir* is the only geographical work for which we know the name of the author. Bogi Th. Melsteð (1907-15) dedicated to Nikulás and *Leiðarvísir* some pages of his essay on 'Ferðir, Siglingar og Samgöngur milli Íslands og annara landa á dögum þjóðveldisins', 'Journeys, Sailing and Communication Between Iceland and Other Lands in the Time of the Commonwealth', making important points on its composition: Bogi (1907-15: 799) considers it likely, but not certain, that Nikulás based his itinerary on a real journey, dismissing the possibility that he can be identified with Nikulás Sæmundarson abbot of Þingeyrar.

Kristian Kålund edited in 1908 the text of MS AM 194 8vo for the first volume of *Alfræði Íslenzk*. Kålund's semi-diplomatic edition is still the only complete critical edition of the manuscript. His edition is preceded by an introduction that includes a description of the manuscript and historical information on the text. In 1913 Kålund published a translation into Danish of *Leiðarvísir*, followed by a detailed commentary of the itinerary, which is mainly based on geographical and historical observations. In 1933 Arrigo Solmi, using Werlauff's edition (1821), made interesting geographical and historical observations on the Italian section of the itinerary, the part between the Alps and Rome.

In 1940 Francis Magoun published the first in a series of important articles on *Leiðarvísir*: Magoun (1940) analysed the description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir*, juxtaposing it with a study of the itinerary made by Archbishop Sigeric of Canterbury, probably in 990, in order to receive his *pallium* from Pope John XV (989-96). Magoun (1940: 277-287) translated into English the Roman section, identifying the places mentioned by the itinerary and adding historical and archaeological comments. In a short article published in the same year, Magoun (1940b) analysed the meaning of six words of difficult interpretation contained in *Leiðarvísir*. In 1943 Magoun (1943) considered the presence in *Leiðarvísir* of motifs and references connected to Germanic heroic legend; in a second article (1943b), he analysed the passage mentioning the sites of Hedeby and Schleswig. In 1944 Magoun translated and annotated the 'Road to Rome', the first part of the itinerary, between its start in Iceland and the Holy City, identifying stops and places mentioned along the route and adding a translation into English.

The *Kulturhistorisk Leksikon for nordisk middelalder* included *Leiðarvísir* under the entry 'Itinerarier' (Holtsmark 1956-78). In 1967 Marco Scovazzi translated into Italian the Italian section of the itinerary, describing the route through Italy and adding essential explicative notes. A detailed analysis of the Mediterranean route was given by Bruce Gelsinger (1972), who showed the accuracy of the information, especially the distances, contained in this section of the itinerary. In 1973 Heinz Joachim Graf published a normalized edition, based on Kålund's text (1908), of passages from *Leiðarvísir* and from the description of the world that precedes the itinerary in the manuscript. He also translated the text into German, adding some essential explicative comments. Benjamin Z. Kedar and Christian Westergård-Nielsen (1978-79) examined the description of the Holy Land and Jerusalem in *Leiðarvísir*. They evaluated the information on the basis of archaeological and historical evidence and compared it to medieval pilgrim guides of the Holy Land. In 1981 Omeljan Pritsak added to his *The Origin of Rus'* (1981: 705-719)[1] a translation into English of the entire itinerary, describing *Leiðarvísir* as 'the most detailed and informative of all the medieval itineraries' (1981: 511). In 1983 Joyce Hill completed

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[1] For the section from Iceland to Rome Pritsak used Magoun's translations (Magoun 1940; 1944).

the work begun by Francis Magoun, translating the second part of the itinerary into English and annotating it. Hill (1993) is also the author of the entry '*Leiðarvísir*' in *Medieval Scandinavia*: *An Encyclopedia*. Two years later, Fabrizio Raschellà (1985-86) published a normalized edition, based on Kålund's text (1908), of the Italian section of *Leiðarvísir* and of all the passages referring to Italy in AM 194 8vo. In a later article Raschellà (1995) also analysed the influence of Germanic heroic legend in the description of the itinerary. In 1988 Kålund's text was edited in modern Icelandic orthography with an essential commentary (Örnólfur Thorsson 1988: III 54-61).

In his *Altnordische Kosmographie*, Rudolf Simek (1990: 264-280) was the first to consider *Leiðarvísir* not as an isolated travel account but in the context of other Old Norse geographical and cosmological works. Simek made a diplomatic edition of *Leiðarvísir* and translated it into German (Simek 1990: 479-90). The text of *Leiðarvísir* in the present thesis is cited from Simek's edition with the indication of line numbers. An annotated translation of the itinerary into French with a commentary and introduction was published in 2000 by Daniel Lacroix. In 2006 Janus Møller Jensen commented on the itinerary, making an accurate picture of the primary sources referring to Abbot Nikulás and his itinerary, and discussing the question of its dating. In his dissertation *Skandinavier unterwegs in Europa*, 'Scandinavians travelling in Europe', Dominik Waßenhoven considered *Leiðarvísir* an example of a travel account (2006: 56-60), analysing the routes described by Abbot Nikulás (2006: 74-85). In a later essay, Waßenhoven (2008) examined *Leiðarvísir* as a source of practical information about pilgrims, highlighting the geographical details contained in the itinerary as well as its *literarische Anklänge* 'literary echos' (2008: 44-49), and adding in the appendix a complete translation of the itinerary into German. The possible written sources for the description of relevant places in the Roman section of the itinerary were analysed in an article (Marani 2009) that anticipates some of the conclusions included in Chapter §3 of the present thesis. A translation into Italian of the entire itinerary was published in 2010 (Marani 2010).

1.2   Manuscript 194 8vo of the Arnamagnæan Collection

The complete text of *Leiðarvísir* is attested on folios 11r-16r of the parchment Manuscript 194 8vo of the Arnamagnæan Collection in Copenhagen. MS AM 194

8vo consists of fifty-two leaves, measuring 140 mm x 107 mm, which are divided into seven gatherings. Each gathering comprises eight leaves, with the exception of the first and the fifth gathering, both of which consist of six leaves.

After the third leaf of the first gathering (fol. 3) there is a lacuna of two leaves. One gathering is probably missing after fol. 6 (Kålund 1908: xix). Kålund (1908: i) believes that a lacuna of two leaves is also probable between the third and fourth leaf of the fifth gathering (fols 33-34), considering the textual discontinuity between fol. 33^v and fol. 34^r. The leaves of the manuscript are dark and crinkled, and several are in poor condition due to damp and wear. The condition of the manuscript and whitish traces of decorations on fol. 1^r, probably illuminated initials, suggest that MS AM 194 8vo is possibly a palimpsest (Kålund 1908: i). The text is written continuously, and the initials are black, though on fols 34-36 only they have a faint red decoration. There are no titles for the main parts, which are not separated with an increased space.

MS AM 194 8vo is one of the very few medieval Icelandic manuscripts of which we know exactly the date and the place of composition (for other examples see Guðvarður Gunnlaugsson 2004 and Stefán Karlsson 2008: 7-10). On fol. 33^v we find the information that the manuscript was completed in 1387: *Enn þa er þetta var skrifat, var lidith fra hingat-burdinum M. CCC. LXXXVII vetr,* 'But when this work was written, 1387 years had passed since the birth of Christ' (Kålund 1908: 54$^{9-11}$). After this the scribe, using a ciphertext, indicates his name, Óláfr Ormsson, his status of priest and the place where the work was completed, the farm of Geirrøðareyri (now Narfeyri), on the peninsula of Snæfellsnes in western Iceland (Kålund 1908: 54$^{11-15}$).

On fol. 34^v begins a second hand, which stops at the end of fol. 36^v. On fols 7^v, 13^v, and 37^r there are marginal notes written by this same second hand. It is also possible to identify the second scribe because on fol. 37^v – with the same cryptography that Óláfr Ormsson, the first scribe, uses on fol. 33^v – he informs us in a marginal note that *Bryniolfr Steinradar son ritade þetta,* 'Brynjólfr Steinráðarson wrote this work' (Kålund 1908: 62, n8). It is likely that the second scribe was also a priest, because the first of his marginal notes on fol. 7^v is written in Latin (Kålund 1908: ii).

MS AM 194 8vo includes a variety of scientific and historical texts and is 'like a small encyclopaedia, which spans all the sciences known at the time' (Kålund

1908: xviii).[2] It is structured like a *compendium*, a 'micro-library' (the type of medieval encyclopaedic literature most common in the Scandinavian world), rather than one of the voluminous *specula* of the whole world common in continental Europe; MS AM 194 8vo betrays 'a strong interest in natural history', including texts on geography, history, computistics, medicine and natural history, and annals (Clunies Ross and Simek 1993: 165). The first gathering (fols 1-6), containing a small computistic treatise, is attested in a better and more complete version in Reykjavík, MS GKS 1812 4to, which had already been edited by Larsson (1883), so that Kålund (1908: xviii-xix) excluded it from his edition, which begins with fol. 7ʳ. It is likely that the original second gathering of MS AM 194 8vo got lost, because the second half of the treatise, attested in MS GKS 1812 4to (Larsson 1883: 18¹²-40), is not preserved in MS AM 194 8vo (Kålund 1908: xix). *Leiðarvísir* is preceded, on fols 7ʳ-8ᵛ, by a description of the Paradise of the Christian tradition, followed by an account of the division of the world among Noah's descendants (8ᵛ-9ᵛ). On fols 9ᵛ-11ʳ we find a small 'description of the world', where the three parts of the known world, Asia, Africa and Europe, are depicted. After the 'description of the world' there follows *Leiðarvísir* till fol. 16ʳ. Immediately after *Leiðarvísir*, MS AM 194 8vo contains a description of some of the most important European cities and sites of pilgrimage (16ʳ-17ᵛ), concluded by an extended description of the city of Jerusalem and its surroundings (17ᵛ-19ʳ). Kålund (1908: xix-xxxi; see also handrit.is 2012: AM 194 8vo) gives a full description of the contents of the manuscript.

1.2.1 *Leiðarvísir* as an Autonomous Text

Although in MS AM 194 8vo we do not find any clear textual or orthographic signal of the beginning of *Leiðarvísir* as an autonomous text, there is general agreement among scholars that the text begins on fol. 11ʳ with the indication of the time necessary to sail round Iceland: *Sva er [sa]gt, at umhuerfis Island se vii [dægra si]gling,* 'it is said that the circumnavigation of Iceland takes seven days' (l. 1). Werlauff (1821: 4) considered it unlikely that the short *summa geographica* was written by the same author as the itinerary (contrary to Hálfdán Einarsson 1777: 134;

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[2] '*Som en lille encyclopædi, der spænder over alle da kendte videnskabe.*'

and Suhm 1792: 47, 109). In the *Antiquitates Americanae* (1837: 280) the passage referring to the circumnavigation of Iceland was already defined as the *introductio* of the itinerary. In his translation of and commentary on *Leiðarvísir* (1913: 54, n.1), Kålund comes out more decidedly than in his edition of MS AM 194 8vo (1908: xix) in favour of the opinion that the description of the world preceding *Leiðarvísir* on fols 9$^\mathrm{v}$-11$^\mathrm{r}$ (8^{27}-12^{25}) is a separate text from the itinerary. The description of the world is attested in two other medieval manuscripts, on fol. 1$^\mathrm{r}$ of Copenhagen, MS AM 736 I 4to (dated about 1300, Kålund 1908: xxxiii), and on fol. 1$^\mathrm{r}$ of Copenhagen, MS AM 47 fol (about 1300, Kålund 1908: xxxii-xxxiii), neither of which includes *Leiðarvísir* (these versions are edited by Simek 1990: 429-33). Further evidence *Leiðarvísir* begins on fol. 11$^\mathrm{r}$ of MS AM 194 8vo is provided by a parallel text of the first part of the itinerary attested on fol. 1 of the parchment manuscript Copenhagen, MS AM 736 II 4to, dated around 1400 (Kålund 1908: xxxiii). The version of *Leiðarvísir* attested in MS AM 736 II 4to stops at the description of Luni (l. 53), contains a few variants and shows some errors, indicating that the text attested in MS AM 194 8vo is more reliable (Simek 1990: 272). It is significant, however, that the fragment of *Leiðarvísir* attested in MS AM 736 II 4to begins with the same passage that is generally considered the incipit of *Leiðarvísir* in MS AM 194 8vo (Kålund 1908: 12^{26}), thus confirming the hypothesis that the itinerary begins there with the indication of the time necessary to circumnavigate Iceland. Kålund (1913: 63) observes that the fact that Margaret of Ølsemagle is referred to as a saint in the description of the world (Kålund 1908: 12^4) confirms that this must be considered a separate text from *Leiðarvísir*. St Margaret of Ølsemagle died in 1176 and was not canonized till 1178. This would be incompatible with the traditional dating of the itinerary, but, as will be shown below (see §1.5), there are other elements in *Leiðarvísir* that are not compatible with this dating. The mention of St Margaret is thus not enough to separate the description of the world from *Leiðarvísir*. A textual comparison between the witnesses of *Leiðarvísir* and those attesting the description of the world is sufficient to locate the beginning of the itinerary on fol. 11$^\mathrm{r}$ (l. 1).[3]

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[3] On this aspect, see also Simek (1990: 271-72), Møller Jensen (2004: 285-86), Waßenhoven (2006: 58-59). The structure of the itinerary and the occurrence of the wording *svá er sagt* in other

In addition to MS AM 194 8vo and to MS AM 736 II 4to, which are the only medieval manuscripts containing *Leiðarvísir*, we also have three eighteenth-century copies of the text: Copenhagen, MS AM 766 b 4to, a copy of MS AM 194 8vo made by Árni Magnússon at the beginning of the eighteenth century (Kålund 1908: xxxiv; handrit.is 2012: AM 766 b 4to); Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, MS NKS 127 fol., pp. 18-38, another eighteenth-century copy of MS AM 194 8vo; and Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, MS NKS 359 4to, pp. 3-13, an eighteenth-century copy of MS AM 736 II 4to (Simek 1990: 478).

Unlike its beginning, the *explicit* of *Leiðarvísir* is clearly signalled in MS AM 194 8vo. On fol. 16^r, after a short description of a return itinerary from the Holy Land to Denmark, we find important information on the author of the text and an indication of its conclusion:

> Leidarvisir sea & borga skipan & allr þessi frodleikr er Ritinn ath fyrirsogn Nicholas abota, er bedi var vitr & vidfregr, minnigr & margfrodr, Ráduis & rettordr & lykr þar þessi frasogn. (ll. 179-82)
>
> This itinerary and list of cities and all this knowledge is written under the dictation of Abbot Nicholas, who was both wise and famous, with a good memory and learned in many things, wise and truthful, and there ends this narration.

The *explicit* of *Leiðarvísir* is clearly defined in the textual *continuum* of the manuscript by the conclusion *ok lykr þar þessi frásögn,* 'and there ends this narration' (l. 182). The *explicit* cannot be considered a part of the itinerary itself. It must be a passage added by a later scribe, who wrote it after the author's death, as a preterite is used to refer to its author and to depict in an encomiastic tone the qualities of the abbot. As Lacroix (2000: 246) has noted, the qualities of the abbot are enumerated with a display of alliteration: the binary formulae of epithets extolling the qualities of Nikulás begin with the same consonant (*vitr-vidfrægr*; *minnigr-margfróðr*; *ráðvís-réttorðr*).

Besides marking its end, the explicit also gives two important pieces of information on the itinerary: it gives indications on a possible definition of its genre

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important passages of the itinerary is further evidence that this is the beginning of *Leiðarvísir* (see §4.2).

and names its author. The complete definition of the work is *Leiðarvísir ok borgaskipan,* 'itinerary and list of cities'. The term '*Leiðarvísir*' will be here translated, interpreted and referred to as 'itinerary' and not as 'guidebook' or 'guide' (as e.g. Kristjánsson 1992: 133 and Hill 1983: 181). The reasons for this translation choice, which is also a definition of genre, will be better explained in §2, where the genre of *Leiðarvísir* will be analysed in the context of other medieval itineraries and travel accounts. Here, it will suffice to recall that this is the translation chosen by the *Icelandic-English Dictionary* (Cleasby and Vigfusson 1957: s.v.), and that Johan Fritzner in his *Ordbog over det gamle norske sprog* translates *leiðarvísir* by the Latin word *itinerarium*, explaining that a it is *a Beskrivelse over de Reiser man kan gjøre, de Veje man derunder kan følge, og de Mærkværdigheder man der kan faa at se*, 'description of the journeys one can do, including the roads one can follow, and the curiosities one can get to see' (Fritzner 1973: s.v.). In §2.5.1.1 the importance of the second definition that is given in the *explicit* will be emphasised, the term *frásögn,* 'narration', which might even be used with good reason as a title for the entire work instead of *Leiðarvísir*. In the explicit of *Leiðarvísir* we also find a second essential piece of information, the only preserved direct reference to the author of the text, which is said to have been written *ath fyrir sogn Nicholas abbóta*, 'under the dictation of Abbot Nikulás' (l. 180).

1.3 Abbot Nikulás

The identification of the 'Abbot Nikulás' mentioned in the explicit has not always been undisputed among scholars and can only be based on sources external to MS AM 194 8vo. The author of *Leiðarvísir* is now commonly identified as Nikulás Bergsson, first abbot of the Benedictine abbey of Munkaþverá in northern Iceland (founded in 1155), but for a long time scholars attributed the itinerary to a figure whose historical existence was never proved, Nikulás Sæmundarson, second abbot of the abbey of Þingeyrar.

1.3.1 Nikulás, the First Abbot of Munkaþverá

An abbot Nikulás is mentioned as the first abbot of Munkaþverá in the lists of Icelandic abbots that were preserved in the *máldagar*. The *máldagar*, 'deeds', were inventories of their property that, according to Icelandic ecclesiastical law, every church had to record once a year (see Cormack 1994: 25-29). Nikulás of Munkaþverá is the only abbot mentioned in the lists who has this name. A list of

Abbots preserved in Reykjavík, MS AM 415 4to on fol 11ᵛ (dated *c.* 1310, see handrit.is 2012: AM 415 4to) states that *Nikulass hallbiarnarson* was the first abbot of Munkaþverá (*Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1896: III 28, n. 12); Reykjavík, MS AM 731 4to (written in the first half of the seventeenth century, handrit.is 2012: AM 731 4to) on fol. 17ʳ indicates a *Nichulás* (*Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1896: III 310, n. 255) as the first abbot, without adding the patronymic; Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket, MS 5 perg. fol. (dated *c.* 1360, see *Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1896: III 150-51) mentions *Niculaas Bergsson* as the second abbot of *þveraa*, indicating a certain *hoskulldr*, who is not known from other sources, as the first abbot (*Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1896: III 153). Later historians gave credence to this testimony (for example Magnússon 1897: 193), which is, however, probably due to a scribal error (see below).

Three Icelandic annals, chronological lists of important events in Iceland and abroad (Simek and Pálsson 2007: 13-14), record that the Benedictine abbey of Munkaþverá was founded in 1155: the *Annales regii,* the *Lögmnanns annáll* and the *Islandske Annaler* register for that year the foundation of a *claustr at Þverá*, a 'cloister in Þverá' (Storm 1888: 115, 253, 322). The *Oddveria Annal* reports the foundation of the abbey in 1154 (Storm 1888: 474). The *Guðmundar saga byskups* reports that the abbey was founded by the bishop Björn Gilsson (1147-62) (*Biskupa sögur* 1858-78: 488). The same saga relates that a Nikulás Bergþorsson was *samtíða*, 'contemporary', to abbot Þorlákr of Þykkvabær, and that he was the first abbot of Munkaþverá (*Biskupa sögur* 1858-78: I 407, n. 2). Nikulás is mentioned as abbot of Munkaþverá in the *Húngrvaka*, 'The Appetizer', a bishops' saga narrating the lives of the first five bishops of Skálholt between 1056-1176 (*Biskupa sögur* 1858-78: I 57-86; see Simek and Pálsson 2007: 199-200). The *Húngrvaka* reports that on 15 June 1155 Nikulás took part as abbot of Munkaþverá in the consecration of the new cathedral of Skálholt, together with Björn Gilsson (*Biskupa sögur* 1858-78: I 82).

Hoskulldr could have been abbot of Munkaþverá only for a very short time, since in June 1155 Nikulás was already in office, and the abbey was founded in the same year. The explanation can be found in a material error of the scribe. Hoskulldr is named as the last abbot of Þingeyrar in the list that in MS SKB perg. fol. 5 comes immediately before the list of the abbots in Munkaþverá (*Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1896: III 153). The indication of Hoskulldr as the first abbot of Munkaþverá must be due to an error of dittography of a later scribe, who copied twice the last name of the

list of abbots in Þingeyrar, also inserting it as the first in the list of Munkaþverá (Bogi Melsteð 1907-15, 801, n. 1; Jón Jóhannesson 1974: 194, n. 202; Møller Jensen 2004, 287-88). As recorded in the other preserved lists and in the *Guðmundar saga*, Nikulás can be considered the first abbot of Munkaþverá (Hill 1983: 176-77 and Simek 1990: 266 report the presence of Hoskulldr in the list without making a stand on the question). Primary sources mention, as seen above, three different patronymics for Nikulás: Hallbjarnarson (*Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1896: III 28, n. 12), Bergsson (*Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1896: III 153, n. 114) and Bergþorsson (*Biskupa sögur* 1858-78: I 407, n. 2). Although it cannot be said with any certainty what patronymic should be attributed to Nikulás, the use of 'Bergsson' prevails among contemporary scholars.[4]

1.3.2   Other Information about Nikulás's Biography in Primary Sources

Three Icelandic annals report that in 1154 Abbot Nikulás returned from a journey. The *Konungsannál,* the *Gottskálks annáll* and the annals of the *Flateyjarbók* register for that year the *Útkváma Nicholas abbóta*, 'the return [to Iceland] of Abbot Nikulás' (Storm 1888: 115, 322; *Flateyjarbok* 1860-68: III 515). Reykjavík, MS AM 412 4to, a compendium of information taken from other annals written in the seventeenth century (handrit.is 2012: AM 412 4to, see §1.3.3), register his return in 1153. This can be considered one of the many imprecisions of this late manuscript (Storm 1888: lii; Melsteð 1907-15: 800). In 1155, as we have seen (§1.3.1 above), Nikulás had already become abbot in Munkaþverá. Primary sources do not agree on the year of Nikulás's death. The annals in *Flateyjarbók* register his death in 1158 (*Flateyjarbok* 1860-68: III 515; see §1.3.3); the *Konungsannál*, the *Lögmanns annáll*, the *Gottskálks annáll* and the *Oddaverja annál* report that Nikulás died in 1159 (Storm 1888: 116, 253, 322, 475). The *Guðmundar saga* relates that Nikulás died *einum vetri fyrr en Guðmundr Arason var fœddr*, 'a year before Guðmundr Arason was born': bishop Guðmundr Arason was born in 1161, and therefore according to the saga Nikulás death was in 1160 (*Biskupa sögur* 1858-78: I 415, n. 1).

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[4] See for example Melsteð (1907-15: 799); Finnur Jónsson (1894-1902: II, 116, 948); Magoun (1944: 314); Ólason (1948-52: III, 488); Hill (1993: 390); Møller Jensen (2004: 287), Simek and Pálsson (2007: 246).

1.3.3 Nikulás Sæmundarson: A Problematic Attribution

In the nineteenth century the Abbot Nikulás mentioned in the *explicit* was erroneously identified as Nikulás Sæmundarson, second abbot of the abbey of Þingeyrar – a figure who probably never existed. It is useful to reconstruct the genesis and the historical background of this mistake because it still has some credit among scholars.

In his *Historia ecclesiastica Islandiae* (1772-78), Bishop Finnur Jónsson was the first to assume the existence of a 'second' Abbot Nikulás. Finnur Jónsson interpreted the entry of the annals of the *Flateyjarbók* that registered the return to Iceland of Abbot Nikulás in 1154 (*Flateyjarbok* 1860-68: III 515, see §1.3.2 above), assuming that this Nikulás could not be the same first abbot of Munkaþverá known from other sources (§1.3.1, §1.3.2, §1.3.4). The abbey of Munkaþverá was founded only in 1155 and Finnur inferred from this information that Nikulás could not already have held the title of abbot at the time of his return to Iceland in 1154.[5] Since in this year the only other existing Benedictine abbey in Iceland was Þingeyrar, Finnur concluded that the Nikulás mentioned in the *Flateyjarbók* must have been its abbot at the time:

> For it is clear that he [Nikulás] came into office before 1153; since at that time [1154] there was no other abbey in Iceland but Þingeyrar, it necessarily follows that he succeeded Vilmundur [Þórólfsson] around 1149. In 1153 he went abroad for business reasons, but he came back in 1154, he eventually died in 1158 and Asgrimur [Vestliðason] succeeded him. (Finnur Jónsson 1772-78: IV: 30-31)[6]

There is no reference in the sources to Finnur's assumption that Nikulás left Iceland in 1153. Bishop Finnur Jónsson could suppose that the Nikulás who returned to Iceland in 1154 was at the time the abbot of Þingeyrar because there is a lacuna in

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[5] The *Oddveria Annal* registers the foundation of Munkaþverá in 1154 (Storm 1888: 474). This date would demolish the argument of Finnur Jónsson in favour of the existence of two abbots Nikulás. Several other sources (§1.3.1), however, attest the foundation of the abbey in the 1155, which remains the most plausible dating for the foundation of the abbey.

[6] '*Nam manifestum est, eum officio ante annum 1153 initiatum fuisse; cum vero eodem tempore nullum aliud in Islandia exstiterit monasterium quam Thingeyrense, necessario sequi videtur, quod Vilmundo circa annum 1149 successerit. Anno 1153 negotiorum causa ad exteros abiit, sed 1154 reversus, tandem 1158 morte abreptus Asgrimo locum cesserit.*'

the list of abbots of Þingeyrar between 1148/49 and 1158 (*Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1857-1959: III 311; see Magnússon 1897: 176; and Møller Jensen 2004: 288, n. 26). Finnur, however, did not consider that the annals were written many years after the events that were registered in them took place, so that the scribe already knew that Nikulás would have received the title of abbot of Munkaþverá and added it to the entry of the *Flateyjarbók* (Møller Jensen 2004: 289; Waßenhoven 2006: 57). Since the death of Nikulás is reported in the annals of Flatey under the year 1158 (*Flateyjarbók* 1860-68: III 515; §1.3.2), Finnur concluded that Nikulás of Þingeyrar died that year, distinguishing between him and Nikulás of Munkaþverá, who died in 1160 (Finnur Jónsson 1772-78: IV 30-31, 41). Finnur (1772-78: IV 41) gathered the information on the death of Nikulás in 1160 from the *Guðmundar saga* (see §1.3.2). There is no need – and no evidence – to assume the existence of a second abbot Nikulás of Þingeyrar, as proposed by Finnur Jónsson: the sources only refer to one abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá, even though they give different years for the date of his death (*Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1857-1959: III 311, n. 2; Melsteð 1907-15: 800; Waßenhoven 2006: 57-58). The existence of an Abbot Nikulás of Þingeyrar is not attested in the sources, which do not show any incoherence that must be resolved by presupposing the assumption of a second Abbot Nikulás.

In the introduction to his edition of MS AM 194 8vo, Erich Werlauff (1821) was the first to use the patronymic Sæmundarson for the author of *Leiðarvísir*. Werlauff shares Finnur Jónsson's opinion that *duo nimirum in annalibus Islandorum occurrunt Abbates Nicolai*, 'two abbots Nikulás appear without doubt in the Icelandic annals' (Werlauff 1821: 4). Werlauff (1821: 4) refers to Bishop Finnur Jónsson (1772-78: IV 30, 41) for the 'first' Nikulás, abbot of Munkaþverá, giving 1160 as the year of his death. Werlauff (1821: 4) considers it more likely that the abbot Nikulás mentioned in the *explicit* of *Leiðarvísir* as its author was the 'second' Nikulás, *Abbas Thingörensis*, 'Abbot of Þingeyrar', proposing for the first time as his patronymic *Sæmundi filius*, Sæmundarson. Werlauff (1821: 4) reports the information that this Nikulás *Sæmundi filius* came back to Iceland from a journey in 1154 and died in 1159. The year of Nikulás's return to Iceland coincides with the entry from the annals of the *Flateyjarbók* reported by Finnur Jónsson (1772-78: IV 30; *Flateyjarbók* 1860-68: III 515). Werlauff, however, indicates a date for the death of Nikulás of Þingeyrar different from the one proposed by Finnur. While Finnur Jónsson (1772-78: IV 30) also refers to the annals of the *Flateyjarbók* (1860-68: III

515) to indicate 1158 as the year of his death, Werlauff (1821: 4) refers to *Ann.[ales] Island.[orum] ad h.[unc] a.[nnum] F. Johannæi H. eccl. Isl. IV. p. 36* as the source that recorded the death of Nikulás of Þingeyrar in 1159. In this passage of Finnur Jónsson's *Historia* (1772-78: IV 36) we find a reference to the *Annales Biörni de Skardsaa*, corresponding to MS AM 421 4to (also named as AM 429 4to 2A, see Kålund 1888-1894: I 627). The annals contained in AM 421 4to, a compendium from a variety of sources written around 1650 probably by Björn Jónsson of Skarðsá (Storm 1888: lii), report under the year 1153 the *Utkoma Nikulásar ábota Sæmundssonar*, 'the return of the abbot Nikulás Sæmundarson'; and under the year 1159 that '*Andaðist Nikulás ábóti ok Eyjólfr prestr Sæmundarson*', 'Abbot Nikulás and Eyjólfur Sæmundarson the priest breathed their last' (*Íslenzkir annálar* 1847: 64, 66). MS AM 421 4to is the only source attributing the patronymic Sæmundarson directly to Nikulás. One can only agree with Bogi Melsteð (1907-15: 800), who related Werlauff's mention of a Nikulás Sæmundarson to MS AM 421 4to and considered the patronymic in this manuscript as an error of transcription, a dittography caused by the reference, immediately after Nikulás, to Eyjólfr Sæmundarson (see also *Diplomatarium Islandicum* 1857-1959: III 311, n. 2). The entry of MS AM 421 4to under the year 1159 corresponds to the entry in the *Flateyjarbók* that records the death of Nikulás in 1158, when *Andadiz Nichulas aboti ok Eyiolfr prestr Sæmundarsun*, 'Abbot Nikulás and Eyjólfur Sæmundarson the priest breathed their last' (*Flateyjarbók* 1860-68: III 515). The death of Eyjólfur is also registered in 1158 in the *Konungsannál* (Storm 1888, 116).

Dominik Waßenhoven believes that Werlauff attributed the patronymic Sæmundarson to Nikulás because in the passage of the annals of *Flateyjarbók* 'he [Werlauff] regarded Nikulás and Eyjólfur as brothers, or he erroneously combined the two persons into one' (Waßenhoven 2006: 57).[7] Waßenhoven considers the reading of MS AM 421 4to only a further reason for Werlauff's mistake' (Waßenhoven 2006: 57, n. 100,[8] where he also refers to Melsteð 1907-15). Werlauff (1821: 4) reports that Nikulás returned to Iceland in 1154, referring to the annals of

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[7] '*Er sah entweder Nikulás und Eyjólfur als Brüder an oder zog beide Personen fälschlicherweise zu einer zusammen.*'

[8] '*Ein weiterer Grund für Werlauffs Verwechslung.*'

the *Flateyjarbók*, as did Finnur Jónsson in his *Historia*. After this information, however, Werlauff explicitly refers to MS AM 421 4to and sets Nikulás's death in 1159. It is not clear why, as argued by Waßenhoven (2006: 57), he should instead have misinterpreted the passage under the year 1158 in the annals of the *Flateyjarbók*. The most obvious explanation is that Werlauff found the patronymic Sæmundarson in a corrupted passage of MS AM 421 4to.

There is in the primary sources an absolute lack of evidence for a 'second' abbot Nikulás, who was identified by a patronymic that is only attested in a corrupt passage of a late manuscript referring to Nikulás of Munkaþverá. Yet the existence of a Nikulás Sæmundarson, second abbot of Þingeyrar, has obstinately gained credence among scholars. In the nineteenth century Sveinbjörn Egilsson (1848: 249), Carl Christian Rafn (1850-52: II 395), Paul Riant (1865: 80-81), Rudolf Keyser (1866: 555), and Janus Jónsson (1887: 183) believed in the historicity of Nikulás of Þingeyrar, to whom, like Werlauff, they all attributed *Leiðarvísir*. Eiríkur Magnússon (1897: 176, 262) still considers the figure of Nikulás of Þingeyrar as historical, even though he attributes *Leiðarvísir* to Nikulás of Munkaþverá. Although at the beginning of twentieth century Bogi Melsteð (1907-15) had already observed that there was no evidence to support his existence, and Kålund resolutely ruled out the existence of an abbot Nikulás in the abbey of Þingeyrar, because 'in its abbot-lists this name does not really appear' (1908: xix),[9] the figure of Nikulás of Þingeyrar periodically turns up in contemporary scholarship. Francis Magoun (1943:210, n.1; 1944: 314, n. 6) attributes *Leiðarvísir* to Nikulás of Munkaþverá, but, following Magnússon (1897), he confirms the historicity of Nikulás Sæmundarsson. Benjamin Kedar and Christian Westergård Nielsen reassert the existence of two abbots Nikulás, stating that the itinerary had usually been ascribed to Nikulás Bergsson, even though the available evidence does not allow it to be determined who was the author; without explaining the reasons of their assertion, they also state that 'the two Abbots Nikolás may well be the same person' (Kedar and Westergård-Nielsen 1978-79: 195). Joyce Hill (1983: 176-77) believes in the existence of both abbots (without ruling out the possibility that Hoskulldr was the first abbot of Munkaþverá, §1.3.1),

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[9] *'I hvis abbedrække dette navn i virkeligheden ikke forekommer.'*

but she attributes *Leiðarvísir* to Nikulás Bergsson. Fabrizio Raschellà (1985-86: 544-45) confirms the historicity of both the abbots but states that there are no elements to attribute *Leiðarvísir* to one or the other. Raschellà (1985-86: 545) also refers to the hypothesis of Kedar and Westergård-Nielsen (1978-79: 195) that the two abbots might be the same person and, considering the different patronymics attested in the sources, he ventures the opinion that the same Nikulás might have been abbot of Þingeyrar before his pilgrimage, and that he might have been chosen as abbot of Munkaþverá after his return from the Holy Land. Judith Jesch follows Raschellà's hypothesis: she attributes *Leiðarvísir* to 'Nikulás, a Benedictine monk of Þingeyrar', adding that his pilgrimage to the Holy Land 'must have helped his career, for by 1155 he had been elected abbot of the newly established monastery at Þverá' (Jesch 2005: 133). A misinterpretation of a single entry in the Icelandic annals, which was made in the eighteenth century by Bishop Finnur Jónsson, still has its effects on twenty-first century scholarship.

1.3.4   Other Works Attributed to Abbot Nikulás

Abbot Nikulás was also famous as a skald. The sources praise him for his learning and his good virtues (likewise the *explicit* of *Leiðarvísir*, §1.2.1 above). The *Guðmundar saga byskups* refers to his being a *kostuligr höfðingi*, 'an excellent leader', *hverr margar ástgjafir hafði þegit af guði*, 'who had received from God many gifts of grace' (*Biskupa sögur* 1858-78: I 407, n. 2). In the D version of the *Jóns saga postola*, 'The Saga of John the Apostle' (the *Litla-Jóns saga*) preserved in Reykjavík, MS AM 649a 4to (written in the second half of the fourteenth century, see Unger 1874: xxiii; handrit.is 2012: AM 649a 4to), Nikulás is mentioned as the author of a *Jóansdrapa*: *Ma þar til nefna fremsta personu Nicholas fyrsta of fremsta Þvera munklifis Eyiafirdði, er beði var geddr natturagiofum ok voldum mannkostum. Hann orti drapu selum Johanni*, 'Among the important people can be named first of all Nikulás of the abbey of Þverá in Eyjafjörðr, who was endowed both with natural gifts and with many virtues. He composed a *drápa* on St John' (Unger 1874: 509). The first three stanzas of this *drápa* are preserved in the *Litla-Jóns saga* (Unger 1874: 509-510). They are included in Finnur Jónsson's anthology (1912-1915: Ia, 560, Ib, 546), in which he translated them into modern Danish.

In the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, Ólafr Þórðarson hvítaskáld (*c.* 1210-1259, Simek and Pálsson 2007: 289) quotes a single verse of a *Kristsdrápa*, a '*drápa*

on Christ', written by abbot Nikulás, as an example of *parabola* (Óláfr Thórðarson Hvítaskáld: 88; Finnur Jónsson 1912-1915: Ia, 560, Ib, 547). The poem, which is written in *dróttkvætt* (the most frequent metre in skaldic poetry, see Simek and Pálsson 2007: 66), combines scenes from the Old and the New Testament. James W. Marchand (1976) has acutely analysed and translated the stanza, showing the elaborateness and the erudition of Nikulás's versification. The *Kristsdrápa* attests that Nikulás was 'an extremely subtle and learned cleric, well versed in Norse as well as Latin and Christian literary tradition, eager to explore the possibilities of merging these traditions in new and complicated ways' (Lönnroth 1990: 33). Møller Jensen (2004: 289-90) suggests that the figural use of biblical episodes in the stanza might prove that Nikulás was familiar with Isidore of Seville's work. After the *Kristsdrápa*, Ólafr Þórðarson quotes as example of *paradigma* a stanza which deals with the figure of Mary (Jónsson 1912-1915: Ia, 627, Ib 635; Jónsson 1927: 89). Frederik Paasche (1914, 93-96) suggested that this second *drápa* could also be the work of Nikulás. Being only based on a stylistic comparison with the *Kristsdrápa*, the attribution of the second fragment cannot be certain. The arguments proposed by Marchand (1976) in favour of Nikulás's authorship are, however, convincing.

1.4   The Itinerary

A description of the itinerary included in *Leiðarvísir*, summarising and clarifying the most important questions discussed by scholars, will now be given. This description will first be useful so as to have an internal reference when relevant places or passages of the itinerary are mentioned in the present thesis. If they can be identified, the corresponding modern names of the routes and the places listed in the itinerary will also be given. This will be useful because in some cases even recent publications do not clearly identify toponyms, or they give names that are no longer in use. In one instance, a new interpretation of a place-name so far not identified with certainty (*Semunt*, l. 62, see §1.4.5) will be offered. The relevant items of information present in the itinerary that can be used for its dating will be considered in §1.5. In the following analysis it will thus appear that an unequivocal twelfth-century dating of the whole itinerary cannot be maintained.

A pan-map with a list of all the place-names mentioned in the itinerary can be found in Marani (2011: http://g.co/maps/czvzx).

1.4.1   From Iceland to Denmark

The text of *Leiðarvísir* begins with the indication that seven days are necessary for the circumnavigation of Iceland and that there are seven more days of sailing from Iceland to Norway. Bruce Gelsinger (1970) has shown that a *doegr sigling* should be considered a unit measuring time and not distance. In fact, the itinerary adds the information that one can sail around Iceland in seven days *ath* [*ra*]*udum byr &* *skiptiz sua sem* [*þarf þviat eigi*] *ma eitt ve*[*dr h*]*afa*, 'with a favourable wind, if this changes as it is needed, because it is not possible to make use of the same wind' (ll. 2-3). Gelsinger (1970) has remarked that this information implies that with an unfavourable wind the sail could take longer than seven days, thus confirming that a *doegr sigling* does not indicate a fixed distance. This piece of information is reported in other sources. We find a significant parallel to this passage of *Leiðarvísir* in *Landnámabók,* which contains the information that it takes seven days to sail from the Stad peninsula (in Norway) to Horn, on the eastern coast of Iceland (Jakob Benediktsson 1968: 32). Another parallel can be found in Adam of Bremen, who states in his *Gesta hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum* IV.37 that one can reach Iceland from Norway in five to seven days (Adam of Bremen 1973: 488[8]). As Gelsinger (1972: 161) has pointed out, it is noteworthy that at the beginning of the itinerary 'days' sailings' are used for the measurement of the sea route, while 'miles' are used in the Mediterranean portion. Kålund (1913: 100-105) provides a conversion of these units of measure into the metric system. The most common landing places in Norway for ships coming from Iceland were Bergen and Trondheim (Magoun 1944: 316; Piebenga 2002: 71), but the itinerary does not mention a specific destination.

1.4.2 From Ålborg to Stade

The first stops of the itinerary are Ålborg and Viborg in Denmark. After a week's journey, there are Hedeby and Schleswig. Although Hedeby is slightly south of Schleswig, it is mentioned first in the itinerary. Magoun (1943b: 172-73) has suggested that there could have been a scribal-mechanical reversal in the order of the names. In the twelfth century, the site of Hedeby had already been abandoned, but it was still known for the presence of the church traditionally thought to be founded in the mid-ninth century by the Frankish missionary Ansgar (Magoun 1943b: 170-71). Hedeby is also mentioned together with Schleswig by Snorri Sturluson in *Heimskringla*, *Magnússona saga* 13 (Snorri Sturluson 1941-51: III 254), where it is

said that Sigurðr Jórsalafari, on his way back home from Jerusalem, first stopped in Schleswig and then met King Niels of Denmark (1103-1134) in Hedeby. After Hedeby, it is a day's journey to the river Eider, where *danmork & hollsetu land, Sa*[*xland*] *& vindland*, 'Denmark and Holstein, Germany and the Wendish territory' meet (l. 6). According to Magoun (1944: 319), Nikulás identified Holstein and Germany using *Saxland* in apposition to *Hollsetuland*, so that the passage should be interpreted as 'Holstein, i.e. Germany'. Møller Jensen (2004: 299-300) observes that the County of Holstein had already gained in importance in the twelfth century and agrees with Kålund (1913: 66), who believes that Nikulás considered *Saxland* as including the area of Dithmarschen, a German settlement north of the Elbe, so that the river Eider can be taken with good reason as a meeting point for Denmark, Holstein, Germany and the Slavic territory. *Vindland*, in fact, indicates the area settled by the *Vindr*, 'Wends', an ethnonym used here, as often elsewhere, as a 'generic term for various Slavic tribes' (Magoun 1944: 319). The next stop is Itzehoe and, after crossing the Elbe, comes Stade.

1.4.3   From Stade to Mainz

1.4.3.1   First Route from Stade to Mainz

After first mentioning Stade, the itinerary adds that *Aa saxlandi er þiod kurteisuzt & nema þar nordmenn mart eptir ath breyta*, 'in Germany the people are very courteous and there the Scandinavians learn much that they imitate' (ll. 7-8). According to Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1953: 36), this is the earliest occurrence of the term *kurteisi* in Icelandic. This remark of Einar's cannot be confirmed, because, as will appear when the question of the dating is discussed (§1.5), an unequivocal dating of the itinerary in the twelfth century cannot be maintained, and the reference to the courtesy of the German people could be a later addition in the manuscript (see §4.1). *Leiðarvísir* also reports the information that in Stade the bishop's throne is in the Church of Mary (ll. 8-9). In Stade, however, there has never been an episcopal see, nor is there evidence of a church dedicated to St Mary. This information must therefore refer to the next stop in the itinerary, Verden, where there was a cathedral church of St Mary (Magoun 1944: 320). Magoun (1944: 320) seems to believe that this mix-up was caused by Nikulás, who 'had in mind' the next stop when writing of Stade. It is more likely, however, that we have to do here with a scribal-mechanical reversal, as in the case of the sequence Hedeby-Schleswig and the probable reversal

of the Hospice of Great St Bernard and St Peter's Hospice (§1.4.4). After Verden, the itinerary continues by mentioning Nienburg and then Minden, where *skuptazt tungur*, 'the tongues change' (l. 11). It is not clear which speech-boundary is meant in this passage: Kålund (1913: 66) believes that this remark should refer to the transition from Danish to German and should be moved to follow one of the passages mentioning *Saxland* (l. 5,7), assuming a scribal error and interpreting *tungur* as 'languages'. Magoun observes that a transition from Danish to German should have been noted near the Eider and believes that *tungur* can refer to the 'transition from the Northalbing dialect of Northern Low German to Westphalian' and should therefore be translated as 'dialects' (Magoun 1944: 322). This is now the dominant opinion among scholars (see Simek 1990: 484; Waßenhoven 2006: 50[15]).

After Minden, the next stops in the itinerary are Paderborn and Mainz. We find the observation that *þar j milli er þorp er horus heitir annat heitir kiliandr & þar er gnita heidr er sigurdr va ath fabni*, 'between them [Paderborn and Mainz] there is a village called *Horús*, another called *Kiliandr*, and the Gnita-heath is there, where Sigurðr killed Fáfnir' (ll. 12-14). While there is agreement among scholars that *Horús* can be identified with Horhausen and der Diemel, called in the twelfth century 'Horhusen' and from the nineteenth century onward 'Niedermarsberg' (Keyser 1954: 268), the identification of *Kiliandr* is much more problematic. Kålund (1913: 66-67) believes that *Kiliandr* might correspond to Caldern, near Marburg; Magoun (1943: 212-18; 1944: 323), observing that the name might have a connection with St Kilian, an Irish missionary to Germany in the seventh century, has suggested an identification with Kilianstädten on the river Nidda. This localization might also explain why the itinerary places in this area the *Gnitaheiðr*, the mythical heath where Sigurðr, the German hero of the Nibelung cycle, slew the dragon Fáfnir. *Gnitaheiðr* is mentioned by numerous Old Norse sources. It occurs twice in verses in the Poetic Edda: in the synoptic *Grípisspá*, 11[4] (Neckel and Kuhn 1962-68: 165) and in *Atlakviða,* 5[2], 6[6] (Dronke 1969: 4). *Gnitaheiðr* is also mentioned in the prose following stanza 14 in *Reginsmál* (Neckel and Kuhn 1962-68: 176) and in the prose prologue of *Fáfnismál* (Neckel and Kuhn 1962-68: 180). *Gnitaheiðr* is mentioned twice in Snorri's Edda: in *Skáldskaparmál*, 40, (Snorri Sturluson 1998: 46[18, 28]) and in a kenning for gold in *Háttatal*, 41[6] (Snorri Sturluson 1991: 20). References to *Gnitaheiðr* can also be found in the *Vǫlsunga saga*, 13, 35 (Finch 1965: 24, 65) and in the *Norna-Gests þáttr* (Wilken 1912-13: I 243[2], see

§1.4.4). The passage in the *Norna-Gests þáttr* corresponds almost verbatim with the prose following stanza 14 of *Reginsmál*.

According to Magoun (1944: 324), Nikulás could have placed *Gnitaheiðr* in this section of the itinerary because he could have distorted the ancient name of the Niddagau (the Nidda valley), *Nitaha* or *Nitehe* (see also Lönnroth 1990: 20-22 and Waßenhoven 2008: 45-46). The location of *Gnitaheiðr* in the Nidda valley is not compatible with its much debated identification with Knetterheide, a locality north of Paderborn. Klaus Rossenbeck (1974) and Raschellà (1995: 264-67) give an overview of this debate (see also von See and others 1997-2009: V 159-160).

1.4.3.2   Alternative Route from Stade to Mainz

After mentioning *Gnitaheiðr*, *Leiðarvísir* indicates an alternative route from Stade to Mainz that runs east across Germany. The first stop of this 'important medieval highway' (Magoun 1944: 324) is Harsefeld. It then passes through Walsrode, Hanover, Hildesheim, Gandersheim, Fritzlar and Arnsburg, which is the last stop shortly before Mainz.

1.4.3.3   Alternative Route from Norway to Mainz

Leiðarvísir reports that these first two routes to Mainz (§1.4.3.1 and §1.4.3.2) are the ones that Scandinavians mainly follow (ll. 18-19), but it then adds that there is another way from Norway to Rome. The first stop of this second alternative route is in Deventer or in Utrecht. As Gryte Anne Piebenga (1993) has observed, by the end of twelfth century the role of Utrecht as an important stop for pilgrims to Rome coming from Iceland (via Bergen) had been taken by Deventer. The fact that *Leiðarvísir* mentions both places is a clear signal that a later scribe added the name of Deventer, without deleting the reference to Utrecht (Piebenga 1993). The reference to Deventer is the first important piece of information given in the itinerary that is not compatible with its twelfth-century dating.

The pilgrims who followed this third alternative route would come to Frisia by sea. The itinerary gives the information that in Utrecht the pilgrims to Rome receive *staf* [*& skreppu*] *& vigslu til romferdar*, 'staff and scrip and a blessing for the pilgrimage to Rome' (ll. 20-21). As Piebenga (2002: 72) has remarked, this item of information implies that for those coming by sea the actual pilgrimage began ashore, in Utrecht, and not with the sea voyage from Norway. This third alternative route passes through Cologne, where *Leiðarvísir* reports that *Af kolnis byskupi skal keisari*

taka vigslo i þeiri kirkio er aquisgrani heitir, 'The emperor must receive his consecration from the bishop of Cologne in that church that is called *Aquis Grani*' (ll. 22-23), confusing the city of Aachen with the name of a church in Cologne. This confusion could have been in the original text and therefore be the work of Nikulás, as Kålund (1913: 67) and Waßenhoven (2008: 50) are inclined to believe. Magoun (1944: 328), on the other hand, suggests that this passage originally referred to the city of Aachen and that it should be read as 'in that church that is (in the town) called Aachen' (Magoun 1944: 349). After Cologne this alternative route reaches Mainz with a three days' journey along the Rhine.

1.4.4   From Mainz to Lake Geneva

It is only after the description of these alternative routes that *Leiðarvísir* adds the information that in Mainz the archbishop's throne is in the Church of Peter and Paul (l. 24). As Magoun (1944: 328-29) has noted, Mainz was an archiepiscopal see, but its cathedral was not consecrated to SS Peter and Paul but to God and St Martin and to SS Peter and Stephen. Speyer, the next stop in the itinerary, is said to be a day's journey from Mainz, but the distance between the two cities (about 100 km), is unusually long for a single day's trip. Magoun (1944: 328-29) has conjectured a corruption by haplography, suggesting that the transmitted text may have omitted the stop in Worms, which lies between the two cities, and where the local cathedral is dedicated to St Peter.

       After Speyer the itinerary continues along the Rhine through Seltz and Strasbourg to Basel, where it moves away from the Rhine to reach Solothurn and Avenches, called by its German name *Vivilsborg*, 'Wiflisburg' (l. 27). *Leiðarvísir* reports that Wiflisburg *var mikil adr lodbrokarsynir brutu hana enn nu er hon litil*, 'was big before the sons of Ragnarr loðbrók destroyed it, but it is now small' (l. 28). The itinerary is here referring to a story that must have been familiar to its readers. The deeds of Ragnarr loðbrók, who lived in the ninth century, are first told by Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum*, IX, 3-5 (2005: I 584-613). The *Ragnars saga loðbrókar* (Olsen 1906-08: 150-153) also gives a version of Ragnarr's sons' incursions into Europe that is interesting for its association with a (failed) journey to Rome, narrating how Ragnarr's sons arrive at Vifilsborg and succeed in destroying the city after having been provoked by its inhabitants. They then decide to conquer Rome, but in Luni, which is also a stop in *Leiðarvísir* (ll. 51, 53, 55; see §1.4.5), they

meet an old beggar carrying on his back a pair of worn-out iron shoes, who persuades them to give up their project by telling them that his shoes were new when he left Rome. The story is also told in the *Norna-Gests þáttr*, incorporated in Flateyjarbók as an episode of the Saga of Óláfr Tryggvason (Wilken 1912-13: I 258-59; see Simek and Pálsson 2007: 283). It is noteworthy that in one of the stories he narrates to King Óláfr Tryggvason, Norna-Gestr mentions, similarly to *Leiðarvísir* (see §1.4.3.1), *Gnitaheiðr* and the killing of Fáfnir by Sigurðr (Wilken 1912-13: I 243²).[10]

1.4.5 From Lake Geneva to Rome

The next stop in the itinerary is Vevey, on Lake Geneva, where *Leiðarvísir* reports that the route of those who are travelling south of the Alps converge: *frakar, flemingiar, Valir, englar, saxar, nordmenn*, 'Franks, Flemings, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans and Scandinavians' (ll. 30-31) meet here. It is likely that with *Saxar* the itinerary refers to travellers coming from the entire German-speaking area and not only from Saxony; *Frakkar* and *Valir* should probably be interpreted here as the Northern and Southern French respectively (Magoun 1944: 332; Waßenhoven 2006: 80). By indicating that pilgrims coming from these different regions meet in Vevey, the itinerary refers to the convergence at this point of the routes coming from the North along the *via Francigena*, the major medieval pilgrimage road between Rome and Canterbury.[11] The route between Lake Geneva and Rome described in *Leiðarvísir* closely coincides with the *via Francigena* (Waßenhoven 2006: 76-80).

Vevey is said to be distant a day's journey from Saint-Maurice, where the saint rests with his army of six thousand six hundred and sixty-six men (ll. 31-32). In this passage the itinerary refers to the legendary martyrdom in 302 of the so-called 'Theban legion', Christian soldiers commanded by Maurice and exterminated in this area on the orders of the Emperor Maximian after they refused to worship pagan gods (Kålund 1913: 68; Raschellà 1995: 260-61). *Leiðarvísir* contains the information that *þar er [pe]trs Kastali*, 'Peter's citadel is there' (l. 32). *Petrs Kastali*

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[10] For the reference to the sons of Ragnarr loðbrók in *Leiðarvísir* see also Lönnroth (1990: 22-25), Raschellà (1995: 267-68), and Waßenhoven (2008: 45-46).

[11] For an overview of the primary and secondary sources on the *Via Francigena* see Stopani (1995, 1996, 2010).

probably refers to Bourg-Saint-Pierre, which is about fifty kilometres away from Saint Maurice; it is therefore possible that in this passage there was a scribal reversal, so that the attested form *þar er* should be corrected to *þá er*, 'then there is' (Magoun 1944: 333; see also Kålund 1913: 68).

The next stop is *Bjarnardz spitali* 'The hospice of the Great St Bernard' (l. 33; see Stopani 2010: 23-32 on the system of hospices and hospitals for the medieval pilgrim), after which *Leiðarvísir* mentions *petrs spital þar er opt ath olafs messo á sumarit snær á grioti & iss á vatni*, 'Peter's hospice where in the summer, on Olaf's Day [July 29th], there is often snow on the rocks and ice on the lake' (ll. 34-35). Magoun (1944: 315) believes that this reference to St Olaf must have been introduced by a later scribe, because King Olaf II was canonized in 1164 by Pope Alexander III. Magoun's remark, however, cannot be supported, because although 1164 was the year of the official proclamation of his sainthood by the Roman curia, Olaf had already been recognized as a saint in Norway within one year of his death in 1030 (Lund 1995: 225). St Peter's Hospice, which was in the area of Bourg-Saint-Pierre and about eight hundred meters under the Pass, is no longer extant: it fell into disuse after the Hospice of Great St Bernard was founded in the mid-eleventh century and it was probably already no longer in use in the mid-twelfth century (Waßenhoven 2008: 43). It is therefore likely that the reference to *Petrs spitali* was misplaced, or that the scribe confused it with *Bjarnardz spitali*, so that the meteorological observation should refer to the Hospice of Great St Bernard, and that the lake indicated here is the lake beside the Hospice (Magoun 1944: 333-334; Møller Jensen 2006: 302-303).

After the Hospice of Great St Bernard the itinerary continues with Etroubles and Aosta, where *Leiðarvísir* erroneously records the information that the bishop's throne is in the Church of St Ursus (l. 36), while it is actually in the Church of St Mary and St Gratus (Magoun 1944: 334). The following stops are Pont St Martin (Solmi 1933: 1212-13; Magoun 1944: 324), Ivrea, Vercelli, Milan – which is said to be a day distant from Vercelli, off the main road to Rome, (l. 39), thus being a possible detour for the pilgrim – Pavia and Piacenza. At this point *Leiðarvísir* mentions the large river Po, which flows between Pavia and Piacenza, and then adds that *þá kemr til þeiRar leidar er ilians veg foro*, 'then one comes to the route of those who travel the *Iljans vegr*' (l. 43). After the convergence in Vevey with the *via Francigena*, we find in this passage a second reference to a different pilgrimage

route, the *Iljans vegr*. The identification of this *Iljans vegr* is still debated. Although a final answer cannot be given, it seems probable that *Leiðarvísir* refers to the 'route of Saint-Gilles-du-Gard', an important pilgrimage site in southern France that was the first stop for pilgrims heading towards Santiago de Compostela on the *Via Tolosana*. Travellers coming from Saint-Gilles and going to Rome could arrive at the intersection with the *via Francigena* going up the Durance valley, passing the Cottian Alps at the Col de Montgenèvre, and then come down along the course of the river Po. Giovanni Cherubini (1998: 121-51) presents an overview of the system of medieval roads leading to Santiago. Waßenhoven (2006: 81-84; see also Kålund 1913: 89-91) gives an outline of the question and of other possible interpretations of *Iljans vegr*, among which the identification with the small town of Ilanz in the Swiss Canton of Graubünden cannot be excluded. A possible corroboration of the fact that *Iljans vegr* refers to Saint-Gilles, however, can be found in the *Hrafns saga Sveinbjarnarsonar*, a contemporary saga written probably between 1230 and 1260 (Guðrún Helgadóttir 1987: lxxxi-xci). *Hrafns saga* narrates the life of Hrafn Sveinbjarnarson, a chieftain in north-west Iceland, and his feud with Þorvaldr Snorrason, which culminated in 1213 with Hrafn's execution (see Ásdís Egilsdóttir 1996 on the figure of Hrafn Sveinbjarnarson). The saga also tells of Hrafn's journeys abroad, mentioning in chapter 4, together with Canterbury, Santiago de Compostela and Rome, his pilgrimage to *Ilansborg*, 'Saint Gilles' (Guðrún Helgadóttir 1987: 4[2]), a form close to the *Iljans vegr* of *Leiðarvísir*.

Domnaborg, 'Borgo San Donnino' (l. 44), which since 1927 has been called Fidenza, is the next stop. Between Piacenza and Fidenza *Leiðarvísir* indicates the presence of *eiriks spitali*, 'the Hospice of Eiríkr' (l. 44). This is a reference to the hospice that was founded by Eiríkr góði of Denmark (Eric I the Good, 1060-1103), who became king in 1095 (Kålund 1913: 70). Later in the itinerary when Paphos is described, *Leiðarvísir* offers the observation that Eiríkr's Hospice is eight miles from Piacenza and that anyone can have something to eat there (ll. 135-36; see §1.4.8). The exact location of Eiríkr's Hospice has not been identified, but it has been suggested that it could have been near Fiorenzuola d'Arda (Schütte 1901: 32-33). The foundation of this hospice by King Eiríkr I near Piacenza is also mentioned in the *Knýtlinga saga*, 74 (Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 220). *Leiðarvísir* continues by mentioning the Taro river, adding that this is never roiled because all the filth thrown into it sinks to the bottom (ll. 45-46, on this passage see Magoun 1940b: 598), and

Borgo Val di Taro. Then one has to cross *Munbard*, 'Monte Bardone' (l. 47). In the Middle Ages *Mons Bardonis* designated the Apennine pass today called 'Passo della Cisa', but it was also the common name for the crest of the Ligurian Apennines. It is possible that the Icelandic itinerary suggested crossing the Ligurian Apennines over the Bratello Yoke (Schütte 1901: 26; Meissner 1903: 195-196; Magoun 1944: 338). After mentioning *Mons Bardonis*, *Leiðarvísir* adds a brief geographical excursus on the extension of Lombardy, which is said to border the Apennines to the south and the Alps to the north (ll. 47-48), and the extension of the Alps, which are said to run from the region of Venice westward to *styrio landi* eastward (ll. 48-49). *Styrjo-land* probably refers to the valley of the river Stura di Demonte, a tributary of the river Tanaro in Piedmont. It must be acknowledged, however, that the point of the compass given in *Leiðarvísir*, *vestr*, 'westward' (l. 48), is wrong, so that *Styrjo-land* could instead designate Styria (Werlauff 1821: 41, n. 68; Magoun 1944: 338-39).

After this brief digression, *Leiðarvísir* gives the information that in the Apennines are *crucis markadr* and *fracka skáli* (l. 50). Although the identification of these toponyms is problematic, they might correspond to Passo Cento Croci and Villafranca in Lunigiana (Magoun 1944: Raschellà 1985-86: 571, ns 14, 15). Pontremoli is the next stop in the itinerary, after which comes *Mario-gildi* (l. 51), another toponym that is not identifiable but could refer to a convent or a hospice near Aulla (Magoun 1944: 340; Raschellà 1985-86: 571-72, n. 16). After *Mario-gildi* there is Luni. The itinerary gives the information that in *luna sandar*, 'the sands of Luni'(l. 51), i.e. the region of la Lunigiana, there are beautiful beaches and a good view. Magoun (1944: 340) argues for *luna sandar* as a 'sound-translation' of the place-name 'Lunigiana'; Raschellà (1985-86: 572, n. 17) opts for a literal interpretation. Luni is mentioned in the *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, 14, as the city where Ragnarr's sons decide to give up their plans of conquering Rome (Olsen 1906-08: 152[22], 153[4]; see §1.4.4). Between *Mariogilldi* and Luni there are Santo Stefano di Magra and *Marioborg*, which can be identified either with Sarzana, where the local cathedral is consecrated to the Virgin Mary, or with Castelnuovo di Magra (Magoun 1944: 340-341).

Leiðarvísir offers the observation that, according to some men, in the Lunigiana is the *ormgard er Gunnar var i settr,* 'the snake-pit into which Gunnarr was cast' (l. 54). This is a reference to the well-known legend of the Burgundian King Gunnarr thrown into the snake-pit by Atli (on the origins of motif of the snake-

pit, see See and others 1997-2009: VI 915-924): the *ormgarðr* is mentioned in the Poetic Edda in the *Sigurðarqvida in scamma*, 'The Short Lay of Sigurðr', 59[4] (Neckel and Kuhn 1983: 216); in *Oddrúnargrátr*, 'The Lament of Oddrún', 28[7] (Neckel and Kuhn 1983: 238); in *Atlakviða in grænlenzco*, 'The Greenland Lay of Atli', 16[12,13], 32[2] (Neckel and Kuhn 1983: 243); and in the short prose of *Dráp Niflunga*, 'The Slaughter of the Niblungs' (Neckel and Kuhn 1983: 17). The death of Gunnarr in the snake-pit is also narrated in the *Völsunga saga*, 39 (Finch 1965: 71) and in the *Þiðreks saga af Bern*, 'The Saga of Theodoric of Verona', where the *ormgarðr* is located in *Súsa*, the Old Norse name for 'Soest' in North Rhine-Westphalia (Bertelsen 1905-11: 314[16-19]; see Raschellà 1995: 269).

Leiðarvísir locates south of the Lunigiana *Kioformunt* (l. 55), a place-name that could indicate the Garfagnana (Kålund 1913: 72-73) or Capriglia (Magoun 1944: 341; Raschellà 1985-86: 572-73, n. 20). There follows the information that in Luni the route from Spain and from Santiago de Compostela converges with the Icelandic itinerary. This is a probable reference to a sea route in the Mediterranean followed by pilgrims coming from Spain (Waßenhoven 2006: 80-81). The next stop is Lucca, where *Leiðarvísir* erroneously calls the cathedral St Mary instead of St Martin. In this church the itinerary locates an important relic, a crucifix made by Nicodemus in the image of God himself, the so-called *Volto Santo*, 'The holy face' (ll. 56-58; see Raschellà 1995: 261-62). A version of the legend can be found in the *Otia imperialia*, 'Recreation for an Emperor', finished *c.* 1219 by Gervase of Tilbury (2002: 599-605). South of Lucca there is Pisa, a harbour where *kaupmenn dromundum af gricklandi & sikil ey Egipta landz men syrlendzkir & affrikar*, 'merchants with dromonds from Greece and Sicily, Egyptians, Syrians and Africans' arrive (ll. 59-60). Magoun (1944: 342) observes that *Affrikár* probably refers to peoples from North Africa, west of Egypt, i.e. Berbers or Libyans. South of Pisa there is *arnblackr*, 'Black Arno' (l. 61). *Arnblackr* parallels *Aqua nigra* (Ortenberg 1990: 199), a stop mentioned in the itinerary describing the journey to Rome made in 990 by Archbishop Sigeric of Canterbury to fetch his *pallium* (see §2.2.3.1). In the itinerary describing the 1191 return-journey of Philip II from the Holy Land (Magoun 1942), there is also a stop called *Arle-le-nair* (Pauli and Liebermann 1885:131[34]). 'Black Arno' probably corresponds to a village near Fucecchio (Raschellà 1985-86: 573, n. 21).

After Black Arno there is *mattildar spitali*, 'the Hospice of Matilda' (l. 61). This is a reference to the Hospice built in Altopascio by Matilda of Canossa, countess of Tuscany (1046-1115), about whom *Leiðarvísir* adds the information that she had the Hospice built in order to redeem a pledge to the monks of Montecassino (ll. 61-62; see Magoun 1944: 342; Stopani 1986: 22-28). After this observation, it is stated that *þa er sanctinus borg þa er martinus borg þa er semunt þa er langa syn*, 'then there is *sanctinus borg*, then there is *martinus borg*, then there is *semunt*, then there is *langa syn*' (ll. 62-63).

Sanctinus borg probably corresponds to San Genesio, later enclosed in San Miniato; *martinus borg* might be a corruption of **Marturusborg*, rendering *Borgo Marturi*, later called Poggibonsi (Magoun 1944: 342-43; Raschellà 1985-86: 573, ns 24-25). In spite of many conjectures, no plausible interpretation has been offered so far for the interpretation of *Semunt* (in the manuscript *semt*). Werlauff interpreted *Semunt* as the name for *Siena*, translating *langa syn*, as an epithet, *unde amplus prospectus*, 'from where [one has] a wide view' (Werlauff 1821: 43, n. 82). Kålund (1913: 74), following Werlauff (1821: 43, n. 82), interprets the name as referring to the position of the city on a hill with a good view. Magoun correctly observes that the second element *syn* is an adaptation of the Italian *Siena* (Latin *Sæna*), while *langa* probably refers to the geographical extension of the city, spreading over three hills, rather than to any ample view (Magoun 1944: 343-44). Raschellà follows Werlauff's interpretation of *Semunt* as referring to Siena, proposing to emend MS *þa er langa syn* to *það er Langasyn*, 'that is *langasyn*', so as to justify its interpretation as an appellative of *Semunt* (Raschellà 1985-86: 573-74, n. 27). The locution *það er* does not appear elsewhere in *Leiðarvísir*, and Raschellà's emendation works on the assumption that *Semunt* derives from a contraction of **Sen(u)munt*, 'The mount of Siena' (Raschellà 1985-86: 573, n. 26). Raschellà does not show evidence attesting to this denomination in primary sources.

One should try to keep the text attested in the manuscript and assume that *Semunt* indicates a place other than Siena. Magoun has proposed, as a 'sheer idle speculation', to identify *Semunt* with Monteriggione, once a famous castle in the Val d'Elsa (Magoun 1944: 343). Stopani (1986: 67) suggests that it might correspond to Monte Maggio. There is, however, a possible correspondence that has not been noticed by scholars so far. *Semunt* could refer to Semifonte, a fortified centre between Florence and Siena founded in the second half of the twelfth century,

possibly shortly after 1177, and destroyed by Florence in 1202 (Pirillo 2004: 242-57). In spite of its short existence as an autonomous centre Semifonte soon gained in importance, and its memory was alive for centuries after its destruction. In the fourteenth century in the parish of Albagnano (modern Bagnano) there was still a confraternity dedicated to *Santa Maria a Semifonte*; in the sixteenth century the 'myth' of Semifonte was still alive in the literary tradition (Pirillo 2004: 235-39; De Angelis 2004). *Semunt* (MS *semt*) could easily be the result of the abbreviation of *Semifonte* or *Summofonte*, the vernacular name of the Latin *Summus Fons*. The relevance of Semifonte on the *Via Francigena* is confirmed by the fact that *Seint Michel*, a stop mentioned in the itinerary of Philip II (Pauli and Liebermann 1885: 131[33]), probably corresponds to San Michele at Semifonte (Pauli and Libermann 1885: 131, n. 14; Magoun 1942: 371, n. 13).

Describing Siena, *Leiðarvísir* offers the observation that the bishop's throne is in the Church of Mary and adds the information that the women there are very beautiful (ll. 63-64; on the tradition of the beauty of Sienese women and the sumptuary laws regulating their dressing, see Mazzi 1880 and Casanova 1901). Next stops after Siena are *Klerkaborg*, 'city of the clerics' and *Hangandaborg*, 'city of the water-fall' (l. 65). Both names are probably translations of the toponyms *Sanctus Clericus*, a popular etymology of San Quirico d'Orcia, and Acquapendente, 'hanging water' (for the many small waterfalls in the area, see Magoun 1944: 344; Raschellà 1985-86: 574, n. 28).

After Acquapendente *Leiðarvísir* mentions a mountain that is called *Clemunt*, which is south of Acquapendente*, þar er kastali aa uppi sa heitir mala mulier þat kollum ver illa konu þar en versta þiod,* 'on top of which there is a castle called *Mala Mulier*, "Bad Woman" as we say, where the people are very bad' (ll. 65-66). *Clemunt* has been considered to refer to the hill on which Radicofani is situated (Magoun 1944: 344; Raschellà 1985-86: 574-75, n. 29). In fact, Kålund (1913: 74) had already noticed that the name *Clemunt* should correspond to Monticchiello or Montecchiello, Latin *Monticlum*, in the Val d'Orcia, northeast of San Quirico

(Repetti 1833-46: 4, 563-65). [12] One can agree with Fabrizio Vanni, who has remarked that it is plausible that *Clemunt* could be the result of the inversion of the two elements forming a place-name pronounced 'Mont-Cle', like Montecchio, Monticlo or Monticchiello; unfortunately, however, there are plenty of similar toponyms in the area, so that it seems groundless to hazard any hypothesis (Vanni 2011: 10). *Mala Mulier* can be identified with *Muliermala*, a xenodochium north of Radicofani (Mambrini and Stopani 1988: 32-33; Wickham 1989: 118). *Muliermala* is mentioned in documents from the eleventh and twelfth century from the abbey of San Salvatore on Mount Amiata (Kurze 1974-: II 125, n. 248; 224, n. 289; 296, n. 327). Kålund (1913: 74), Magoun (1944: 345), and Raschellà (1985-86: 575) have argued, referring to Repetti (1833-46: I 396), that *Muliermala* coincides with Callemala, a medieval village on the southern side of the mountain of Radicofani.[13] *Muliermala* and Callemala are in fact two different places on this stretch of *via Francigena*. Mambrini and Stopani (1988: 28-30) and Wickham (1989: 118, 121) locate *Muliermala* some five kilometres north of Callemala.

The itinerary continues by adding that Acquapendente is south of *Clemunt* and that the region going from Acquapendente to the Apennines is called *Tuscia* 'Tuscany'(ll. 67-68; MS *Ruscia*). The next stop is *kristino borg*, 'the city of Christina', a common epithet for Bolsena, where the saint was martyred, and where, according to *Leiðarvísir*, the body of the saint and the relic of a stone with her footprint are also kept (ll. 67-68; Werlauff 1821: 43, n. 87; Magoun 1944: 345). After Bolsena are *fla[vian]s borg*, 'the city of Flavian', a conventional epithet for Montefiascone (Magoun 1944: 345), and Viterbo (ll. 69-70). Near Viterbo is *Þidreksbad*, 'The Bath of *Þiðrek*' (l. 70), which probably corresponds to Bagnoregio. The old name of this city was *Balneum Regis* or *Regium*. According to an old tradition, it was founded by Theodoric the Great (Magoun 1944: 345-46; Raschellà 1995: 27; see Muratori 1723-1738: X 112). The toponym in *Leiðarvísir* is probably connected with the information contained in the *Saga Þiðriks af Bern*, which refers to *Þiðreks bað* as a place-name (Bertelsen 1905-11: 357[19], 392[25-26], 397[22]). If we

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[12] In Kålund's text (1913: 74) the place name is spelled 'Montechiello'. This spelling is repeated in Magoun (1944: 345). Waßenhoven (2008: 54) calls it 'Montichiello'.

[13] Repetti, however, states in another passage (1833-46: III, 29) that it is not clear whether *Malamulier* and Callemala coincide.

accept the correspondence between *Þiðreks bað* and Bagnoregio, this stop should have been mentioned together with Bolsena and not Viterbo, so that it is possible that the sequence of the original text was changed (Raschellà 1995: 271-72).

The last three places that the itinerary mentions before Rome are *Sútarinn micli*, 'Sutri Major', *Sútarinn litli*, 'Sutri Minor', and *Feginsbrecka*, 'the slope of joy' (ll. 70-72). *Sútarinn micli* can be identified with the ancient city of Sutri (Magoun 1944: 346; Raschellà 1985-86: 575, n. 33). Sutri is probably mentioned in *Þorsteins þáttr stangarhöggs*, where we find the information that one of the main characters, Bjarni of Hof, dies on his pilgrimage to Rome and that *hann hvílir í borg þeiri, er Vateri heitir, ok er þat mikil borg, skammt hingat frá Rómaborg*, 'he lies buried in a city, which is called *Vateri*, and this is a large town, a short way from this side of the city of Rome' (Jón Jóhannesson 1950: 78). No city is known under the name *Vateri*, and it is likely that the manuscript reading is a corruption of *Sutari* or *Sutri* (see Cucina 1998: 104, n. 64; Jón Jóhannesson 1950: 78, n. 2). It is relevant that, similarly to *Leiðarvísir*, *Þorsteins þáttr stangarhöggs* describes Sutri as a *mikil borg*, 'a large town'. A satisfactory answer cannot be given for the localization of *Sútarinn litli*, said to be a day's journey from Sutri and close to the 'Slope of Joy'. This is without doubt a translation of the Latin *Mons Gaudii*, the name given by medieval pilgrims to Monte Mario because it was the first point from which they could see the aim of their pilgrimage (Magoun 1944: 346-347; Raschellà 1985-86; see also Kedar 2005: 256-58). If we consider the fact that *Sútarinn litli* is between Sutri and Rome and close to Monte Mario, its identification with La Storta, the last important stopping-place before Rome for pilgrims coming from the north, seems to be the most plausible among the several possible interpretations (Magoun 1944: 346; Raschellà 1985-86: 575-76, n. 34).

1.4.6 Rome

The description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir* (ll. 72-102) is of great importance within the text for its sheer size and its richness of detail when the main sites are described. It details some of the most important Roman churches, such as St John Lateran, Santa Maria Maggiore, San Lorenzo fuori le mura, Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, San Giovanni a Porta Latina, Santa Maria in Domnica, Santi Giovanni e Paolo, the Pantheon, San Paolo fuori le mura, and the Basilica of St Peter. *Leiðarvísir* also mentions secular buildings, such as the Porta Latina, the Baths of Diocletian, and

Castel Sant'Angelo. Chapter §3 will specifically examine the description of Rome and the scholarly discussion of the issues involved, focusing on the written sources used for its composition and showing that some details given in *Leiðarvísir* are incompatible with the traditional twelfth-century dating, so that the whole section was most probably added in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It will be proved, in particular, that the descriptions of Sant'Agnese, the Pantheon, and the Catacombs have close parallels in hagiographic sources, on which they are probably based. It will also be shown that the descriptions of the Lateran and of St Peter's cannot have been written during Nikulás' lifetime. Two of the relics that *Leiðarvísir* mentions as being in the Lateran (the garment and the milk of Mary) were in fact moved there only after 1159 (§3.7.2); in the description of St Peter's, there is a probable reference to a plenary indulgence for pilgrims visiting the Basilica, which was granted for the first time in 1300 by Pope Boniface VIII (§3.20.2); finally, the information that the body of Pope Gregory the Great is under his altar sets another *terminus post quem*, because it was placed there during the papacy of Innocent III (1198-1216; see §3.20.8).

1.4.7   From Rome to Bari and Brindisi

After the description of Rome *Leiðarvísir* gives two alternative routes through southern Italy to reach Capua and then Bari and Brindisi, important harbours in Apulia where pilgrims used to embark for the Holy Land (Stopani 1992: 40-45; Waßenhoven 2006: 77, 79). The first route (§1.4.7.1) initially follows the *via Tuscolana*, then the *Via Casilina* (the name given in the Middle Ages to the old *Via Latina*) as far as Capua (Stopani 1992: 29; Møller Jensen 2004: 307; for the route of the old *Via Latina*, see Monti 1995: 7-17), and then continues along the Appian way towards Benevento, to reach the town of Monte Sant'Angelo on the Monte Gargano and follow the coast until Bari. The second route (§1.4.7.2) follows the *Via Appia Traiana* for its whole length from Albano Laziale to Brindisi.

1.4.7.1   From Rome to Bari

Only the first letter ('*t*') of the name of the stop after Rome is legible on folio 14[r] of MS AM 194 8vo (l. 103). It has been plausibly conjectured that this word should be reconstructed as *T*[*usculum*], the name of the Roman city which was destroyed in 1191 by the Commune of Rome (Werlauff 1821: 47, n.117; Kålund 1913: 79). *Tusculum* is not the ancient name of the modern Frascati, as Kålund (1913: 79) and

Raschellà (1985-86: 562) have affirmed, but a different city (see Hill 1983: 181). After *Tusculum* come Ferentino and Ceprano (l. 103). *Leiðarvísir* reports that the river *Garileam*, 'Garigliano', flows there (l. 104). The river Garigliano forms in Sant'Apollinare at the confluence of the rivers Gari and Liri, but the name 'Garigliano' is also attested for the entire course of the river Liri (Raschellà 1985-86: 577, n. 57). The itinerary adds the information that *hon skilr romveriariki & sikileyiar* 'it [the Garigliano] divides the Kingdom of Rome and Sicily' (l. 104) and that *campania edr pull*, 'Campania or Apulia' (l. 105), is to the southeast but *Italia* (l. 104) to the north, thus marking the northern limit of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily in southern Italy (Hill 1983: 181). After Ceprano there are Aquino (the manuscript has [...]*naborg*, usually read as [*Aqui*]*naborg*, see Raschellà 1985-86: 563) and the Benedictine abbey of Montecassino, described with its churches and the relics kept there (ll. 105-110). The next places in the itinerary are San Germano (an old name of Cassino), Capua, Benevento, Salerno (a city off the main itinerary, where it is reported that the best physicians are), and *Sepont*, the ancient *Sipontum*, a city on the coast near Manfredonia, abandoned in the thirteenth century (ll. 110-112; see Hill 1983: 182; Stopani 1992: 41-42).

Raschellà (1985-86: 577-78, n. 60; see also Stopani 1992: 29) has conjectured a lacuna in this passage of the manuscript, because the itinerary gives no intermediate stop for the long stretch between Benevento and Siponto (approximately 140 km). One can suppose that after Benevento *Leiðarvísir* suggested pilgrims should follow the *Via Appia Traiana* (explicitly mentioned shortly afterwards, see §1.4.7.2) as far as Troia, after which it could make a detour from the *Via Appia* to reach Siponto, probably passing through Foggia (for the stretch of the *Via Traiana* between Benevento and Troia, see Della Portella 2004: 192-196). *Leiðarvísir* adds that *Sepont* is at the foot of *Michialsfjall* (l. 113). Kålund (1913: 59, 80), Hill (1983: 182) and Waßenhoven (2008: 57[163]) interpret *Michialsfjall* as a reference to the 'Monte Gargano'. It seems clear, however, that the correct interpretation is provided by Raschellà (1985-86: 578, n. 61), who accurately relates the toponym *Michialsfjall* to the town of Monte Sant'Angelo, where there is a sanctuary dedicated to the Archangel Michael in memory of the legend of his apparition on the mountain. *Leiðarvísir* refers to this well-known legend, adding the information that in Monte Sant'Angelo is *hellir michelis*, 'Michael's cave', and

silkidukr er hann gaf þangat, 'the silken cloth that he gave to that place (l. 114; see Hill 1983: 182-83 for the diffusion of the legend).

After Siponto the itinerary continues along the coast with Barletta, Trani, Bisceglie, Molfetta, Giovinazzo and then Bari, where *Leiðarvísir* says that the body of St Nicholas lies (ll. 114-16).

1.4.7.2   From Rome to Brindisi

After mentioning Bari, *Leiðarvísir* adds that there is another westerly route from Rome to Capua: one has to travel from Rome to Albano, where one can take the *flaians bru* and travel for three weeks, from one end to the other (ll. 116-17), i.e. from Albano to Brindisi. *Flajánsbrú* (as it would appear in normalised spelling) is clearly a scribal error. The emendation of *Trajánsbrú*, 'Trajan's Causeway', for *Flajánsbrú* proposed by Werlauff (1821: 49, n. 133) has been maintained by all following scholars. In *Leiðarvísir* it is called *eth agietazta mannvirki*, 'the most exceptional human construction' (l. 118-19), and the designation *Trajánsbrú* is extended to the entire Appian Way. The Appian Way, built between the fourth and third century BCE, connected Rome and Brindisi. The *Via Traiana* was a new stretch of the *Via Appia* built between 108 and 110 CE by the Emperor Trajan in order to reach Brindisi from Benevento by a shorter and faster route (see Della Portella 2004: 192-221 for a description of the new route). The *Via Traiana* was in the Middle Ages an important artery for those who were travelling towards the east through southern Italy, becoming, as Stopani (1992) has called it, *La Via Francigena del Sud*, 'The Via Francigena of the South' (for the route followed by the *via Appia Traiana*, see Stopani 1992: 9-22). The word *brú*, used in *Leiðarvísir* to refer to the *Via Traiana*, usually means 'bridge', but in this passage, as correctly observed by Hill (1983: 183-84; see also Raschellà 1985-86: 578-79), it must be interpreted as 'causeway, raised path'. The Appian Way was in fact distinguished by its numerous bridges and viaducts (See Della Portella 2004: 190-91), built not only to cross the difficult terrain of the Pontine Marshes but also in the stretch between Benevento and Brindisi (Ventre 2004a, 2004b).

Leiðarvísir specifies the route to Brindisi by indicating the following stops along the *Via Traiana*: Terracina, Fondi, Gaeta, Capua, Benevento, Monopoli, and Brindisi. On Terracina we find the remark that *hana brutu Romueriar & er hon nu litil*, 'the Romans destroyed it and it is now small'(l. 120), a probable reference to its destruction by the Romans in 406 BCE, narrated by Livy (1962-65: II 279-80; see

also Raschellà 1985-86: 579). Although Bari is on the *Via Appia Traiana*, this city, which is the last stop mentioned above in §1.4.7.1, is not mentioned in the second route from Rome to Brindisi given in *Leiðarvísir*. The route from Rome to Brindisi coincides with the first route from Rome to Bari only in the stretches between Capua and Benevento and between Benevento and the point where the first route separated towards Siponto, probably Troia (§1.4.7.1). The second route must therefore be considered not only an alternative way to reach Capua from Rome, but a separate route to a different harbour in Apulia, i.e. to Brindisi instead of Bari, where the first route leads.

The Italian section of the itinerary ends by adding that Venice is in the same gulf as Bari, and that in Venice are the patriarchal throne and *helgir marcus domar & lucas*, 'the holy relics of Mark and Luke' (ll. 121-22). The relics of St Mark were translated to Venice from Alexandria in 828 (Hill 1983: 185). The relics of Luke were never kept in Venice, but according to tradition they were found in 1177 in Padua and kept there in the Basilica of Santa Giustina (on the *inventio* of the Evangelist's body and its deposition in the Basilica, see Bellinati 2003; and Zampieri 2003: 199-220). This year is not compatible with a composition during Nikulás's lifetime. The reference in *Leiðarvísir* to the relics of Luke can, however, be better explained by supposing an error by a later scribe, who confused the name of the Evangelist with that of St Lucy, whose relics were brought to Venice in 1204 (Werlauff 1821: 49, n.139; Møller Jensen 2004: 308-309). This scribal error appears extremely likely, but if one accepts it, the reference to the relics of St Lucy in Venice is also incompatible with a dating of the itinerary within Nikulás's lifetime.

1.4.8 From Italy to Acre

The first stop mentioned after the Italian section of the itinerary is Durrës, from where the old *via Egnatia* started (Fasolo 2003: 133-37; Møller Jensen 2004: 309). The route described by *Leiðarvísir* did not follow the *via Egnatia* by land, but continued along the coast by ship. The next stop is in Corfu, at Kassiopi, which is called in *Leiðarvísir Mariohǫfn,* 'the harbour of Mary' (l. 123), after the Church of the Blessed Virgin sacred to seafarers (Kålund 1913: 81). After Kassiopi there are Fiskardo, the harbour in Cephalonia where, according to tradition, Robert Guiscard Duke of Apulia died in 1085, and Cape Maleas, called *Engilsnes*, 'Angel's ness' (l. 124), i.e. Capo Sant'Angelo (Hill 1983: 185). *Engilsnes* is also mentioned in

Heimskringla, Magnússona saga, chapter 11, when the crusade led by Sigurðr Jórsalafari is described (Snorri Sturluson 1941-51: III 252). Cape Maleas marked since antiquity one of the most important routes to the western Mediterranean, and it was famous for its difficult weather. It is when rounding Cape Maleas that Odysseus (Od. IX.80) is blown off course on his return to Ithaca.

Leiðarvísir adds the information that Cape Maleas *er skamt til eyar paciencia eda sikileyiar þar er iardelldr & votn vellandi sem á islandi*, 'is close to the island Sapientza or *Sikiley*, there is volcanic fire and boiling water like in Iceland' (ll. 124-25). The identification of *paciencia* with the island of Sapientza is commonly accepted. Sapientza is a small island south of Cephalonia, and because of its position it should have followed Fiskardo in the itinerary. The manuscript gives *Sikiley* as an alternative name for *paciencia*, which is not attested elsewhere. Kålund (1913: 81-82) has suggested emending the passage by adding *til* before *Sikiley*, so that this would not be another name of Sapientza but a separate island at a short distance to Cape Maleas. Kålund has proposed that *Sikiley* could correspond to Sicillo, the Venetian name for Antikythera, which however has no such volcanic activity as Sicily. The observation in the itinerary can thus be explained by supposing a confusion of the name Sicillo with Sicily. The passage remains, however, a crux.

The identification of the next stop is also problematic. *Leiðarvísir* adds that after *sikileyiar* there is *borg er martini heitir hon er aa bolgara landi*, 'the town which is called "Of Martin". It is in the land of the Bulgarians' (ll. 125-26). *Bolgara-land* does not refer to Bulgaria, but to the 'land of the Slavs', who had been for a long time in the Peloponnese after their conversion to Christianity in the ninth century (Hill 1983: 186). The 'Town of Martin' cannot be identified with any certainty. Kålund (1913: 82) found in a fifteenth-century Italian portolan (Kretschmer 1909: 510, 536) a reference to Martin Carabo, a good anchorage halfway between Cape Maleas and Monemvasia. Kålund's interpretation remains, however, questionable, since *Leiðarvísir* clearly refers to a town and not simply to a good landing-place for ships.

After *Martinoborg* the itinerary mentions Kos. As in Vevey, Piacenza and Luni (§1.4.5), *Leiðarvísir* reports the information that in Kos different pilgrims' routes converge, adding that there *koma leidir saman af puli & af miklagardi*, 'the routes from Apulia and from Constantinople meet' (ll. 126-27). *Leiðarvísir* also gives the indication that from Kos the direction is northwest to Apulia (see Møller

Jensen 2004: 310, n. 150 for the interpretation of this passage). After Kos the next places mentioned in the itinerary are Rhodes, *Grikland*, 'Greece' (l. 128; the Byzantine Empire, which included the Asia Minor, see Hill 1983: 187), Kastelorizo and Patara. The itinerary states that St Nicholas was born in Patara, that *stendr þar enn skoli hans*, 'his school still stands there' (l. 129), and that he was bishop of Myra, which is mentioned immediately afterward (l. 130). After Myra there is *Ialandanes*, 'Cape Gelidonya' (l. 130; Turkish: *Gelidonya Burnu* or *Taşlık Burnu*), said to be *i tyrklandi*, 'in the land of the Turks' (l. 130), i.e. outside the Byzantine Empire. This piece of information is particularly relevant because it is incompatible with the traditional dating of the itinerary: in the twelfth century the region was still under Byzantine control, because Antalya was seized by Kaykhusraw I, Seljuk Sultan of Rûm, only in 1207 (Leiser 2010: 306; see also Kålund 1913: 83; Pritsak 1981: 241).

After Cape Gelidonya there is Cyprus. The itinerary gives the geographical indication that there is a gulf that the Norsemen call *Átalsfjord* and the Greeks *Gulfus Sataliae*, 'The Gulf of Antalya' (ll. 131-32; MS has *Gullus*). *Leiðarvísir* provides the information that in Cyprus, in the city of Paphos, there is a garrison of the Varangians and that Eiríkr góði of Denmark died there, adding that he donated money to Lucca so that every Danish-speaking man could drink wine for free, and that he founded a hospice in Piacenza (see §1.4.5). This reference to the death of Eiríkr in Cyprus and the information given by *Leiðarvísir* that Pope Paschal allowed Eiríkr góði to transfer the archiepiscopal see from Saxony to Denmark is also in *Knýtlinga saga*, chapters 74, 81 (Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 219, 238).

1.4.9 From Acre to Jerusalem

The itinerary continues into the Holy Land with Acre. The fact that *Leiðarvísir* mentions Acre *a iorsala landi*, 'in the Holy Land' (l. 137), sets a *terminus post quem*, because the town was captured in 1104 by Baldwin I of Jerusalem (Wilkinson 1988: 18). After Acre the town of *chafarnaum* is mentioned (l. 137). This should not be confused with Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee, mentioned in the New Testament. Under the Crusaders' Kingdom the ancient coastal town Shiqmona, corresponding to the modern site of Tel Shikmona, was known to Christians and Jews as Capharnaum

(Arabic 'Khirbat al-Kanisah'; see Prawer 1972: 206, 294; 1980: 207, n. 24; Zacour 1985: 526).[14] It is also reported that Capharnaum was formerly called *Þolomaida*, 'Ptolemaîs', but this piece of information should be transferred to Acre (Hill 1983: 188; see also Møller Jensen 2004: 311). After Capharnaum *Leiðarvísir* continues along the coast by naming Caesarea, Jaffa and Ascalon. It is observed that Jaffa was Christianized by Baldwin I of Jerusalem along with Sigurðr Jórsalafari (ll. 138-39). This is historically wrong, because Jaffa was captured in 1099, whilst Baldwin became king in 1100, and Sigurðr participated in conquering not Jaffa but Sidon, in 1110. The information given in this passage, that Ascalon *stendr aa serklandi & er heidin*, 'is in the realm of the Saracens and is heathen' (l. 139-40), has been used to set a *terminus ante quem* for the composition of *Leiðarvísir*, because the city was recaptured by the Christians in 1153 when, on August 12, the city of Ascalon surrendered to the army of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and was recaptured by King Baldwin III of Jerusalem (see Kedar and Westergård-Nielsen 1978-79: 195; Hill 1983, 176).

Leiðarvísir then names a series of coastal cities north of Acre: Tyre, Sidon, Tripoli (in modern Lebanon) and Latakia. The itinerary provides the information that *Anþekiofiord,* 'The Bay of Antioch', is there, and that Peter the Apostle established his patriarchal see in Antioch (ll. 141-42). *Leiðarvísir* specifies that these cities are in *Sýrland*, 'Syria' (l. 142), the Arabic name for the Kingdom of Jerusalem (Hill 1983: 190), while the area inland from Acre is the district of Galilee. *Leiðarvísir* names some relevant biblical sites between Galilee and Jerusalem (ll. 143-48). It begins with Mount Tabor, where Moses and Elijah appeared to the apostles; there follow Nazareth, where is mentioned the annunciation of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary and where Christ lived for twenty-three years, Jenin, and *Iohannis kastali*, 'the Castle of John'. The itinerary specifies that *Iohannis kastali* (corresponding to the modern Sabastiya; see Hill 1983: 190) was formerly called Samaria and that the relic of the head of the Baptist was discovered there. Benjamin Kedar has proposed 1145 as a *terminus post quem*, since this is the year of the *inventio* in Samaria of the relics of St

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[14] Hill (1983: 188) calls the modern place H. Konés. Møller Jensen (2004: 312) seems to believe that H. Konés (or el-Kenise) and Shiqmona refer to different places.

John the Baptist, which are also mentioned in *Leiðarvísir* (ll. 146-47; Kedar 2005: 266-67).

The itinerary also states that in that town is Jacob's well, where the Samaritan woman gave Jesus water to drink. Before Jerusalem are mentioned the following: Neapolis, the modern Nablus; *Casal*, too common a prefix of a place-name to identify it, although Kedar and Westergård-Nielsen (1978-79: 200, n. 26) suggested *Casale Dere*, corresponding to the modern Kh. Ras al-Dayr (see Ellenblum 1998: xx, n. 187, 106-108); and al-Bira, the old Magna Mahumeria (Ellenblum 2007: 170).

1.4.10 Jerusalem and the Holy Land

The description of Jerusalem offered in *Leiðarvísir* is less extensive than that of Rome. It includes the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, The Hospital of John the Baptist, the Tower of David, the Temple of the Lord, and Solomon's Temple (ll. 149-156). The itinerary provides details only on the *pulcro kirkia*, 'the Church of the Holy Sepulchre'. The year 1149 was proposed as a possible *terminus post quem* for the composition of the itinerary on the basis of the description of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is called *kirkia su, er grof drottins er i & stadr sa, er cross drottins stod*, 'the church where the Lord's grave is, and the place where the Lord's cross stood' (ll. 150-51). The itinerary contains the information that the tomb of Christ and Golgotha are inside the same structure. The new church that included them under the same roof was consecrated on 15 July 1149, and this would imply that *Leiðarvísir* was written after that date (Hill 1983: 191-92). In the description of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre there is also a reference to the old tradition (Ezekiel 5:5) of Jerusalem as the centre of the world, which was commonly accepted in the medieval European mind-set: *þar er midr heimr, þar skinn sol iamt or himni ofan of Iohannis messo*, 'the centre of the earth is there, there the sun shines straight down from the sky on the feast of John' (l. 154; see Simek 1996: 73-81 for an overview on this tradition). Wilkinson (1988: 18) does not interpret *iamt or himni ofan* as 'perpendicularly, straight on', but as if the sun shone 'directly' from the sky illuminating the centre of the world, which, in this case, would not be covered by a building but placed outside. Wilkinson therefore considers 1149 as a *terminus ante quem* because *Leiðarvísir* would be describing the building still incomplete and before its consecration. The first interpretation, which is compatible with the tradition of the perpendicular position of the sun on the Cross, should be preferred

(Møller Jensen 2004: 293). The dating of *Leiðarvísir* based on this information is, however, open to doubt, because the great part of the new church was built between 1140 and 1149, and *Leiðarvísir* could refer to the church during its construction (Kedar 2005: 266-67). The description of the Hospital of John the Baptist in Jerusalem as *Rikaztr i ollum heimi*, 'the most magnificent in the world' (l. 155) could refer to its extensive rebuilding in the early 1150s (Hill 1983: 201; see also Wilkinson 1988: 18).

After Jerusalem the itinerary mentions Mount Sion (MS: *Synai*), where the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles, and Bethlehem, which is said to be *litil borg & fogr* 'a small and beautiful town' (l. 159). Bethany, where *Leiðarvísir* recalls that Jesus resurrected Lazarus, is called *kastali*, 'a castle' (l. 160). Kedar and Westergård-Nielsen observe that the fact that Nikulás designates Bethany a *kastali*, (l. 146), might be another *terminus a quo*. Queen Melisende in fact, according to William of Tyre, in 1144 had a fortified tower built at Bethany (William of Tyre 1844: I 699). They remark that 1144 cannot be accepted as a *terminus* for *Leiðarvísir* because a papal letter of 1128 already mentions the presence of a *castellum*, 'a castle', at Bethany (Mayer 1977: 375; Kedar and Westergård-Nielsen 1978-79: 194, n.5). In actual fact, Bethany is often mentioned in medieval sources as a castle. In the same passage of William of Tyre quoted by Kedar and Westergård-Nielsen, Bethany is called a *castellum* (William of Tyre 1844: I 699). The pilgrim guide of the Pseudo Eugesippus, written in 1040, already refers to Bethany as an *oppidum*, 'a castle, a fortified place' (*PL*: CXXXIII 1000; see §2.6.1).

Leiðarvísir indicates that the Dead Sea is southeast of Jerusalem, mentioning the Old Testament cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the river Jordan, whose holy waters are said not to mix with the Dead Sea. The *Mons Oliveti*, where Christ ascended to Heaven, is located east of the city. The itinerary gives another geographical item of information, writing that between the Mount of Olives and Jerusalem there is the valley of Josaphat, where there is the tomb of Mary (ll. 165-66; see §2.6.2). After the valley of Josaphat there is Mount Quarantana (Deir el Quruntul, l. 167). The statement in *Leiðarvísir* that *Abrahams kastali*, 'the Castle of Abraham' (l. 168), is near Jericho is not correct. In the Crusader period the castle of Abraham was a Frankish fortress at Hebron, south of Jerusalem (Hill 1983: 197). *Abrahams kastali* could have been misplaced because in the text, after Jericho, there follows *Abrahams veller*, 'The Plains of Abraham' (ll. 168-69).

Close to the Plains of Abraham there is the river Jordan. In this passage the indication is given that the river divides *Rabita land*, 'Arabia', and *Jórsalaland*, 'The Holy Land', or '*Syrland*' (ll. 170-71) as it is called by the Muslims. *Leiðarvísir* recalls that Christ was baptised in the Jordan and that on the bank of the river there is *ein litil kapela þar for cristr af kledum sinum* 'a small chapel where Christ took off his clothes' (ll. 171-72). The baptism site, which the Gospel of John (1:28) locates in 'Bethany beyond the Jordan' (the modern Al-Maghtas in Jordan), was a site for medieval pilgrims coming to the Holy Land to visit (Hill 1983: 197-98). The description of the Holy Land ends with the famous account of the method of estimating latitude by lying down on the bank of the Jordan:

> Vt vid jordan ef madr liggr opinn á slettum velli & setr kne sitt upp & hnefa á ofan & reisir þumull fingr af hnefanum upp þa er leiþar stiarna þar yfir ath sea iafnha en eigi heRa. (ll 173-75)
>
> Out by the Jordan, if a man lies on his back on level ground and lifts up his knee and sets his fist on top of it and stretches his thumb from the fist, then the Pole Star is to be seen above, that high but not higher.

This method of measurement, which is essentially correct, has no parallel in other ancient and medieval descriptions of the Holy Land (§2.7).

1.4.11 From the Holy Land to Ålborg

After the description of the method of measuring the altitude of Polaris on the banks of the Jordan, *Leiðarvísir* gives directions for the return journey. The indications focus only on the time necessary to go back to Denmark from the Holy Land. The itinerary specifies that from the Jordan there are five days of travel to Acre, then fourteen days by sea to Apulia. From Bari it is another fourteen days on foot to Rome. One needs an additional six weeks to reach the Alps, from where it is another three weeks to Hedeby (ll. 175-77; Hedeby is also mentioned at the beginning of the itinerary, l. 5; §1.4.2). The itinerary adds the information that *ith eystra iliansveg er ix vikna for*, 'the eastern *Iliansvegr* is a nine weeks' journey'(ll. 177-78). If one accepts the interpretation of *Iliansvegrs* as 'the route of Saint-Gilles-du-Gard' (§1.4.5), *eystra* should be emended to *vestra*, 'western' (Kålund 1913: 89-91; Hill 1983: 198-99). After Hedeby it is seven days' travelling to Viborg (between the two places there is the river Kongeå), from where it takes two more days to reach Ålborg, which was the first stop at the beginning of the itinerary (§1.4.1).

1.5   The Dating and the Attribution of *Leiðarvísir*

The only incontrovertible *terminus ante quem* that we have for the composition of *Leiðarvísir* is the year 1387, when MS AM 194 8vo was completed by Óláfr Ormsson (§1.2). This is a valuable element, whose importance should not be underestimated, as it is the only external evidence we have for the dating of the itinerary (a precise piece of information that is available for very few medieval Icelandic manuscripts).

1.5.1   The Datable *Termini* in *Leiðarvísir*

A general *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the itinerary has been derived from its attribution to Abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá. As we have seen (§1.3.2), the annals register his death in 1158 or in 1159, the *Guðmundar saga* in 1160. The only source that we can use for the attribution is the *explicit* of MS AM 194 8vo, where the itinerary is said to have been written by an Abbot Nikulás (§1.2.1). This Abbot Nikulás named in the *explicit* can probably be identified with the first abbot of Munkaþverá, who is the only abbot named Nikulás in the Icelandic abbot-lists and is mentioned in other sources as a learned man and the author of erudite texts (§1.3). The attribution of *Leiðarvísir* to Nikulás of Munkaþverá becomes, however, highly problematic if one considers that some of the following *termini*, which can be identified in the itinerary, are incompatible with its composition before Nikulás's death:[15]

1) The reference to Deventer together with Utrecht as a stop for pilgrims coming from Iceland (§1.4.3.3). This piece of information must have been added after the twelfth century, since it was only by the end of the twelfth century that the role of Utrecht as an important stop for pilgrims going to Rome from Iceland (via Bergen) had been taken by Deventer.

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[15] For the sake of completeness the whole list of the datable *termini* in *Leiðarvísir* will be given here. Items 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 have been treated above (§1.4); items 2, 3 and 4, which are based on the present author's own research and have not been noted by previous scholars, are discussed at further length in §3.

2) The list of relics mentioned in the Lateran cannot be attributed to Abbot Nikulás because two relics mentioned in the description of the Lateran (the garment and the milk of Mary) were moved there only after 1159 (§3.7.2).

3) In the description of St Peter's there is a probable reference to a plenary indulgence for pilgrims visiting the Basilica. The *indulgentia plenaria* for pilgrims coming to Rome was granted for the first time in 1300 by Pope Boniface VIII (§3.20.2).

4) In the description of St Peter's there is the information that the body of Pope Gregory the Great is under his altar. It was Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) who had the body of Gregory the Great placed there (§3.20.8).

5) The reference to the relics of Luke, which were never kept in Venice, probably derives from an error of transcription of the original reference to the body of St Lucy, whose relics were brought to Venice in 1204. Even if the text should not be emended, one should keep in mind that traditionally the body of St Luke was found in Padua in 1177 (§1.4.7.2).

6) Cape Gelidonya is said to be in the land of the Turks (§1.4.8), i.e. outside the Byzantine Empire. Antalya was seized by the Sultan of Rûm in 1207 (§1.4.8).

7) Acre is said to be in the Holy Land. The town was captured by the crusaders in 1104 (§1.4.9).

8) Ascalon is said to be in the realm of the Saracens, and heathen. The city was captured by the Christians in 1153 (§1.4.9).

9) The itinerary mentions the relics of St John the Baptist that were found in Samaria in 1145 (§1.4.9).

10) The itinerary includes the information that the tomb of Christ and Golgotha are inside the Church of the Sepulchre, which was built in its new form, including the two sites under the same roof, between 1140 and 1149 (§1.4.10).

Items 7-10 above have been used to confirm the compatibility of the internal textual evidence with the information we have on the life of Nikulás of Munkaþverá (see for instance Kedar and Westergård-Nielsen 1978-79: 194-97; Hill 1983: 176-77; Simek 1990: 266; for 9 Kedar 2005: 266-67). Items 1-6 are incompatible with the general *terminus* of 1158-1160 (the time of Nikulás's death) and therefore with the attribution of the work to Nikulás of Munkaþverá.

1.5.2 Problems in the Attribution of *Leiðarvísir* to Nikulás of Munkaþverá

The items of information attested in the text that are not compatible with its twelfth-century dating have never been considered together by scholars, but only individually. On the basis of the attribution of *Leiðarvísir* to Abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá, they have been interpreted as single additions made by later scribes. It has been maintained that the identification of the Abbot Nikulás mentioned in the *explicit* with Nikulás, first abbot of Munkaþverá, who died between 1158 and 1160, was confirmed by the fact that the itinerary could be dated to the mid-twelfth century on the basis of internal evidence. Werlauff was the first to use these *criteria interna* (Werlauff 1821: 5) in order to confirm the identity of Abbot Nikulás. Kålund maintained that 'the information provided [in *Leiðarvísir*] is as good as if all of it were correct and corresponds exactly to the situation in the mid-twelfth century' (Kålund 1908: xxii).[16] A fundamental gap in this reasoning must be noted. The attribution to Nikulás of Munkaþverá is already presupposed, and it is used to evaluate those elements from which it should have been initially derived and confirmed, that is the historically datable items of information present in the text. The argument relies on a *petitio principii*, because the attribution to Abbot Nikulás is assumed in order to confirm it. If one only considers the internal evidence present in *Leiðarvísir*, the text cannot be dated to the twelfth century, and it cannot therefore be attributed to Nikulás of Munkaþverá. It is likely that the Abbot Nikulás named in the *explicit* as the author of *Leiðarvísir* can be identified with Nikulás of Munkaþverá, but the itinerary, at least as handed down in MS AM 194 8vo, cannot be attributed to him. The historical elements incompatible with a twelfth-century dating of the text are too relevant and disseminated throughout the whole itinerary to be considered 'occasional misstatements or confused statements which may well not be due to the author' (Magoun 1940: 278; 1944: 315, referring to the mention of St Olaf's day, see §1.4.5).

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[16] '*De givne oplysninger er så godt som alle fuldt nojagtige og svarer ganske til forholdene ved midten af 12. årh*'.

If one assumes that the identification of Abbot Nikulás with Nikulás of Munkaþverá is correct, the information given in the *explicit* that *Leiðarvísir* was written by him can be evaluated in two different ways. The first possibility (A) is that the attribution is wrong and that the whole text of *Leiðarvísir* was written later, having been composed in the thirteenth or fourteenth century by a single author or revised by different compilers. We do not have any evidence as to when the *explicit* was composed; it might be as late as the manuscript itself (1387), and the attribution to Abbot Nikulás might be the result of a mere arbitrary conjecture of a later scribe. The second possibility (B) is that the information provided in the *explicit* is correct, and that Abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá actually composed *Leiðarvísir* before 1160, but the text handed down in MS AM 194 8vo was largely modified and redrafted in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The reference to Abbot Nikulás in the *explicit* is still a valuable piece of evidence that indicates the authorship of *Leiðarvísir* and should not be underestimated. Such an attribution to a definite author is not common for geographical texts or compilations. In MS AM 194 8vo there are no other such examples of attribution, and the fact that an unknown scribe added the explicit in order to identify the author of the itinerary, at the same time praising his qualities and virtues, is an absolutely relevant element. Although a definitive answer cannot be found, the second possible evaluation (B) of the incompatibility between the attribution of *Leiðarvísir* to Nikulás of Munkaþverá and the *termini post* 1160 present in the text seems to be preferable. On this basis, one can suppose that an *Urtext* of *Leiðarvísir* was composed by Nikulás of Munkaþverá but modified by one or more later scribes, so that the version that was handed down to us in MS AM 194 8vo is different from the twelfth-century itinerary (see §4.1).

If the only general *terminus ante quem* is the date of composition of MS AM 194 8vo (1387), since the date of Nikulás's death cannot be maintained, there are also consequences for the evaluation of the other *termini* that can be detected in the text. The *termini ante* and *post quem* will have a different status in the process of dating the internal textual evidence of *Leiðarvísir*. Item 8 above is the only *terminus*

ante quem, all the other items are *termini post quem*.[17] The *termini post quem* are based on events that, at the moment of the composition of the text, have already taken place. If a passage contains a piece of information on a fact that has historically taken place and that can be dated, that passage cannot have been written before the known date for that event. The *termini post quem* can also set an absolute dating for the passages of *Leiðarvísir* where they can be detected. If a passage contains the information that Cape Gelidonya is in the land of the Turks (§1.4.8), it must have been written after 1207 (§1.4.8).

Even if one admits possibility (B) and not (A), the consequence is that not all the text of *Leiðarvísir* was written by Abbot Nikulás, but that the version attested in MS AM 194 8vo was elaborated by later scribes. Consequently, we cannot affirm that the passage of the itinerary attesting the *terminus ante quem* 8 was written by Abbot Nikulás. A *terminus ante quem* is based on a fact that has not taken place yet at the moment of the composition of the text. In the case of *Leiðarvísir*, a *terminus ante quem* cannot give us an absolute dating of the text, but only of the information it transmits. We can date before 1153 the piece of information given in *Leiðarvísir* that Ascalon is still 'heathen', i.e. that it had *not* been recaptured (item 8), because we know that it was recaptured that year by King Baldwin III. We cannot, however, state that the text was necessarily written before that date. In a later period, a scribe might have inserted item 8 in the itinerary using written (or even oral) sources that were not up-to-date. In other words, he might have used a text describing a situation that at the time he was writing had already changed, because it did not record an event that had taken place after it had been written. There are no elements to say that this passage was written before 1160 by Nikulás and not by later scribes before 1387. The prerequisite to use this *terminus ante quem* to date the text would be that it was based on first-hand information personally recorded *in loco* by Nikulás during a journey. Even without considering the problematic nature of the attribution of *Leiðarvísir* to Nikulás of Munkaþverá, we have seen that relevant passages of the itinerary

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[17] Item 1 allows us to set only a generic *terminus a quo*: the process with which Deventer took the role of Utrecht as an important stop for pilgrims to Rome coming from Iceland obviously took place gradually by the end of the twelfth century (Piebenga 1993).

contradict this eyewitness-prerequisite, because they contain references to events that took place after the abbot's death.

The question of the logical and historical evaluation of the *termini ante quem* is thus closely related to a question crucial to any analysis of *Leiðarvísir*: the question of its genre and of the sources used for its composition. *Leiðarvísir* has unanimously been considered a travel account written by Abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá on the basis of first-hand experiences gained in the course of a journey he would have made to the Holy Land. We have seen that several items of information given in the itinerary are historically incompatible with a composition during Nikulás's lifetime, so that they cannot be based on his direct experience. Chapter §2 will analyse the question of the genre of *Leiðarvísir*: after taking into consideration relevant scholarly definitions of travel account as a genre, *Leiðarvísir* will be compared to other medieval itineraries and descriptions of the Holy Land. It will become evident that there is neither any internal nor any external evidence to define *Leiðarvísir* as a travel account, whereas it shows all the features of an impersonal itinerary describing a route, and not the actual journey of an individual traveller, to the Holy Land.

2   The Genre of *Leiðarvísir*

For the last two centuries, *Leiðarvísir* has been the subject of great interest on the part of scholars from a variety of disciplines: not only Old Norse scholars, but also historians, geographers, and toponymists have studied and analysed this work. In spite of the variety and significance of the studies on the subject, however, uncertainties can constantly be identified in scholars' proposed definitions of the literary genre to which *Leiðarvísir* belongs. This lack of clarity has had significant consequences on the interpretation of the work. *Leiðarvísir* is variously defined as a guide or as an itinerary (i.e. as an impersonal text describing a place or the route leading to that place), and as a travel account or a diary (i.e. a text describing a journey historically made by an individual). A point on which all the commentators of *Leiðarvísir* agree is that it is based on the experiences collected during a real journey to the Holy Land made by an Abbot Nikulás, thereby defining the work, directly or indirectly, as a travel account.

In this chapter, after a review of previous definitions of the work and a terminological clarification of the concepts of 'travel writing' and 'travel account', *Leiðarvísir* will be compared to other medieval travel accounts, in order to show that there are no textual or historical elements that allow us to consider it as belonging to this genre. It will emerge, on the other hand, that *Leiðarvísir* reveals significant similarities with the impersonal and anonymous guides which were widespread in medieval Europe for the use of pilgrims. An outline of the most relevant definitions of *Leiðarvísir* given by scholars so far will now be provided.

2.1   Previous Definitions of *Leiðarvísir*

Scholars who have commented on *Leiðarvísir* have used various terms to define the text, but they have all maintained that it reflects the experience of a real journey. Thus, explicitly or not, *Leiðarvísir* has always been considered a 'travel account'. This conclusion has been made without any real argument but simply on the basis of the fact that it describes an itinerary to the Holy Land. As will be explained below, the text of *Leiðarvísir* does not include any direct references to a real journey, and it does not have any of the structural characteristics typical of a travel account.

Werlauff defines *Leiðarvísir* as an 'an itinerary from Denmark, through Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Rome; from here, through southern Italy and Greece, to the Holy Land' (Werlauff 1821: 4).[18] In his introduction to the *Symbolae ad geographiam medii ævi*, Werlauff does not explicitly refer to the fact that the itinerary is based on a real journey, but he implies it in his commentary. After Brindisi and Venice, *Leiðarvísir* mentions [*D*]*uracur*, 'Durrës', in Albania (l. 123; see Hill 1983: 185). Werlauff observes on this passage that 'Although Durrës is mentioned immediately after Venice, I do not however believe that our traveller went across from this last city to the first, because, even if they generally used to reach the Holy Land across the sea from Venice, examples of twelfth-century routes from Apulia (Brindisi?) to Durrës are not lacking' (Werlauff 1821: 49-50).[19] Werlauff refers to Nikulás as an *itinerator,* 'a traveller', who would himself have covered the itinerary he describes, but Werlauff does not justify this assertion. He takes for granted that an itinerary must be written by a real traveller, whereas, as will emerge below, there are many examples of medieval guides that were written for pilgrims but were not travel accounts, and did not report the experiences collected by a single subject during a real journey. This fundamental misunderstanding has also been repeated by later commentators.

In his *Antiquités Russes*, Rafn defines *Leiðarvísir* as an 'an itinerary containing a description of the usual route from Iceland to the Holy Land' (Rafn 1850-1852: 395),[20] and relates the itinerary to a journey made by Nikulás (1852: 396). Commenting on the method indicated in *Leiðarvísir* to measure the altitude of Polaris (ll. 172-74), Rafn defines *Leiðarvísir* as a *relation*, 'account' (1852: 414, d).

Examining *Leiðarvísir* in the introduction to his edition of MS AM 194 8vo, Kristian Kålund defines *Leiðarvísir* as an *itinerarium*, and as a *vejbeskrivelse og stadfortegnelse*, 'an itinerary and a list of the cities' (Kålund 1908: xix), quoting the terms by which the explicit refers to the work, *Leiðarvísir* and *Borga skipan* (ll. 179-

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[18] '*Itinerarium e Dania, per Germaniam, Helvetiam, Italiam, ad Romam; hinc per Italiam inferiorem et Greciam usque ad terram sanctam.*'

[19] '*Licet Dyrrachium statim post Venetias commemoratur, haud tamen credo itineratorem nostrum ex hac urbe in istam transiisse, cum ex Venetiis plerumque trans mare terram sanctam petere soliti essent, nec desint exempla Sec. XII^mi trajectus ex Apulia (Brundusio?) in Dyrrachium.*'

[20] '*Itinéraire contenant la description de la route habituelle de l'Islande à la Terre-Sainte.*'

80). Later in his commentary, analysing the details of *Leiðarvísir* and its possible dating, he affirms that *Leiðarvísir* is probably the *oprindelige rejseberetnig temlig uforandret*, 'original travel account, rather unchanged' (Kålund 1908: xxii). Kålund is the first one to refer explicitly to *Leiðarvísir* as a 'travel account'. He does not justify on what basis this can be done, but simply proposes a dating of the content of *Leiðarvísir* (1908: xxii-xxv), thereby introducing a terminological confusion that remains in later interpretations of the work. Kålund repeats the same ambiguity in the definition of the work in his translation of the itinerary, published in 1913 with an extensive commentary. He first defines *Leiðarvísir* as a *ledetråd for pilgrimme til Rom og det hellige Land*, 'guide for pilgrims to Rome and the Holy Land' (Kålund 1913: 61), but later refers to it as *den fra abbed Nikolaus stammende beretning*, 'the account deriving from Abbot Nikulás' (1913: 64, 69 and passim), as a *rejseberetning*, 'travel account', and as a *vejviser*, 'guide, itinerary' (1913: 66, 67, 68 and passim), concluding that with *Leiðarvísir* 'we have a substantially unaltered version of the oral account of the abbot on what he had personally observed in his journey, which undoubtedly was through Rome to the Holy Land' (1913: 88).[21]

Magoun associates the description of Rome given in *Leiðarvísir* with that of Sigeric (990-94, see below §2.2.3.1) and calls both 'diaries' (1940: 267, 268 and passim), emphasising the supposed subjectivity of the two descriptions, because 'they tell us one very important thing that the medieval Baedekers do not, namely, just what two individuals elected to see or were shown or, equally significant, what two men chose to note down or especially remembered in the course of their tour of the city' (1940: 267). Magoun considers *Leiðarvísir* an 'itinerary or, better, pilgrim-diary', one of the many 'medieval reports and accounts of pilgrimages by Icelanders to Rome and to the Holy Land' and supposes that the abbot made a real journey in 1154 (1940: 278). In his article on the Germanic heroic legends present in *Leiðarvísir* (1943) and in his commentary and translation of the 'Route to Rome' (1944), Magoun repeats the terminological confusion, defining it as a 'travel-diary' and as an 'itinerary' (1943: 211), and as an 'itinerary or, better, pilgrim-diary' (1944: 314 and passim).

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[21] '*Vi har en i alt væsenligt uforandret gengivelse af abbedens mundtlige beretning om, hvad han personlig havde iagttaget på sin rejse, som utvivlsomt er gået over Rom til det hellige land.*'

Significantly, the *Kulturhistorisk Leksikon for nordisk middelalder* includes *Leiðarvísir* both in the entry for *Reisebeskrivelser* (Bjarni Einarsson 1956-78: 29) and in the entry for *Itinerarier*, where Anne Holtsmark considers *Leiðarvísir* a medieval *vejviser*, 'itinerary', adding that it is based on a journey made by Nikulás (1956-78: 517, 519).

Commenting on his translation into German of a section of *Leiðarvísir*, Heinz-Joachim Graf (1973: 16) calls it an itinerary, and refers to the information reported by the annals that Nikulás came back from a journey in 1154. However, in his comment Graf does not affirm that the itinerary is based on the journey of the abbot or that it is a travel account. Commenting on the description of Jerusalem, Benjamin Kedar and Christian Westergård Nielsen equate medieval *itineraria* with direct accounts (1978-79: 193 and passim). They also define *Leiðarvísir* indifferently as an account (1978-79: 193, 195 and passim) and as an itinerary (1978-79: 197 and passim). In her commentary and translation of the second part of *Leiðarvísir*, 'From Rome to Jerusalem', Joyce Hill refers to it as a 'pilgrim itinerary' and as a travel account, 'a sober and precise account of his extensive travels' (1983: 175, 203 and passim). In her entry dedicated to *Leiðarvísir* in *Medieval Scandinavia. An Encyclopedia*, Hill again refers to the work both as an 'itinerary' and as an 'account' based on the journey made by Nikulás (1993: 390-91).

Omeljan Pritsak (1981: 511) defines *Leiðarvísir* as an itinerary, adding that it is 'based on an actual pilgrim's diary of a voyage that took place in 1154'. Regis Boyer, making stimulating observations on the Old Norse words for *ville* and on the images of *Jórsalaborg, Romaborg* and *Miklagardr*, 'Jerusalem, Rome and Constantinople', refers to the description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir* and defines it as a *journal* of a pilgrimage personally made by the abbot (1986: 177), without explaining why the itinerary and the description of Rome should be a diary of a real journey. Fabrizio Raschellà in his commentary and translation of the Italian section considers *Leiðarvísir* a guide and an itinerary (1985-86: 543 and passim) and accepts that it is based on a real journey. Örnólfur Thorsson observes that *Leiðarvísir*

'belongs to that literary genre that in Old Norse sources are called *travel books*', giving the example of Sigeric's *itinerarium* as a similar kind of text (1988: lviii).[22]

In his *Altnordische Kosmographie*, Simek (1990: 262) maintains that *Leiðarvísir* should be set in the middle between an itinerary, a pilgrim guide and a travel account (1990: 264), writing that 'the itinerary called *Leiðarvísir* of Abbot Nikulás was conceived as a pilgrim-guide, which was based on a pilgrimage to Rome and to the Holy Land' (1990: 264-65); [23] he then defines *Leiðarvísir* as a *Reisebeschreibung*, 'description of a journey', and a *Pilgerbericht*, 'pilgrim account' (1990: 271).

Lars Lönnroth defines *Leiðarvísir* as a 'pilgrim itinerary', a 'medieval Baedeker' (in contrast to Magoun 1940: 267), and a 'travel guide' (1990: 17, 19), and even though he does not refer to it as a 'travel account', Lönnroth puts *Leiðarvísir* in relation with the pilgrimage of the abbot (1990: 19-20). In the commentary to his French translation of *Leiðarvísir*, Daniel Lacroix (2000) gives a precise definition of the work. After characterising *Leiðarvísir* as an *itinéraire* and as *un guide destiné aux pèlerins allant d'Islande à Jérusalem*, 'a guide for pilgrims going from Iceland to Jerusalem' (2000: 233), Lacroix specifies this definition:

> The itinerary of Abbot Nikulás presents the enumerative character of the guides with a utilitarian purpose, because the author seeks above all to make a list of the cities that an Icelandic pilgrim departing for the Holy Land must cross, and to list the most interesting places of worship: churches, episcopal sees, relics. The picturesque and descriptive observations remain rare but are of great interest because they provide a glimpse of what the culture of the author is, that is to say a scholar. (Lacroix 2000: 233)[24]

After commenting on how the culture of the author emerges from the text, Lacroix observes that 'this itinerary belongs therefore to a very specific genre and has few

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[22] '*Heyrir til þeirrar bókmenntagreinar sem í norrænum heimildum eru nefndar farabækur.*'

[23] '*Das als* Leiðarvísir *bezeichnete Itinerar des Abtes Nikulás war wohl als Pilgerführer konzipiert, welches auf einer Pilgerreise nach Rom und ins Heilige Land beruhte.*'

[24] '*L'itinéraire de l'abbé Nicholas présente le caractère énumératif des guides a finalité utilitaire, l'auteur cherchant avant tout à faire la liste des villes que doit traverser un pèlerin islandais partant pour la Terre sainte, et à répertorier les lieux de culte les plus intéressants: églises, sièges épiscopaux, reliques. Les notations descriptives et pittoresques restent rares mais sont d'un grand intérêt, car elles permettent d'entrevoir quelle est la culture de l'auteur, c'est-à-dire un clerc.*'

equivalents in Old-Norse literature, but there are many texts written in other languages describing the pilgrimage to Jerusalem' (Lacroix 2000: 234).[25] Lacroix makes a significant remark in a note, where, commenting on the exclusion of *Leiðarvísir* from the anthology on *Croisades et Pèlerinages. Récits, chroniques et voyages en Terre sainte. XIIᵉ-XVIᵉ siècle* (Régnier-Bohler 1997), he maintains that *Leiðarvísir* is not a direct account: 'it is true that a travel guide like that of Nikulás must be distinguished from the account of a pilgrimage' (2000: 234).[26] Lacroix highlights the fact that *Leiðarvísir* is a practical guide for the Icelanders who wanted to go on a pilgrimage, where 'the author does not give an account of his travel and does not look for literary effects, because only the objective data are of interest to him' (2000: 246).[27] After explicitly stating that *Leiðarvísir* is not a travel account, however, Lacroix takes the traditional, and conflicting, view that *Leiðarvísir* describes Nikulás's real journey (2000: 233, 246-48).

Janus Møller Jensen calls *Leiðarvísir* a *reisebeskrivelse*, 'travel account' (2004: 284 and passim), and a *vejviser*, 'guide' (2004: 286). One can criticise his choice not to translate '*leiðarvísir*' using the Danish word Kålund does, *vejviser* (1913: 61), but with *reisebeskrivelse*, 'travel account'(Møller Jensen 2004: 285), but it does show the uncertainty around the subject. Comparing different medieval pilgrim routes, Kedar refers to *Leiðarvísir* as an *itinerario*, 'itinerary' (2005: 265), and as a *resoconto*, 'account' (2005: 267, 270). In his *Skandinavier unterwegs in Europa (1000-1250)*, Waßenhoven (2006: 56) calls *Leiðarvísir* a *Reisebericht*, 'travel account'; in a subsequent and relevant article, Waßenhoven defines it as a *Pilgerführer* (2008: 29 and passim)*,* and he then adds that in *Leiðarvísir* Nikulás describes his journey to Rome and Jerusalem (2008: 31), thus implying that it is a travel account. Waßenhoven (2008: 31) specifies that *Leiðarvísir* contains more information than a 'pure' itinerary and sums up some of the definitions that have been proposed so far. In an article focused on the possible written sources for some

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[25] '*Cet itinéraire appartient donc à un genre littéraire très particulier et il a peu d'équivalent dans la littérature norroise, mais il existe de nombreux textes rédigés dans d'autres langues décrivant le pèlerinage de Jérusalem.*'

[26] '*Il est vrai que le guide de voyage, comme celui de Nicholas, doit être distingué du récit de pèlerinage.*'

[27] '*L'auteur ne fait pas le récit de son propre voyage et ne recherche pas les effets littéraires, car seules les données objectives l'intéressent.*'

mirabilia included in the description of Rome, *Leiðarvísir* has been defined as an 'itinerary' (Marani 2009: 45). Questions of its genre and authorship were not taken into specific consideration in that article, but it was highlighted how several features of the Roman section, which were traditionally considered to be based on direct experience, show strong correspondences with written sources.

2.2 Travel Writing and Travel Accounts

As we have seen, scholars concur in defining *Leiðarvísir* as an itinerary or as a pilgrim-guide, and, explicitly or not, it is also maintained that its text constitutes the account of a real journey. A terminological and conceptual clarification appears essential to test the validity of these classifications and to determine in which genre *Leiðarvísir* should be categorised. The question of the applicability of a modern system of genre to medieval literature is legitimate, but one can agree with Hans Kuhn, according to whom, in spite of recurring scepticism, 'no philology can do without at least some concept of genre' (1956: 3).[28] As suggested by Hans Robert Jauss, a theory of genres for medieval literature should replace the concept of literary genre as a platonic idea with the historical concept of continuity, in which genres configure an historically determined *Horizont von Erwartungen und Spielregeln*, 'horizon of expectations and rules' (Jauss 1972: 119). As a consequence, literary genres cannot be considered 'as *genera* (classes) in a logical sense, but as groups or historical families' (Jauss 1972: 110).[29]

Fundamental aspects of the question of the medieval genre system are examined in Kindermann (1959) and in Frank (1997). The medieval indifference towards fixed terms to designate genres also applies to travel writing, but an analysis of the sources and their subdivision by genre categories still has an important heuristic value (Wolf 1989: 86). An introduction to the concept of 'genre' can be found in Frow (2006). Dieter Lamping (2009: xv-xxvi) presents a summary of contemporary tendencies in literature genre theory in the introduction to his

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[28] '*Zumindest kommt keine Philologie ohne Gattungsbegriffe aus*.'
[29] '*Sind die literarischen Gattungen nicht als* genera *(Klassen) im logischen Sinn, sondern als Gruppen oder historische Familien, zu verstehen.*'

Handbuch der literarischen Gattungen. The academic interest – and consequently the scholarly work – on the subject of travel writing and travel accounts has increased dramatically in the last years. The following observations are therefore the result of a selection made from the vast literature on the subject, in order to identify the most relevant formal and structural criteria accepted by scholars to define a text as 'travel writing'. Jan Borm (2004) and Carl Thompson (2011: 9-33) can be profitably consulted for a more complete outline of the debates on 'travel writing' in recent academic discourse.

As shown by Borm, it is essential to distinguish between 'the *travel book*, or *travelogue* as a predominantly (and presupposedly) non-fictional genre, and *travel writing* or *travel literature* (*the literature of travel*, if one prefers) as an overall heading for those texts whose main theme is travel' (Borm 2004: 19). This terminological and conceptual distinction is, for example, in use among German and French critics, who distinguish between *Reiseliteratur* and *Reisebuch* (or *Reisebericht*) and between *littérature de voyage* and *récit de voyage* (see Borm 2004: 18-19). The more neutral term 'travel writing' seems preferable to 'travel literature', given the variety of texts – often non-literary – that can be included under this label. Before 1900 in the English-speaking world, the term 'voyages and travels' was also employed to embrace a diversity of travel-related texts (Thompson 2011: 19). A wide range of terms are in use as synonyms for 'travel account': '"travel book", "travel narrative", "journeywork", "travel memoir", "travel story", "travelogue", "metatravelogue", "traveller's tale", "travel journal", or simply "travels"' (Borm 2004: 13). Recent scholars (like Borm 2004 and Thompson 2011) tend to prefer the terms 'travel book' or 'travelogue'. These terms, however, can be interpreted as referring to structured or extensive works, which is rarely the case for medieval texts of this kind. The more neutral term 'travel account' will, therefore, be henceforward used.

2.2.1 Travel Writing

A first difficulty one encounters in defining the concept of 'travel writing' lies in its extension and in the wide range of texts that it can include. An efficacious characterization of contemporary travel writing given by Jonathan Raban can also be readily applied to travel writing from the past:

> Travel writing is a notoriously raffish open house where different genres are likely to end up in the same bed. It accommodates the private diary, the essay, the short story, the prose poem, the rough note and polished talk with indiscriminate hospitality. (Raban 1988: 253)

Zweder von Martels has also noted the difficulty in finding 'the exact boundaries' of the genre:

> Travel writing seems unlimited in its forms of expression, but though we may therefore find it hard to define the exact boundaries of this genre, it is generally understood what it contains. It ranges from the indisputable examples such as guidebooks, itineraries and routes and perhaps also maps to less restricted accounts of journeys over land or by water, or just descriptions of experiences abroad. These appear in prose and poetry, and are often part of historical and (auto)biographical works. Sometimes we find no more than simple notes and observations, sometimes more elaborate diaries. The letter written during the journey itself, or composed long afterwards with literary skill is another much favoured form. (Martels 1994: xi)

Percy Adams provides an extensive catalogue of the many forms of travel writing before 1800 (1983: 38-80). Travel writing is 'a very loose generic label and has always embraced a bewilderingly diverse range of material' (Thompson 2011: 11): it is therefore problematic to consider it as a proper genre. In spite of this heterogeneity of texts to which the label 'travel writing' can be applied, however, 'it is generally understood what it contains', as remarked by Martels (1994: xi). This recognisability of travel writing can be better explained if, instead of using a classic genre category, one resorts to the concept of *Familienähnlichkeit*, 'family resemblance', proposed by Ludwig Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations* (1963: 324-25). According to Wittgenstein's idea of 'family resemblance', in some cases 'the search for an analytic definition is futile, and proposing one may distort the existing concept' (Hacker 1995: 269). The texts which are members of the extension of the concept 'travel writing' 'may be united not by essential common characteristics, but by family resemblance, i.e. by a network of overlapping but discontinuous similarities, like the fibres in a rope, or the facial features of members of a family' (Hacker 1995: 269). The concept of 'family resemblance' was significantly used by Jauss (1972:

113) to describe the *eigentümliche Struktur*, the 'peculiar structure', of a literary genre. As remarked by Thompson:

> Given the range of material that has historically been classified as 'travel writing' or 'voyages and travels', there is probably no neat and all-encompassing definition of the form that one can give. The genre is perhaps better understood as a constellation of many different types of writing and/or text, these differing forms being connected not by conformity to a single, prescriptive pattern, but rather by a set of what the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein would call 'family resemblances'. That is to say, there are a variety of features or attributes that can make us classify a text as travel writing, and each individual text will manifest a different selection and combination of these attributes. (Thompson 2011: 26)

Although she does not explicitly refer to Wittgenstein in her analysis of the exotic European travel writing, Mary Campbell (1988: 5), discussing the problematic nature of a definition of travel literature before the seventeenth century, uses the concept of 'family resemblance'. A similar application of this Wittgensteinian concept to the theory of literary genre has been proposed by Harald Fricke, who has used the idea of 'family resemblance' in his definition of 'aphorism' (1981: 138-150; 1984: 14; see also Lamping 2009: xx).

If one accepts that texts recognized as belonging to the group 'travel writing' are only connected by a set of family resemblances, one must agree with Borm, who argues that travel writing is not a genre but 'a collective term for a variety of texts both predominantly fictional and non-fictional whose main theme is travel' (Borm 2004: 13). As noted by Thompson, travel should be understood not only as a movement through space, but also as a confrontation or a negotiation with alterity (see also Brenner 1989c):

> If all travel involves an encounter between self and the other that is brought about by movement through space, all travel writing is at some level a record or product of this encounter, and of the negotiation between similarity and difference that it entailed. (Thompson 2011: 10)

Embracing both fictional and non-fictional texts, Borm's definition includes in the 'extended family' of travel writing a multiplicity of individuals among which relevant resemblances can be shown. A variety of texts can thus be classed as forms of travel writing: Homer's *Odyssey*, for example, or *Le Divisament dou Monde* by

Marco Polo; Swift's *Gulliver Travels,* Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* or Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* (see Thompson 2011: 24).

Similarly to Borm and Thompson, Anne Fuchs gives an inclusive definition of 'travel literature' as 'any written expression that articulates the relationship between the self and the world in the experience and processing of the other' (Fuchs 2009: 591;[30] see Murath 1995). Fuchs's definition conveys the extent of the genre and the complexity of specifying its features and subcategories. Travel literature is a genre that has been developed and structured on an empirical basis, defined, above all, through the criterion of *Welthaltigkeit,* 'the relationship to the world', so that it is difficult to characterize this genre 'with the conventional method of typological literary theory (Fuchs 2009: 593;[31] see also Brenner 1989b).

Within the blurred boundaries of travel writing, however, it is possible to define more precisely its many specific subgenres and modes: the ancient *peripli* and *itineraria*, for example, the medieval *peregrinationes*, guidebooks, maps, novels of travels from all ages, memoirs and travel accounts. The travel account is indubitably central to travel writing. It is indisputable that *Leiðarvísir* can be classed as a form of travel writing as defined above, but it is much more problematic to consider it also as a travel account. In order to clarify this crucial point, a definition of travel account will now be provided. It will emerge that, while *Leiðarvísir* shares many of the features common to the impersonal guides, there are no internal or external elements to define it as an account of a real journey made by an individual.

2.2.2 Travel Accounts

Peter Brenner gives a clear and neutral definition of a travel account as 'the linguistic representation of an authentic journey' (Brenner 1989b: 9).[32] This definition does not contain a judgement on the aesthetic value or on the truthfulness of the travel account, because the travel account 'by definition is intended to refer only to real travel, but the authors have much room for manoeuvre between authenticity and

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[30] '*Jede schriftliche Äußerung, die die Beziehung zwischen Ich und Welt über die Erfahrung und Verarbeitung des Fremden artikuliert*'
[31] '*Mit den konventionellen Verfahren einer typologischen Poetik.*'
[32] '*Die sprachliche Darstellung authentischer Reisen.*'

fiction in the description. This room was filled in very different ways by individuals and by specific epochs' (Brenner 1989b: 9).[33] From a different perspective, Roland Le Huenen explains clearly this fundamental point:

> As its name suggests, the travel account, if it is an account, implies also a journey, and this is where it first asserts its originality. A journey, that is to say an actual movement in space during a certain period, which is immediately assumed as prior to the account itself. The syntagm *travel account* necessarily poses a relation of antecedence and tutelage between these terms, between the text and its object. The account can only emerge in the aftermath of a relation to the world, which is inevitably prior, unavoidable in its priority. (Le Huenen 1990: 15-16)[34]

The real experience of a journey is what distinguishes a travel account, because 'the travel book is a kind of witness: it is generically aimed at the truth. Neither power nor talent gives a travel writer his or her authority, which comes only and crucially from experience' (Campbell 1988: 2).

Even if the travel account is a *genre sans loi* (Le Huenen 1990: 14) – that is, a genre lacking the determined and tendentially rigid rules of form and content characteristic of other literary genres (like e.g. the dithyramb or the classical eclogue) – there are nevertheless strong similarities and common features that may allow us to establish heuristic categories. Carmen Samson-Himmelstjerna offers an interesting description of some similarities shared by medieval travel accounts:

> They [the travel accounts] are handed down as literary autobiographical accounts of pilgrims, which besides the explicitly formulated details of their journey (distances of the respective places from each other, attractions, lodgings, characteristics of sacred sites, etc.) give between the lines information about the expectations, the reactions, the prejudices, and the learning process of the

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[33] '*Soll sich per definitionem nur auf wirkliche Reisen beziehen, aber den Verfassern liegt doch ein breiter Spielraum zwischen Authentizität und Fiktionalität der Beschreibung offen, der sowohl individuell wie auch epochenspezifisch ganz verschieden ausgefüllt wurde.*'

[34] '*Comme son nom l'indique le récit de voyage, s'il est un récit, implique aussi un voyage, et c'est en quoi s'affirme d'abord son originalité. Un voyage c'est-à-dire un déplacement réel dans l'espace, au long d'une certaine durée, et qui est d'emblée posé comme préalable au récit même. Le syntagme récit-de-voyage pose de façon nécessaire une relation d'antécédence et de tutelle entre ses termes, entre le texte et son objet. Le récit ne peut surgir que dans l'après-coup d'un rapport au monde inéluctablement premier, incontournable dans sa priorité.*'

traveller. Pilgrims' accounts should in this respect be considered very realistic texts. (Samson-Himmelstjerna 2004: 23)[35]

Borm (2004: 17) uses for his definition of travel account the concept of 'dominant aspects'. This idea was introduced by Jauss (1972: 112), who proposed using the concept of *systemprägende Dominante*, 'the dominant aspects that organize the system', by which the so-called *Gattungsmischung*, 'mixed genres', of classical theory, which were the negative counterparts to the pure genres, can be transformed into a methodically productive category. This concept is particularly useful in identifying genres that, like the travel account, 'consist of a mix of different genres and forms of writing' (Borm 2004: 17), but that can be analysed in terms of dominant aspects. On this basis, the travel account can be defined as

> any narrative characterized by a non-fiction dominant that relates (almost always) in the first person a journey or journeys that the reader supposes to have taken place in reality while assuming that author, narrator and principal character are but one or identical. (Borm 2004: 17)

The ways in which the non-fiction dominant is structured and can be recognized vary according to the reader's horizon of expectations. Thompson, who defines the travel account as a 'first-person narrative of travel which claims to be a true record of the author's own experience', remarks that the distinction between 'fiction' and 'non-fiction' in a travel account is not always as clear as one might suppose, because the experience of a real travel is always 'crafted into travel text, and this crafting process must inevitably introduce into the text, to a greater or lesser degree, a fictive dimension' (Thompson 2011: 29-30; see also Neuber 1989: 51-52). In other words, the 'referential pact' between the author of a travel account and his/her readers contains differing, historically-determined clauses, since 'the degree to which readers

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[35] '*Sie werden als literarische Selbstzeugnisse von Pilgern überliefert, die neben den explizit formulierten Details ihrer Reise (Entfernungen einzelner Orte voneinander, besuchte Attraktionen, angesteuerte Herbergen, Merkmale heiliger Stätten usw.) auch zwischen den Zeilen Aufschluss geben über die Erwartungen, Reaktionen, Vorurteile und den Lernprozess der Reisenden. Pilgerberichte gelten als Texte, die in dieser Hinsicht die größte Realitätsnähe haben.*'

presuppose the author of a travelogue to be writing non-fiction varies throughout the history of the genre' (Borm 2004: 17-18).

Resting on their historically-determined assumptions, medieval authors had clearly in mind a difference between fiction and non-fiction in written texts. This difference was also theoretically elaborated in medieval rhetorical analysis. Jauss (1972: 117, 126-27) used the terminology adopted by John of Garland in his *Parisiana poetria*, originally composed *c.* 1220 (John of Garland 1974: xiv-xv), to classify medieval literary genres according to the degree of reality in the narration. John of Garland, in fact, identifies three kinds of narration rooted *in negociis*, 'in plot': *fabula, hystoria* and *argumentum* (John of Garland 1974: 100). A fable contains *nec res veras nec verisimiles*, 'events that are untrue, and do not pretend to be true'; history reports *res gesta ab etatis nostre memoria remota*, 'an event which has taken place long before the memory of our age'; and a realistic fiction is *res ficta que tamen fieri potuit*, 'a fictitious event which nevertheless could have happened' (John of Garland 1974: 100-101; see Bruyne 1975: II 20-21).

2.2.3   Features of Medieval Travel Accounts

Readers of medieval travel accounts had a 'horizon of expectations' very different to readers of modern-day travel accounts. However, authors of medieval travel accounts also show 'epistemological anxieties' towards assessing the truthfulness of their observations and the non-fiction dominant of their accounts; these epistemological anxieties are expressed in a series of 'strategies by which travellers have tried to present themselves as reliable sources' (Thompson 2011: 64). Symmetric to authors' strategies, as Thompson has remarked, one great concern of readers of travel accounts from all ages has been whether they are being deceived, or whether the actual experience of the author is reported in the text: 'If travelogues are to be credited by their readers, they must meet contemporary audience expectations as to what denotes reliability and plausibility in the travel account'; authors of travel accounts had thus to meet the 'epistemological decorum' (a term coined by Shapin 1994: 193-242) required by their readers (Thompson 2011: 72; see also Coleman 2003: 8-15).

In order to be plausible and reliable to its readers, a fundamental prerequisite that a medieval travel account had to display was conformity to a canon of established authorities – a conformity that in the Middle Ages was a prerequisite for

any written text. For travel accounts, this canon included the Bible and the writings of the Fathers of the Church, as well as the works of philosophers, geographers and natural historians from antiquity (Thompson 2011: 72-73; see also §2.6.1). It was common for medieval pilgrims who wrote an account of their journey to use words from the Bible to describe the places they had visited in the Holy Land. An example of this principle of authority, through which both a traveller's experience and the written account based on this experience were filtered, can be found in the *Itinerarium Egeriae*. This is the oldest text that has come to us that can be defined as an account of a pilgrimage (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 37-90). It is likely that Egeria, probably an Aquitanian or Galician nun of noble birth, made her pilgrimage to the Holy Land between 381 and 384. After her return, she described her journey in the form of a letter addressed to the sisters of her religious community (see Egeria 1995: 9-29 for questions of the identification of Egeria and the dating of her account). As Mary Campbell has observed, Egeria went to the Holy Land 'to see a diorama of the Scriptures, and she found it, thanks to the likeminded religious who inhabited the holy sites and through whom all *ostendibantur juxta scripturas* "were shown according to the Scriptures"' (Campbell 1988: 21-22). This is the beginning of the fragmentary text of the *Itinerarium* (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 37), of which the beginning and the end have been lost. The experience of Egeria as a traveller 'bears a striking resemblance to the act of reading', and the images to which her 'zealous piety was attracted were limited in number and available from other sources, pre-eminently the Bible' (Campbell 1988: 24-25).

2.2.3.1   The Narrator in the First Person

As we have seen in Borm's definition (2004: 17), a stylistic feature of the genre 'travel account' is that, as a rule, travel accounts are written in the first person singular. This feature can also be identified in medieval texts. The use of the first person in a travel account is a rhetorical strategy to maintain the identity of author, narrator and principal character. Scholars who have analysed the structure of travel accounts agree on this fundamental point: Zlatko Klátik (1969) considers the question of the poetics of the travel account, concluding that the fundamental feature that travel accounts have in common is the *Ich-Erzähler*, 'the narrator in the first person':

> The identification of the author with the narrator is one of the most common (and most conventional) generic characteristics of the travel account and has a crucial importance for the structure of the composition. The figure of the author, as a traveller and a narrator in a single person who enters into a description of the real world, guarantees the credibility of the account and confirms that what has been illustrated and described was actually observed and recorded. The predicate in the first person here serves a dominant function. The concrete subject becomes the exclusive realizer of information based on direct observations and on the recognition of new areas of reality. (Klátik 1969: 136-37)[36]

Campbell proposes a similar explanation, giving reasons for her decision to start her study of European exotic travel writing not with pre-Christian texts, but with the fourth-century *peregrinatio* of Egeria:

> Our point of origin, though, needs justifying: it is, like any point, imaginary. We begin in the late antiquity, at the end of the fourth century, with the earliest known narrative of Christian Pilgrimage written by a European. Why not begin earlier, with a pre-Christian work? Classical and Hellenistic Greek accounts of India and Persia are extant and will be referred to in these pages. The simple answer [...] is that travel literature is defined here as a kind of first-person narrative, or at least a second-person narrative (as in the travel guide: "thence you come to a pillar near the chamber of the holy sepulchre'). A history such as Herodotus wrote is a third-person narrative. The peripluses of Alexander the Great's pilots are almost narratives, but there is no 'person' in the extant epitomes; the geography of Strabo or Natural History of Pliny is not narrative at all. (Campbell 1988: 5)

Egeria's account is written in the first person singular. She often uses the first person plural to indicate the stages of the journey she made together with her companions,

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[36] '*Die Identität des Autors mit dem Erzähler bildet eines der häufigsten (und auch konventionellsten) Gattungsmerkmale der Reisebeschreibung und hat eine entscheidende Bedeutung für ihren Kompositionsaufbau. Die Gestalt des Autors als Reisenden und Erzählers in einer Person, die in die Beschreibung der wirklichen Welt eindringt, garantiert die Glaubwürdigkeit des Berichtes, bestätigt, dass das, was veranschaulicht und beschrieben wurde, wirklich beobachtet und festgehalten war. Eine dominierende Aufgabe hat dabei die Aussage in der ersten Person. Das konkrete Subjekt wird zum ausschließlichen Verwirklicher von Informationen, die auf unmittelbaren Beobachtungen und auf der Erkenntnis neuer Gebiete der Wirklichkeit beruhen.'*

but the narrative person is the first person singular, as, for instance, appears from the famous beginning of the fragment of her letter:

> ...ostendebantur iuxta scripturas. Interea ambulantes pervenimus ad quendam locum, ubi se tamen montes illi, inter quos ibamus, aperiebant et faciebant vallem infinitam, ingens, planissima et valde pulchram, et trans vallem apparebat mons sanctus dei syna. Hic autem locus, ubi se montes aperiebant, iunctus est cum eo loco, quo sunt memoriae concupiscentiae. In eo ergo loco cum venitur, ut tamen commonuerunt deductores sancti illi, qui nobis cum erant, dicentes: 'consuetudo est, ut fiat hic oratio ab his qui veniunt, quando de eo loco primitus videtur mons dei': sicut et nos fecimus. Habebat autem de eo loco ad montem dei forsitan quattuor milia totum per ualle illa, quam dixi ingens. (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 37)

> ...were shown according to the Scriptures. Walking meanwhile we came to a certain place where those mountains, among which we were going, opened and made an endless valley, vast, exceedingly flat and very beautiful, and across the valley appeared the holy mountain of God, Sinai. This place, moreover, where the mountains opened is joined with that place where are the Graves of Lust. In that place therefore when one arrives, as those holy guides who went with us advised, saying, 'It is customary, that a prayer is made here by those who come, when from that place is first seen the mountain of God': and accordingly we did. It was moreover from that place to the mountain of God about four miles in all across that valley, which as I said is vast. (Campbell 1988: 23)

Egeria switches the narration from first person plural (*pervenimus, ibamus*) to first person singular (*dixi*), marking the identity of author, narrator, and principal character. This use of the first person narrator is possible because, as Campbell explains, 'with Christianity we find at last an audience for the first-person travel account and a metaphysic in which private experience is valued and self-consciousness imperative' (1988: 20). The diffusion of Christianity and the fact that its holy places lay in a foreign and distant place created 'a fertile ground for the development of an experiential kind of travel literature virtually unknown before Egeria's Peregrinatio'; with this process the rhetorical innovation of the first person singular formally individuates the Christian travel account, since 'the shift from the third to the first person, from the land to the journey that reveals it, marks a tangible point of departure'(Campbell 1988: 20).

The perspective of Egeria, which will show the way forward to the modern European travel account, is radically different from that of the historians and geographers of classical and late antiquity who 'used for their works data accumulated with first-hand experience, but do not dwell in their books on journey or the self, but only on the data accumulated during the journey. Journey for them is a method of research; the self is a respectable "source" but not a subject whose human nature is or should be emphasized' (Campbell 1988: 15).

Analogous observations are made by Ursula Ganz-Blättler (1990) in her book on accounts written between 1320 and 1520 by European pilgrims to Jerusalem and Santiago de Compostela. Ganz-Blättler (1990: 273-99) defines the function that the pilgrim accounts, considered as 'portions' of autobiographies, had in the formation of this genre and of a 'self-awareness' of the subject/narrator and confirms that a characteristic common to all the accounts is the use of the first person 'I' or 'We'. Ganz-Blättler analyses the different functions of the pilgrim accounts and lingers over one of their possible functions, as pilgrim guides:

> Usually, everything that does not require explanatory introductory and closing remarks is originally conceived as a 'Baedeker' intended for future pilgrims. The basic informative function seemed to the authors such a matter of course that they did not say a word about it. Where the pilgrims' guide feature is not explicitly mentioned, impersonal formulas ('you go') or the use of direct speech ('You come here') point in this direction. (Ganz-Blättler 1990: 250).[37]

Ganz-Blättler contrasts here the 'account-' with the 'guide-function' in the texts she examines, indicating another stylistic and structural element of fundamental importance in the evaluation of *Leiðarvísir*. In the Icelandic itinerary the 'I' form, typical of the accounts, is completely absent, whereas only impersonal forms, typical of the guides, are used. (see §2.3, and Table 1, p. 101).

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[37] '*Ursprünglich als 'Baedeker' für nachfolgende Pilger gedacht ist im Normalfall alles, was ohne erläuternde Einleitungs- und Schlussworte auskommt. Den Autoren erschien die grundlegende informative Funktion offenbar dermaßen als Selbstverständlichkeit, dass darüber kein Wort verloren werden musste. Wo die Pilgerführer-Funktion nicht explizit genannt ist, weisen sehr oft unpersönliche Formeln ('man geht') oder die Verwendung der direkten Rede ('Du kommst hierauf) in diese Richtung.*'

From a different perspective, Friedrich Wolfzettel (1996: 9-19) makes stimulating observations on the medieval pilgrim's account as a specimen of a *discours du voyageur*. Wolfzettel affirms that in medieval accounts we have originally a '"poor" discourse, whose ritual aspects leave little room for any originality' (1996: 13).[38] Pilgrim accounts do not yet express the 'rich' discourse, which will begin to articulate its originality with Humanism, but they are already characterised by a narrator in the first person. Wolfzettel remarks on the importance of this process of secularisation, which is characterised 'by the frequent use of the vernacular instead of Latin, by the increasingly important role that is played by the first-person voice of the narrator, and by the narration of a story that, in the guise of a traditional guide, would convey the dynamic aspect of the experience' (1996: 14).[39]

Dietrich Huschenbett (2000) examines the German travel accounts of the late Middle Ages as a new prose genre and reaches the same conclusion that 'stylistically, the texts are composed as accounts in the first-person singular or plural and have basically a tripartite division of the contents: Outward journey – Stay in Palestine – Return journey ' (Huschenbett 2000: 123).[40]

Carmen von Samson-Himmelstjerna (2004) makes significant and stimulating remarks on the medieval German travel accounts, also bringing to light the important role played by the type 'pilgrim' in fictional sources. Samson-Himmelstjerna remarks on the difficulty of a structural classification of the pilgrims' accounts to conclude that

> If one nevertheless attempts to reach a positive definition of the texts defined as
> "pilgrim accounts", it is possible to ascertain, as the only clear characteristic that
> can be assigned to all the accounts, that a first-person narrator, who appears more

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[38] '*Un discours "pauvre" dont les aspects rituels ne laissent guère de place à une originalité quelconque.*'

[39] '*Par l'usage fréquent de la langue vulgaire à la place du Latin, par le rôle de plus en plus important que prend le je du narrateur et par la narration d'un récit qui, sous les apparences du guide traditionnel, voudrait rendre l'aspect dynamique du vécu.*'

[40] '*Stilistisch sind die Texte als Ich- oder Wir-Bericht verfasst und verfügen grundsätzlich über eine Dreiteilung des Inhalts: Hinreise – Aufenthalt in Palästina – Rückreise.*'

or less clearly, gives an account of a journey to the Holy Land' (Samson-Himmelstjerna 2004: 24).[41]

Scholars agree that the only stylistic and structural feature that travel accounts have in common is the use in the narration of the first person, singular or plural. For the pilgrim guides the stylistic equivalent of its impersonal content (de Beer 1952, see §2.4) is the usage of the impersonal form (Ganz-Blättler 1990: 250). In fact, it is the usage of the first person that makes it possible to define as 'travel accounts' pilgrim guides that are otherwise impersonal. The *Itinerarium Burdingalense*, the most ancient account of a Christian Pilgrimage that has survived to this day, provides a significant example (Cuntz 1990: I 86-102; *Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 1-26). It is a classical itinerary, with indication of stops and distances, describing the journey that an anonymous pilgrim made in 333 from Bordeaux to the Holy Land (Keel 1984: 415). The whole itinerary is impersonal, articulated with a repetitive series of *mutationes*, *mansiones* and *civitates*, 'changes, halts and cities', with the corresponding indications of distances in miles (see Milani 2002). After having reached Constantinople, however, the author of the itinerary sums up the distance he has covered up to that point and indicates the following stop using the first person plural:

> Fit omnis summa a Burdigala Constantinopolim vicies bis centena viginti unum milia, mutationes ccxxx, mansiones cxii. Item ambulavimus Dalmatico et Zenophilo cons. iii kal. iun. a Calcedonia et reversi sumus Constantinopolim vii kal. Ian. cons. suprascripto (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 8),
>
> The total from Bordeaux to Constantinople is 2,221 miles, 230 changes, 112 stops. We travelled during the consulate of Dalmatius and Zenophilus, leaving from Chalcedonia on the 30th of May, and we returned to Constantinople on the 25th of December during the same consulate.

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[41] '*Versucht man dennoch, zu einer positiven Definition der als 'Pilgerberichte' bezeichneten Texte zu gelangen, lässt sich als einziges eindeutiges, allen Berichten zubeweisbares Merkmal konstatieren, dass ein mehr oder minder deutlich auftretender Ich-Erzähler über eine Reise ins Heilige Land berichtet.*'

These resumptive remarks of the author give us precious indications for a dating of the itinerary, but they are also the only element that allows us to define the text as a travel account. The use of the first person plural of two verbs of movement (*ambulavimus* and *reversi sumus*) combines in one single subject author, narrator and principal character and makes it explicit that the text is (or intends to be read as) a description of a real journey made by this subject, that is, a travel account.

The itinerary of Sigeric describes the archbishop's journey to Rome in 990 to fetch his *pallium* (Parks 1954: 46-47; Ortenberg 1990: 207). The itinerary, which has often been compared to *Leiðarvísir* (Magoun 1940; Örnólfur Thorsson 1988: lviii), contains in its incipit a direct reference to the journey of the archbishop, whereas *Leiðarvísir* does not include any reference to a specific journey of the author. The reference to Sigeric's journey was made by the author of the itinerary, who was probably a man of Sigeric's retinue (Parks 1954: 46): *Adventus archiepiscopi nostri Sigerici ad Romam*, 'arrival at Rome of our Archbishop Sigeric' (Stubbs 1874: 391). In Sigeric's itinerary, similar to the *Itinerarium Burdingalense*, after the reference to the *adventus* of the archbishop to Rome the anonymous author writes that, at the end of the first day, *Deinde reversi sunt in domum*, 'After this they came back to the [bishop's] mansion' (Stubbs 1874: 392); during the second day, after visiting the Lateran, he writes that *Inde refecimus cum domini* [sic] *apostolico Johanno*, 'after that we ate together with Pope John [XV]' (Stubbs 1874: 392). The text of *Leiðarvísir* does not contain either a determined grammatical subject expressing the action of travelling or any indication of an individual and historical subject making a journey.

2.2.3.2   The Meta-Accounts

Some travel accounts do not have an explicit 'I' or 'we', but they do have a subject of the narration and of the travel acting as an implicit first person. The account of the travel is in this case reported indirectly by a third person: a narrator reports the experiences of another person who went on an actual journey. Since they are accounts of other accounts, I propose for this kind of text the designation 'meta-account' (Campbell 1988: 34 uses the term 'mediated account'). The term 'meta-account' should not be confused with the term 'meta-travelogue', often used among scholars to denote a travelogue that includes reflections on travelogues as a genre,

thinking over the problem of narrating travel, and describing the Other (see Leon 2009: 76).

A first important example is given by *De locis sanctis*, written by Adomnán, ninth Abbot of Iona (679-704), who is also known for his *Vita Columbae* (Adomnán 1961), the biography of the founder of the Abbey, St Columba, (521-97). Adomnán did not visit the Holy Land himself, but he writes in his work that he had access to first-hand information given to him by the bishop Arculf. All we know about Arculf is conveyed in *De locis sanctis* and in two passages of Bede. Adomnán calls him *sanctus episcopus gente Gallus*, 'holy bishop, a Gaul by race' (Adomnán 1958: 36, 37), and Bede reports in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* (Bede 2005: 96) and at the end of his *De locis sanctis* (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 279-80) that Arculf came to Iona after being shipwrecked off the western coast of Britain. Adomnán reported that after reaching Iona Arculf narrated to him his long journey. On the basis of internal evidence, it has been assumed that Arculf probably sojourned in the Near East in the years 679-82, and that Adomnán composed *De locis sanctis* at Iona between 683-86 (Adomnán 1958: 9-11). In the incipit of *De locis sanctis* are introduced the two subjects of the text, the first person narrator and the third-person subject of the travel and of the travel account:

> Arculfus sanctus episcopus gente gallus diuersorum longe remotorum peritus locorum uerax index et satis idoneus in hierusolimitana ciuitate per menses nouem hospitatus et loca sancta cotidianis uisitationibus peragrans mihi adomnano haec uniuersa quae infra craxanda sunt experimenta diligentius percunctanti et primo in tabulis describenti fideli et indubitabili narratione dictauit; quae nunc in membranis breui textu scribuntur. (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 183)
>
> The holy bishop Arculf, a Gaul by race, versed in diverse far-away regions and a truthful and quite reliable witness, sojourned for nine months in the city of Jerusalem, traversing the holy places in daily visitations. In response to my careful inquiries he dictated to me, Adomnán, this faithful and accurate record of all his experiences which is to be set out below. I first wrote it down on tablets: it will now be written succinctly on parchment. (Adomnán 1958: 37)

The historicity of an individual instance of travel is declared in the incipit, where it is also stated that the account is based on the *experimenta*, 'experiences', related *fideli et indubitabili narratione*, 'in a faithful and accurate narration', of a *verax index et satis idoneus*, 'truthful and quite reliable witness' (*Itineraria et alia geographica*

1965: 183). In some passages, the narration switches to direct speech, as when the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is described:

> Arculfus itaque de ipsius ciuitatis habitaculis a nobis interrogatus respondens ait: memini me et uidisse et frequentasse multa ciuitatis eiusdem edificia plurimas que domus grandes lapideas per totam magnam ciuitatem intra moenia circumdata mira fabricatas arte sepius considerasse. (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 186-87)
> Arculf then, when we questioned him about the dwellings of the city itself [Jerusalem], said in reply: 'I recall seeing and visiting many buildings in the city, and often studying several great stone mansions built with wondrous skill throughout the whole great city within the surrounding walls'. (Adomnán 1958: 43)

As is clear from this passage, the direct and individual experience of Arculf, his *memini*, is central to Adomnán's text. Adomnán has also used written sources for the composition of *De locis sanctis*: besides the Bible, he uses Jerome's Letters, his *De situ et nominibus locorum hebraicorum liber*, and probably the *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* (Adomnán 1958: 13-14). He refers explicitly to some of these sources, whereas others have been identified by scholars (see Gorman 2006 for a picture of the *index fontium*). Thomas O'Loughlin (1992) has shown that *De locis sanctis*, rather than reporting Arculf's travels, was written to supply a work of reference, in order to provide for the reader of the Scriptures geographical information that would assist him in his exegesis. The relation of Adomnán to Arculf is complex, but O'Loughlin (1997) has emphasised that Arculf plays in *De locis sanctis* the role of an 'expert witness', who is needed to confirm by direct observation the solutions to contradictions emerging from scriptural exegesis. Adomnán (1958: 44), for instance, uses the direct *experimenta* of Arculf to solve the problem of a *discrepantia nominum*, a 'discrepancy in the words', used in the gospels to refer to the place where Christ's body was laid: in Mark, Luke, the Acts, and John the place is called *monumentum*, whereas Matthew refers to it on four occasions as *sepulchrum* and on three occasions as *monumentum* (O'Loughlin 1992: 44). Adomnán resolves the contradiction thanks to Arculf's direct experience by stating that the *monumentum* is the outside and the *sepulchrum* the inside of Jesus's burial place (Adomnán 1958: 44; see O'Loughlin 1992 and 1997 for other significant examples of how *De locis sanctis* deals with important questions of scriptural exegesis).

David Woods (2002) has argued that the information contained in *De locis sanctis* derives from excerpts of texts collected by a source whose real name was Arnulf, misread by Adomnán as Arculf. On the basis of a life contained in the *Gesta abbatum Fontanellensium*, the history of the abbots of the monastery of Fontanelle, Woods (2002: 43-51) maintains that Arnulf put together a Latin translation of a life of Constantine and a collection of miracle-stories to support the authenticity of some relics he had obtained in Constantinople: Adomnán would have only read a manuscript containing a copy of these texts, knowing very little about Arnulf and without ever actually meeting him. Woods's thesis is based on valid arguments, but even if De *locis sanctis* were an exegetical manual based exclusively on written sources, and Adomnán had never personally met a pilgrim coming from a long journey in the Holy Land (see also Delierneux 1997), the facts remain that Adomnán presents it as a record of the *experimenta* of Arculf and that the text is structurally a 'meta-account'.

We find another example of meta-account in the work of Huneberc, a nun born in England between 730 and 740, who shortly before 762 joined her relative Walburga, the Abbess of Heidenheim, and wrote, probably around 780, a life of St Willibald (Holder Egger 1887; see Bauch 1984: 13-15, and Huneberc of Heidenheim 1995: 141-43 for her biography). Huneberc composed the *Vita* of Willibald mostly on the basis of information that she got directly from Willibald himself. In a large part of the work she describes Willibald's journey to the Holy Land, which he had undertaken between 722 and 729, thus realizing what we have called above a 'meta-account'. The subjects of this meta-account are Willibald and his companions, in the third person singular or plural. Interestingly, in a passage describing the two sources of the river Jordan, Jor and Dan, Huneberc gets confused while reporting Willibald's own words and uses a dative pronoun in the first person plural:

> Et ibi orantes, pergebant inde et veniebant ad locum illum ubi duos fontes de terra emanant Ior et Dan, et tunc venientes de monte deorsum, in unum collecti faciunt Iordanem. Ibi morabant unam noctem inter duabus fontibus, et pastores dabant nobis acrum lac bibere. (Holder Egger 1887: 96)
>
> After praying there, they departed and came to the spot where two fountains, Jor and Dan, spring from the earth and then pour down the mountainside to form the river Jordan. There, between the two fountains, they passed the night and the shepherds gave us sour milk to drink. (Huneberc of Heidenheim 1995: 154)

The *nobis* of this passage, a significant *lapsus calami* by Huneberc, shows clearly that while the grammatical subject of a meta-account is in the third person, the real – deep – subject is in the first person, thus confirming that a travel account is narrated, as a rule, by an *Ich- Erzähler*.

Another famous example of a meta-account is the narration of Ohthere's voyages included in the anonymous translation from Latin into Old English of Paulus Orosius' *Historiarum adversum Paganos Libri Septem,* probably made in the early 890s (Bately 1980: 13-18; see Bately 2007: 21). The question on how and by whom these reports came to be embedded in the Old English Orosius is complex and still open because of the sparseness of the actual evidence we have (Bately 2007: 26). It is likely that the voyages along the coasts of Norway and Denmark described in the text took place in the second half of the ninth century (Bately 1980: lxxxviii). In spite of the absence of an explicit 'I', these descriptions can be defined as meta-accounts. The personal subjects in the reported speech, expressed in the third person, are in fact an implicit first person that narrates his voyages:

> Ohthere sæde his hlaforde, Ælfrede cyninge, þæt he ealra Norðmonna norþmest bude [...] He sæde þæt he æt sumum cirre wolde fandian hu longe þæt land norþryhte læge, oþþe hwæðer ænig mon be norðan þæm westenne bude. Þa for norþryhte be þæm lande. (Bately 1980: 13-14),
>
> Ohtere said to his lord, King Alfred, that he lived furthest north of all Northmen [Norwegians]. [...] He said that on a certain occasion he wished to investigate how far the land extended in a northerly direction, or whether anyone lived north of the waste. Then he went north along the coast (Bately 2007: 44).

Analogous considerations can be made for the text reporting the voyages of Wulfstan, where the indirect clause expresses a personal and definite subject of the travel: *Wulfstan sæde þæt he gefore of Hædum* (Bately 1980: 16), 'Wulfstan said that he travelled from the Heaths [Hedeby]' (Bately 2007: 48). Two other famous examples of meta-accounts are *Le Divisament dou Monde*, also known as *Il Milione* (Polo 1982), where the accounts of the travels made by Marco Polo are recorded by his cellmate Rustichello da Pisa in 1298; and the journal of Christopher Columbus's first voyage, which has reached us in the version edited and summarized by Bartolomé de las Casas (1993).

The first-person narrator is a stylistic feature common to travel accounts. Even texts that, like the *Itinerarium Burdingalense* and the itinerary of Sigeric, have

an impersonal structure can be defined as travel accounts because they have occurrences of the first person, which identify author, narrator and principal character. Other texts, like the narration of Arculf's and Ohthere's voyages, are in the third person, but their indirect clauses contain an embedded *Ich-Erzähler*. *Leiðarvísir* is structured on a series of impersonal expressions (§2.5) and does not show any textual reference to a traveller or to a determined narrator identical with the author of the text and with the traveller/principal character: there are no stylistic or structural features of the text that allow us to define it as a travel account (or meta-account).

2.2.3.3   The Autoptic Principle

Another strategy that has often been adopted by travellers to reinforce the plausibility and the accuracy of their accounts is to assert that what they report is based on their personal experience. This insistence on the fact that their authority is that of the eye-witness and that they have seen by autopsy – that is, for themselves – what they report in their account, has been denoted the 'autoptic principle' (Thompson 2011: 64-65). The authors of medieval travel accounts often refer to their direct experience as a trustworthy source in order to reinforce the reliability of their text (Richard 1981. 22-23).

Elka Weber (2005: 57-70) gives a description of the different sources used by authors of travel accounts, and observes that 'when the author does insert himself into the narrative, it is usually for one of the four following reasons: to bolster his reliability, to highlight some ritual activity, to recall physical danger or discomfort, or to assert national identity' (Weber 2005: 177; see also Richard 1981: 39-43 and Ganz-Blättler 1990: 110-13). Theodericus, a pilgrim from West Germany who visited the Holy Land between 1164 and 1174, probably in 1169 (Theodericus 1976: 5-7; Huygens 1994: 28-29), makes a very interesting distinction among the various sources he has used, among which his *visu* experience clearly plays the most important role:

> de Christo quidem et eius locis ea, que visu didicimus, pro posse narravimus; nunc quedam de eius amicis et aliis locis nota referemus, post hec quedam a nobis visa, quedam ab aliis nobis relata dicemus. (Huygens 1994: 172[932-35])
>
> We have told as best as we could those things about Christ and the places of his that we have learned by seeing them; now we shall report some notable things about some of his friends and some other places; after this we shall mention some

things which have been seen by ourselves, and some things that have been reported to us by other people.

Theodericus makes another relevant statement about his purposes and the sources he has used at the explicit of his *libellus*:

Haec de locis sanctis, in quibus Dominus noster Iesus Christus, servi forma pro nobis suscepta, corporalis substantie presentiam exhibuit, partim a nobis visa, partim ab aliis veraci relatu cognita digessimus, sperantes lectorum vel auditorum animos in ipsius amorem per eorum que hic descripta sunt notiam excitandos. (Huygens 1994: 197$^{1625\text{-}30}$)

We have arranged these things about the holy places (partly seen by us, and partly known to us by the true accounts of other people), in which our Lord Jesus Christ, having taken on the form of a servant for our sake, displayed the presence of his bodily substance, hoping to awaken the minds of the readers or hearers to the love of him by the things which are described here.

Authors of pilgrim accounts often stress the importance of the fact that they have directly experienced with their senses the object of their narration. The Anglo-Saxon Saewulf went to Jerusalem in 1102 and wrote in Latin an account about his pilgrimage (Huygens 1994: 35). In his *Certa Relatio de situ Jerusalem* Saewulf gives us a significant example of the importance that pilgrims attached to their direct experience, when he vividly describes the tragic effects of a storm that broke in the harbour of Jaffa the day after he had landed there with his companions:

Mane vero, dum ab aecclesia venimus, sonitum maris audivimus, clamorem populi omnesque concurrentes atque mirantes de talibus prius inauditis, nos autem timentes currendo simul cum aliis venimus ad litus. Dum enim illuc pervenimus, vidimus tempestatem altitudinem superexcellere montium, corpora quidem innumerabilia hominum utriusque sexus summersorum in litore miserrime iacentia aspeximus, naves minutatim fractas iuxta volutantes simul vidimus. Sed quis preter rugitum maris et fragorem navium quicquam audire potuit? Clamorem etenim populi sonitum que omnium tubarum excessit. (Huygens 1994: 62$^{106\text{-}16}$)

But the next morning, when we arrived at the church, we heard the sound of the sea and people shouting, and all were hurrying together and were amazed at such unheard-of facts; we were afraid, and we came to the shore along with the others. When we arrived there, we saw that the storm was higher than the hills, and we observed innumerable bodies of persons of both sexes who had been drowned lying

miserably on the shore; we saw at the same time ships broken into pieces banging against each other nearby. But who could then hear anything apart from the roar of the sea and the noise of the breaking ships? For it was louder than the shouts of the people and the sound of the crowds.

Saewulf uses in this passage a relevant series of verbs of perception in the first person plural ('*audivimus*' '*vidimus*', '*aspeximus*', '*audire*'). He emphasizes a few lines later that he personally saw how many people could not flee to safety, switching to the first person singular ('*me vidente*'):

> Quid plura dicam? Quidam stupore consumpti ibidem dimersi sunt, quidam a lignis, propriae navi, quod incredibile multis videtur, adherentes, me vidente ibidem sunt obtruncati, quidam autem a tabulis navi evulsis iterum in profundum deportabantur, quidam autem natare scientes sponte se fluctibus commiserunt, et ita quamplures perierunt, perpauci quippe, propria virtute confidentes, ad litus illesi pervenerunt.(Huygens 1994: 63[134-40])
>
> What should I add? Some people who were in a daze were drowned there and then; other people, clinging to their ship, were – as appears unbelievable to many – decapitated before my eyes by pieces of wood; others, being snatched off the timbers of the ship, were taken off to deep water; some people, who could swim, voluntarily trusted to the waves, and so the majority of them died. Very few, trusting in their own strength, reached the shore safely.

Ricoldus of Monte Croce, a Florentine Dominican who travelled around Palestine and the Middle East between 1288 and 1291 (Keel 1984: 450), affirms in his *Liber Peregrinacionis* that he decided to leave for the Holy Land and cross the sea *ut loca illa corporaliter viderem, que Christus corporaliter visitavit, et maxime locum, in quo pro salute humani generis mori dignatus est, ut memoria passionis eius in mente mea imprimeretur tenacius*, 'in order to see personally those places that Christ personally visited, and most of all that place where he deigned to die for the salvation of mankind, so that the memory of his passion was impressed on my mind more persistently' (Laurent 1873: 105).

2.2.3.4 Direct References to the Date and the Reasons for the Journey

A third strategy that medieval travellers often adopted to affirm the non-fiction dominant of their accounts is to refer to their journey in their texts, frequently in the

prologue, sometimes adding the reasons that have induced them to write about them, or giving indications about the dates of their travel (Richard 1981: 20-21; Huschenbett 2000: 123). This is strong internal evidence of the historicity of a travel account that cannot be found in *Leiðarvísir*.

An anonymous pilgrim from Piacenza made his pilgrimage to the Holy Land between 560 and 570 with a group of other pilgrims, vividly reporting the experiences he collected during his journey (Milani 1977: 36-38). His account of the pilgrimage is of particular interest because it is the last one before the Muslim conquest of the Holy Land. Scholars tend to prefer the shorter and older of the two versions of his text that have reached us (Milani 1977: 31-34). Using the first person, the Piacenza pilgrim directly refers to his journey and to the city of departure at the beginning of his account, in order to affirm that his pilgrimage was *precedente beato Antonino martyre, ex eo quod a civitate Placentina egressus sum, in quibus sum locis peregrinatus, idest sancta loca,* 'under the guidance of the Blessed Antoninus the Martyr, from the time that I left from Piacenza, in all the places where I travelled, that is the holy places'(Milani 1977: 88).

As we have seen, the author of the itinerary of Sigeric directly refers in the *incipit* to the journey of the archbishop: *Adventus archiepiscopi nostri Sigerici ad Romam,* 'arrival at Rome of our Archbishop Sigeric' (Stubbs 1874: 391).

In the prologue of his *Certa Relatio de situ Jerusalem* Saewulf openly refers to his journey and to the difficulties he encountered:

> Ego Saewlfus, licet indignus et peccator Ierosolimam pergens causa orandi sepulchrum dominicum, dum recto tramite simul cum aliis illuc pergentibus, vel pondere pressus peccaminum vel penuria navis, per altum pelagus transire nequivi, insulas tantum per quas perrexi vel nomina earum notare decrevi. (Huygens 1994: 59)
>
> I, Saewulf, although unworthy and a sinner, made my way to Jerusalem in order to pray at the Lord's Sepulchre; while I went on the direct route with others who were going thither, either because I was oppressed with the burden of sins or because of the poorness of the ship, I was unable to cross over the open sea; thus, I only sailed along the islands and decided to note down their names.

John of Würzburg, who made his pilgrimage leaving Germany probably around 1160 (Huygens 1994: 28; see also Samson-Himmelstjerna 2004: 30-57), explains the reasons for his journey and exhorts his friend Dietrich to follow him:

Inde est etiam quod ego, in Iherosolimitana manens peregrinatione pro domini nostri Iesu Christi amore, tui tamen absentis non immemor, dilectionis tuae causa loca venerabilia, quae dominus noster, mundi salvator, una cum gloriosa genitrice sua MARIA virgine perpetua et cum reverendo discipulorum suorum collegio corporali sanctificavit praesentia, praecipue in civitate sancta Iherusalem, quanto expressius et studiosius potui denotando, in eis facta, et epygrammata sive prosaice sive metrice stili officio colligere laboravi. (Huygens 1994: 79[12-20])

This is why, while I was on pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, not forgetful of you who were absent, I have worked to collect faithfully, for the love I bear towards you, the venerable places that were sanctified by the bodily presence of our Lord, the saviour of the world, with his glorious mother Mary, Eternal Virgin, and with the blessed company of his disciples, particularly in the Holy City Jerusalem, describing these [venerable places] in as much detail and as accurately I could; the events that happened there; and all the inscriptions, whether in prose or verse.

John also explains that he is writing his *Descriptio* in order to guide his friend through his pilgrimage, or, should Dietrich not make it, to inspire his devotion by giving him a picture of the Holy Land:

Quam descriptionem tibi acceptam fore estimo, ideo scilicet, quia evidenter singula per eam notata tibi, quandoque divina inspiratione et tuitione huc venienti, sponte et sine inquisitionis mora et difficultate tanquam nota tuis sese ingerunt oculis, vel, si forte non veniendo haec intuitu non videbis corporeo, tamen ex tali noticia et contemplatione eorum ampliorem quoad sanctificationem ipsorum devotionem habebis. (Huygens 1994: 79[20-27])

I believe that this description will please you for this reason: because, if by divine inspiration and protection you come thither, all the things which I have described for you will meet your eyes as if they were known to you, easily and without the delay and the difficulty of searching for them; and if you happen not to go there and you will not physically see them, you will nevertheless have a greater love of their holiness thanks to this account and contemplation.

It is significant that not only does John refer to his journey and his direct experience of the Holy Land, but also highlights the importance of seeing the places *intuitu corporeo*, thus insisting on his eye-witness status and the autoptic principle.

Wilbrand van Oldenburg wrote an account of his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, indicating the names of his fellow travellers and the year of his pilgrimage, 1212

(Laurent 1873: 162-63; Tobler 1853-54: xxiii). Wilbrand writes explicitly in the prologue to his *Peregrinatio* that he is writing for those who could not visit the Holy Places, thus contrasting, like John of Würzburg, direct and indirect experience:

> Quapropter favorabilem attentionem illorum humiliter deposco, qui queislibetcunque prepediti negociis terram sanctam et eius loca et civitates non visitarunt, amore tamen et desideratione illius inducti de eis, que nondum senserunt nec viderunt, legere delectantur et intelligere. (Laurent 1873: 162).
>
> Therefore I humbly ask for the favourable attention of those who, restrained by some occupation, did not visit the Holy Land and its places and cities, but nevertheless, induced by love and desire towards that land, which they have not directly seen, love to read and to know [about it].

In the Middle Ages travel accounts and impersonal guides often draw on the same sources (see §2.6). They serve the similar functions of guiding a real traveller on a pilgrimage and of depicting the Holy Land to someone who cannot go on a pilgrimage. Sometimes it can be difficult to distinguish between a travel account and a guidebook. It is reasonable, however, to assert that the intention of the author is to represent his account with a non-fiction dominant – that is, to negotiate a 'referential pact' with his/her readers – if a text has at least one of the three features we have seen: the narrator in the first person (§2.2.3.1); use of the autoptic principle (§2.2.3.3); or a direct reference to a real journey. It is clear that this does not necessarily imply the truthfulness of what the account reports, or that the author really based his/her work on information gained during an actual journey: the history of travel accounts is full of liars and deceivers (see Thompson 2011: 64-72). However, the individuation of one of these three features can allow one to ascertain that the intention of the author is to compose a non-fiction text describing a journey that he/she claims to have really made: a travel account. As will now be shown, *Leiðarvísir* does not have any of these features, and there is no external evidence that the itinerary is based on a real journey. It will emerge that it is implausible to define *Leiðarvísir* as a travel account, whereas it can be classed as an impersonal guide to the Holy Land.

2.3 Absence of Evidence to Define *Leiðarvísir* as a 'Travel Account'

We have seen (§2.2.3.1) that a characteristic feature of travel accounts is the use of the first person, singular or plural. The text of *Leiðarvísir* does not contain a determined grammatical subject expressing the action of travelling or any indication of an individual and historical subject making a journey. The Icelandic itinerary is structured on an impersonal sequence of *þá er* + [toponym]; *þar er* + [toponym]; *í* + [toponym] + *er*; *úr* + [toponym] + *er* [x] *daga för til*; *þá er skammt til* + [toponym]; *þá er dagför til* + [toponym] (see Table 1, p. 101). As Celestina Milani has remarked in connection with the *Itinerarium Burdingalense*, in *Leiðarvísir* 'there is no protagonist. The protagonists are the distances between one stop and the other, and the things to see' (Milani 2002: 39).[42] As we have seen (§2.2.3.1), in the *Itinerarium Burdingalense* there are two verbs of movement in the first person (*ambulavimus* and *reversi sumus*, *Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 8) combining in the same subject author, narrator and principal character: these verbs allow us to class the *Itinerarium* as a travel account. The only personal subjects present in *Leiðarvísir* are the historical, mythical, or biblical characters that are connected to places mentioned in the itinerary, like, for example, Sigurðr (l. 13), Constantine the Great (l. 81), Pope Sylvester I (l. 83), Eiríkr Sveinsson (l. 132), and Christ (l. 132).

Since there is no subject of the narration, not even in the third person, *Leiðarvísir* cannot be considered a meta-account (§2.2.3.2). In the *explicit* we find the observation that *Leiðarvísir* was written *ath fyrirsogn Nicholas abota*, 'under the dictation of Abbot Nikulás' (l. 180). This observation, as the *explicit* (see §1.3), is posterior to the composition of the itinerary, and it does not contain the information that the scribe was writing down an account of Nikulás's journey; it only refers to a common medieval composition practice of the authors – particularly if they belonged to the upper clergy, as was the case with an abbot – dictating their work to a scribe, without being directly involved in the act of writing (on the method of composition of literary texts and the practice of dictation in the Middle Ages, see Petrucci 1992).

It is significant that the only occurrence of the first person in the itinerary is in the plural in a passage describing alternative routes. *Leiðarvísir* indicates three possible routes to reach Mainz (ll 8-24; see §1.4.3 and Marani 2011; Magoun 1944:

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[42] '*Non c'è protagonista. Protagoniste sono le distanze tra una tappa e l'altra e le cose da vedere.*'

316; Waßenhoven 2006: 79). The first route (1a) goes from Stade to Mainz via Verden, Nienburg, Minden und Paderborn (ll. 8-13). After having described the first alternative, the itinerary adds a second route (1b) that goes from Stade to Mainz through Harsefeld, Walsrode, Hannover, Hildesheim, Gandersheim, Fritzlar and Arnsburg (ll. 13-17). At the end of the description of the first alternative route, after mentioning Arnsburg, *Leiðarvísir* reports that *þa er eigi lan*[*gt*] *til* M[e]*ginzoborgar sem aðr foro ver*, 'then it is not far till Mainz, which we already reached' (l. 17). This is the only occurrence in the whole text of the first person plural. It cannot be interpreted as a reference to an individual and historical journey. It should instead be read as a narrative signal, a help to the reader (or to a potential traveller/pilgrim) in a difficult passage, in order to explain where the description of the second alternative route ends and where the third one begins. This is confirmed by the fact that, immediately after mentioning Mainz for the second time at the end of the second possible route, we find the information that *Þesar ij þiod leid*[*ir fara N*]*orðmenn* [*&*] *kemr saman leidin i meginsborg ef þessar ero farnar & er þat* [*flest*]*ra manna for*, 'the Scandinavians travel these two roads and they join at Mainz if they are travelled, and that is the route of most people' (ll. 18-19).

The fact that *Leiðarvísir* is not describing here an individual journey but is indicating the alternative routes to Rome for a Scandinavian pilgrim is confirmed by the fact that these two routes are said to be those taken by *Norðmenn* in general, without specifying which was the one taken by the author of the text or by a definite subject of the travel. These two routes are said to be the most used by travellers and are put on the same level. The sequence does not imply an order of importance. One is inclined to agree with Magoun, who interprets the passage *er það flestra manna för* as 'that is the route of most people'(1944: 347). Contrarily, his consideration that the first route is the one 'taken by Nikulás' (1944: 316) has no textual basis. *Leiðarvísir* defines 1a and 1b as *þjóðleiðir*, 'highways', and adds that they are both 'the route of most people' (ll. 18, 19), so that Waßenhoven's definition of route 1a as the *Hauptweg*, 'main route' (2006: 75) is also not based on the text. After 1b, *Leiðarvísir* reports that *su er onnur leidin til roms* [*ath*] *fara or Noreg ... eda ... til deventar eda trectar & taka menn þar staf* [*& skreppu*] *& vigslu til romferdar*, 'there is another route to take from Norway to Rome: ... to Deventer or Utrecht and there the men receive staff and scrip and a blessing for their pilgrimage to Rome' (ll. 19-21). From Utrecht or Deventer the third route goes along the Rhine via Köln to

Mainz (ll. 21-24), where no other narrative signal is given, after which the description continues to Rome. The three routes are described as possible alternative routes for a Scandinavian pilgrim, but there is no textual evidence of an actual journey. *Leiðarvísir* here reports alternative routes, not the account of a real journey.

Leiðarvísir does not contain any reference to a real journey (§2.2.3.4), and does not include among the sources that are mentioned in the text the direct experiences of an individual author/traveller. The absence in *Leiðarvísir* of an explicit narrator and of a (grammatical) subject of the journey excludes the possibility that the truthfulness of the information reported in the itinerary might be corroborated by the 'autoptic principle' (§2.2.3.3). The perception verb *sjá* is used three times in the itinerary in an impersonal construction. When the city of Jerusalem is introduced, the itinerary includes the observation that *þar ser enn stormerki pislar cristz*, 'one sees there wonderful signs of the passion of Christ' (l. 150); describing the rock of Golgotha, the legend is reported that *þar ser glogt blod Christz á steini*, 'one can clearly see the blood of Christ on the stone' (l. 151-52); at the end of the itinerary the method of measuring the latitude on the banks of the Jordan is explained, saying that the pole star 'can be seen' above the stretched thumb of a man lying on his back (ll 173-75; see §1.4.10 for text and translation). These occurrences of *sjá* in *Leiðarvísir* cannot be considered applications of the autoptic principle. They are not perception verbs used in the first-person by the author/narrator/protagonist/traveller to strengthen the truthfulness of his account, but deictic observations reported in an impersonal guide.

The only sources that are explicitly cited in the itinerary to strengthen the truthfulness of its content are oral (Simek 1990: 271). *Leiðarvísir* begins with the formula *sva er sagt*, *at umhuerfis Island se vii* [*degra si*]*gling*, 'it is said that around Iceland is a sail of seven days' (l. 1), which is repeated to introduce the Rome section: *sva er sagt at roma se iiij milur aa leingd* [*en iiii*] *á breidd*, 'it is said that Rome is four miles in length and four in breadth' (17[16]; see §3.4). The Rome section ends with a reference to the number of the churches: *Sua hafa frodir menn sagt at eingi se sua frodr at vist se ath viti allar kirkior i romaborg*, 'truthful men have said that no one is so wise as to know all the churches in the city of Rome' (ll. 100-101). The section of the itinerary from Ålborg to Rome is introduced by a relevant reference to the pilgrims to Rome: *Sva telia Romferlar ath or ála borg se ij daga* f[*or*] *til Vebiarga*, 'Pilgrims to Rome say that from Ålborg it is a journey of two days

to Viborg (l. 4, see §4.2). *Leiðarvísir* does not include a textual reference to the author's direct experiences of a journey as a source for the account, but only cites these external oral sources. It has never been pointed out that *Leiðarvísir* refers to the *Rómferlar* as a source for information external to the itinerary, whereas, in the typical structure of a travel account, this source should be inside the text, because the author himself would have gone on pilgrimage to Rome and, consequently, should also refer to himself in the first person as a *Rómferill* and as a source of information.

There remains the possibility of defining *Leiðarvísir* as a travel account, i.e. proving that it is based on a real journey made by an individual traveller, using evidence outside the text. To this end, one could use the entries in the Icelandic annals mentioning Abbot Nikulás and the information contained in the *explicit* of *Leiðarvísir*. This can be considered external to the itinerary because it was not written by Abbot Nikulás (see §1.2.1).

The *explicit* does not contain any direct or indirect reference to a specific journey of Abbot Nikulás or to the fact that the information contained in the itinerary is based on the direct experience of an individual traveller. We have seen that the reference to the text being written at Abbot Nikulás's dictation only indicates a common practice of writing, but does not say anything about the contents or the sources of the text.

There are three entries in the Icelandic annals that could strengthen the hypothesis that *Leiðarvísir* is a travel account (see §1.3.2). The *Annales Regii*, the *Gottskalks Annaler*, and the annals of *Flateyjarbók* report for the year 1154, along with the death of Pope Anastasius IV and the election of Pope Adrian IV, the *útkváma Nicholas abbóta*, 'the arrival in Iceland of Abbot Nikulás [from abroad]' (Storm 1888: 115, 322; Flateyjarbok 1860-68: III 515). These entries reported in the annals only indicate that Abbot Nikulás came back to Iceland from abroad, but no information is reported about where he came back from and whether there is any connection between his homecoming, a journey to the Holy Land, the information gained during this journey, and the itinerary described in *Leiðarvísir*. This piece of evidence is not sufficient to argue that *Leiðarvísir* is the representation of a real journey. This external item of information would not suffice to define *Leiðarvísir* as a travel account, even if it indicated the destination of Nikulás's journey or qualified it as pilgrimage: as we have seen in §1.5.2, on the basis of internal textual evidence, the attribution of *Leiðarvísir* to Nikulás, first Abbot of Munkaþverá, is extremely

problematic, and there are many reasons to believe that some important parts of the itinerary were written after Nikulás's death.

While there are no internal or external elements that allow us to consider *Leiðarvísir* a travel account, that is 'the linguistic representation of an authentic journey' (Brenner 1989b: 9), the Icelandic itinerary shows many similarities with another important subgenre of travel writing in the Middle Ages: the impersonal pilgrim guides. Before analysing the subgenre of the pilgrim guides, a list of the other travel accounts attested in Old Norse Literature will be given.

2.3.1 Travel Accounts in Old Norse Literature

If one accepts Borm's extensive definition of travel writing as 'a collective term for a variety of texts both predominantly fictional and non-fictional whose main theme is travel' (Borm 2004: 13), this label can clearly be attached to a variety of texts in Old Norse literature. As remarked by Simek (1990: 263), scholarly research has in the past focused more on giving an overview of travels in Old Norse literature than on patterns, structures and forms of travel literature itself. Studies on travels described in Old Norse-Icelandic sources were carried out by Riant (1865), Maurer (1870), Bogi Melsteð (1907-15), Springer (1950), Einar Arnórsson (1954-58), Schach (1978) and Uecker (1989). In his seminal *Altnordische Kosmographie*, Simek (1990) analysed Old Norse geographic and cosmographic representations, also giving a summary of the reception of these texts in the sagas. In his *Skandinavier unterwegs in Europa*, Dominik Waßenhoven (2006) carried out important prosopographical research into Scandinavian travellers in the period 1000-1250, analyzing the relevant sources and mobility in the area. In his doctoral dissertation, John Shafer (2010) gave an exhaustive picture of far-travel in saga literature, analysing narrative patterns, themes, and the motivations of far-travellers (Shafer 2010: 15-23 provides a scholarship survey on the subject; see also the articles in Ferrari 1995).

As noted by Simek, it is remarkable that 'in spite of the frequent references to exploration-, conquest-, and pilgrimage-journeys in Old Norse Literature, Old

Norse 'travel accounts are only sparsely attested' (Simek 1990: 263).[43] In fact, if one considers that *Leiðarvísir* cannot be included in this genre for the reasons that have been explained, there are no Old Norse texts handed down to us that can truly be considered travel accounts. We have only fragments of information about texts that probably were travel accounts but have been lost in the manuscript tradition.

Gripla is the title of an encyclopaedic 'little compendium' including geographical, historical and scientific sections, probably based on Isidore of Seville and other compilations. Late medieval and modern manuscripts attest fragments from the *Gripla*, but it is not clear whether the compendium might also have included travel accounts and what exactly its function was (see Ólafur Halldórsson 1978: 37-38, 229-34; Simek 1990: 264, 292-93).

The Icelander Gizurr Hallsson (died in 1206), an influential man with literary interests, was lawspeaker from 1181 to 1200 and in the course of his life travelled to southern Europe (Simek and Pálsson 2007: 117). In *Sturlunga saga* it is mentioned that he wrote a book on his travels abroad called *Flos peregrinationis*:

> Hann var ok inn bezti klerkr, þeirra er hér á landi hefir verit. Opt fór hann af landi í brott; ok var betr metinn í Róma, en nökkurr annarr Íslenzkr maðr hafði verit fyrir hann, af ment sínni ok framkvæmð. Hónum varð víða kunnigt um Suðrlöndin. Ok þar af görði hann bók þa, er heitir *Flos peregrinationis*. (Guþbrandur Vigfússon 1878: I 206)
>
> He was also the best scholar of those who have been in this country. He often travelled out of the country, and he was received in Rome better than any other Icelander had been before him, because of his culture and his prowess. He had a wide knowledge of southern countries and wrote a book about it, which is called *Flos peregrinationis*.

It is not certain whether the *Flos peregrinationis* was written in Latin or in Old Norse. The title does not imply that the work was written in Latin; Ari Þorgilsson's *Libellus Islandorum*, for example, was written in Icelandic. It is likely that this book of Gizurr's included not only an account of his journeys, but, given his erudition,

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[43] '*Trotz der häufigen Erwähnungen von Forschungs-, Eroberungs- und Pilgerfahrten in der altnordischen Literatur sind altnordische Reiseberichte nur sehr spärlich überliefert.*'

also geographical and historical information (on the *Flos peregrinationis*, see Simek 1990: 293-95).

The *Reisubók,* 'travel book', of Björn Einarsson Jórsalafari (*c.* 1350-1415) is mentioned in late medieval and early modern manuscripts (see Jón Jóhannesson 1945; Ólafur Halldórsson 1978: 242-253; Simek 1990: 295-97). Manuscript Reykjavík ÍB 149 4to (paper, written between 1700 and 1799, see handrit.is 2012: ÍB 149 4to) reports at page 4 after the rubric *Úr reisubók Björns Einarssonar Jórsalafara*, 'From the Travel Book of Björn Einarsson Jórsalafari' a summary of his travel account (Ólafur Halldórsson 1978: 184). Björn travelled to Greenland, Santiago de Compostela, Canterbury, and three times to Rome; during the last of these journeys to Rome in 1405-11, he also reached the Holy Land (see Simek 1990: 295-96). It is likely that the *Reisubók,* like other fifteenth-century travel accounts, also included personal observations and material taken from other guides to the Holy Land (Simek 1990: 296-97).

Besides the lost *Flos peregrinationis* and the *Reisubók*, two descriptions of journeys written in Latin are preserved. The *Profectio Danorum in Hierosolymam* narrates the expedition to the Holy Land of a group of Danish crusaders who reached Jerusalem in 1192 in the wake of the fall of the city to Saladin in 1187 (edited by Gertz 1917-22: II 443-92; see Kværndrup 1993 and Skovgaard-Petersen 2001: 7-19). In the heading of the dedicatory letter the author calls himself *frater X. canonicus. X* can be an abbreviation for 'Christianus' or for *'in Christo'*; the identity of this 'Brother Canon' is not clear, but there are good reasons to believe that he was Norwegian. The work is dedicated to a *dominus K.*, who cannot be identified with certainty either (Gertz 1917-22: II 457; see Skovgaard-Petersen 2001: 8). The *Profectio* was probably written in the late 1190s, that is, in the years immediately following the expedition, with the year 1202 as a likely *terminus ante quem* (Skovgaard-Petersen 2001: 9). Karen Skovgaard-Petersen (2001: 13-14) argues that the author does not base his narration on a previous written account of the expedition but seems to have relied on information directly gathered from one or more participants. Skovgaard-Petersen also observes that it is fairly certain that the author did not himself take part in the expedition, because he never hints 'at his having been an eyewitness to the events' (Skovgaard-Petersen 2001: 14). To use the term explained in §2.2.3.3, the author does not resort to the 'autoptic principle'. A further confirmation of the fact that the *Profectio* is not based on the direct experience of its

author can be found in a passage on the stay of the travellers in Constantinople during the return journey. *Frater X.* describes the Hodegetria, an icon of the Virgin Mary, which on Tuesdays miraculously carried itself in procession (Gertz 1917-22: II 490-91; see Ciggaar 1996: 113). Before describing the miracle, the author observes that the fact he is about to report might seem *absurdum* and *incredibile*, but that *illorum, qui viderant, testimonio comprobatur*, 'it is proved by the testimony of those who have seen it' (Gertz 1917-22: II 490; see Skovgaard-Petersen 2001: 14). The author indirectly uses the autoptic principle, basing the plausibility of his narration on the direct experience of witnesses to the miracle. Thus, the *Profectio Danorum in Hierosolymam* appears to be an account based on accounts given by those who participated in the expedition: it can therefore be defined a 'meta-account' (§2.2.3.2).

An *Itinerarium in terram sanctam* composed in Latin is preserved fragmentarily in a manuscript written *c.* 1300 (Storm 1880: xxxxvii). The beginning of the text is lost, and at the end the author calls himself *Pauper frater Mauritius* (Storm 1880: 168). Frater Mauritius was a Franciscan who followed the Norwegian baron Andres Nikolasson in his expedition to the Holy Land. Andres left in 1270 and died in Jerusalem in 1273 (Riant 1865: 72, 357-58; Storm 1880: xxxxviii; Holtsmark 1956-78: 519). The fragment describes a sea journey from Cape St Vincent on the Atlantic coast of the Iberian Peninsula through the Straits of Gibraltar, following the coast of Spain and France to Marseilles, from whence the sea is crossed to Sardinia (Storm 1880: 165-67). After a manuscript lacuna, the journey continues along the Syrian coast and ends in Acre (Storm 1880: 165-67). The *Itinerarium* of Brother Mauritius is the only preserved text composed in medieval Scandinavia that can for good reasons be considered a travel account. At the beginning of the fragment, in fact, Mauritius describes his journey with a series of impersonal movement verbs, like, for example, *dirigitur*, 'one heads for' (Storm 1880: 165[3]); *venitur*, 'one comes to' (Storm 1880: 165[6]); and *intratur*, 'one enters' (Storm 1865: 165[9]). After mentioning Cartagena, however, Mauritius makes an interesting observation on the kingdom of Granada and the mountain range of the Sierra Nevada: *credo firmiter hanc terram fore altissimam omnium terrarum juxta mare, cujus montium cacumina nubes penetraverant nobis videntibus*, 'I firmly believe that this land is the highest among the lands next to the sea: the peaks of its mountains penetrated into the clouds before our very eyes' (Storm 1880: 165[6-7]). Brother Mauritius opens this passage with a verb of opinion (*credo*) in the first-person singular to introduce his personal

impression on the height of the Sierra Nevada. He then reinforces his statement by using the ablative absolute of a perception verb (*nobis videntibus*). In this passage we find two features typical of a travel account: the use of the first person and the autoptic principle. After Cartagena, Mauritius uses two movement verbs in the first-person plural to explain that they chose not to sail directly to Sardinia but to sail along the coast to Marseilles: *nos vero eundo Massiliam deviavimus. Nam ad aquilonem directe tendebamus*, 'we deviated from our course sailing towards Marseilles. In fact we headed directly north' (Storm 1880: 167[11-12]). In the *explicit* Brother Mauritius uses a verb in the first person (*queso*, Storm 1880: 168[31]) to 'ask' his readers to remember in their prayers Andres Nikolasson, and *me pauperem fratrem Mauritium*, 'me, the poor Brother Mauritius' (Storm 1880: 168[33]). The *explicit* is thus written by the author himself. There is also external evidence in other sources confirming the expedition of Andres Nikolasson and Brother Mauritius, and its date (see Riant 1865: 72, 357-58; Storm 1880: xxxxviii; Waßenhoven 2006: 156). In the case of the *Itinerarium* by Brother Mauritius there are relevant elements that allow us to class this text as a travel account: use of the first person, the autoptic principle, and external evidence. *Leiðarvísir* does not show any of these elements, but it has features typical of the medieval pilgrims' guides, which will now be discussed.

2.4   Features of Medieval Pilgrim Guides

E. S. de Beer gives a useful general definition of guidebooks as a sub-genre of travel writing:

> They [the guidebooks] possess certain qualities and features in common. They are impersonal, systematic, and designed for a single overriding purpose. They provide short descriptive inventories of all the places and monuments likely to be of interest to their users; these inventories are arranged topographically by lines of approach. This, the combination of inventory and itinerary, is the decisive feature of the class. To facilitate their use these books are equipped with maps and plans. Further, they give much practical information about transport and communications, accommodation, costs, and so on. They are portable and must therefore be concise. (de Beer 1952: 36)

Melchior de Vogüé, commenting on the anonymous guides to the Holy Land that he edited in the Appendix of his *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte* (1860; see below §2.6.1), suggested a clear and functional subdivision of the 'prehistory of the genre' of travel writing into *relations de voyage* and *guide*:

> During the entire Middle Ages, the descriptions of the Holy Land and the accounts of pilgrims were very popular. There is not a great library in Europe that does not contain a number of these writings: one can classify them into two categories. The former are travel accounts, which one would call today a diary, they have a personal character. The latter, on the contrary, are anonymous and brief descriptions, guides, intended to provide pilgrims with the necessary information and to make the Holy Land known to those who could not undertake the pilgrimage. (de Vogüé 1860: 407)[44]

More recently, Donald Howard (1980: 18-28) has divided medieval pilgrimage narratives into three groups: logs, guides, and narrations. Logs are 'only curiosities, some of historical interest', consisting of 'a set of dated entries each beginning "*item*"', that 'for the most part are a list of places and expenses' (Howard 1980: 18). The 'guides', more and more widespread from the eleventh century onward, 'are practical aids for the traveller and pilgrim: they give an itinerary and name the places to be seen. In most there is no sense of the author's self, and no anecdotes or narrative' (Howard 1980: 25). Howard's distinction between guides and narration rests on an aesthetic basis: according to Howard, the narrations, written by 'keen observers and sightseers' are 'accounts of travels that went beyond the function of guidebooks into the fascination of travel itself' (1980: 27). He includes among the guides not only anonymous and impersonal guides, like the twelfth-century anonymous pilgrims' guides (see below §2.6) or the *Information for Pilgrims unto the Holy Land* (Duff 1893), printed *c.* 1498, but also a travel account like the *Libellus*

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[44] '*Pendant tout le moyen âge, une grande faveur s'attacha aux descriptions de la Terre Sainte et aux récits des pèlerins. II n'est pas de grande bibliothèque en Europe qui ne renferme un certain nombre de ces écrits: on peut les classer en deux catégories. Les uns sont des relations de voyage, ce qu'on appellerait aujourd'hui un journal; elles ont un caractère tout personnel. Les autres, au contraire, sont des descriptions anonymes et succinctes, des guides, destinés à fournir aux pèlerins les indications nécessaires et à faire connaître la Terre Sainte à ceux qui ne pouvaient entreprendre le pèlerinage.*'

de locis sanctis by Theodericus (Howard 1980: 20, 26; Huygens 1994: 143-97; see §2.2.3.3). Howard's definition of 'narration' is not far from the definition of the modern travel book given by Paul Fussell:

> A sub-species of memoir in which the autobiographical narrative arises from the speaker's encounter with distant or unfamiliar data, and in which the narrative – unlike that in a novel or a romance – claims literal validity by constant reference to actuality (Fussell 1980: 203)

This aesthetically based definition is only applicable to the modern and literary travel book and has been criticised with sound arguments by Thompson (2011: 13-23). It is based, however, on assumptions also frequently used in the analysis of medieval texts.

Jean Richard, in his *Les Récits de voyages et de pèlerinages* (1981: 15-23) considers the possibilities for a definition of the genre and adopts the bipartition used by de Vogüé into pilgrims' guides and pilgrims' accounts. The pilgrim guides, like the famous *Liber sancti Jacobi*, written in the twelfth century for the pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela (Vielliard 1938), contain practical information and suggest routes along which stops, accommodation, and sanctuaries are indicated (Richard 1981: 15); the *récits de pèlerinages* are descriptions of the pilgrimage/journey of an individual pilgrim/voyager who 'takes up his pen to describe his own pious journey' (Richard 1981: 19).[45]

Gerhard Wolf (1989: 86-90), analysing the German travel accounts of the late Middle Ages, individuates the same three subgenres as Howard: 1) the pilgrim guides, 2) the itineraries, and 3) the literary travel accounts. Wolf (1989: 87-88) highlights how the pilgrim guides originate in the growing demand for practical travel information and for short descriptions of the places to visit. In the pilgrim guides, the author does not make an entrance with his own experiences and ideas, so all these guides resemble each other, being mostly based on a model not mentioned by the author. The second type of medieval travel accounts mentioned by Wolf (which corresponds to the 'log' individuated by Howard), follows the structure of the

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[45] '*Prenne la plume pour raconter son pieux voyage.*'

itinerary, i.e. a description of a route with the indication of places and distances. The authors of these *itineraria* describe in the first person a journey they personally made, recording the distances covered, the contracts stipulated with the ship owner, the equipment necessary to travel, and above all the expenses they had (Wolf 1989: 88). Wolf remarks that these itineraries have a representative function: they are intended to document that the author went on a pilgrimage, and that he received indulgences at the places he visited (Wolf 1989: 88-89). Examples of these late *itineraria* are the *Jerusalemfahrt des Peter Sparnau und Ulrich von Taestaedt* (written in 1385; Röhricht 1891: 480-91), and the *Meerfahrt* of Hans Porner, who made his journey in 1418-19 (Hänselmann 1874-75: 130-49; see Röhricht 1890: 105). The third type of medieval travel account individuated by Wolf is the 'literary travel account' (the 'narration' in Howard): these are much more extensive than the *itineraria* and often include a great deal of information taken from a variety of sources, not only a real journey (Wolf 1989: 89). Miedema (1996: 443-44) has generalized this tripartition in the simplified form 'itinerary/guide/travel account', applying it to all medieval travel writing.

Taking into consideration the whole history of travel literature, Fuchs (2009: 593; see also Neuber 1989: 51) individuates five subgenres: 1) the practical travel guide, 2) the accounts of scientific discovery and/or research, 3) the subjective travel diary, 4) the aesthetically elaborated travel account, and 5) the novel of travel. Items 1) and 3) correspond to the bipartition Guide/Travel account proposed by de Vogüé (1860) and Richard (1981), which is the most rigorous and convincing. The individuation of 'narrations' (Howard 1980), or 'literary travel accounts' (Wolf 1989) – the 'aesthetically elaborated travel accounts' in Fuchs (2009:593) – inside the genre 'travel account' can be defended by legitimate aesthetic criteria but does not have a heuristic value. Although much stylised and simplified, the 'logs' individuated by Howard (corresponding to the *itineraria* of Wolf) can be considered a particular type of travel account written by an individual traveller. The *itineraria* in a narrower sense are a particular type of guide-book, composed of 'a list of places with directions and distances', their organisation being 'dictated by geography and chronology' (Howard 1980: 20, 68).

Simek distinguishes between the two meanings of *itinerarium*, as an 'impersonal guide' and as a 'travel account':

Following medieval usage, there will hereafter be referred to as 'itineraries' both
the strictly pertinent descriptions of roads and stops that were used as guides on the
one hand (itineraries in the narrower sense), and on the other hand travellers'
accounts of their travels, which could serve both as a guide and as an instrument of
education, either in the largest frame of knowledge-transmitting literature or as
edifying literature for a readership that stayed at home, as long as such accounts
display a structure largely corresponding to the journey's course. (Simek 1990:
262)[46]

In fact, an itinerary was originally 'a mere description of a route that, provided with
details like distance measurements, road conditions, and accommodation options
(*itinerarium adnotatum sive scriptum*) or written on a chart (*itinerarium pictum*), was
useful for the preparation or for the memory of the traveller' (Olshausen 1996: 693;
see also Heit 1999).[47] As noted by Werner Goez, the *Itineraria* in the Roman Empire
had essentially the function of listing the *mansiones*, 'the places where a civil
servant, an official, or a state courier had a right to free overnight-stay, provision of
fresh supplies, and a change of horses' (Goez 1987: 154).[48] With the fall of the
Roman Empire, the meaning and function of the *Itineraria* change. The *Itineraria*
ceased to be state documents recognizing a right of civil servants and became a
simple list of stopping places to guide private travellers who did not know the route
to their destination (Goez 1987: 154). The itinerary scheme can thus be used both for
the account of a real journey and for a guide describing a route and its stops:

Whether in a pilgrim guide or in the account of a pilgrim who intends to enlighten
those who will come after him, in a handbook for merchants or in the narration of a

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[46] '*In Anlehnung an den mittelalterlichen Gebrauch werden im Folgenden als Itinerare einerseits
rein sachbezogene Weg- und Stationsbeschreibungen, welche als Reiseführer dienten, bezeichnet
(Itinerarien im engeren Sinn), andererseits die erweiterten, von Reisenden gemachten Aufzeichnungen
über die eigene Reise, welche sowohl als Reiseführer wie auch als Bildungsinstrument entweder in
weitesten Rahmen wissensvermittelnder Literatur oder aber als Erbauungsliteratur für ein zu Hause
verbliebenes Publikum dienen konnte, solange solche Reiseberichte eine dem Reiseverlauf weitgehend
entsprechende Struktur aufweisen.*'

[47] '*Eine bloße Routenbeschreibung, die, mit näheren Angaben wie Streckenmaßen,
Straßenbeschaffenheit, Unterkunftsmöglichkeiten versehen* (Itinerarium adnotatum sive scriptum) *oder
auf einer Karte eingetragen* (Itinerarium pictum)*, dem Reisenden zur Vorbereitung bzw. Erinnerung
diente.*'

[48] '*Un elenco delle località, ove un funzionario, ufficiale, corriere dello stato aveva diritto al
pernottamento*'.

journey, the author lists carefully and in order the notable points of his pilgrimage, often indicating the distances that separate them from each other. (Richard 1981: 63)[49]

One can thus distinguish between travel accounts (as defined in §2.2.2 and §2.2.3) reporting the real journey of an individual traveller and guides describing routes or places so that these places can be better known by the reader or become the objective of a real journey. These categories formalize two different functions that can coexist in the same text, as is frequently the case in medieval travel literature, where travel accounts describing the real journey of an individual often have the function of a guide as well (Richard 1981: 18-19).

Like 'travel writing', the two subgenres 'guide' and 'travel account' are abstractions elaborated on an empirical basis, so that it can often be difficult to say to which of them a specific text belongs (Richard 1981: 19). The sets 'travel account' and 'guide' are not mutually exclusive. In particular, there are numerous examples of travel accounts that follow the structure and have the function of a guide. The 'logs' mentioned by Howard (1980: 18) are, for example, accounts of individual pilgrimages following the structure of an itinerary. The *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae* by Burchard of Mount Sion, to take the example of a text very popular throughout the Middle Ages, was written by a Dominican monk who travelled to the Middle East at the end of the thirteenth century (Laurent 1873: 19-99). His book, which is also based on written sources, is 'both a guide for pilgrims and the account of a pilgrimage' (Richard 1981: 18).[50]

2.5 *Leiðarvísir* as a Pilgrim Guide

In §2.3 we have seen that there are no grounds for defining *Leiðarvísir* as a travel account. On the contrary, the features of *Leiðarvísir* correspond to the definition of 'guidebook' proposed by de Beer (1952: 36): 1) it is impersonal and designed to give

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[49] '*Que ce soit dans un guide de pèlerinage ou dans un récit émanant d'un pèlerin qui se propose d'éclairer ceux qui viendront après lui, dans un manuel destine aux marchands, dans la narration d'un voyage, l'auteur énumère soigneusement et dans l'ordre les points notables de sa pérégrination, souvent en indiquant la distance qui les sépare les uns des autres.*'

[50] '*Autant un guide à l'usage des pèlerins qu'une narration de pèlerinage.*'

the directions necessary to reach the Holy Land; 2) it contains a brief description of the places and monuments of interest (Rome and Jerusalem are described more extensively, but the names of the most important churches and their patrons are also given for other cities along the route); 3) the inventories are arranged geographically – and topographical indications are given inside the city of Rome; 4) it gives information about accommodation (it mentions for instance the hospital in Lucca founded by Eiríkr Sveinsson in 1099 and the hospice near Piacenza, ll. 44-45 and ll. 133-36); and 5) it is short and could be easily carried by a pilgrim. In the form we have in MS AM 194 8vo, *Leiðarvísir* is not equipped with a map, but only a few of these pilgrim maps have survived to this day (Weber 2005: 16-17; see also Richard 1981: 50-52). Within the genre 'guide', *Leiðarvísir* has the structure of an itinerary 'in the narrower sense' (Howard 1980: 20, 68; Simek 1990: 262), being structured around stops and distances. It is enriched with indications relevant for a Scandinavian pilgrim, containing more information than a traditional itinerary, but it can still be classified within this particular category of guide. *Leiðarvísir* is therefore a guide for pilgrims and an itinerary 'in the narrower sense': it does not describe an authentic journey but an authentic route. Scholars who have analysed the geographical information included in *Leiðarvísir* (Magoun 1940, 1944; Hill: 1983; Springer 1950; Raschellà: 1985-86) have shown its accuracy and its correspondence to reality. It should be stressed that *Leiðarvísir* actually served its practical function as an itinerary: all a pilgrim needed to continue his/her journey was the name of the next stopping-place (Goetz 1987: 154). By using the directions of *Leiðarvísir*, an Icelandic pilgrim could find his way to Rome and to the Holy Land, also finding useful and interesting information about the places along the route. The referential pact negotiated by the author of *Leiðarvísir* with its readers is not about the truthfulness of the description of an individual's journey, as in a travel account, but it is about the correspondence with reality of the route it describes, as in a guidebook.

2.5.1.1   The *Explicit*: *Leiðarvísir* as a *Narratio*.

The *explicit* of *Leiðarvísir*, which, as mentioned above in §1.2.1, was composed by a later scribe and can therefore be considered external to the text, does not contain any reference to a journey of the author of *Leiðarvísir*, as is the case of some texts that would otherwise be considered anonymous guides. For example, Belardo da Ascoli wrote in *c.* 1155 an otherwise impersonal guide to the Holy Land, which he

concludes with an explicit in the first person in which he maintains that he saw and experienced personally all he wrote (De Sandoli 1979-84: II 43-49). The only allusion in *Leiðarvísir* to a connection between the text and a direct experience of a journey might be the very conclusion of the explicit: *og lykkr þar þessi frasogn*, 'and there ends this narration' (ll. 181-82). Hill (1983: 181) translates *frásögn* with 'narration', but it has also been translated as 'account' (Kedar-Nielsen 1978-79: 206), and this might allude to the fact that the preceding text describes an authentic journey. Even accepting the interpretation of *frásögn* as 'account', this reference, made by a later scribe, would still be too vague a piece of evidence for concluding that *Leiðarvísir* describes an authentic journey. However, the considerations of O'Loughlin (1992, 1997; see §2.2.3.2) on the genre of Adomnán's *De locis sanctis* can give us a key for a possible interpretation of the term *frásögn* and suggest to us – besides its dominant function of pilgrim-guide – a further function of *Leiðarvísir*.

O'Loughlin (1992: 38-41; 1997: 137-139) argues that Adomnán's work satisfied a necessary requirement of Christian scholarship that was explained by Augustine in his *De doctrina christiana* (Augustine 1962). According to Augustine, the reader of Scripture had to understand first the basic literal sense and its relation to other theological senses, but he also had to have at hand specific reference works explaining those matters that could only be known from factual experience (O'Loughlin 1992: 39). In *De doctrina christiana*, among the specific disciplines that can help interpret the text, Augustine distinguished those that he called 'descriptive' (dealing with matters of little importance or the results of human convention) from those that involved 'narration':

> Narration covers all those specific forms of knowledge which one must have in parallel with the scriptures for understanding them properly. Narration does not deal with mere human conventions but is an orderly knowledge of God's workings in his creation; it deals with the work of time and divine providence. (O'Loughlin 1992: 40).

Augustine explains how history, the knowledge of past based on testimony or factual experience, is of great importance to interpreting the scriptures: *Quicquid igitur de ordine temporum transactorum indicat ea quae appellatur historia, plurimum nos adiuuat ad libros sanctos intellegendos, etiamsi praeter ecclesiam puerili eruditione discatur*, 'Anything, then, that the subject which is called history shows about the

chronology of past events assists us very much in understanding the holy books, even if it is learnt outside the Church as a part of children's education' (Augustine 1962: 2.27.1-7). Augustine then observes that natural sciences are a second fundamental type of *narratio* that does not deal with knowledge of the past but can be a fundamental exegetical aid:

> Est etiam narratio demonstrationi similis, qua non praeterita, sed praesentia indicantur ignaris. in quo genere sunt quaecumque de locorum situ naturisque animalium, lignorum, herbarum, lapidum aliorum ue corporum scripta sunt. de quo genere superius egimus eam que cognitionem ualere ad aenigmata scripturarum soluenda docuimus. (Augustine 1962: 2.29 [2-5])
>
> There is also a narration similar to a description, in which not past but present facts are shown to those who have no knowledge of them. To this genre belongs all that has been written about the situation of places, and the nature of animals, of trees, herbs, stones, and other bodies. Of this genre I have treated above, showing that this kind of knowledge is useful in solving the difficulties of the Scriptures.

Geography, the *narratio* of *locorum situs*, is an auxiliary learning which is necessary to interpreting the Scriptures: 'What was characteristic of "narration" was that it could not be worked out from general principles but had to be learned through individual experience [...] without this experience one does not have the *data* by which the scriptures can be fully understood. Moreover, without knowing the actual perceptible realities mentioned, one cannot hope to resolve problems or contradictions' (O'Loughlin 1997: 137).

According to Augustine, the description of places – geography as *narratio* – is not the result of the invention of the narrator but must be based on factual knowledge. In order to describe the places in the world as they were created by God, so that the reader of the Scriptures can have a fundamental instrument of exegesis, a factual experience is necessary. Whether Adomnán had really met Arculf or not – and whether Arculf ever existed – the author of *De locis sanctis* intended to reinforce the trustworthiness of his *narratio* by basing it on a direct witness.

This explanation of *De locis sanctis* as a *narratio* also sheds light on a possible interpretation of *frásögn*, which is the definition given at the end of the *explicit* to the whole Icelandic itinerary: *og lýkkr þar þéssi frásögn,* 'and there ends this narration' (ll. 181-82). This could be interpreted as an allusion to the fact that *Leiðarvísir,* besides being a guide, an 'itinerary and a list of the cities', had also the

function of *narratio*. Besides showing a pilgrim route, the text in fact contains a variety of historical and geographical information that can be learned only from factual experience. A *narratio* has to be based on the direct knowledge of the things that it describes, but it does not necessarily include information gathered by an individual during a single journey. The concept of *narratio* does not coincide with that of a travel account. It can be based on a single travel account, as with Adomnán's claim for his *De locis sanctis* – using the recollections of Arculf together with written sources. It can also contain data that were collected, orally or in a textual form, not by an individual but by a multitude of men over the course of time, as is the case in the disciplines of geography and history. The dominant function of *Leiðarvísir* is the description of an actual route to the Holy Land (with some possible alternatives), but one can also interpret it as a *narratio*, a work of reference that can help the reader to locate real places. *Leiðarvísir* locates along its itinerary not only *locorum situs* relevant for the exegesis of the Scriptures – as with the section dedicated to the Holy Land – but also places that an Icelandic reader could find in hagiographies, legends or historical texts and might not be familiar to him. The *narratio* of *Leiðarvísir* collects, in the words of Augustine (1965: 2.29[2]), a variety of *praeterita* and *praesentia*, historical and geographical information based on factual experience, that was fundamental to helping the reader with the exegesis of secular as well as sacred texts.

'*Leiðarvísir*' has been accepted as the name of the Icelandic text, and it is reasonable to keep it for historical and practical reasons. However, as we have seen above in §1.2.1, the complete definitions given to the whole text in the *explicit*, which should be taken as the titles of the entire work, are '*Leiðarvísir ok borga-skipan*' and '*frásögn*: *Leiðarvísir sea ok borga-skipan ok allr þessi frodleikr er ritinn ath fyrir-sogn Nicholas abota,* [...]*, ok lykr þar þessi frasogn*', 'This itinerary and list of cities and all this information is written at the dictation of Abbot Nicholas, [...] and there ends this narration' (ll. 179-82). '*Leiðarvísir*' refers to only one of the elements of the contents of the work that are listed in the *explicit*, the 'itinerary', the sequence of stops along the route leading to the Holy Land. The other element is *borga-skipan*, the list and description of the cities along the route. Both these elements, *Leiðarvísir* and *borga-skipan* constitute the *fróðleikr*, 'the knowledge and the information' given in the text and are the two components of the *frásögn*, which is the only term referring to the entire text.

2.6   Medieval Pilgrim Guides to the Holy Land

Leiðarvísir is a different kind of text from the travel accounts of the time, but it shows relevant resemblances to some twelfth- and thirteenth-century pilgrim guides that have come to us. Compared with the Latin guides of the time, *Leiðarvísir* shows relevant adaptations for Scandinavian addressees: 'Nikulás's frame of reference is definitely Nordic' (Kedar and Nielsen 1978-79: 197). *Leiðarvísir* mentions, for instance, the hospice founded near Piacenza by King Eiríkr Sveinsson (ll. 44-45) and observes that in Paphos there is a garrison of Varangians (l. 132), that Eiríkr Sveinsson died there, and that he saw to it that every Danish-speaking man could drink free wine in Lucca (ll. 133-35); the itinerary also specifies that the Gulf of Adalia is called *Átalsfjörðr* by Scandinavians (l. 131).

The composition of guides to the Holy Land began in the first centuries of Christianity. An important branch of this tradition originates with *De situ et nominibus locorum hebraicorum*, written by Jerome around 390. The work is a revised and enriched translation into Latin of the *Onomasticon* by Eusebius of Cesarea, written in the years before 331 (Eusebius 2005). As we have seen (§2.2.3.2), Jerome's work was used by Adomnán, together with Arculf's report, for the composition of his *De locis sanctis* between 683 and 686. Jerome's description of the Holy Land and the work of Adomnán were also the main sources used by Bede to compose his *De locis sanctis* (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 247). Bede's description of the Holy Land, which was based exclusively on written sources, had a wide and lasting influence. As late as the twelfth century Peter the Deacon, librarian of the abbey of Montecassino between 1127 and 1137, based his *De locis sanctis* on Bede's work, using also excerpts from Egeria's *Itinerarium* (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 92). Two sixth-century guides to the Holy Land have come down to us: the *Breviarius de Hierosolyma*, a short anonymous guide from the beginning of the century (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 107), and *De situ terrae sanctae*, written a few years later, around 520, by a Theodosius, of whom we know nothing but his name (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 107-114). For his *De situ terrae sanctae* Theodosius draws from different sources, to which he makes few additions (Keel 1984: 426). After the First Crusade (1095-99), the Holy Land was more accessible for Christian pilgrims, so that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the need for guides for the increased number of pilgrims arose (Sumption 1975: 114-36; Schmugge 1988; Wolf 1989). Pilgrim guides became very popular. Many of them do

not show any originality but are based on the same models (Wilkinson 1988: 2-3; Keel 1984: 441). Nineteenth-century philologists edited some of the most important of these guides, which, because of the absence of any authorial indication or the impossibility of an attribution, were defined as *Anonymi* or *Innominati*.

2.6.1 The *Innominati* Guides

Besides the *Innominati* I-IX edited in the nineteenth century, the anonymous guides anthologised by Sabino De Sandoli (1979-84: II-III) and by John Wilkinson (1988) have been taken into consideration in the following analysis. Since these guides do not usually have a title, the names proposed by Wilkinson (1988: 4-23) will be used below. Wilkinson (1988: 4-6) individuates a first group of three anonymous guides composed between 1099 and 1104: the *Innominatus I*, completed after 1099 and before 1104, was attached to the *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolymitanorum* (Hill 1962: 98-101; see Wilkinson 1988: 4 and De Sandoli 1979-84: III 1); the guide called by Wilkinson *Qualiter* is from the same period (1099-1103) and was attached to the *Historiae Hierosolymitane* of Archbishop Baudry of Dol (Tobler 1879: 347-49, see Wilkinson 1988: 6); and the *Ottobonian Guide*, which covers only Jerusalem and is probably the latest among the three guides (Mercati 1936: 153-54; Ciggaar 1976: 125-26, see Wilkinson 1988: 6). The *Anonymus Alemannus*, probably written between 1102 and 1106, was edited by De Sandoli (1979-84: III 153-57). A guide of the Holy Land forms chapters 31-33 of the *Gesta Francorum Jherusalem expugnantium*, dated to before 1109 (*Recueil des Historiens des Croisades* 1866: 509-512; see Wilkinson 1988: 11). *De Situ*, which precedes the *Descriptio* edited by de Vogüé (1860: 412-14), was written before 1114 (Wilkinson 1988: 11). Rorgo Fretellus, who was Archdeacon of Nazareth between 1135 and 1148/52, wrote a *Descriptio de locis sanctis* (Boeren 1980) that is part of the textual *corpus* of the *Innominati* guides. The first version of his work was written in 1137, the second in 1148 (Boeren 1980: vii-xxii): the *Descriptio* of Rorgo Fretellus is a guide mostly based on written sources, the Bible and the works of Jerome, but also the *Innominatus I* and *De distantiis locorum Terrae Sanctae*, that is preserved under the name of Eugesippus and was written in 1040 (*PG* 133: 991-1004). The *Descriptio locorum circa Hierusalem adjacentium*, published by de Vogüé (1860: 414-33), influenced by the first version of Rorgo Fretellus (Boeren 1980: XVII) was probably written between 1131 and 1143. The *Innominati I-IV* were edited in 1865 by Titus

Tobler (113-140) as an appendix to Theodoric's *Libellus de locis sanctis*. *Innominatus II* was written about 1170 (Tobler 1865: 118-28; see De Sandoli 1979-84: III 9 and Wilkinson 1988: 21). The *Innominatus III* was written between 1187 and 1229, its author, probably of French origin (Tobler 1865: 128-34; De Sandoli 1979-84: III 17), starts the itinerary from Brindisi, using an unreal name and giving a bizarre sequence of stops. The *Innominatus IV* was written *c.* 1270 after the occupation of Jerusalem (Tobler 1865: 134-40; De Sandoli 1979-84: 23). The *Innominati V* and *VI* were edited by Wilhelm Anton Neumann in 1866 and 1868: the former was composed *c.* 1180, the latter around 1148 (De Sandoli 1979-84: III 29, 45). The *Innominatus VI* is probably based on the *Descriptio* of Rorgo Fretellus. The *Innominati VII* and *VIII* were included by Tobler in his *Descriptiones Terrae Sanctae* (1874: 100-107, 193-96) and can be dated respectively to *c.* 1160 and *c.* 1185 (Wilkinson 1988: 17-18; De Sandoli 1979-84: III 77, 85). The *Innominatus VII*, based partially on *Innominatus I* and similar to *Innominatus II* towards the end, formed the basis for *Innominati IX* and *V*. The *Innominatus IX,* written around 1175, was added by Neumann in 1874 (534-39) to his review of Tobler's *Descriptiones Terrae Sanctae* and was also edited later by Golubovich (1906: 405-408; De Sandoli 1979-84: III 91). Henri Michelant and Gaston Rayanaud included in their *Itinéraires a Jérusalem et Descriptions de la Terre Sainte* three pilgrim guides that were composed in old French: *Les pelerinaiges por aler en Iherusalem* (1882: 86-103, dated *c.* 1231); *Les chemins et les pelerinages de la terre sainte* (1882: 177-99, written before 1265); and the *Pelerinages et pardouns de Acre* (1882: 229-236, *c.* 1280). Girolamo Golubovich edited in 1906 (408-10) an *Itinerarium sanctorum locorum* from the first half of the twelfth century, renamed *Innominatus X* by Sabino de Sandoli (1979-84: III 101).

These anonymous and impersonal guides had a wide circulation, as is confirmed by their ample manuscript tradition: 'The majority were simply for practical use. For those who could come to the Holy Land they served simply as guides, and for those who could not they served as means of making a spiritual pilgrimage' (Wilkinson 1988: 2). Some of them were advertisements *ante litteram*, 'perhaps distributed by the churches or the shipping agents' (Wilkinson 1988: 2), such as the guide called *Qualiter*, which begins with an *incipit* addressed to potential travellers to the Holy Land: *Quicumque ad Ierusalem civitatem sanctam ire voluerit, semper ad solis ortum intendat, et sic, Deo ductore, ad sanctam Ierusalem veniet,*

'Anyone who may wish to go to Jerusalem, the Holy City, should continue to travel eastwards, and in this way, under the guidance of God, he will come to the Holy City' (Tobler 1879: 347; see Wilkinson 1988: 2). These guides were mostly based on other descriptions of the Holy Land. Even travel accounts with a definite author, of whom we know that he actually visited the places he described, were composed using a variety of written sources:

> Quite often it is very hard to tell what places were actually visited by the pilgrims. In their anxiety to produce as full as possible an account of their stay in the Holy Land they quoted long passages from other books, and this tendency increased in the Crusader period, when a pilgrim could not go very far without being within range of the enemy. [...] This desire to quote earlier works may be seen in two ways. In the Latin Kingdom a pilgrim on his travels was doing something which was of great importance to him. In fact he was entering into an experience which was of great antiquity, and earlier books by those who were, in his view, authorities might provide some of the information which he required. The advantage for the author was that the authorities were likely to tell the truth. But the disadvantage to his readers was and is that what a pilgrim quotes as his personal observations, is not always the case. (Wilkinson 1988: 2-3)

The fact that *Leiðarvísir* is a guide and not a travel account can also be confirmed by a comparison with the anonymous Latin guides to the Holy Land. *Leiðarvísir* is a text with impersonal indications that contains no reference to an individual traveller and his historically-determined journey. As is the case for the medieval Latin guides to the Holy Land, written sources have also played a decisive role in the composition of the impersonal information contained in *Leiðarvísir*. Chapter §3 will analyse the description of Rome and show that it is mainly based on written sources. Some relevant formal similarities, and similarities of content, between *Leiðarvísir* and the medieval Latin guides to the Holy Land will now be taken into account. Such similarities strongly indicate a dependence of the Icelandic text on Latin sources.

2.6.2 *Leiðarvísir* and the *Innominati* Guides

As we have seen above (§2.3), from a structural point of view *Leiðarvísir* cannot be considered to belong to the genre of the travel account. From a structural point of view, a travel account shows a non-fiction dominant, that is, is based or declares

itself to be based on a real journey made by an individual; it is written in the first person by the same subject who made the journey; alternatively, if it is written by an author reporting the account of a traveller, it is a meta-account, and has as its subject a defined individual, which can be in the third person.

Leiðarvísir does not introduce the places along the route to Jerusalem following the progression of an individual journey, the experiences, and the impressions of a definite traveller, but uses a limited number of impersonal expressions, the most frequent of which are exemplified in Table 1.

	Impersonal Expression	Number of Occurrences in *Leiðarvísir*
1.	Þar er + [place name/information]	59
2.	Þá er + [place name]	43
3.	þá + [er] + [time/space indication] + til + [place indication]	35
4.	Úr/ór/fra + [place indication] + er+[time indication]+ til [place indication]	17
5.	á/í + [place indication] + er + [place indication]	11
6.	[indication] + þar hvilir hann	10
7.	Fyrir [cardinal indication] + er + [place indication]	7
8.	þá er skamt til / þá er eigi langt til	7
9.	þá/þaðan til + [place indication]	3
10.	á millum/á meðal [place] + ok + [place] + er	3

Table 1: Relevant impersonal connectives in Leiðarvísir.

The impersonal structure and expressions of *Leiðarvísir* and its lack of any reference to an individual traveller giving an account of his journey are similar to the structure of medieval guides to the Holy Land. It is significant that some of the expressions indicated in Table 1 are comparable with those identified in the *Itinerarium Burdingalense* by Celestina Milani (2002: 37-40). Milani (2002: 38) observes that the *Itinerarium Burdigalense* derives from the intersection of two different structures, an *Itinerarium romanum*, which is articulated in stops without descriptive passages, and an *Itinerarium ad loca sancta*, starting at Caesarea in Palestine and containing short descriptions of the places. This same structural bipartition into an *Itinerarium* leading to Rome and another describing the route from Rome to the Holy Land can also be observed in *Leiðarvísir* (see §4.2). As mentioned above in §2.3, Milani points out that the *Itinerarium Burdingalense* has the structure of an

impersonal guide: 'There is no protagonist. The protagonists are the distances between one stop and the other and the things to see' (Milani 2002: 39).[51] The most frequent structure in the Bordeaux Itinerary is *fit a* [place of departure] + [place of arrival] *milia...mutationes...stationes* (Milani 2002: 39). This structure is comparable with 2) *þá* + [*er*] + [time/space indication] + *til* + [place indication] and 3) *Úr/ór/fra* + [place indication] + *er* + [time indication] + *til* [place indication]. Other frequent structures in the *Itinerarium Burdingalense* are: *Ibi est* + [place or monument to see] + *qui*; *Ibi est* + [place] + *ubi...*; *Inde est* + [place], *ubi*; *Inde est* + [distance] + [place], *ubi* (Milani 2002: 39). They correspond respectively to 1) *Þar er* + [place name/information] and 2) *Þa er* + [place name].

The most frequent impersonal expression in *Leiðarvísir* (as appears in Table 1) is the structure *þar er* + [place name/information], 'in that place is', used to add information to a place that has already been mentioned. It is often used (13 times) to indicate the presence of a bishop's throne in a city or in a church, as e.g. *þa er mundioborg, þar er byskups stoll at petrs kirkio*, 'then comes Minden, where the bishop's throne is in the Church of Peter' (l. 10; §1.4.3.1). This structure follows the basic model *ibi est* + [place name/information], which was used in the guides to describe a relevant place already mentioned. The *Itinerarium Burdigalense* frequently uses this structure, as in the following passage describing the area around Bethel:

> Inde passus mille est locus, ubi Iacob, cum iret in Mesopotamiam, addormiuit, et ibi est arbor amigdala, et uidit uisum et angelus cum eo luctatus est. Ibi fuit rex Hieroboam, ad quem missus propheta, ut conuerteretur ad Deum excelsum. (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 14)
>
> A thousand paces from there is the place where Jacob fell asleep as he was going to Mesopotamia, and an almond tree is there, and Jacob saw the vision and the angel wrestled with him. King Jeroboam was there, to whom the prophet was sent so that he should convert to the most high God.

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[51] '*Non c'è protagonista. Protagoniste sono le distanze tra una tappa e l'altra e le cose da vedere.*'

The Icelandic syntagm *þar er* + [place name/information] corresponds to the Latin model *ibi est*+ [place name/ information]. The expression is also commonly used in the Latin guides of the *Innominati*. Formal parallels to the Icelandic itinerary can, for example, be found in the *Innominatus I* (Hill 1962: 98-101). No information about the life of the *Innominatus I* can be gathered from this 'very short guide, which served only to help the memory of the pilgrims to recall some Holy Places of the Old and New Testament' (De Sandoli 1979-84: III 1).[52] The *Innominatus I* is impersonal: relevant places are described without using the first person. The description of Jerusalem with which the guide begins shows the *ibi est* + [place name/information] model and other interesting formal parallels to *Leiðarvísir*:

> In Jerusalem est cubiculum uno lapide coopertum, ubi Salomon Sapientiam scripsit. Et ibi inter templum et altare in marmore ante aram sanguis Zachariae fusus est. Inde non longe est lapis, ad quem per singulos annos Iudei veniunt, et unguentes eum lamentantur et sic cum gemito redeunt. Ibi est domus Ezechiae, regis Iuda, cui ter quinos annos Deus addidit. Deinde est domus Caiphae, et columna, ad quam Christus ligatus flagellis, caesus fuit. (Hill 1962: 98)
>
> In Jerusalem is a little cell, roofed with one stone, where Solomon wrote the Book of Wisdom. And there, between the temple and the altar, on the marble pavement before the holy place, the blood of Zechariah was shed. Not far off is a stone, to which the Jews come every year, and they anoint it and make lamentation, and so go away wailing. There is the house of Hezekiah king of Judah, to whose span of life God added fifteen years. Next to it is the house of Caiaphas, and the pillar to which Christ was bound when he was scourged. (Hill 1962: 98)

In addition to the model *ibi est* corresponding to the Icelandic *þar er*, this passage exemplifies other structural features common to *Leiðarvísir* and the Latin guides. *Deinde* is used in the meaning of 'afterwards, then, next', but also in the spatial acceptation of 'in the next position, from there' (Glare 1968: s.v.): this use is very close to the use of the expression *þá er* + [place/indication], which is one of the most frequent in the Icelandic itinerary (35 occurrences). The adverb *inde* has an

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[52] ' *Questa brevissima guida, che serviva soltanto per aiutare la memoria dei pellegrini a ricordarsi di alcuni Luoghi Santi del Vecchio e Nuovo Testamento.*'

analogous function, being used in the meaning of 'from that place, thence', but also to indicate 'a fresh stage in a temporal, topographical, or other sequence: following on that, next, then' (Glare 1968: s.v.). The expression *inde non longe est*, 'it is then not far from there', is used to refer to the Wailing Wall. This expression corresponds to *þá er eigi langt til*, or *þá er skamt til*, attested seven times altogether in *Leiðarvísir*.

Innominatus I contains a brief description of Jerusalem, including the Sepulchre Church, the *Templum Domini*, and the temple of Solomon (Tobler 1865: 113-14), also mentioned in *Leiðarvísir* (l. 156, see §1.4.10). After Jerusalem the guide describes the Mount of Olives:

> Inde contra orientem quasi ad mille passus mons Oliueti conspicitur, ubi dominus Iesus ad. patrem oraauit dicens: 'Pater, si fieri potest,' et reliqua. Et in lapide Pater Noster scripsit; et inde ascendit in celum, dicens discipulis: 'Ite docete omnes gentes,' et reliqua. Inter Templum Domini et montem Oliueti est uallis Iosaphath, ubi uirgo Maria ab apostolis sepulta fuit. In qua ualle mundum iudicaturus ueniet Dominus. Ibi prope est uilla quae dicitur Gethsemani ibique prope est ortus trans torrentem Cedron, ubi Iudas Iesum tradidit. Inde prope est sepulchrum Isaiae prophetae. Inde ad mille passus Bethania, ubi Lazarus quatriduanus resuscitatus est. (Hill 1962: 99)
>
> About a thousand paces away eastward you can see the Mount of Olives, where the Lord Jesus prayed to the Father, saying, 'Father, if it be possible,' etc. And he wrote the 'Our Father' upon a stone, and from that place he ascended into Heaven, saying to his disciples 'Go, and teach all nations,' etc. Between the Lord's Temple and the Mount of Olives is the Valley of Jehoshaphat, where the Virgin Mary was buried by the disciples. This is the valley in which the Lord will come to judge the world. Near to it is the village called Gethsemane, and close by, across the torrent of Kedron, is the garden where Judas betrayed Jesus. The tomb of Isaiah the prophet is quite near. A thousand paces away is Bethany, where Lazarus was restored to life on the fourth day. (Hill 1962: 99)

This passage of the *Innominatus I* guide exemplifies other formal similarities between *Leiðarvísir* and the pilgrim guides. It is structured on a paratactic series of places, employing a sequence of uses of *inde*, which corresponds to *þá er* of *Leiðarvísir*. The formula *inde prope*, often used in the *Anonymi*, corresponds to the Icelandic *þá er skamt til/ þá er eigi langt til*, 'then it is a short distance to' (7 occurrences in *Leiðarvísir*). The Icelandic itinerary mentions the Mount of Olives

after the Jordan, stating that *Austr fra borginni er fiall, er heitir mons oliveti, þar ste Cristr upp til himna*, 'East from the city is a mount, which is called Mons Oliveti; there Christ ascended to heaven' (ll. 164-65). The *Innominatus I* reports that the Mount of Olives is *inde contra orientem quasi ad mille passus*, 'About a thousand paces away eastwards', and that *inde ascendit in celum*, 'from there [Christ] ascended to Heaven' (Hill 1962: 99).

Another example of relevant parallels can be found in the description of the Valley of Josaphat. *Leiðarvísir* includes the information that *aa medal fiallzins olivéti & Iorsala-borgar er dalr sa, er heitir vallis iosaphat, þar er grof Mario drotningar,* 'between the Mount of Olives and Jerusalem is the valley, which is called the Valley of Josaphat; in that place is the tomb of our lady Mary' (ll. 165-67). The *Innominatus I* guide indicates that *inter templum Domini et montem Oliveti est vallis Josaphat, ubi virgo Maria ab apostolis fuit sepulta*, 'between the Lord's Temple and the Mount of Olives is the Valley of Josaphat, where the Virgin Mary was buried by the Apostles' (Hill 1962: 99). The *Innominatus VII* guide uses almost the same wording: *inter Jerusalem et montem Oliveti est vallis Josaphat, ubi sancta Maria ab apostolis fuit sepulta, et ibi est torrens Cedron*, 'between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives is the Valley of Josaphat, where the Holy Mary was buried by the Apostles, and there is the torrent Kidron' (Tobler 1874: 104). *De Situ* contains a similar text: *Ecclesia Sanctae Mariae que dicitur in valle Iosaphat, est inter Jerusalem et montem Oliveti vallis Medio, et ibi est sepulchrum S. Mariae genitricis Dei*, 'The Church of the Holy Mary in the Valley of Josaphat is between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, and there is the sepulchre of the holy mother of God' (de Vogüé 1860: 414). The *Innominatus III* guide gives the parallel information that *inter montem Oliveti et montem Syna est vallis Josaphat, locus amenissimus [...] Item in [valle] Josaphat est ecclesia magna de lapidibus constructa, in qua est sepulchrum venerandae virginis mariae*, 'between the Mount of Olives and Mount Sinai is the Valley of Josaphat, a very pleasant place. And in the Valley of Josaphat is a big church built with stones, in which is the sepulchre of the venerable Virgin Mary' (Tobler 1865: 132-33).

The *Peregrinationes* of the *Innominatus II*, written *c.* 1170 (De Sandoli 1979-84: 9), begin the description of the Holy Land from Acre, like *Leiðarvísir*, and describe an itinerary that partly coincides with that described by Nikulás:

Per viam superiorem ab Accaron in sanctam civitatem pergentibus occurrit civitas Nazareth. Inde per duas leugas est mons Tabor, quo Christus transfiguratus est. Ibidem prope Tiberiadis civitas est, juxta quam est mare Galilææ, ubi Dominus multa miracula fecit. Superius ad duas leugas est tabula, ubi Dominus satiavit V millia hominum de quinque panibus et duobus piscibus. Inde occurrit civitas Sebaste reliquiis sancti Johannis Baptistae reverenda. Inde itur Neapolim, ubi est puteus, super quam sedit Dominus loquens cum Samaritana. (Tobler 1865: 118)

Those who go from Acre to the Holy City by the upper way meet the city of Nazareth. Two leagues from there is Mount Tabor, where Christ was transfigured. Nearby is the city of Tiberias, next to which is the Sea of Galilee, where the Lord accomplished many miracles. Two leagues above it is the Table where the Lord satisfied five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes. Then comes the city of Sebaste, which is venerable because of the relics of St John the Baptist. From there one goes to Nablus, where is the well on which the Lord sat when he talked with the Samaritan woman.

The places along the road to Jerusalem are introduced by *inde est*, and by *inde itur*, the latter corresponding to the Icelandic expression *þá ferr til* [place indication], which occurs five times in the itinerary. The route after Antioch (l. 143) described by *Leiðarvísir* partly coincides with that of *Innominatus II* and has a very similar structure, articulated by occurrences of *þá er*:

Galilea herath er upp [aa] land fra akrs borg Þar er fiall mikit, er tabor heitir, þar syndiz postolom moyses & helias þa er Nazaret þar kom Gabriel engill til motz vid Mario & þar var Cristr feddur iij vetr & xx. þa er þorp er heitir gilin þa er Iohannis kastali er fordum hét Samaria þar fanzt heilagr domr Iohanis baptista þar er Iacobs brunr er Cristr bat conuna gefa ser ath drecka af þa er Nepl micil borg. (ll. 143-48)

The district of Galilee is in the land above Acre. In that place is a high mountain, which is called Tabor; there Moses and Elias appeared to the Apostles. Then there is Nazareth: there the angel Gabriel met Mary, and there Christ was nurtured for twenty-three year. Then there is a village which is called Jenin. Then there is John's Castle, which before was called *Samaria*; there the relics of John the Baptist were found, and in that place is Jacob's well, from which Christ asked the woman to give him to drink. Then there is Nablus, a large town.

Along the route described by the *Innominatus II* are Acre, Nazareth, Mount Tabor, Tiberias, Sebaste and Nablus. *Leiðarvísir* lists Acre, Mount Tabor, Nazareth, Jenin,

John's Castle/Samaria (called Sebaste by Herod the Great, see Hill 1983: 190-91) and Nablus.

In the *Innominatus III* guide, written between 1187 and 1229 (De Sandoli 1979-84: III 17), Nazareth is mentioned after Jerusalem: *item de Jerusalem usque Nazareth sunt duæ diætæ, in qua civitate Gabriel angelus annuntiavit virgini Mariae Christum*, 'It is a two days' journey from Jerusalem to Nazareth, in which city the angel Gabriel announced Christ to the Virgin Mary' (Tobler 1865: 133). The expression *item de* + [place name] + *usque* + [place name] + *est/sunt* + [distance] that we observe in this sentence is frequent in *Innominatus III* (10 occurrences) and is used to introduce a new place in the itinerary giving the distance from the previous one. This expression can be compared to *úr/ór/frá* + [place indication] + *er* + [time indication] + *til* that occurs 17 times in *Leiðarvísir*, as for example in the German section: *or kolni ero iij dagleidir upp med rin til meginzoborgar*, 'From Cologne it is a journey of three days along the Rhine to Mainz' (ll. 23-24), or in the description of the way back at the very end of the itinerary: *ór vebiorgum er ii daga til álaborgar*, 'from Viborg it is a journey of two days to Ålborg' (l. 179). The *Innominatus III* guide is of particular interest because it begins in Brindisi, where the Mediterranean sea-route of *Leiðarvísir* also begins. It describes in its first part an itinerary (Tobler 1865: 128-30) that goes from Brindisi to Glarentza, the Greek Isles, and Cyprus, reaching the Holy Land in Jaffa and not Acre like *Leiðarvísir*. The details of *Innominatus III* are often imaginative: it reports, for instance, that in Greece there are *pulchrae mulieres*, 'beautiful women' (Tobler 1865: 128), an observation that *Leiðarvísir* makes for Siena, where there are *konur venstar* (l. 64, see §1.4.5).

The itinerary of the *Innominatus IV*, written after 1270 probably by a German author (Tobler 1865: 134-40; see De Sandoli 1979-84: III 23), begins in Cyprus. The stops along the route are introduced by a series of *item*, which have here the function of *inde* or *deinde* in the other guides. After Jerusalem and the *vallis Josaphat*, where the *sepulchrum virginis Mariae*, 'the tomb of Mary', is (Tobler 1865: 136-37), as in *Leiðarvísir* (ll. 165-67), the *Innominatus IV* mentions the Mount of Olives:

> Item in monte Oliveti apparuit Dominus discipulis suis post resurrectionem. Item in eodem monte ascendit Dominus in cœlum. Item ibidem est sepulchrum Mariæ Ægyptiacæ. Item Gaffa, ubi nati sunt apostoli Jacobus et Johannes Evangelista. Est a Jerusalem II diætas versus in boream. Item mons Quarentenus, ubi Dominus dejunavit et tentatus est a diabolo. Est a Jerusalem bene quinque milliaria teutonica.

Item hortus Abrahæ est ibidem, ubi prophetæ sancti sepulti sunt. Item Jordanis, ubi Dominus baptizatus est. Est a Jerusalem ad XII milliaria teutonica. (Tobler 1865: 137)

And on the Mount of Olives the Lord appeared to his disciples after the Resurrection. And on the same mount the Lord ascended to Heaven. And there is the tomb of Mary of Egypt. Then Jaffa, where the Apostles James and John the Evangelist were born. From Jerusalem it is a journey of two days northward. Then Mount Quarantania, where the Lord fasted and was tempted by the devil. It is a good five German miles from Jerusalem. And in that same place is Abraham's Garden, where the holy prophets are buried. Then the Jordan, where the Lord was baptised. It is twelve German miles from Jerusalem.

After the tomb of Mary in the Valley of Josaphat, *Leiðarvísir* indicates a sequence of sites which is comparable to that of *Innominatus IV*, giving similar information about the mount where the temptation of Christ took place:

þa er long stund til Querencium fiallz, þar fastadi gud, ok þar freistadi diofull hans. Þar er Abrahams kastali. Þar er Abrahams kastali. Þar stod Hiericho. Þar ero Abrahams-veller. Þa er skamt til Iordanar, er Cristr var skirdr, hon fellr or landnordri i út-sudr. (22^{28}-23^1).

Then it is a long way to the mount *Querencium*: God fasted there, and there the Devil tempted him. Abraham's Castle is there. There stood Jericho. In that place are the Plains of Abraham. Then it is a short way to the Jordan, where Christ was baptised; it flows from north-east to south-west.

As in *Leiðarvísir*, the impersonal sequence of *item* which forms the guide of the *Innominatus IV* does not include any verbs of movement or perception, which are typical of accounts of personal experiences, but limits itself to listing places and information. The *Innominatus IV* ends with a description of the Church of the Sepulchre in Jerusalem, reporting that *super sepulchrum Domini, quod est in medio ecclesiae, est apertura rotunda*, 'above the Sepulchre of the Lord, which is in the middle of the church, is a round opening' (Tobler 1865: 139). This information is also given by *Leiðarvísir*, which says that the Church of the Sepulchre is *opin ofan yfir grofinni*, 'open above, over the Sepulchre' (ll. 153-54; see §3.14).

Analogous information on Mount Quarantania can be found in other anonymous guides. The guide *Qualiter* states that *inde etiam ad orientem ultra leugas sex, est locus ubi Dominus ieiunavit diebus xl et ubi a diabolo est temptatus,*

non superatus, 'then more than six leagues to the east is the place where the Lord fasted for forty days and where he was tempted by the devil but was not defeated' (Tobler 1879: 348). The guide *Innominatus II* refers to the place called *Quadrantena, eo quod Christus ibi jejunavit XL diebus. In summo montis est, ubi tentavit eum satanas*, 'where Christ fasted for forty days. On the mountain top is the place where Satan tempted him' (Tobler 1865: 125). An almost identical text is also given in other guides. *Innominatus IV*: *Item mons Quarantenus, ubi Dominus jejunavit et tentatus est a diabolo*, 'then comes Mount Quarantania, where the Lord fasted and was tempted by the devil' (Tobler 1865: 137). *Innominatus V*: *Deinde usque in Quarantenam XII mil, ubi Dominus ieiunavit XL dies et fuit tempatus a sathana*, 'then it is twelve miles to Mount Quarantania, where the Lord fasted for forty days and was tempted by Satan' (Neumann 1866: 247). *Innominatus IX*: *ab illo loco distat Vi liuces usque ad Quarentanam ubi ieiunavit Dominus XL diebus et ubi temptatus est Dominus a diabolo*, 'from that place it is six leagues to Mount Quarantania, where the Lord fasted forty days and the Lord was tempted by the devil' (Golubovich 1906: 406). *Innominatus X*: *et ab inde usque ad Quarantenam sunt leugue VI ubi dominus ieiunavit XL diebus et XL noctibus et fuit tentatus a diabolo*, 'and from there it is six leagues to Mount Quarantania where the Lord fasted for forty days and forty nights and was tempted by the devil' (Golubovich 1906: 409).

2.7 Conclusions

The Icelandic itinerary appears to be much closer to the twelfth- and thirteenth-century pilgrim guides to the Holy Land than to the travel accounts of the time. It cannot be included in the genre of the travel account for the reasons that have been explained in this section: it is not written in the first person but has an impersonal structure; there is no direct reference in the text to the journey made by the author; and there is no internal or external evidence of its being based on a journey made by an individual. The text of *Leiðarvísir* is structured on a limited number of impersonal expressions that articulate the description of the route to the Holy Land. These expressions, the lack of a personal subject, and the absence of the autoptic principle find correspondence in the many anonymous pilgrim guides that had a wide diffusion after the recapture of the Holy Land made it newly possible to visit the sites named in the Old and the New Testament. *Leiðarvísir* should not be included among the medieval travel accounts but among these Latin guides, which have in common with

the Icelandic text not only a similar formal structure – that of the impersonal guide – but also analogous route directions and information on relevant sites of the Holy Land, as has been demonstrated in §2.6.2. *Leiðarvísir* is an itinerary that describes a real route, and not a real journey, from Iceland to the Holy Land. Like other guides, it is for the use of both actual travellers and pious readers who never intended to go on a pilgrimage. Certain sections of *Leiðarvísir* are composed using written sources – as will be shown with regard to the description of Rome in Chapter §3 – and there is no basis for considering it an account of an individual journey. One should not infer, however, that *Leiðarvísir* is merely a mechanical compilation from other guides or descriptions that the author had at his disposal. *Leiðarvísir* contains various kinds of information about the places mentioned along the route, about churches, episcopal sees, and relics, about peoples, languages, and local traditions, all interspersed with religious and fantastic elements. The complexity of the written sources used for its composition will emerge in the next section, where the description of Rome will be examined in detail.

At least one key passage, put at the end of the itinerary, is likely to be based on direct observation, because it has no direct correspondence in any other written source (at least the sources that have been scrutinized): the description of the ingenious method of measuring the elevation of the polestar on the riverbank of the Jordan (see §1.4.10). There are no textual grounds to conclude that it was the author's personal experience. The text does not use any of the common strategies (§2.2.3) for maintaining the truthfulness of what is narrated by the direct experience of the author. If the passage is not based on a written source unknown to us, the author must have used an oral account reporting this technique of measurement.

Leiðarvísir is a guide and not a travel account, but appears to be an erudite and elaborate guide, a complex and many-sided text composed using a variety of sources, among which the experiences and the observations collected by adventurous travellers must have played a fundamental role.

3   The Description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir*

The description of Rome has characteristics which distinguish it not only from the other city descriptions present in *Leiðarvísir*, but also from the rest of the itinerary. With its 440 words (from a total of *c.* 2500), it is by far the most extended and detailed city description in the whole text, far more than that of Jerusalem, to which the itinerary dedicates only 117 words. Rome is the only city for which dimensions and internal directions and distances are provided and it is the only section of *Leiðarvísir* where we find a Latin sentence, which gives the dimensions of St Peter's (ll. 95-96). Besides being two of the signals of the presence of written sources, as will be shown in the course of the present chapter, the higher frequency of Latin and the presence of the only complete Latin sentence indicate that the Rome section is also formally distinct and more elevated than the rest of the itinerary (Simek 1990: 271).

3.1   The Description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir* (*Description A*)

This chapter will analyse the description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir* (henceforward also referred to as *Description A*), comparing it to Latin sources so as to prove that important parts of it are based on written sources. The text of *Leiðarvísir* will also be compared to the description of Rome included in a separate work, 'The List of the Cities' (§3.2), which shares significant similarities with *Description A*. In *Leiðarvísir*, the descriptions of the basilicas of St John Lateran, of Sant'Agnese fuori le mura and of St Peter's are the most detailed. Most of this chapter will therefore be dedicated to the analysis of the descriptions of these three basilicas in *Leiðarvísir*. As will emerge, this has made it possible not only to compare more accurately these descriptions with Latin sources, but also to date some significant details. It will be shown, as already alluded to in §1.4.6 and §1.5.1, that the descriptions of St John Lateran and St Peter's are incompatible with a twelfth-century dating, and consequently with the attribution to Nikulás of Munkaþverá.

While each passage of the description of Rome will be analysed and commented on separately in the present chapter, the complete text of *Description A* is provided here below both for internal reference and in order to give an overview of its structure:

[s]ua er sagt ath roma se iiij milur aa leingd [en iiii][53]a breidd þar ero .v byskups stolar Einn er ath Ions kirkiu baptiste þar skal eingi messo syngia yfir há alltari sa er midr se vigdr en lydbyskups þae er páfa stoll þar er blod Christi & kledi mario & mikill hlutr beina iohannis baptiste þar er umskurdr Christi & miolk or briosti mario af þorn giord Christz & af kyrtli hans & margir adrir helgir domar vardir i eino gullkeri miclo Annar byskups stoll er ath mario kirkiu þar skal pafi messo [sy]ngia ioladag & [p]ascha-dag þridi er at kirkiu stephani & laurenti þar skal pafi messo syngia enn viij. dag iola & hatidir þeira sealfra Enn austr þadan ij. milur er agnesar kirkia hun er dyrliguzt j allri borginni hana lét gera Constantia dottir Constantini konungs er hon tok fyrry tru en hann & bad hon leyfis ath lata gera agnesar kirkiu en konungr leyfdi henne utan borgar ath radi Silvestri pafa. þadan ero iiij milur i borgina austan i hlid þat er heitir anteportam latinam þar er kirkia Iohannis postola fra kirkiu iohannis er skamt til hallar þeirar er atti deoclacianus konungr þa er mario kirkia þa er kirkia iohanni & pauli martirum þeir [voro hird]menn Constancio þa er allra heilagra kirkia micil & d[yrlig & er o]pin ofan sem pulkro kirkia i hierusalem Vestr fra borg[ginni] er pals kirkia þar er munclifi & borg um utan er gengr or roma [þar] er stadr sa er heitir catacumbas þetta er allt fyrir utan tifr hon fellr i gegnum borgina roma hon het fordum a[lbula] [54] Crescencius kastali er hestr i borginni fyrir hedan ána [hardla] rikr þa er kauphus petrs postola hardla mikit & langt þa er en gaufga petrs kirkia hardla[55] mikil & dyrlig þar er lausn oll of vandredi manna of allan heim & skal austan ganga i petrs kirkio & alltari i midri kirkio þar er petrs ork undir alltara & þar var hann i myrkvastofa Ecclecia petri cccclx pedum a foribus longa ad sanctum alltare sed lata ccxxx p[e]dum & þi ner stod cros petri þa er hann v[ar] pindr sem nu er haallt[ar]e i þeim ero half bein petri & pauli guds postola & half hvortueggi ero i pals kirkiu I ha alltara ero folgin .xxv. beina[56] lerisueina Christz þeira er petro fylgdu i romaborg I petrs kirkiu er alltari silvestri pape þar sem hann hvilir Gregorius altari er i petrs kirkiu þar sem hann hvilir petrs nal er hia úti fyrir vestan Sua hafa frodir menn sagt ath eingi se sua frodr at vist se ath viti allar kirkior i

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[53] Simek's edition (l. 72) follows Kålund (1909: 17[17]) who completes the lacuna with [*en ii*]. I agree with Magoun (1940: 281) in completing the text with [en iiii], see §3.4.

[54] Simek (l. 90), following Kålund (1909: 18[19]; 1913: 77), completes the manuscript lacuna with *Albana*. I agree with Magoun (1940: 285), who completes the text with *Albula* (see §3.17).

[55] *mikit & langt þa er en gaufga petrs kirkia hardla*: this sentence is missing in Simek's edition (l. 92; see Kålund 1909: 21-22). When I quote it, I will consider the sentence as belonging to line 92.

[56] A possible emendation of this passage (**beina xxv*) is suggested in § 3.20.8.

romaborg Roma heiter fyrir <nordan> tifr en latran [f]yrir s[unnan] & þo allt saman romaborg. (ll. 72-102)

It is said that Rome is four miles in length and four in breadth. Five bishops' sees are there. One [bishop's see] is at the Church of John the Baptist. There no-one can sing mass at the high altar who is ordained as less than a suffragan bishop. The papal throne is there. The blood of Christ is there and a garment of Mary and a great part of the bones of John the Baptist; the foreskin of Christ is there and milk from the breast of Mary, [a part of] Christ's crown of thorns and [of] his tunic and many other relics kept in a large golden vessel. The second bishop's see is in the Church of Mary. There the pope must sing mass on Christmas day and on Easter day. The third [bishop's see] is in the Church of Stephen and Lawrence. There the pope must sing mass on the octave of Christmas and on the feast of these same saints. But two miles east from there is the Church of Agnes, the most splendid in the entire city. Constantia, daughter of King Constantine, had this built when she accepted the faith before him and she asked leave to have the Church of Agnes built, and the king gave her leave to build it outside the city on the advice of Pope Sylvester. From there it is four miles west into the city to that gate that is called *ante portam latinam*. The Church of John the Apostle is there. From the Church of John it is a short distance to the hall that King Diocletian owned. Then comes the Church of Mary. Then comes the Church of the Martyrs John and Paul. They were men of Constantia's retinue. Then there is the large and splendid Church of All Saints and it is open at the top like the Church of the Sepulchre in Jerusalem. To the west outside the city is the Church of Paul. A monastery is there, and round about a suburb that extends out from Rome. The place that is called *catacumbas* is there. All this is beyond the Tiber. It flows through the city of Rome. It was formerly called *Albula*. The Castle of Crescentius is the highest in the city on this side of the river. [It is very] magnificent. Then there is the market of Peter the Apostle, very large and long. Then there is the venerable Church of Peter, very large and splendid. In that place is full release from the troubles of men from the whole world, and one must enter the Church of Peter from the east, and the altar is in the middle of the church. The sarcophagus of Peter is there under the altar, and he was there in a dungeon. The Church of Peter is four hundred and sixty feet long to the holy altar, and two hundred and thirty feet wide, and Peter's cross when he was tortured stood near where the high altar now is. Under this are half the bones of Peter and Paul, apostles of God, and the other half of both are in the Church of Paul. Under the high altar are concealed twenty-five bones of those disciples of Christ who accompanied Peter to Rome. In the Church of Peter is the altar of Pope

Sylvester, where he lies buried. The altar of Gregory is in the Church of Peter, where he lies buried. The needle of Peter is nearby outside to the west. Learned men have said that no one is so wise as to know all the churches in the city of Rome. North of the Tiber it is called 'Rome' and south 'Lateran', and yet the whole together is called 'the city of Rome'.

3.2   The Description of Rome in *borga skipan* (*Description B*)

In AM 194 8vo on folio 16[v] (Simek 1990: 492[1-10]), immediately after *Leiðarvísir*, we find a shorter description of Rome that is not inserted in any itinerary. This second description of Rome (hereafter referred to as *Description B*) shows relevant parallels with the one included in *Leiðarvísir* and will therefore be taken into account when the corresponding passages of the itinerary are analysed. It will emerge that *Description B* draws on sources similar to those of *Leiðarvísir*, but it probably belongs to a different tradition (§3.6). *Description B* is inserted in a long list of the holy places and has a manuscript diffusion wider than *Leiðarvísir*: it is attested in fragmentary form also on folio 14[r-v] of *Hauksbók*, Copenhagen, MS AM 544, 4to, written at the beginning of the fourteenth century (Kålund 1888-1894: I 683; Simek 1990: 491; handrit.is 2012: AM 544 4to), in Copenhagen, MS AM 597 b 4to (1650-1700; Simek 1990: 491; handrit.is 2012: AM 597 b 4to) and in Copenhagen, MS AM 736 I 4to (early fourteenth century; Simek 1990: 491; handrit.is 2012: AM 736 I 4to). In *Hauksbók* this list has the rubric *Um borga skipan oc legstaðe heilagra manna*, 'List of the Cities and of the Places of Burial of Saints' (henceforward *borga skipan*; Simek 1990: 492). After Rome, this list includes some of the most important places of pilgrimage in Italy (Simek 1990: 493[11]-494[20]), St Vincent in Spain (Simek 1990: 493[20-21]), St James in Galicia (Simek 1990: 493[21]), Saint Martin in Tours (Simek 1990: 493[21-22]), St Gilles in Provence (Simek 1990: 493[22]), St Dionysius in Paris (Simek 1990: 493[22]), St Remigius in Reims (Simek 1990: 493[22-23]), an extensive description of Constantinople with its relics (Simek 1990: 493[24]-494[50]; for an analysis of this description and its possible written sources, see Simek 1990: 287-92), and a description of Jerusalem and the Holy Land (Simek 1990: 494[51]-496[96]), which is more exhaustive than that in *Leiðarvísir* (on this description see Kedar and Westergård-Nielsen 1978-79; Simek 1990: 285-292).

The description of Rome in *borga skipan* is shorter than the one present in *Leiðarvísir*: after observing that Rome is superior to any other city and that the relics of St Peter, St Paul, St Lawrence and St Andrew are there, *Description B* mentions

only the five patriarchal churches (Simek 1990: 492[1-10]). The relevant passages of *Description B* will be commented on together with the corresponding passages of *Leiðarvísir*. Below is the complete text of *Description B* as attested in MS AM 194 8vo:

> Roma borg er yfir ollum borgum & hia henne ero allar borgir ath virða sva sem þorp þviat iord & steinar & streti oll ero Rodin i blodi heilagra manna þar ero enir eztu hofdingiar petrus & paulus & laurencius & heilagr domor sancti Andrez apostoli hann var pindr i borg þeiri a griklandi er patras heitir I roma borg ero v yfir musteri i þeira huerio ero vij kardinales Eth ezta þessara mustera er þar er þeir petrus & paulus huila Annath er ath mario musteri þridia er þar sem er hofut sancti pauli apostoli þar er via ostiensi Et fiorda sancti laurencij[57] et fimta i latrani[58] sancti iohanni[s b]aptista þar er heimile pafa þar ero kardinales episcopi[59] [&] skal engi messo [s]yng[ia] midr vigdr en byskupi þi ath þar er blod Christz[60] & kledi mario & miok sva oll bein Johannis baptista. (Simek 1990: 492, a[1-10])

> The city of Rome is superior to all cities, and, compared with it, all other cities are to be considered as villages because the earth and the stones and all the streets are reddened with the blood of the saints. The highest princes Peter and Paul and Lawrence are there and the relics of St Andrew the Apostle. He was martyred in that city in Greece that is called Patras. In Rome there are five principal churches and in each of them there are seven cardinals. The most glorious of these churches is that where Peter and Paul lie. The second is in the Church of Mary. The third is in that place where the head of the holy Apostle Paul is and where the Via Ostiensis is. The fourth [is the church] of St Lawrence,[61] and the fifth [is] in the Lateran[62] [the church] of St John the Baptist. The house of the pope is there. Cardinal bishops are there[63] [and] no-one consecrated as less than a bishop can sing mass there because the blood of Christ is there[64] and a garment of Mary and almost all the bones of John the Baptist.

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[57] MS AM 544, 4to adds *vttan borgar* (Simek 1990: 492, c[9]).
[58] MS AM 544, 4to adds *þar er cros* (Simek 1990: 492, c[9]).
[59] MS AM 544, reads *þar ero aller cardenales oc byskupar aller* (Simek 1990: 492, c[10]).
[60] MS AM 544, 4to adds *i allteri* (Simek 1990: 492, c[11]).
[61] MS AM 544, 4to adds 'outside the city' (Simek 1990: 492, c[9]).
[62] MS AM 544, 4to adds 'there is the cross' (Simek 1990: 492, c[9])
[63] MS AM 544, 4to reads 'there are only cardinals and only bishops' (Simek 1990: 492, c[10])
[64] MS AM 544, 4to adds 'under the altar' (Simek 1990: 492, c[11]).

Description B appears to be strongly linked to *Leiðarvísir*, and it has been supposed that it might be the work of Nikulás himself (Simek 1990: 285). The reference to the garment of Mary, however, a relic brought to the Lateran only after 1159, makes its attribution to Nikulás implausible (see §3.7.2). Furthermore, there are substantial reasons to believe that this shorter description of Rome, even though relying on Latin sources close to those of *Leiðarvísir*, belongs to a different textual tradition (see §3.6).

3.3   Medieval Descriptions of Rome

In addition to the many sources which the author of *Description A* would have been able to consult and use in order to collect historical or geographical information about the city of Rome (the ones relevant for the present thesis will be presented in the course of this chapter), there were several texts which more specifically described the city and which could be used by both the travelling pilgrim and the sedentary scholar far from Rome. One of the oldest of these texts is about the churches of Rome and is commonly known by the name *Stationes ecclesiarum urbis Romae*. The form of this text is a list which indicates, for every day of the year, a station (i.e. church) where the principal mass for the day was to be celebrated. The oldest manuscript dates back to the eighth century (Miedema 1996: 15). In an eighth-century manuscript is preserved another important text on the churches of Rome, the *Notitia ecclesiarum urbis Romae*, written probably under Honorius I (625-638), and including for the most part churches outside the city (VZ: II 68-71). Another famous text is the *Mirabilia urbis Romae* (henceforward referred to as *MUR*). The *terminus ante quem* of its first known version is 1143. It was part of the *Liber politicus* by Benedict, Canon of St Peter's. It has been maintained that the *MUR* should be dated to the end of the tenth century, in the reign of Otto III, but Nine Robijntje Miedema has argued convincingly for its dating in the mid-twelfth century (1996: 3-11). The *MUR* consists of lists and descriptions of monuments and sites, many belonging to ancient Rome: as has been effectively discussed by Miedema (1996: 441-53), the *MUR* does not constitute an actual guide to the Holy City, but should rather be considered to belong to the genre of the *descriptio urbis* (on the distinction between fact and fiction in the *MUR*, see Kinney 2007). The *Graphia aureae urbis Romae* is a text composed in the middle of the twelfth century and handed down in few manuscripts: it includes a historical introduction on the history of Rome, the *MUR*,

and a *libellus* with a fantastic description of the ceremonies at the Roman imperial court (Miedema 1996: 256-57). The *ordines romani* are ritual books that include instructions for liturgies to be celebrated in Rome; they also describe in detail the itineraries to be followed by processions associated with certain liturgical solemnities (on the history of the *ordines romani*, see Palazzo 1998: 175-186). Two *ordines romani* composed in the twelfth century are particularly significant for the topographical information contained in their catalogues of churches. The first *ordo*, written by the same Benedict, Canon of St Peter's and author of the *MUR*, is included in his *Liber* politicus, and it often belongs to the manuscript tradition of the *MUR*. The second *ordo* was written by Cencius, *camerarius* of the popes Clement III (1187-1191) and Celestine III (1191), and later elected pope as Honorius III (1216-1227). Cencius included the *ordo* in his *Liber Censuum Romanae Ecclesiae*, written in 1192.[65] An important text containing much information about St John Lateran is the *Descriptio Lateranensis ecclesiae*, written by John the Deacon during the papacy of Alexander III (1159-1181), based on earlier texts (the first dated shortly after 1073; see §3.7) and enriched with his own updates. The *Descriptio Lateranensis ecclesiae,* was a source for parts of the *Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae* about St John Lateran (VZ: III 319-25).

The text which was in fact most commonly used from the late twelfth century through the Renaissance – and which probably was, as we will see, a source for both *Description A* and *Description B* – is the *Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae* (henceforward referred to as *IEUR*). It reached wide circulation in the fourteenth century, probably because, after the first Jubilee called by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300, the large number of pilgrims who were attracted to Rome needed reliable descriptions of the Roman churches (Miedema 2003: 22-23). The oldest manuscript containing the *IEUR*, London, British Library, MS Cotton. Faustina B.VII, dates back to the late twelfth century (Miedema 1996: 45; 2003: 20-21); it is based, however, on traditions which began earlier. In §3.20.1 the year 1181 is proposed as a possible terminus post quem for the version of the *IEUR* in MS Cotton. Faustina

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[65] The *ordo* of Cencius was integrally edited by Fabre, Duchesne and Mollat (1910-52). References in this thesis are to the edition of the topographical sections of the two catalogues included in VZ (III 210-22).

B.VII. For the *IEUR* we do not have a uniform tradition but a multiform corpus of texts. They appear in many versions, the common feature of which is that they are accounts of the churches of Rome and of the indulgences that could be obtained in each, often mentioning also the relics kept there. The versions differ in the number of churches and their descriptions (on the textual history of the *IEUR*, see Miedema 2003: 18-37). In reviewing the *IEUR*, which could be part of the tradition informing *Leiðarvísir*, the five published editions of the Latin versions of the *IEUR*, based on fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts, have been taken into account in this thesis, as well as manuscripts BL, Cotton. Faustina B.VII; London, Lambeth Palace, MS 527 (fourteenth century, Miedema 1996: 48); and Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. Lat. 687 (fourteenth-fifteenth centuries, Miedema 1996: 76).[66] Many manuscripts contain several of these sources on Rome, sometimes copied by one hand as is the case in MS Cotton. Faustina B.VII, which includes the *IEUR* immediately after a shortened version of the *MUR* and before a list of the *Stationes ecclesiarum*.

3.4   The Dimensions of the City

Description A opens in the manner of the *MUR*, giving the dimensions of the city: [*s*]*ua er sagt ath roma se iiij milur aa leingd* [*en iiii*] [67] *a breidd*, 'it is said that Rome is four miles in length and four in breadth' (l. 72). The indication of the length and breadth of the city is atypical in the pilgrim guides (Miedema 1996: 473). These usually give the measure of the perimeter of Rome with the number of towers in the walls, which is how the *MUR* begins:

> Murus civitatis Romae habet turres CCCLXI, turres castella XLVIIII., propugnacula VI.DCCCC, portas XII, sine Transtiberim, Posterulas V. In circuitu vero eius sunt miliaria XXII, excepto Transtiberim et civitas Leoniana. (VZ: III 17)

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[66] The published editions of the *IEUR* are in Huelsen 1927: 137-56; Hulbert 1922-1923: 403-24; VZ: IV, 78-88; Weißthanner 1954: 39-64; Schimmelpfennig 1988: 637-58. See Miedema (2001: 44-49; 2003, 18-23) on the published editions and the textual history of the *IEUR*.

[67] [*en ii*] in Simek's edition, see note 53 above.

> The wall of the city of Rome has three hundred and sixty-one towers, forty-nine towers with bulwarks, six thousands and nine hundred merlons, twelve gates, not including Trastevere, and five posterns. Its circumference is of twenty-two miles, without reckoning Trastevere and the Leonine City.

Magoun (1940: 281) rightly observes that the [*ii*] indicating the breadth in Kålund's edition should be substituted by [*iiii*] or [*iv*], thus corresponding to the roughly circular ground-plan of Rome. The [*ii*], however, is not a 'scribal error' (Magoun 1940: 281) but a conjecture of Kålund for a lacuna (Kålund 1909: 17[17]). According to Kålund (1913: 75), in *Leiðarvísir* one should understand for 'length' the axis east-west of the city, and for 'breadth' the axis north-south. As for the value of one mile in *Leiðarvísir*, Kålund (1913: 75) considers it corresponding to a Roman mile (1.5 km), whereas Magoun (1940: 281) says that it could be equivalent to 1 or perhaps 1.1 km. Kedar (2005: 268) agrees with this last reckoning.

The dimensions of the city of Rome are also given in the *Vegr til Róms*. This is an itinerary attested in Copenhagen, MS AM 281 4to fol., fol. 94[v] (handrit.is: AM 281 4to.) and in Copenhagen, MS AM 597 b 4to, fol. 43[r-v] (handrit.is: AM 597b 4to); both manuscripts were written in the seventeenth century, but are probably copies of texts originally embedded in *Hauksbók* (Simek 1990: 511). The itinerary, which follows an 'eastern route' and only indicates stops and distances from Lübeck to Rome, has been edited by Finnur Jónsson (1892-96: 502), Otto Springer (who also added a commentary, 1950: 114-19), and Simek (1990: 511-12). In the itinerary, after Viterbo comes Rome, which is the last stop: *til Roma Borgar 40 mylur, vt vm sialfa Róm og Latran 4 mylar, til S: Páls 4 mylur*, 'to the city of Rome 40 miles. All around Rome itself and the Lateran four miles: to the Church of St Paul four miles' (Simek 1990: 511, a). *Vegr til Róms*, unlike *Description A*, which indicates the length and the breadth of the city, follows the traditional pattern of giving the measure of the circumference of Rome; in addition to this, it also reports the distance from the perimeter of the walls to the Basilica of San Paolo fuori le mura. The correspondence, however, of the repetition in both *Description A* and *Vegr til Róms* of the measure of 'four miles' when giving the dimensions of Rome is relevant and might not be accidental. The author of *Description A* might have adapted or misunderstood an analogous item of information, which traditionally referred to the dimensions of Rome and gave – as in *Vegr til Róms* – an identical measure for its circumference and its distance to San Paolo fuori le mura, reformulating it into the

measures of the length and the breadth of the city. *Vegr til Róms* counts the distances for the stretch from Bozen to Rome in *valskar mylur*, 'Italian miles', that correspond to 1.5 kilometres (Springer 1950: 118). This also corresponds to the 'Roman mile' that Kålund (1913: 75) associates with the unit of measurement used by *Description A* to give the measurements of Rome. There is a topographical representation of the city giving its length and its breadth in the *History* attributed to Zacharias Rhetor, written towards the end of the sixth century and preserved in a shortened version in Syriac. In the *History* of Zacharias the dimensions of Rome are given in length and breadth, even though they are noticeably wider than the figures noted in *Leiðarvísir*: 12 miles from east to west, and 12 from north to south (VZ: I 333-334).

3.5   The Five Patriarchal Churches

After this introduction, Nikulás describes the most important churches, stating that in Rome there are *v byskups stolar*, 'five bishops' sees' (l. 73). *Description A* refers to the five patriarchal churches of Rome (Magoun 1940: 281), also called *sedes patriarchales*, 'patriarchal sees' (§3.6). The patriarchal churches until the fourteenth century were in fact still five and not seven, as they would become with the reclassification of the ancient churches of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme and San Sebastiano fuori le mura (Blaauw 1994: 44-49). The reference to seven *patriarchales ecclesiae*, which was used in the *IEUR* from the fourteenth century, referred only to the special indulgences that were granted by visiting them, but did not have an administrative or liturgical meaning (Blaauw 1994: 48; Miedema 2003: 22-23). One should bear in mind, however, that there are fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts still indicating only five patriarchal churches, like London, Lambeth Palace, MS 527 (§3.6; see Miedema 2003: 22, n. 21 for other examples). The *incipit* of *Description B* is very similar: *I roma borg ero v yfir musteri*, 'in the city of Rome there are five principal churches' (Simek 1990: 492[5]). The term used to refer to the patriarchal churches *yfirmusteri*, 'principal churches', could render the Latin *patriarchales*, or also other qualifications used for the five main churches of Rome, such as *privilegiatae*, *regales*, or *principales* (see Schimmelpfennig 1986: 649).

3.6   The *Indulgentiae ecclesiarum* as a Source for *Description A* and
   B

An *incipit* including a reference to the five patriarchal churches of Rome is typical of the *IEUR*. The *IEUR* preserved in MS Cotton Faustina B.VII, which begin on folio 16[va] with the rubric *Indulgentiae indulte a romanis pontificibus ad stationes que sunt in urbe romana*, 'Indulgences granted by the Roman pontiffs at the stations which are in the city of Rome', are followed (f. 16[va-b]) by a list of the main churches of Rome with indications of the indulgences to be obtained in each, and, after this, we find an enumeration of the patriarchal churches:

> Ecclesie Patriarchales. Quinque sunt patriarchales ecclesie in Roma. Ecclesia Sancti Petri. Ecclesia Sancti Pauli. Ecclesia Sancti Iohanni in Laterano. Ecclesia Sancte Marie Maioris. Ecclesia Sancti Laurentij extra muros et praeterea Sancta Sanctorum. (MS Cotton Faustina B.VII, f. 16[vb])
>
> Patriarchal churches. The patriarchal churches in Rome are five. The Church of St Peter, the Church of St Paul, the Church of St John Lateran, the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, the Church of San Lorenzo fuori le mura and in addition to those the *Sancta Sanctorum*.

That MS Cotton Faustina B.VII contained information which could be intended for northern pilgrims – or readers – is confirmed by a subsequent observation about the different degrees of indulgences that were granted according to travellers' countries of origin (see §3.20.1). MS Cotton Faustina B.VII, written in England in the second half of the twelfth century and containing a shortened version of the *MUR*, the *IEUR*, and the *Stationes ecclesiarum* (Miedema 1996: 45) can give us an idea of the Latin sources on Rome which might have been available in medieval Iceland. A similar *incipit* can also be found in the other two most ancient versions of the *IEUR*. The *IEUR* contained in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. lat. 3719 (beginning of the thirteenth century, see Miedema 1996: 65), read:

> Quando peregrini intrant, primo has quinque ecclesias: Sancti Johannis in Laterano et Sancte Marie Maioris et Sancti Petri apostoli et Sancti Pauli et Sancti Laurentii extra Muros. (Miedema 2003: 21)
>
> When the pilgrims come into [Rome], [they] first [visit] these five churches: [the churches of] St John Lateran and Santa Maria Maggiore and St Peter the Apostle and St Paul and San Lorenzo fuori le mura.

The *IEUR* of BN, MS. lat. 3719 continue by adding a list of the indulgences that are granted by visiting the patriarchal churches (Miedema 2003: 21). *Description A*

includes a likely reference to an *indulgentia plenaria* only when it comes to the description of St Peter's (l. 92; see §3.20.2), while *Description B* does not contain any reference to indulgences granted to pilgrims visiting Rome. The similarity of the beginning of the *Description A* to the traditional *incipit* of the *IEUR* is also evident if we consider the beginning of the text preserved in Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 778 (thirteenth century, see Miedema 1996: 64):

> Quinque sunt ecclesie patriarchales, in quibus habentur XL dies indulgentie singulis diebus quadragesime: ecclesia Sancti Petri, Sancti Pauli, Sancti Johannis in Laterano, Sancti Laurentij extra Muros, Sancte Marie Maioris. (Miedema 2003: 21)
> There are five patriarchal churches, in which forty days of indulgence are granted in each single day of Lent: the Church of St Peter, [the Church] of St Paul, [the Church] of St John Lateran, [the Church] of San Lorenzo fuori le mura, [the Church] of Santa Maria Maggiore.

These three lists of the five patriarchal churches in the *IEUR* attested in MS Cotton Faustina B.VII; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. lat. 3719; and Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 778 (the three most ancient versions of the *IEUR*, see Miedema 2003: 20) are not structured according to a series of ordinal numbers. In other versions the patriarchal churches are often enumerated by a series of ordinal numbers. This is the case of the *IEUR* edited by James Hulbert, who compared fifteenth-century manuscripts and early prints (for the list of these texts, see Hulbert 1923: 405-409; and Miedema 2001: 10, n. 28), and published a text attested in an early printed edition, British Library, C 9 a 22 (Rome: *c.* 1490; see Miedema 1996: 184) 'that in large part agrees verbatim with the manuscript versions' (Hulbert 1923: 405):

> [S]anctus Silvester scribit in cronica sua quod Rome fuerunt mille quingenti et quinque ecclesie quarum maior pars est destructa. Et inter illas tantum sunt septem principales privilegiate maiori privilegio, gratia, dignitate et sanctitate quam alie. Prima est sacrosancta Lateranensis ecclesia que est caput totius orbis et urbis, deinde ecclesia Sancti Petri, ecclesia sancti Pauli, ecclesia Sancte Marie Maioris, ecclesia Sancti Laurentii extra muros, ecclesia Sanctorum Martirum Fabiani et Sebastiani, ecclesia Sancte Crucis in Hierusalem. Prima ecclesia Lateranensis dedicata est a beato Silvestro papa in honorem Sancti Salvatoris and Sancti Johannis baptiste et evangeliste [...] Secunda ecclesia principalis est ad sanctum Petrum [...] Tertia ecclesia Principalis est ad Sanctum Paulum [...] Quarta ecclesia principalis est ad Sanctam Mariam Maiorem [...] Quinta ecclesia principalis est ad

Sanctum Laurentium extra muros [...] Sexta ecclesia principalis est ad Sanctum Sebastianum [...] Septima ecclesia principalis est ad Sanctam Crucem [...] (Hulbert 1923: 405-408)

St Sylvester writes in his chronicle that in Rome there were one thousand five hundred and five churches, most of which are destroyed. And among them there are only seven principal churches, which are granted greater privilege, favour, and dignity than the others. The first is the sacrosanct Lateran church, which is the head of the whole City and of the whole world; then there are the Church of St Peter, the Church of St Paul, the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, the Church of San Lorenzo fuori le mura, the Church of the holy Martyrs Sebastian and Fabian, the Church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. The first Lateran church has been dedicated by the blessed Sylvester to the honour of the holy Saviour and St John the Baptist and the Evangelist [...] The second principal church is St Peter's [...] The third is St Paul's [...] The fourth is Santa Maria Maggiore [...] The fifth principal church is San Lorenzo fuori le mura [...] The sixth principal church is San Sebastiano [...] The seventh principal church is Santa Croce in Gerusalemme [...]

In this version we find an *incipit* which, with minor variations, had become typical for the *IEUR* from the fourteenth century. According to Miedema, Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, MS Salem VII, 104 (written in the fourteenth century, see Miedema 1996: 42) contains the first attestation of this *incipit*: *Sunt Romae mille quingente qinque capellae*, 'In Rome there are one thousand five hundred and five churches' (Miedema 2003: 23).

In *Leiðarvísir* only the names of the first three churches are preceded by ordinals (§3.1), whereas in *Description B* ordinals are used to introduce all five patriarchal churches. This may be an indication of the fact that the author of *Description A* modified the structure of a version of the *IEUR*, inserting references to other churches, thereby changing the original order and leaving the numerals only for the first three basilicas in his list (see §4.1). The list in *Leiðarvísir* begins with St John Lateran. This is typical for many versions of the *IEUR*, as in BN, MS. lat. 3719 (Miedema 2003: 21), which lists, like *Leiðarvísir*, Santa Maria Maggiore as the second patriarchal church; later versions of the *IEUR* (as Hulbert 1923: 405) also begin the list of the Roman patriarchal churches with St John Lateran. After Santa Maria Maggiore has been mentioned, the order of Roman churches in *Description A* does not find a correspondence in any of the edited texts of the *IEUR*. One should bear in mind, however, that the *IEUR* do not contain a uniform text, and, in

particular, the number of the churches and the order in which they are listed differ appreciably (Miedema 2003: 23-24). Moreover, the corpus of the *IEUR* is attested in a large number of witnesses, of which only a few are edited: Miedema (1996: 22, 24-95) lists in her catalogue one hundred and ten medieval manuscripts witnessing a Latin version of the *IEUR*. The order of *Description A* might correspond to one of the many unpublished version of the *IEUR*, or, as said above, the sequence of the Latin model might have been changed by the author of *Description A*.

The *IEUR* underwent a process of normalization only after the invention of printing (Miedema 2001: 7-8), but we have seen that often early versions also have a standard *incipit*: a reference to the five patriarchal churches in the older versions, or, from the fourteenth century on, a reference to the one thousand five hundred and five churches in Rome (Miedema 2003: 23). After the reference to the dimensions of Rome (§3.4), *Description A* begins the list of Roman churches and sites with a sentence, *þar ero .v byskups stolar,* 'five bishop's sees are there [in Rome] (l. 73), which follows very closely the *incipit* of the *IEUR* referring to the five patriarchal churches, such as the beginning of the version attested in MS Cotton Faustina B.VII, f. 16v: *Quinque sunt patriarchales ecclesie in Roma*.

Description B begins by mentioning the superiority of Rome and the presence there of the bodies of St Peter, St Paul, St Lawrence and the relics of St Andrew (Simek 1990: 492[1-4]; traditionally the head of Andrew the Apostle was kept in St Peter's, Blaauw 1994: 574; see §3.7.2.4). The reference in the *incipit* of *Description B* to the blood of the saints with which 'the earth and the stones and all the streets are reddened' (Simek 1990: 492[2-3]) is a widespread medieval *topos*, also attested in the *Codex Regius* version of *Fóstbrœðra saga* (Björn and Guðni 1943: 257, n. 1; see §3.23). After this introduction, the list of the five patriarchal churches is introduced by a sentence, *I roma borg ero v yfir musteri,* 'In the city of Rome there are five principal churches' (Simek 1990: 492[4-5]), which is also very close to the *incipit* of the early *IEUR*. The order of the patriarchal churches in *Description B* does not find a correspondence in any of the edited versions of the *IEUR*. As with *Description A*, this might be due to a change made by the Icelandic author, or, alternatively, *Description B* might be based on one of the many unpublished versions of the *IEUR* – which, as said above, are not a uniform text, the order and number of the churches that are described varying significantly (Miedema 2003: 23-24). Besides the *incipit*, as Miedema has remarked, the other characteristic feature of the *IEUR* is that they

are structured around a description of the churches of Rome, and of the indulgences that are granted by visiting the churches, irrespective of the number that are described and of how detailed these descriptions are (Miedema 2003: 19). *Description A* and *Description B* show marked similarities to these features: both *Description A* and *Description B* contain the *incipit* typical of the older versions of the *IEUR*, and they both describe the main churches of Rome; *Description A*, in addition to the five patriarchal churches, lists other churches and also has a probable reference to the *indulgentia plenaria* granted to the pilgrims visiting St Peter's (l. 92, see §1.5.1 and §3.20.2). *Description B* does not include any reference to indulgences.

In fact, similarly to *Description A* and *Description B*, there are witnesses of a Latin version or of a reworking of the *IEUR* that contain very little information, or no information at all, on the indulgences granted to pilgrims visiting the churches of Rome. Lists of the Roman churches, mentioning the relics kept there and structured on the model of the *IEUR*, but including few or no references to the indulgences granted to the pilgrims, can be found in the manuscript tradition. In the *IEUR* attested in Manuscript Montserrat, Biblioteca del Monestir, Cod. I – also called *Liber Rubeus* from the colour of its cover – written *c.* 1400 (edition in VZ: IV 75-88; see Miedema 1996: 51; and Miedema 2003: 26), only the interiors of the churches are described in detail, whereas there are only a few pieces of information on the indulgences. Other significant examples can be found in Miedema (2003: 467), such as Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O.I. 17 (fourteenth century, Miedema 1996: 32), which hands down a list of the Roman principal churches without a reference to the indulgences; and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Th. Tan. 407 (sixteenth century, Miedema 1996: 62), which lists the patriarchal churches of Rome, referring also to their bishops and priests, but does not contain information on the indulgences; other manuscripts do not contain a complete text of the *IEUR*, but only their *incipit*.[68] Miedema also mentions London, Lambeth Palace, MS 527 (fourteenth century, James 1932: 725-

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[68] Miedema (2003: 467) mentions Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Salem VII, 104 (fourteenth century, Miedema 1996: 42); Wrocław, Biblioteca Uniwersytecka, MS I F 155/180 (fourteenth/fifteenth century, Miedema 1996: 93); and Wrocław, Biblioteca Uniwersytecka, MS I Q 457 (second half of the fifteenth century, Miedema 1996: 93).

27). [69] An examination of Lambeth Palace, MS 527 has shown that it contains a text of great interest for its structural similarities to *Description A* and *Description B*. This MS includes on fol. 67^v a list of the patriarchal churches of Rome, with the typical *incipit* of the *IEUR*; the list is followed on fol. 68^r by a list of relics in the Lateran:

> Quinque sunt sedes in roma patriarchales. Prima in ecclesia lateranensi. Secunda in ecclesia sancte marie maioris. Tertia in ecclesia sancti petri. Quarta in ecclesia sancti pauli. Quinta in ecclesia sancti laurentii extra muros. In ecclesia lateranensi quae est caput mundi et sedes apostolica imperialis et patriarchalis ibi ostenduntur he reliquie: archa testamenti in qua est virga aaron quae fronduerat et tabule testamenti in quibus scripsit dominus leges moysy. Et sunt decem candelabra aurea quae fuerunt in tabernaculo. Et mensa propositionis de ligno sedium super quibus dominus comedebat cum discipulis suis et ampullae due cum sancto sanguine et aqua de latere Christi et tunica inconsutilis [Fol 68 r] quam fecit sancta maria et sudarium quod fuit super caput Domini in sepulchro et cilicium de pilis camelorum quod Iohannes baptista induerat in deserto et forcipes quibus tonsus fuerat Sanctus Iohannis Evangelista et duo cherubini de auro. (Lambeth Palace, MS 527, fols 67^v-68^r)

> The patriarchal sees in Rome are five. The first is in the Lateran church. The second is in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore. The third is in the Church of St Peter. The fourth is in the Church of St Paul. The fifth is in the Church of San Lorenzo fuori le mura. In the Lateran church, which is the head of the world and apostolic, imperial and patriarchal see, are displayed these relics: the Ark of the Covenant, in which there is the rod of Aaron that budded, and the tables of the Covenant on which the Lord wrote the Law for Moses. And there are the ten golden candlesticks that were in the Tabernacle and a credence table[70] made with the wood from the chairs on which the Lord used to eat with his disciples, and two ampules with some of the holy blood and water from the side of Christ, and the seamless garment which the Holy Mary made, and the shroud which was on the

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[69] Miedema (2003: 467) also refers to MS Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. Lat. 1433 (fourteenth century, *Tabulae codicum* 1864: 237), asserting that, like Lambeth Palace, MS 527, it lists the Roman churches and some relics of the Lateran. An examination of ON, Cod. Lat. 1433, however, has shown that the MS contains on fols 175^r-177^v a shortened version of the *Descriptio Lateranensis Ecclesiae* of John the Deacon (see §3.7).

[70] On the *mensa propositionis* see Shipley (1872: 299).

head of the Lord in the sepulchre and the garment of camel's hair that John the Baptist wore in the desert and the scissors with which John the Evangelist was tonsured and two golden cherubim.

The text attested in Lambeth Palace, MS 527 reveals relevant similarities with *Description* A and *B*, testifying a related Latin version of the *IEUR*, probably closer to that on which *Description* A is based. Like *Description A* and *B*, the text of Lambeth Palace, MS 527 was written in the fourteenth century but it still indicates five patriarchal churches.

The *incipit* of Lambeth Palace MS 527, *Quinque sunt sedes in roma patriarchales* is very close the beginning of *Description A*, stating that in Rome *þar ero .v byskups stolar*, 'there are five bishop's sees' (l. 73). The Old Norse *stóll*, (commonly used to refer to a bishop's see, Cleasby and Vigfusson 1957: s.v.) is in fact here a calque on the Latin *sedes*. Similarly to *Description A* and *Description B*, the text of Lambeth Palace, MS 527 lists the five bishop's sees using a series of ordinals, without the repetition in the series of the implicit *sedes* and adding a locative of the church denomination: *Prima* [*sedes patriarchalis*] *in ecclesia lateranensi. Secunda* [*sedes patriarchalis*] *in ecclesia sancte marie maioris. Tertia* [*sedes patriarchalis*] *in ecclesia sancti petri* [...]. *Description A* follows the same pattern. After the indication of the five *biskupsstólar*, in *Description A* we find an analogous structure for the first three patriarchal churches: *Einn* [*biskupstóll*] *er að Jónskirkju baptiste* [...] *Annarr biskupsstóll er að Maríukirkju* [...] *þriði* [*biskupstóll*] *er að kirkju Stephani et Laurenti* [...].

As we have seen, *Description B* reports that in Rome there are five *yfirmusteri*, a term which is probably a calque on the Latin *ecclesiae principales* or *patriarchales* (see §3.5), and not on the Latin *sedes*. The series of ordinals in *Description B* begins with the second principal church: *Annað er að maríumusteri. Þriðja* [*yfirmusteri*] *er þar sem er höfuð sancti pauli apostoli* [...] *Et fjórða* [*yfirmusteri*] *sancti laurencii et fimta* [*yfirmusteri*] *i latrani sancti iohannis baptista.* The implicit substantive of the ordinals in *Description B* is thus *yfirmusteri* and not *biskupstóll*, as in *Description A*. This probably derives from the fact that the Latin model of *Description B* referred to *quinque ecclesiae principales* and not to *quinque sedes patriarchales*, like Lambeth Palace, MS 527 and the possible source of *Description A*. One can compare the pattern followed by *Description B* to the version of the *IEUR* edited by Hulbert (1924, see above), where we find that *Secunda*

ecclesia principalis est ad sanctum Petrum [...] *Tertia ecclesia Principalis est ad Sanctum Paulum* [...] *Quarta ecclesia principalis est ad Sanctam Mariam Maiorem* [...] *Quinta ecclesia principalis est ad Sanctum Laurentium extra muros* [...]. Together with the different order followed in the list of the Roman churches, the fact that *Description B* is probably based on a Latin source referring to the five patriarchal churches as *ecclesiae* and not as *sedes* (as in *Description A*) is a strong indication that *Description B* is based on a different version of the *IEUR*.

Lambeth Palace, MS 527 is also of great interest because, after the list of the five bishops' sees, it adds a list of some of the relics kept in the Lateran. The list in MS 527 is based on the *Descriptio Lateranensis ecclesiae* of John the Deacon (§3.7.2.2) and only partially corresponds to the list of relics also mentioned in *Description A*; however, MS 527 confirms the existence in the tradition of texts that, like *Description A*, following the pattern of the *IEUR*, refer both to the five patriarchal churches of Rome and to the relics of the Lateran, but do not mention the indulgences granted to the visitors of the church.

Besides the five patriarchal churches, *Description A* also describes other churches and secular places of Rome. As will become evident in this chapter, it is likely that, in addition to a version of the *IEUR*, the author of *Description A* (who, it is useful to repeat it, cannot have been Nikulás, see §3.7.2.5, §3.20.2, §3.20.8) also made use of other written sources: hagiographic and historiographical texts, but also other descriptions of Rome like the *MUR*. The second part of *Description B* (starting with the *incipit* typical of the *IEUR*) only contains information on the five patriarchal churches. Miedema (2003: 31-35) has classified the *corpus* of the German and Dutch versions of the *IEUR* composed between the fourteenth and the sixteenth centuries, identifying two large groups and various subgroups. The first group includes the witnesses of the *IEUR* that only describe the patriarchal churches, the second group witnesses in which, in addition to the patriarchal churches, other Roman churches are described. Miedema categorises later versions of the *IEUR* that includes seven patriarchal churches, but her classification can easily be applied to *Description A* and *Description B*. On the basis of Miedema's classification, *Description A* can be inserted into the group of the *IEUR* describing other churches in addition to the five principal churches. In particular, it can be included in the subgroup '2b3' (see Miedema 2003: 34-35) in which the patriarchal churches are mixed with other churches and not listed all together at the beginning; in this subgroup, as in

Description A, the sequence in which the churches are listed does not apparently follow a systematic order (on the absence of method in the sequence followed by *Description A*, see Waßenhoven 2008: 35-38). As will emerge in the course of this chapter (§3.7.2, §3.20), the fact that *Description A* reworks a version of the *IEUR* is also confirmed by the fact that the descriptions of St John Lateran and St Peter's in *Description A* contain details and textual elements derived from or strongly linked to the *IEUR*. *Description B* can be inserted in the subgroup '1a' identified by Miedema: this subgroup consists of the witnesses of the *IEUR* that name only the patriarchal churches but contain a description of each of them (Miedema 2003: 31).

It can therefore be plausibly argued that *Descriptions A* and *B* are based on a Latin version of the *IEUR*. It cannot be said with certainty whether they depend on the same version which was revised differently, or whether they depend on different versions of the *IEUR*. The changed order in which the patriarchal churches are listed and different details and wording in the descriptions of the churches would seem to suggest that they drew on different versions of the *IEUR*. The passages of *Description A* and *Description B* that refer to St John Lateran and the relics that are kept there, on the contrary, clearly show a common source (§3.7.2).

Description B can be considered a partial translation of an early version of the *IEUR*. As we have seen, *Description B* is also attested in the *Hauksbók*, on fol. 14^r. Jón Helgason (1960: xx-xxii) has dated fols. 1r-18v of MS AM 544 4to *c.* between 1290 and 1334. This makes *Description B* one of the earliest vernacular versions of the *IEUR*. The earliest translations into German and Dutch are in fact witnessed in fourteenth century manuscripts (Miedema 2003: 25). In her catalogue, Miedema registers as the earliest English versions of the *IEUR* the texts attested in Kew, Public Record Office, MS SC 6/956/5 (written in 1344-45); the 'Vernon Manuscript' (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. Poet. a. I, written c 1370-85); and the 'Simeon Manuscript' (London, British Library, MS Add. 22.283, written in the late fourteenth century; for the description of these manuscripts, see Miedema 1996: 163-64, 166). The earliest French versions recorded by Miedema are from the fourteenth century: London, British Library, MS Add. 25.105 and Bern, Schweizerische Landesbibliothek, Cod. 98 (Miedema 1996: 160-61).

This similarity between *Description A* and the *IEUR* has already been noticed by Miedema, although only en passant. Explaining the reasons for the exclusion of some important sources from her *Die römischen Kirchen im Spätmittelalter nach den*

'Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae', 'The Roman Churches in the late Middle Ages according to the "Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae"', Miedema touches on this point:

> The limitation to the German- and Dutch-language material led to the fact that the pilgrims' accounts of the city of Rome by Nikulás von Munkaþverá (twelfth century), Pero Tafur (1437), Giovanni Rucellai (1450), John Capgrave (*c.* 1450), Jean de Tournay (1488-1489) and Fra Mariano da Firenze (1517) are not considered, although it is true of them that they rework the 'Indulgentiae'. (Miedema 2001: 22)[71]

Miedema, who uses the comments of Kålund (1913) and Magoun (1940), considers *Leiðarvísir* a travel account and groups *Description A* with other more recent works, which are in fact very different from *Leiðarvísir* and which, unlike *Leiðarvísir*, can be considered to be based on real journeys. One can fully agree, however, with her glancing reference to the fact that *Leiðarvísir* is a *Bearbeitung* of the *IEUR*.

After the *incipit* referring to the five patriarchal churches of Rome, *Leiðarvísir* begins by describing the basilica where the first 'bishop's see' is, St John Lateran. The description of the Lateran includes a list of some of the famous relics kept in the basilica. As will emerge in §3.7, a comparison between *Description A* and other Latin sources referring to the relics of the Lateran can give relevant information both on the dating of *Description A* and on the written sources on which the Icelandic text is probably based.

3.7   The Church of John the Baptist

In the Middle Ages, the Lateran and not St Peter's was the religious and administrative centre of power of the Roman Church. According to tradition, the *Palatium Lateranense* was donated to Pope Miltiades (311-314) by Constantine after his conversion. The *Palatium Lateranense* was the residence of the popes throughout

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[71] '*Die Einschränkung auf das deutsch- und niederländischsprachige Material führte dazu, dass die Rompilgerberichte des Nikolàs von Munkathvera [sic] (12. Jahrhundert), des Pero Tafur (1437), Giovanni Rucellai (1450), John Capgrave (c. 1450), Jean de Tournay (1488-1489) und Fra Mariano da Firenze (1517) nicht berücksichtigt werden, obwohl für sie gilt, dass sie die 'Indulgentiae' bearbeiten.*'

almost all the Middle Ages, at least until the pope returned from Avignon in 1377. A basilica was built near the new seat and dedicated in 327 to the Saviour (Cempanari 1989: 14-15). It was dedicated to the two Saint Johns, the Baptist and the Evangelist, during the papacy of Gregory the Great (590-604). It was also called *Lateranense* (or *Laterana), Costantiniana* or *Aurea*, 'golden', for the golden-yellow columns adorning it (Pietrangeli 1990: 11-12; Blaauw 1994: 160-73). The study of Philippe Lauer (1911) is still a fundamental resource for the history of the Lateran; for more recent studies and bibliography the works of Carlo Pietrangeli (1991) and Julian Gardner (1995) can be profitably consulted.

The sequence of patriarchal churches presented in *Description A* begins the list of the five patriarchal churches with the 'Church of 'John the Baptist': *Einn er ath Ions kirkiu baptiste þar skal eingi messo syngia yfir há alltari sa er midr se vigdr en lydbyskups þae er páfa stoll*, 'One [bishop's see] is at the Church of John the Baptist. No-one who is ordained as less than a suffragan bishop can sing mass at the high altar' (ll. 73-74). In *Description B* the name of the Lateran is the last mentioned. As we have seen, *Description A* uses a series of ordinals only for the first three churches, *Description B* for all the main churches (§3.5): St John Lateran is the fifth, after San Lorenzo fuori le mura: *et fimta i Latrani, sancti Iohannis baptiste*, 'and the fifth is the [patriarchal church] of St John the Baptist in the Lateran' (Simek 1990: 492[8]).

Magoun (1940: 281) observes that *lýdbyskup*, 'suffragan bishop', may be either a misinterpretation of the meaning of *cardinalis episcopus* or a scribal error for *yfirbiskup*, *höfuðbiskup*, or some similar term used to render *cardinalis episcopus*. This hypothesis is well-grounded, and can be strengthened by a comparison with the parallel text of *Description B*: *þar er heimile pafa þar ero kardinales episcopi [&] skal engi messo [s]yng[ia] midr vigdr en byskupi*, 'the house of the pope is there. Cardinal bishops are there, and no-one who is consecrated as less than a bishop can sing mass there' (Simek 1990: 492[8-9]). *Description B* explicitly quotes the Latin source it is using by referring to the *cardinales episcopi*. The form *lýðbiskup* attested in *Description A* is probably a later misreading of the *lectio difficilior *yfirbiskup* or **höfuðbiskup*, translating the Latin *cardinalis episcopus*. In the sources that have been reviewed in this thesis there is no reference to the right of a bishop *suffraganeus* to celebrate mass on the high altar, whereas references to a *cardinalis episcopus* are common. We find a similar passage in the *Descriptio Lateranensis ecclesiae*, where

its author, John the Deacon, describes the high altar in St John Lateran, *super quod missam non celebrat nisi papa vel cardinalis episcopus*, 'on which no-one except the pope or a cardinal celebrates mass' (VZ: III 338; see also Werlauff 1821: 45).

The *Descriptio Lateranensis ecclesiae* (henceforward *DLE*) is in fact a fundamental source for the medieval history of the Lateran. As will be argued in §3.7.2, it is instrumental in the dating of the list of Lateran relics in *Description A* and *B*. In its latest version, the *DLE* is the work of a certain John the Deacon, canon of the Lateran Basilica, who wrote it during the papacy of Alexander III (1159-81), to whom the *DLE* is dedicated (VZ: III 320, 326). John the Deacon revised and updated an older *Liber de Sancta Sanctorum*, the first version of the *DLE*, which dates from between 1073 and 1118 but was probably composed not much later than 1073. John declares that his purpose was to renew an older book *antiquitatis vetustate quasi abolitum*, 'almost obliterated by its great age' (VZ: III 326[26]). We also have a second recension, which can be placed between the death of Anastasius IV (1154) and the beginning of the pontificate of Alexander III (1159). Giovanni B. De Rossi (1888: 222-23) and VZ (III 319-25) give a picture of the manuscript tradition and of the questions concerning the dating of the three versions of the work; Cyrille Vogel (1956) presents an overview of the textual tradition, a stemma of the manuscripts and a dating of the recensions. The *DLE* is intended to exalt the prestige of the Lateran Basilica; its purpose is thus similar to that of the *Descriptio Basilicae Vaticani*, which was written in the same period by Peter Mallius in praise of the Basilica of St Peter (VZ: III 375-381; see §3.20 for its relevance for St Peter's description in *Description A*).

3.7.1 The 'Throne of the Pope'

Description A goes on to indicate that in St John Lateran *Þar er páfa stoll*, 'there is the papal throne' (l. 74). *Páfa stoll* is a translation of the Latin *cathedra pontificalis*, of which, again, we find an example in John the Deacon: *In hac itaque sacrosancta Lateranensi basilica Salvatori Ihesu Christo Deo dicata, quae caput est mundi, quae patriarchalis est et imperialis, sedis est apostolicae cathedrae pontificalis*, 'In this sacrosanct basilica, which is the head of the world, which is patriarchal and imperial, dedicated to Jesus Christ The Saviour, is the seat of the apostolic pontifical throne' (VZ: III 336). In fact, St John Lateran and not St Peter's was (and still is) the cathedral of Rome (Cempanari 1989: 16), the church containing the *cathedra* of the

bishop of Rome, namely the pope. On the throne situated in the hemicycle of the tribune there was, prior to the papacy of Pope Nicholas IV (1288-92), a twelfth-century tetrastich stating that *haec est papalis sedes et pontificalis* [...] *nec debet vere nisi solus papa sedere,* 'this is the papal and pontifical seat [...] and truthfully no-one but the pope ought to sit there' (De Rossi 1888: 307; Lauer 1911: 225-26). Lambeth Palace, MS 527 refers on fol. 67[v] to St John Lateran as *sedes apostolica imperialis et patriarchalis* (§3.6).

The *pafa stóll* is also mentioned in *Veraldar saga* (1944: 59[5]) in the passage where the list of the churches built by Constantine is given (1944: 58[19]-59[14]). As will be explicated in more detail in the chapter dedicated to the Church of Sant'Agnese (§3.10.3), this list of churches in *Veraldar saga* is most probably based on a corresponding passage of Bede's *De temporum ratione* (1977: 509) where, however, there is no reference to the *cathedra pontificalis* in St John Lateran. The fact that both *Leiðarvísir* and *Veraldar saga* mention a *pafa stóll* has strong implications for the determination of a possible common Latin source of *Leiðarvísir* and *Veraldar saga*. This Latin source is probably a version of the *IEUR* with a list of the main basilicas of Rome. In the corresponding passage, *Description B* states that in St John Lateran is *heimili pape*, 'the house of the pope' (Simek 1990: 492[8]). The fact that in the Middle Ages the *heimili* of the pope was in the Lateran is, as we have seen, historically correct, but it is also possible that this is a *lectio facilior* of *Description B*, which is based on the Latin *cathedra pontificalis*. The fact that *Description A*, *Description B*, and *Veraldar saga* (which we know is only text based) show similarities in the corresponding passages that describe St John Lateran confirms the plausibility of the hypothesis that the text of *Leiðarvísir* is here based on written sources. A later echo of the information on the 'throne of the pope' in St John Lateran can be found in the German tradition of the *IEUR*, where the basilica was called *des babstes stule* (Miedema 2001: 163).

3.7.2   The List of Relics in *Leiðarvísir*: Sources and Dating

Rome was one of the three most important destinations for pilgrims from medieval Europe, along with Jerusalem and Santiago de Compostela (for the history of medieval pilgrimage to Rome, see Birch 1998). The faithful came in crowds not only to pray at the tombs of the apostles Peter and Paul, but also to revere the multitude of relics that were preserved in the churches of the city. From the fourth century on, the

liturgical and political significance of the cult of relics grew steadily within the Christian world. The Eastern custom of obtaining a multitude of relics by dividing the saints' bodies into different parts, however, was not usual in Rome until the eighth century, when the norm of the Roman law sanctioning the inviolability of tombs and bodies fell into disuse. After that, the number of relics preserved in the Roman churches began to multiply.[72] The bodies, or parts of bodies, of martyrs buried outside Rome were brought into churches and basilicas *intra muros* in order to be better guarded but also to be a tangible sign of the city's power and superiority. Some of the most revered relics, including those of New Testament figures and other saints, were gathered, especially in the course of the eighth and ninth centuries, in the Basilica of St John Lateran and in the small Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio, also known as *Sancta Sanctorum* (built inside the *Palatium Lateranense*).

Lists of some of these celebrated relics are also included in *Description A* and *Description B*. §3.7.2 analyses the list of Lateran relics in *Description A* and *B* and compares it to Latin sources, in particular to the *DLE* by John the Deacon (written in its final version between 1159-81) and to an inscription that was placed outside the chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio at the end of the twelfth century (Blaauw 1994: 233-49 gives an overview of the sources for the Lateran relics). It will emerge that the list of *Leiðarvísir* must have been composed later than the *DLE,* because the Icelandic itinerary includes two Marian relics (the garment and the milk of the Virgin) that are not enumerated in this Latin source. On the other hand, the two Marian relics are mentioned by the inscription outside the *Sancta Sanctorum*, which also shows significant correspondences with *Description A*. A closer consideration of this inscription will show that it was probably placed there before the papacy of Innocent III (1198-1216), thus giving useful information regarding both the dating of this source and that of the Icelandic list (§3.7.2.6). In the process, the analysis will shed light on the date of composition of this passage of *Leiðarvísir*, demonstrating, as already alluded to in §1.5.1, that it is incompatible with the traditional dating of the itinerary (§3.7.2.7).

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[72] For a general picture of the cult of relics, see Geary (1978), Vauchez (1988: 499-518), Angenendt (1997), and Stelladoro (2006); for the cult of relics in the age of the crusades, see Toussaint (2011); for the eight-century change in the cult of saints and their relics, see Vauchez (1993: 456-57)

3.7.2.1   St John Lateran and the Palatine Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio

After the reference to the *Cathedra Pontificalis*, *Description A* gives a list of the relics to be found in the 'Church of John the Baptist':

> þar er blod Christi & kledi mario & mikill hlutr beina iohannis baptiste þar er umskurdr Christi & miolk or briosti mario af þorn giord Christz & af kyrtly hans & margir adrir helgir domar vardir i eino gullkeri miclo. (ll. 74-77)
>
> The blood of Christ is there and the garment of Mary and a great part of the bones of John the Baptist; the foreskin of Christ is there and milk from the breast of Mary, [a part of] Christ's crown of thorns and of his tunic and many other relics kept in a large golden vessel.

The list of relics is also attested in a shorter form in *Description B*, where a causal connection, absent in *Description A*, is established between the presence of the relics in the Lateran and the fact, mentioned above, that only bishops are allowed to sing mass there. *Description B* in fact reports that in the Church of John the Baptist *skal engi messo [s]yng[ia] midr vigdr en byskupi þi ath þar er blod Christz & kledi mario & miok sva oll bein Johannis baptista*, 'no-one consecrated as less than a bishop can sing mass there because the blood of Christ is there and a garment of Mary and almost all the bones of John the Baptist' (Simek 1990: 492, a[9-10]). The text of *Description B* in the *Hauksbók* (see §3.2) adds at the beginning of the description of St John Lateran that *þar er cross Iohannis baptista*, 'The cross of John the Baptist is there' (Simek 1990: 492c[9]: see §3.7.2.7 on this relic). The list of relics of *borga skipan* contains in the same order the first three relics mentioned in *Leiðarvísir* (the blood of Christ, the garment of Mary, and the bones of the Baptist). As already argued in §3.6, this correspondence is a strong indication of a common written source between *Description A* and *Description B*. The different lections (*mikill hlutr beina* in *Description A* and *mjök svá öll* in *Description B*) containing the reference to the bones of the Baptist suggest that the two Icelandic descriptions of Rome drew independently on this common source.

The relics of the Lateran mentioned in *Leiðarvísir* were among the most venerated in the whole medieval world. They were gathered, especially in the course

of the eighth and ninth centuries, in the Basilica of St John Lateran and in the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio.[73] The *Oratorium* of San Lorenzo in Palatio was built in the sixth or possibly already in the fifth century (Morello 1991: 92) and only subsequently called *Ad Sancta Sanctorum* (see §3.7.2.4). It is mentioned for the first time in the *Liber Pontificalis* in the life of Pope Stephen III (768-72), on the occasion of the consecration, around 770, of the Antipope Constantine (Duchesne 1955-57: I 469). It was a private chapel for the use of the pope, a palatine chapel, built in the course of the works of enlargement and embellishment of the papal residence (for the history of the *Sancta Sanctorum*, see Grisar 1908: 11-26; Gardner 1995). This medieval *Vorläuferin*, 'precursor', of the Sistine Chapel, as Hartmann Grisar (1908: 14) defines it, was consecrated to St Lawrence because of its proximity to the *scrinium*, the papal library and archive, of which St Lawrence was the patron (Grisar 1908: 12; Cempanari 1989: 27). Pope Sixtus V (1585-90) demolished the old *palatium lateranense*, which was then in a state of ruin, and built a new one. The present-day chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio is thus no longer inside the papal palace, as it was during the Middle Ages, but in a separate building which also includes the *Scala Sancta*, the 'Holy Stairs'; this staircase was, according to the tradition, part of the palace of Pilate in Jerusalem and now leads to the *Sancta Sanctorum* (Cempanari and Amodei 1989: 24-25).

The relics mentioned in *Leiðarvísir* were kept both in the Lateran Basilica and in San Lorenzo in Palatio. It must be remembered, however, that these relics were not commonly on view to the faithful. The relics of the Lateran were enshrined – or said to be enshrined – under the high altar, and those in the *Sancta Sanctorum* were in the private chapel of the pope, which was not open to the common faithful; most of them were kept under the altars. They were brought out in procession only on certain days of the liturgical year: Grisar (1908: 69-74, 89-92) and Twyman (2003: 64-65) describe the use for the liturgy of two crosses containing the relic of the True Cross and the relic of the foreskin of Christ (see §3.7.2.4). Otherwise, the relics were shown to the public only on exceptional occasions, as happened in 1308

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[73] For the formation of the relics deposits in the Lateran, see Jounel (1977: 101-103), Galland (2004: 34-35), and Burkart (2009: 82-91); for the evolution of the cult of relics from the ninth through the eleventh century, see Geary (1978: 16-30);

after a fire that destroyed the Lateran. Lauer (1911: 243-50) published an anonymous poem, a sort of *planctus*, 'lamentation', written after this fire, which has been recently re-edited and commented on by Marco Petoletti (2003). This medieval *ritmo* is preserved in a mid-fourteenth century manuscript of the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome (MS F. 61, ff. 92[r]-95[r]; Petoletti 2003: 382). It narrates in rhythmic quatrains how the relics of the Lateran, miraculously intact, were shown to the Romans who had come in crowds to the scene. Special permission from the pope was otherwise indispensable to see the relics, as in the case of a French pilgrim in 1350, who needed the leave of Pope Clemens VI to visit the Chapel of San Lorenzo and its relics (Grisar 1908: 24).

The oldest lists of the relics kept inside the Lateran Basilica and in the palatine chapel are contained in John the Deacon's *DLE* and in two Latin inscriptions, one in the Lateran basilica, and the other in the *Sancta Sanctorum*. These three sources are of the greatest importance for a better comprehension of the list of relics in *Description A* and in *Description B*.

3.7.2.2   The Relics of St John Lateran in the *Descriptio Lateranensis ecclesiae*

The oldest account of the relics kept in the Basilica of St John Lateran and in the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio is contained in the *DLE*. John the Deacon begins the chapter titled *De Arca et Sanctis Sanctorum, quae sunt in Basilica Salvatoris*, 'On the Ark and the Holy of Holies that are in the Basilica of the Saviour', with a list of Old Testament relics which were believed to be under the high altar of the Basilica. In fact, John is not certain whether the *arca foederis Domini,* 'the Ark of the Covenant', is kept under the high altar or is the high altar itself (VZ: III 336[20]; Petoletti 2003: 387), but maintains that under the altar are the objects that, according to Heb. 9: 2-4, were inside the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant. He first lists the objects kept *in priori tabernaculo*, 'in the first section of the tabernacle': the *candelabra*, 'candlesticks', and *mensa et propositio panum*, 'the table and the Bread of the Presence'. Then he mentions those kept in the second part of the Tabernacle, which is called *Sancta Sanctorum*, 'the Holy of Holies': the *aureum turibulum*, 'golden altar of incense', an *urna aurea habens manna,* 'golden urn holding the

manna', the *virga Aaron*, 'Aaron's rod', the *tabule Testamenti*, 'the tablets of the Covenant', and the *virga Moysi*, 'the rod of Moses' (VZ: III 337[5-11]; Blaauw 166-67).

After this, John enumerates the New Testament relics enshrined under the altar.[74] They include, among other relics, the following: the *tunica inconsutilis, quam fecit virgo Maria filio suo domino nostro Ihesu Christo, quae in morte ipsius a militibus sortita est, non scissa*, 'the seamless garment, which the Virgin Mary made for her son, our Lord Jesus Christ, which was drawn lots for by the soldiers at his death and not torn' (see John 19:23); the *purpureum vestimentum*, 'purple garment [of Christ]' (see John 19:5); *de sanguine et aqua lateris Domini ampullae duo*, 'two ampules with some of the blood and water from the side of the Lord'(see John 19: 34-35); the *circumcisio Domini*, 'the foreskin of the Lord';[75] *de sanguine sancti Iohannis Baptistae*, 'some of the blood of St John the Baptist'; *de pulvere et cinere combusti corporis eiusdem praecursoris Christi*, 'some of the dust and of the ash of the cremated body of that same precursor of Christ' (VZ: III 337[11]-358[4]). Some items present in this list are also mentioned by *Description A* and *Description B*: 'the blood of Christ' mentioned in both the texts (l. 75; Simek 1990: 492[10]); 'the foreskin of Christ', present in *Description A* (l. 76); the 'tunic of Christ' in *Description A* (l. 76) may correspond to the *tunica inconsutilis* or to the *purpureum vestimentum*; the *DLE* makes no mention here of the bones of the Baptist, which are in *Description A* and in *Description B*, but just of some of the Baptist's blood and of the dust and the ash from his cremated body.

3.7.2.3 A Thirteenth-Century Inscription in the Lateran Basilica (*Inscription A*)

A mosaic inscription (henceforward called '*Inscription A*'), hanging inside the Basilica and datable to the end of the thirteenth century (Petoletti 2003: 388), contains another list indicating the most important relics kept in the Lateran Basilica. A complete transcription of *Inscription A*, which in its present state is heavily

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[74] It is significant that the text of *Description B* attested in *Hauksbók* reports the information that the blood of Christ is *i alltari*, 'in the altar' (Simek 1990: 492c[11]).

[75] John indicates the presence the foreskin of Christ also among the relics in the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio. See below §3.7.2.4 for an interpretation of the apparent duplication of this relic.

restored, can be found in the work of Philippe Lauer on the Lateran palace (1911: 294-95) and in an article by Marco Petoletti (2003: 388). The list in *Inscription A* coincides largely with that of the *DLE* both for the Old Testament and for the New Testament relics. It includes, however, among the New Testament relics, two relics of John the Evangelist not mentioned by John the Deacon, *pars catene cum qua ligatus venit ab Efeso*, 'a part of the chain with which he was bound when he was coming from Ephesus', and the *forcipes cum quibus tonsus fuit de mandato Cesaris Domitiani*, 'the scissors with which he was tonsured on Domitian's order' (Petoletti 2003: 388). The fact that *Inscription A* includes relics not present in the list by John the Deacon might be evidence that it was made later than the *DLE*. *Inscription A* mentions, as the list of the *DLE*, *de sanguine et aqua de latere Christi ampulle due*, the *tunica inconsutilis* and the *purpureum vestimentum* (Petoletti 2003: 388), relics that may correspond to the blood of Christ – attested in *Description A* and *B* – and to the tunic of Christ in *Description A*; but it does not include the foreskin of Christ.

3.7.2.4 The Relics of the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio in the *Descriptio Lateranensis ecclesiae*

In the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio a number of New Testament and saints' relics were preserved that were among the most important for the Christian world. Some of them were enshrined under the main altar in an *arca cipressina*, a 'cypress chest', made, as John the Deacon informs us (VZ: III p. 356[4]), for Leo III (795-816; for a description of the treasure of the *Sancta Sanctorum*, see Morello 1991; for the history of the relics and the objects in the *Sancta Sanctorum* see Grisar 1908: 26-57; and Thunø 2002: 17-23). The name '*Sancta Sanctorum*' was written on the cypress chest during the papacy of Innocent III (1198-1216), establishing a parallel between the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of Covenant was kept (Heb. 9: 2-4), and the Palatine Chapel of San Lorenzo (for the tradition linking the high altar to the Ark of the Covenant, see Twyman 2003: 51-55). This was, probably at the end of the twelfth or in the early thirteenth century, the origin of the name *Sancta Sanctorum*, or more precisely *Ad Sancta Sanctorum*, by which the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio is still commonly known (Grisar 1908: 16-17; Burkart 2009: 84-88). The cypress coffer survived through the centuries, remaining undamaged even when, during the sack of Rome (1527), a squad of *Landsknechte* penetrated the *Sancta Sanctorum*, pillaging the chapel of precious liturgical objects and of relics that were not locked in the *arca cipressina*, including, as some sources suggest, the foreskin of Christ (Grisar 1908:

24-25, 93). During the pontificate of Leo X (1513-21) the cypress coffer was opened for an examination of the relics, on which Panvinio based his list in 1570 (Galland 2004: 76-77). After that, it remained closed for almost four centuries, until, in 1903, Pope Leo XIII gave leave to open it again (on the opening of the *Sancta Sanctorum* and the investigations between 1903 and 1908, see Noreen 2011). Precious reliquaries and relics, many of them already mentioned in the *DLE*, were found, and two authoritative scholars, Philippe Lauer (1906) and Hartmann Grisar (1908), gave a detailed account of the treasure of the *Sancta Sanctorum*. In the *arca cipressina* were also found many labels of papyrus, parchment or paper used to identify the relic to which they were attached. Bruno Galland (2004) has published an excellent edition of these *authentiques*, 'labels of authentication', of the relics of the *Sancta Sanctorum*, showing remarkable correspondences between them and the medieval lists we have, in particular the *DLE* of John the Deacon.

In his description of the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio (VZ: III 356-58), John mentions three different altars under which the relics were kept. As stated above, he refers to the fact that in the main altar there is the *arca cipressina* made for Leo III, which contains three *capsae*, 'caskets, reliquaries'. In the first *capsa* is a *'crux de auro purissimo adornata gemmis et lapidibus pretiosis [...]; et in media cruce illa est umbilicus et praeputium circumcisionis Domini',* 'a cross of purest gold, adorned with gems and precious stones [...]; and in the middle of this cross is the umbilical cord and the foreskin of the Lord' (VZ: III 356[7]). The relic of the foreskin is also mentioned in *Description A* (l. 76). The *crux gemmata*, found in 1903 when the *arca cypressina* was opened − it was stolen in 1945 and has now disappeared − dates to between the sixth and the eighth centuries (Cempanari and Amodei 1989: 41-42; Thunø 2002: 18). It should not be overlooked that John the Deacon attests the presence in the *Sancta Sanctorum* of the foreskin of Christ which he had already mentioned among the relics kept under the high altar of the basilica. Moreover, it is noteworthy that in this passage of the *DLE* not only the *praeputium* but also the *umbilicus* […] *Domini* figures for the first time in connection with the *Sancta Sanctorum*. John uses it in the acceptation of 'umbilical cord': in this case it would be, like the foreskin, another relic of the body of the baby Jesus left on the earth shortly after his birth (traditionally Jesus was circumcised eight days after his birth).

John refers to the use of the *crux gemmata* for the celebration of the feast of the exaltation of the Cross (VZ: III 356[7-11]). It is important to observe that in the *Ordo Romanus* of the canon Benedictus, written only a few years before the *DLE*, in the time of Pope Innocent II (1130-1143, see §3.3), only the *circumcisio* is included in the celebration of this feast, without any reference to the *umbilicus*. In the *Ordo* of Benedict it is said that *in exaltatione sanctae Crucis* there is a station at the Lateran, where *cardinales portant sanctuaria in Processione, scilicet de ligno crucis Domini, et sandalia Jesu Christi, et Circumcisionem ejus ad basilicam Salvatoris, ubi est statio*, 'the cardinals bring the relics, namely some wood from the Cross of the Lord, the sandals of Christ, and the foreskin of Christ, in procession to the Basilica of the Saviour, where there is a station' (*PL*: LXXVIII 1052; see Blaauw 1994: 197-98). The relic of the Cross and the sandals of Christ are also mentioned in the *DLE* (VZ: III 356[13-14]).

Grisar (1906: 110-111; 1908: 95-96) plausibly argues that the *umbilicus* was 'invented' by John the Deacon. John probably found the foreskin of Christ included in two separate catalogues of relics, one for the Lateran Basilica and the other for San Lorenzo in Palatio. He did not realize that it was the same relic that, after the compilation of the Lateran catalogue, had been transferred from the basilica to the palatine chapel. Since the existence of two foreskins of Christ could not be admitted, Grisar argues that John tried to harmonise this incongruity, differentiating between the *circumcisio Domini*, which he declares to be kept under the altar of the basilica (see §3.7.2.2), and the *umbilicus et praeputium circumcisionis Domini* inside the *arca cipressina* in the *Sancta sanctorum* (Grisar 1906: 110-111; 1908: 96). John, according to the reconstruction of Grisar (1906: 110-111), interpreted the two references made to the same relic (the foreskin of Christ) in different periods and in a different location (the main altar of St John Lateran first, the *Sancta Sanctorum* later) as if they referred to two different relics. As a result of his interpretation, John used in his *DLE* different terms: *circumcisio Domini* to refer to the relic that he supposed to be still under the altar of the basilica, and *umbilicus et praeputium circumcisionis* for the relic in the *Sancta Sanctorum*, which in effect had been moved there. In this way John would have not be compelled to cast doubt on the trustworthiness of the catalogues of relics he was using, or on the authenticity and the existence of a relic that he had probably never seen.

Grisar has suggested a second possible explanation for the fact that the *umbilicus Domini* is mentioned for the first time in the *DLE*: the presence in this list of the umbilical cord of Christ could derive from a misunderstanding of a reference in an older catalogue to the place where the *praeputium* was kept, the *umbilicus crucis*, 'the central point of the cross'. It is possible that the foreskin could be said to be in the *umbilicus*, 'in the centre', of the *crux gemmata* containing the relic. In the course of time, this meaning of *umbilicus* might have been misunderstood for *umbilicus* in the sense of 'umbilical cord', an expression erroneously believed to refer to a different body-relic of Christ (Grisar, 1908: 96). This second hypothesis is fully compatible with the hypothesis of the harmonization by John the Deacon of the two different catalogues mentioning the foreskin of Christ in two different places in the Lateran.

Grisar (1908: 96) indicates a passage of the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy, dated before the sixth century (Tischendorf 1876: 183; see also Peeters 1914: 7), as the only reference made to the relic of the umbilical cord of Christ before the *DLE*. In the text of the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy attested in Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, MS codex orientalis 387 (dated to 1299), however, there is no reference to the umbilical cord of Christ but only to the foreskin (Provera: 1973:73; Genequand 1997: 214; on the Arabic Infancy Gospel, see Peeters 1910: 619; and Geerard 1992: 58). Besides the Lateran, several towns in medieval Europe claimed to have the authentic foreskin of Christ. Robert Palazzo (2005) and Ralf Lützelschwab (2006) give an accurate picture of the veneration of this relic in the Middle Ages, of the literary sources referring to it, and of the many theological issues raised by its existence. It appears that many other churches and sanctuaries all over Europe claimed to have the original foreskin of Christ.

After mentioning the cross containing the *umbilicus* and the *preputium* of the Lord, John says that in the second *capsa* is a *crux de smalto depicta*, 'an enamelled cross', behind which is [a fragment of] the *crux* of Christ (VZ: III 356[13]). The enamelled cross, still visible in the *Museo sacro della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, probably dates to the end of the seventh or to the early eighth centuries (Morello 1991: 93). John continues his list by saying that in a third *capsa* are the *sandalia*, 'the sandals', of the Lord, and in another *capsa deaurata*, 'gilded reliquary', is *de ligno illo sanctae Crucis, quam Heraclius, devicto Chosroë, secum tulit de Perside*, 'part of that wood of the Holy Cross, which Heraclius brought from

Persia after he defeated Chosroe' (VZ: III 356). The 'cypress coffer' contains many bones of saints (VZ: III 357$^{2-9}$), among which there are *ossa duo sancti Iohannis Baptistae*, 'two bones of St John the Baptist' (VZ: III 357$^{2-3}$). These may correspond to 'almost all the bones of John the Baptist' mentioned in *Description A* and in *Description B* (l. 75; Simek 1990: 492^{10}). The long list of saints' bones in the *DLE* might have been summarized in the generic expressions *mikill hlutr* (l. 75) and *mjök svá öll* (Simek 1990: 492^{10}) combined with the reference to the bones of the Baptist.

John concludes the list of the relics contained in the *arca* of Leo III thus: *panis* and *tredecim de lenticulis*, 'a loaf of bread' and 'thirteen lentils' from the last supper; *de arundine, et de spongia cum aceto ad os Domini posita*, 'a part of the reed and of the sponge with vinegar put over the mouth of the Lord'; and *lignum de sicomoro ubi Zachaeus ascendit*, 'some wood of the sycamore climbed by Zacchaeus' (VZ: III 357$^{9-12}$). Over the main altar, John describes an *imago Salvatoris mirabiliter depicta*, 'an image of the Saviour painted miraculously' (VZ: III 357^{13}). John refers here to the Acheiropoieta, a full-length image of Christ, famous throughout Europe, which was considered to be ἀχειροποίητα, 'not made by a human hand' (Andaloro 1991). A silver cover, which hid all the body of the image but the head, was laid on it during the papacy of Innocent III (1198-1216; Grisar 1908: 39-54). It is remarkable that, in spite of its importance, the Acheiropoieta is not included in the list of relics present in *Description A* and in *Description B*.

Under the Acheiropoieta are mentioned, among other relics, some stones that were touched by Christ, the Virgin and saints (VZ: III 357^{17}-358^{8}), another piece of the Cross of the Lord (VZ: III 358^{3}), and some of the wood of his crib (VZ: III 358^{6}). Under the second altar there are the *capita sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, et capita sanctarum Agnetis et Eufemiae*, 'the heads of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and the heads of Saints Agnes and Eufemia' (VZ: III 358$^{9-11}$). These heads of saints were in the Lateran at the latest from the eighth or the ninth century (Blaauw 1994: 167). In *Description B* the *höfuð sancti Pauli apostoli*, 'the head of Paul the Apostle' (Simek 1990: 492^{7}) is erroneously said to be in the basilica dedicated to him on the via Ostiense. In the third altar there are relics from the body of St Lawrence (VZ: III 358$^{12-14}$). John the Deacon concludes his list by adding that in the oratory are relics of the Forty Martyrs of Armenia and *multorumque aliorum*, 'and of many others' (VZ: III 358^{14}). This generic and conclusive reference of the *DLE* might correspond to that put at the end of the list of relics in *Leiðarvísir*: *margir adrir helgir domar*

vardir i eino gullkeri miclo, 'many other relics kept in a large golden vessel' (l. 77). The *gullker*, 'the golden vessel' (l. 77), may correspond to the *urna aurea habens manna*, 'golden urn holding the manna', which the *DLE* indicates under the high altar of the Lateran Basilica (VZ: III 337[8]); alternatively it may correspond to the *capsa deaurata* in the *arca cipressina* (VZ: III 356[15]), or even to the *arca cipressina* itself.

3.7.2.5   The Inscription of the *Sancta Sanctorum* (*Inscription B*)

The two Marian relics mentioned in *Leiðarvísir* (the 'garment of Mary' and the 'milk from the breast of Mary') are not included in the *DLE*. Significantly, a passage of the *DLE* indicates that the 'garment of Mary' and the 'milk of the Virgin' are preserved along with other Marian relics in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, where, in the main altar *sunt reliquiae de capillis sanctae Mariae matris Domini, de lacte eiusdem Virginis, de winplio sui capitis, de panno sui vestimenti*, 'are the relics of the hair of the Holy Mary Mother of the Lord, of her milk, of the wimple of her head, of the cloth of her garment' (VZ: III p. 359[9-11]; on the relics of Santa Maria Maggiore, see Blaauw 1994: 398-403). At the time of the last recension of the *DLE*, revised and updated by the canon of the Lateran basilica during the pontificate of Alexander III (1159-81), the presence of Marian relics is thus not attested in the Lateran but in Santa Maria Maggiore.

The presence of relics of Mary in the *Sancta Sanctorum* is attested for the first time in the inscription that was put at the entrance of the chapel. This inscription (henceforward *Inscription B*), not preserved to the present day, was first published by Heinrich Sauerland (1892: 608). The inscription, added to a twelfth-century manuscript by a hand from the beginning of the fourteenth century, is on fol. 253[v] of Trier, Bibliothek des Priesterseminars, MS 89 (R.V. 8) (Sauerland 1892: 608; Marx 1912: 71). The text of *Inscription B* can also be found in the *IEUR* contained in Vatican City, MS Vat. Reg. 520, dated 1364 (edited by Hülsen 1927: 140-41), and in Manchester, John Rylands University Library, MS Lat. 71 (fourteenth-fifteenth century; see James 1921: I 137, where he also provides a transcription of the text of *Inscription B* in this MS). Three lines mentioning Pope Nicholas III (1277-80) are added at the end of the version attested in MS Vat. Reg. 520 (Hülsen 1927: 141) and in John Rylands Library, MS 71 (James 1921: I 137). *Inscription B* is written in Leonine hexameters and begins with the line *Iste reliquie sunt ad sancta sanctorum Rome*, 'These relics are in the *Sancta Sanctorum* in Rome' (Sauerland, 1892: 608).

One has to agree with Grisar (1908: 60), who asserts that this is a title added by the copyist, and not with Galland (2004: 72-73), who considers it part of the original inscription, and therefore the first occurrence of the name *Sancta Sanctorum* in connection with the Chapel of San Lorenzo. A confirmation can be found on fol. 253v of Trier, MS 89, where, after the text of *Inscription B*, we find the transcription of the text of *Inscription A*, preceded by another title added by the copyist, *Reliquiae quae sunt in altari sancti Iohannis Baptiste*, 'Relics that are in the altar of St John the Baptist', parallel to the title of *Inscription B*, '*Iste reliquiae sunt ad sancta sanctorum Romae*'.

The first relic in the list of *Inscription B* is the foreskin of Christ, mentioned together with the *umbilicus*, as in the *DLE*:

> Iste locus celebris nostris sic vernat in horis,
>
> Ut populo veteri sancte domus interioris.
>
> Circumcisa caro Christi, sandalia clara,
>
> Ac umbilici viget hic precisio cara;
>
> De velo matris domini carisque capillis,
>
> Et lac, quod sacris suxisti, Christe, mamillis.
>
> Hic panis cene sacer est humerusque Mathei,
>
> Vestis baptiste cum mento Bartholomei.
>
> Hic [sancte] Eufemie capud, Agnetisque beate,
>
> Hic Petri Paulique capud, pars de cruce sancta.
>
> Hiis sociata manent carissima pignora quanta. (Trier, MS 89, fol. 253v)
>
> (This celebrated place flourishes in our times, like [the place of] the holy inner house for the Jewish People. The circumcised flesh of Christ, the glorious sandals, and the precious section of the umbilical cord flourish here. Part of the veil of the Mother of God, and of the dear hair, and the milk that you, Christ, sucked from the sacred breasts. Here is the sacred bread of the Last Supper and the shoulder of Matthew, and the garment of the Baptist with the chin of Bartholomew. Here are the heads of St Eufemia and of St Agnes. Here are the heads of Peter and Paul and part of the Holy Cross. Many precious relics are kept here together with these.)

The only relic mentioned in *Description A* that does not have a correspondence in any of the three sources that have been considered (*DLE*, *Inscription A*, *Inscription B*) is the 'great part of Christ's crown of thorns' (l. 76). There is also no reference in later sources to a tradition that this relic was kept in the Lateran: a possible explanation for its presence in *Description A* is proposed in §3.7.2.7. The five relics

of Christ (the foreskin, the umbilical cord, the sandals, the loaf from the Last Supper and the fragment of the Cross) and the heads of St Paul, St Peter and St Agnes mentioned in *Inscription B* are also in the *DLE*, whereas the shoulder of St Matthew, the chin of St Bartholomew and the garment of the Baptist are not. Bruno Galland has shown an interesting correspondence between the 'chin of Bartholomew' and 'the shoulder of Matthew', and two labels found in the *arca cipressina* when it was opened in 1903; in addition, the 'garment of the Baptist' may match an ancient piece of cloth found – without any label – inside the chest. On the basis of these considerations, Galland argues convincingly that these relics must have been transferred to the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio after the *DLE* was written, and that *Inscription B* must therefore date from after the text of John the Deacon (Galland 2004: 71).

Analogous conclusions can be drawn from the reference of *Inscription B* to three Marian relics not included by John the Deacon among those venerated in the *Sancta Sanctorum*: the veil of Mary, some of her hair and her milk. It cannot be said whether the three relics of Mary (the veil, the hair, and the milk) mentioned in *Inscription B* are the same as those placed by the *DLE* in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, from where they were later moved to the *Sancta Sanctorum*, or if they were transferred there from another church (Galland 2004: 71). The presence of the milk, the hair and the garment of Mary was attested in numerous churches of Rome (Miedema 2001: 855). The presence of the relics of the Virgin in the *Sancta Sanctorum* is, however, confirmed by later sources. The *Historia Ecclesiastica*, written by Bartholomew of Lucca (*c.* 1240-1327), attests the presence in the Lateran of the hair of Mary. Bartholomew, describing the renovations made in the *Sancta Sanctorum* by Nicholas III (1277-80), writes that the pope removed the relics from the chapel for the duration of the work, and mentions explicitly the heads of the apostles Peter and Paul *cum carne Circumcisionis Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, capillis quoque B. virginis Mariae, et capite Beatae Agnetis*, 'with the flesh of the circumcision of our Lord Jesus Christ, and also the hair of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the head of the Blessed Agnes' (Bartholomew of Lucca 1727: 1181). The anonymous author of the *ritmo* written in 1308 (after the fire that destroyed the Lateran that year) mentions, among the relics that were still intact after the fire and were shown to the crowd, the *Virginis sanctissime lac immaculatum*, 'the immaculate milk of the Most Holy Virgin', the *circumcisio*, 'the foreskin', and the *vestis*, 'the

garment' of Christ (Petoletti 2003: 400). The *Tabula Magna*, a long inscription made in 1518, containing a catalogue of all the relics and indulgences of the Lateran, mentions *de lacte, capillis, et vestimentis Beatae Mariae Virginis*, 'part of the milk, of the hair, and of the garments of the Blessed Virgin Mary' (Lauer 1911: 297).

It is significant for a dating of the description in *Leiðarvísir* that the presence in the Lateran of the garment and the milk of Mary is attested only after the last recension of the *DLE* was composed, during the papacy of Alexander III (1159-81). Considering the apologetic purpose of John's composition, and given the importance of the Marian relics, if John had had information about their presence in the *Sancta Sanctorum* it is unlikely that he would have failed to mention them in his *DLE*. One can fully agree with Galland (2004: 72), who infers from these sources that the milk and the hair of Mary, which John the Deacon does not locate in the Lateran but in Santa Maria Maggiore, were brought to the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio after the *DLE* was written. The fact that the garment and the milk of Mary were not in the Lateran before 1159 is incompatible with the attribution of this passage to Abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá and with the assumption that the list in *Leiðarvísir* was based on his personal experiences. This assumption implies that Nikulás would have acquired during a journey the information he used in this text. The annals inform us that an Abbot Nikulás came back from a journey in 1154, even though the destination from which he returned is not specified (see §1.3.2). It has been assumed (without any evidence) that this was a journey to the Holy Land and that during this journey Abbot Nikulás should have acquired the information he reported in his work. He should thus also have personally learnt of the presence of the Marian relics in the *Sancta Sanctorum*. Nikulás, however, came back in 1154, five years before the papacy of Alexander III. This excludes the possibility that the information regarding the presence of the relics, reported in *Leiðarvísir*, could be based on Nikulás acting as an eyewitness. The possibility remains that another traveller might have learnt in Rome that the Marian relics were preserved in the *Sancta Sanctorum*, and then gone back to Iceland reporting the information to Abbot Nikulás, who might have written it down in his itinerary shortly before his death. As seen in §1.3.2, the year of Nikulás's death is attested between 1158-1159 (in several Icelandic annals) and 1160 (in the saga of Bishop Guðmundr). A narrow space of time remains between 7 September 1159, when Alexander III was elected pope, and 1160, which is reported only in the saga of Bishop Guðmundr as the year of Nikulás's death. The possibility

that the description of the Lateran in *Leiðarvísir* is the work of Nikulás, though using information collected by another traveller, would be acceptable only if the translation of the Marian relics to the *Sancta Sanctorum* had taken place during the first months of the papacy of Alexander III (whose reign lasted almost twenty-two years), and accepting the date of Nikulás's death reported in Guðmundr's saga, which is the only one compatible with this hypothesis. This interval is further narrowed by the fact that the journey from Rome to Iceland of the traveller who would have related the information to Nikulás would have taken several months. It appears thus extremely unlikely that the description of the Lateran in *Leiðarvísir* could have been written during Nikulás's lifetime, and the fact that *Leiðarvísir* mentions the garment and the milk of Mary must therefore be considered incompatible with the dating commonly accepted for the composition of the text.

It is interesting, in this connection, to notice a significant textual correspondence between the *Description A* and *Inscription B*. This correspondence further strengthens the thesis that the list of Lateran relics in *Leiðarvísir* was not written by Abbot Nikulás. *Inscription B* refers to the presence of the milk of Mary in the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio with the line *lac, quod sacris suxisti, Christe, mamillis*, 'the milk that you, Christ, sucked from the sacred breasts'. *Description A*, which does not distinguish between the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio and the Basilica of the Lateran, similarly indicates the presence in the Church of John the Baptist of *miolk or briosti Mario*, 'milk from the breast of Mary' (l. 76). In the other later sources mentioning the milk of Mary in the Lateran, no reference to the 'breast of Mary' can be found. The poem written in 1308 after the fire that destroyed the Lateran calls the milk *virginis sanctissimae lac immacolatum*, 'the immaculate milk of the most holy Virgin' (Petoletti 2003: 400); the *Tabula Magna* mentions simply *de lacte* (Lauer 1911: 297); in the later tradition of the *IEUR* included in the *Historia et Descriptio Urbis Romae* there is no reference to parts of the Virgin's body, but only to the presence of *de lacte* of Mary (*Mirabilia Romae* 1489: fol. 28^v). This notable textual correspondence is a strong indication that the author of this passage of *Leiðarvísir* directly used the text of *Inscription B*. If this is so, the dating of *Inscription B* can give useful indications for an historical evaluation of the textual stratification of the Icelandic itinerary.

The list in *Description B* does not include a reference to the milk of Mary, but the fact that the first three relics that are mentioned (the blood of Christ, a garment of

Mary, the bones of John the Baptist; Simek 1990: 492[10]) coincide with *Description A* is a strong signal of its dependency on the same source as *Description A*. It can therefore be argued that the conclusions reached on the dating of this passage of *Description A* can also be plausibly applied to *Description B*.

3.7.2.6   The Dating of *Inscription B*

Grisar (1908: 60) and Lauer (1911: 201) maintain that *Inscription B* is not older than the twelfth century. Galland (2004: 72) provides a more precise dating: after considering the possibility that *Inscription B* is later than the *DLE* of John the Deacon (1159-81) and prior to the works done in the chapel by Nicholas III (1277-80), when *Inscription B* was removed, Galland affirms that the inscription could have been made during the pontificate of Innocent III (1198-1216), who also made refurbishments to the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio. His dating of *Inscription B* to the time of Innocent III is, however, more open to doubt. Pope Innocent III, in fact, in his *De missarum mysteriis*, 'On the Mysteries of the Mass' (*PL*: CCXVII 763-916), addresses the question *utrum Christus resurgens sanguinem resumpsit quem effudit in cruce*, 'whether Christ, at his resurrection, recovered the blood that he shed on the cross' (*PL*: CCXVII 876; see Palazzo 2005: 160). Lotario dei Conti di Segni began work on his *De missarum mysteriis* in 1195, before becoming pope, but finished it later during his pontificate (Peters 1999: 22; Maccarrone 1943: 130-31). Drawing on arguments already used by Guibert of Nogent (*c.* 1055-1124) in his *De sanctis et eorum pigneribus*, 'On the Saints and their Relics' (Guibert de Nogent 1993: 110-11, 166; see Guth 1970: 36-51, 72-110; and Lützelschwab 2006: 611-12), Innocent III ponders the authenticity of the relic of the foreskin of Christ. To use our modern terms, he is questioning the possibility that primary relics of Christ could exist.[76] Innocent quotes Luke 21:18, *capillus de capite vestro non peribit*, 'not a hair from your head will perish', to demonstrate that on the day of the resurrection men will have their entire earthly body restored; if this is true, there is all the more reason

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[76] The distinction between primary relics (the physical remains of a saint) and secondary relics (objects that had come into contact with a saint or with primary relics) was first proposed by Joseph Braun (1926: 243-44; see also Angenendt 1997: 155-58). Gia Toussaint (2011: 30-36) shows the particular status of some of Christ's relics, such as the True Cross. Nicholas Vincent (2001: 82-117) provides an overview of the scholastic debate on the bodily relics of Christ.

to ask *quanto magis sanguis ille non periit qui fuit de veritate naturae*, 'How much more that blood [of Christ] did not perish, which was of the truth of nature' (*PL*: CCXVII 876). Bettina Bildhauer, commenting on this passage, observes that:

> *Veritas* (*humanae*) *naturae* is a technical term much used in the debates on the resurrection of Christ and of all Christians' bodies for all that is essential rather than accidental to the body and will thus be resurrected. It thus simply means 'the essence of the human nature' or 'true human nature', and this text, as well as many others, argues that blood belongs to the inalienable part of the body that will be resurrected. (Bildhauer 2006: 30)

After this assertion, Innocent questions *quid ergo de circumcisione praeputii vel umbilici praecisione dicetur? an in resurrectione Christi similiter rediit, ad veritatem humanae substantiae?*, 'What shall one therefore say of the foreskin or of the cutting off of his umbilical cord? Did it similarly revert at the resurrection of the Lord to the truth of the human substance?' (*PL*: CCXVII 876-77; on this passage, see also Vincent 2001: 86). These two questions show all the doubts of the pope about the authenticity of the relic of the foreskin, which could not have remained on the earth since Christ's body was restored to him at his resurrection. The fact that the foreskin is venerated in two different places, the Lateran and in Charroux, casts even more doubt on the authenticity of the relic:

> Creditur enim in Lateranensi basilica scilicet in Sancto sanctorum conservari. Licet a quibusdam dicatur, quod praeputium Christi fuit in Jerusalem delatum ab angelo Carolo Magno, qui sustulit illud et posuit Aquisgrani. Sed post a Carolo Calvo positum est in ecclesia Salvatoris apud Carosium. (*PL*: CCXVII. 876-77)
>
> It is believed, in fact, that they [the foreskin and the umbilical cord of Christ] are preserved in the Lateran basilica, namely in the *Sancta Sanctorum*. Even though it is said by some people that the foreskin of Christ was given in Jerusalem by an angel to Charlemagne, who took it away and deposited it in Aachen, but later it was placed by Charles the Bald in the Church of the Saviour in Charroux.

Palazzo (2005: 159-68) gives a detailed account of the different versions of this legend and of its theological implications. Innocent, using the impersonal *creditur*, distances himself from the legends surrounding the foreskin of Christ, and concludes by saying that *melius est tamen Deo totum committere, quam aliquid temere diffinire*, 'it is better that all be left entirely to God, rather than venturing to assert something'

(*PL*: CCXVII 877). Innocent III, who distinguishes between *circumcisio praeputii* and *umbilicus*, seems to have in mind the *DLE* of John the Deacon, and perhaps also the text of *Inscription* B. It is significant that in the *Ordo Romanus* written by Cencius Camerarius (the successor of Innocent III with the name of Honorius III, from 1216 to 1227) the *circumcisio* is not mentioned in the liturgy of the Exaltation of the Cross (Fabre, Duchesne and Mollat 1910-52: I 310), whereas the *Ordo* of Benedictus Romanus, written at the time of Pope Innocent II (1130-1143), includes the *circumcisio* in the celebration of this feast (*PL*: LXXVIII 1052; see Blaauw 1994: 197-98). After Innocent III, the relic of the foreskin progressively lost importance and eventually disappeared from the papal liturgy (see Grisar 1908: 95; and Twyman 2003: 64-65). If we consider all the reservations that Pope Innocent had about the relic of the foreskin (and the body-relics in general), it seems highly unlikely, contrary to what Galland (2004: 72) proposes, that *Inscription B*, which mentioned both the *circumcisio* and the *umbilicus* of Christ, was commissioned during his papacy and was put at the entrance of his private chapel. It therefore seems more likely that the inscription had already been made when Innocent III began his pontificate, and on this basis a dating of *Inscription B* between the *DLE* of John the Deacon (1159-1181) and the beginning of the pontificate of Innocent III (1198) can be suggested.

It is possible, on the other hand, to determine an absolute *terminus ante quem* for *Inscription B* prior to the years 1277-80, when works were done in the *Sancta Sanctorum* by Nicholas III and the inscription was removed. It has already been observed by Sauerland (1892: 608) that Jacobus de Voragine quoted the third and the fourth lines of *Inscription B* in the chapter 'De circumcisione Domini' of his *Legenda aurea*, 'The Golden Legend' (Jacobus de Voragine 1998: 129). Jacobus, who started the composition of the *Legenda* in the sixties of the thirteenth century and probably worked on it till his death in 1298 (on the composition of the *Legenda*, see Maggioni 1995; and Jacobus de Voragine 1998: xiii-xxxv), was using in this passage the *Liber epilogorum in gesta sanctorum*, 'Book of Abstracts of the Acts of the Saints', of Bartholomew of Trent (*c.*1200-*c.*1270; on the life of Bartholomew, see Bartholomew of Trent 2001: xix-xxvii). In the chapter 'De circumcisione Domini' of his *Liber*, the latest version of which was probably written under Pope Alexander IV (1254-1261; see Bartholomew of Trent 2001: xxx-xxxii), Bartholomew reports the legend (also related by Innocent III), that the foreskin was given to Charlemagne by

an angel, brought to Aachen, and later placed in Charroux by Charles the Bald (Bartholomew of Trent 2001: 43[24-26]). Bartholomew adds that

> Romana curia, quam sequi debemus, asserit illam circumcisionem esse in ecclesia
> que dicitur Sancta sanctorum, unde et ibidem scriptum legi:
> Circumcisa caro Christi, sandalia clara
> ac umbilici viget hic precisio cara. (Bartholomew of Trent 2001: 43[26-30])
> The Roman Papal Court, which we must follow, asserts that the foreskin is in the
> church called *Sancta Sanctorum*, where I read that it is written:
> The circumcised flesh of Christ, the glorious sandals,
> and the precious section of the umbilical cord flourish here.

Bartholomew affirms in this passage that he had personally read the inscription (*legi*). The papacy of Alexander IV (1254-1261), during which the *Liber epilogorum* was written, is the absolute *terminus ante quem* for the inscription. We know, however, that Bartholomew had diplomatic assignments at the court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen, and was in central Italy and in Rome between 1238 and 1244 – when he could have read and transcribed *Inscription B* – to carry out these assignments (Bartholomew of Trent 2001: xxii-xxiv). This period may therefore be taken as a more precise *terminus ante quem* for *Inscription B*.

On the basis of these observations, it can be concluded that *Inscription B* was written after the *DLE* of John the Deacon (1159-81) and before the *Liber epilogorum* of Bartholomew of Trent (1254-61). An even more precise *terminus ante quem* for the inscription could be the period during which Bartholomew was in central Italy and in Rome (1238-44). A dating in the period between the writing of the *DLE* and the beginning of the pontificate of Innocent III (1198) might also be proposed, if we assume that Innocent III probably had *Inscription B* in mind when discussing the subject of the body-relics, and that after him the relic of the foreskin disappeared from the official liturgy. If we consider that the text of *Leiðarvísir* probably drew directly on the text of *Inscription B*, and that *Inscription B* was composed and placed outside the *Sancta Sanctorum* after the *DLE* was written, because it lists relics not indicated by John the Deacon, there are more reasons to rule out the possibility that the list of relics in *Leiðarvísir* was written during Nikulás's lifetime. The fact that the list of *Description A* mentions the Marian relics presupposes that they had already been translated to the *Sancta Sanctorum* when that was written, but the probable textual dependence of *Leiðarvísir* on *Inscription B* also implies that the Icelandic text

was composed after the inscription had been placed outside the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio. As shown above, Nikulás could still be the author of the list of relics in *Leiðarvísir,* but only assuming that the year of his death was 1160, as stated in the saga of Bishop Guðmundr, and not 1158-59 (as stated in several Icelandic annals, see §1.3.2). In this case, before the end of 1160 and after Alexander III was elected pope (on 7 September 1159), all the following events would need to have taken place for the Icelandic list of relics in *Description A* to be the work of Abbot Nikulás (even if he relied on second-hand information): the *DLE* would need to have been composed by John the Deacon; new relics (including the Marian Relics mentioned in *Leiðarvísir*) would need to have been transferred to the *Sancta Sanctorum*; *Inscription B* would have been composed and placed outside the *Sancta Sanctorum*; Abbot Nikulás would then have been able to read the text of *Inscription B* – transcribed in a manuscript or reported to him by a traveller, who had made the journey from Rome to Munkaþverá. The inclusion of the Marian relics in the list of *Leiðarvísir* and its probable textual dependence on *Inscription B* can much better be explained by assuming an addition to the original text made by a later scribe, or supposing that the whole *Leiðarvísir* is a later work. The information could derive from a traveller who visited the Lateran after 1159; alternatively, it is possible that the author of *Description A* derived the information exclusively from a written source. In either case, the description of the Lateran in *Leiðarvísir* cannot be ascribed to Abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá. The dating of the description of the Lateran in *Leiðarvísir* can thus reasonably be placed after 1159, and most probably in the thirteenth century (or later), when a later scribe could have had at his disposal the text of *Inscription B*. The same dating can be plausibly be proposed for *Description B* in *borga skipan* (§3.7.2.5).

3.7.2.7   Conclusions on the List of Relics in *Leiðarvísir*

The analysis in §3.7.2 has shown that certain details of the description of St John Lateran in *Leiðarvísir* are incompatible with its dating between 1154, the date of Nikulás's return from his journey, and 1158-1160, the time of his death, because it includes two relics (the garment and the milk of Mary), whose presence at the Lateran is not attested before the pontificate of Alexander III (1159-1181).

It is likely that both *Inscription B*, which includes the relics of the Virgin, and the *DLE* (directly or through the mediation of a later Latin text with information on the relics derived from the *DLE*), which includes all the other relics, were used to

compile the list of relics in this passage of *Leiðarvísir*. The fact that in Trier, MS 89 both *Inscription A* and *Inscription B* are attested on a single folio allows us to admit the possibility that the author of this passage of *Leiðarvísir* could have access to the texts of both inscriptions.

The diffusion of the *DLE* in its various versions, and of its lists of relics, is demonstrated by its use in texts produced in very different areas. Petrus Diaconus (*c.*1107-*c.*1159), for instance, in his *Liber de locis Sanctis*, 'Book on the Holy Places', written in Montecassino in 1137, and for which he used several sources, primarily the *Itinerarium Egeriae* (see §2.2.3) and Bede's *De locis sanctis* (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 29-30), appears to know an antecedent version of the *DLE*, or more probably an inventory of relics of the Lateran Basilica prior to John the Deacon's *DLE*. Petrus places in the Basilica the *circumcisio* (as the *DLE*, see VZ: III 337[19]), but also relics that, according to the *DLE* (VZ: III 356[14], 357[10]), are in the *Sancta Sanctorum*, such as the *arundo* and the *sandalia* of Christ (*Itineraria et alia geographica* 1965: 96[3-6]), with a simplification of the information about the location of the relics not dissimilar to that in *Description A*. Another example of a reuse of the list of New Testament relics in the Lateran basilica present in the *DLE* is to be found in the *Speculum Ecclesiae*, 'The Mirror of the Church', of Gerald of Wales (*c.*1146-*c.*1223), where the list is repeated almost verbatim, with the exception of the foreskin of Christ, which is not mentioned. Gerald refers also to the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio, where he indicates the presence of the heads of the Apostles Peter and Paul *cum multis aliis reliquiis*, 'with many other relics' (Gerald of Wales 1873: 275). Renier of Saint-Laurent (1157- after 1182) mentions in his *Vita Reginardi*, written after 1182, some of the relics preserved in the *Sancta Sanctorum* such as the heads of Peter and Paul, the relics of St Lawrence, and the Acheiropoieta (*PL*: CCIV 132; on the *Vita Reginardi*, see Manitius: 1973: 165). Gervase of Tilbury (*c.*1150-*c.*1228) in his *Otia Imperialia*, finished around 1219, draws on the text of John the Deacon to report that *umbilicus Domini et prepucium circumcisionis eius*, 'the umbilical cord of the Lord and his foreskin', are kept in the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio (Gervase of Tilbury 2002: 600; see xxxviii-xl for the dating of the work). A list of the Lateran relics based on the *DLE* is also in the mid-twelfth century *Graphia aurea urbis Rome* (VZ: III 83-84; see §3.3). A list of the Lateran relics based on the *DLE* and close to the text of the *Graphia urbis* is included in MS Rome, Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Vat. Lat. 636 on fol. 73[v] (twelfth/thirteenth century, see

VZ: III 12, 13; Miedema 1996: 76). In MS Cod. Vat. Lat. 636 are preserved some passages of the *MUR*, before which there is a description of the Lateran Basilica, of St Peter's and of San Paolo fuori le mura. As we have seen in §3.6, Lambeth Palace, MS 527 includes a list of Lateran relics based on *DLE* after the *incipit* typical of the *IEUR*. MS Zwettl, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 109 (composed between *c.* 1200-*c.* 1230, see Ziegler and Rössl 1985-1997: 22-23), contains after the *MUR* (fols 156ra-162rb) excerpts from the *DLE* description of the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio (fols. 162va-163rb). Manuscript Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 4265, dated to the second half of the fourteenth century (Parthey 1869: xiii; Huelsen 1927: 137; Miedema 1996: 77), includes on folios 209^{r}-212^{r} a version of the *MUR*, followed on fols 212^{v}-214^{v} by a description of the main churches of Rome with their relics (edited by Parthey 1869: 47-62): the description of the Lateran and its relics reworks the lists of the *DLE*. After these descriptions MS Vat. Lat. 4265 contains on fols 215^{r}-216^{r} a version of the *IEUR* (edited by Huelsen 1927: 137-156 and Weißthanner 1954: 59-63).

The lists of relics in John the Deacon's *DLE* were also the basis for some versions of the *IEUR*. The *IEUR* attested in MS Rome, Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Vat. Lat. 687 (composed between the fourteenth and the fifteenth century, Miedema 1996: 76) include a list of the relics of the Lateran basilica. Part of the list is based on the *DLE* (VZ: III 337^{14}-338^{8}; see §3.7.2.2) but, interestingly, MS Vat. Lat. 687 also mentions a *velum Mariae*, which, as we have seen, is not included in the *DLE* but in *Inscription B* and *Description A*:

> Item in eadem ecclesia sunt due ampulle de sanguine et aqua que fluxerunt de latere Christi, sudarium, purpureum vestimentum et lintheum cum quo Christus extersit pedes discipulorum suorum in cena et de quinque panibus hordiaceis de quibus saciati fuerunt quinque milia hominum, de carne carne preputii que fuit domino nostro Ihesu Christo abscissa in circumcisione, velum beate marie [...] (BAV, Vat. Lat. 687, fols 129^{v}-130^{r})
>
> And in this same church [St John Lateran] there are two ampules with some of the blood and of the water that flowed from his side, the shroud, the purple garment and the piece of linen cloth with which Christ washed the feet of his disciples at the Last Supper, and some of the five barley loaves with which five thousand people were fed, and some of the flesh of the foreskin that was cut off at his circumcision, and a garment of the Blessed Mary [...]

The text of the *IEUR* of MS Vat. Lat. 687 is very close to that of Manuscript Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. hist. 2° 459 (written in the first half of the fourteenth century, Miedema 1996: 82), in which the *velum beate Marie virginis* and *de carne preputii* are also mentioned (Schimmelpfennig 1988: 651).

Inscription B, in whole or in part, must have had a wide circulation in the tradition of the written sources describing Rome. We have seen that the two lines mentioning the foreskin of Christ are quoted by Bartholomew of Trent and Jacobus de Voragine in the thirteenth century. The entire inscription was transcribed at the beginning of the fourteenth century in Trier, MS 89 and was also included in a branch of the tradition of the *IEUR* in MS Vat. Reg. 520, and in Manchester, John Rylands University Library, MS Lat. 71. It is therefore not unlikely that the author of *Description A* could also have had access to the text of *Inscription B*, perhaps inserted in a manuscript containing a collectanea of written sources and inscriptions on the city of Rome, or in a version of the *IEUR*. Furthermore, the possibility that the text was transcribed by a later Icelandic traveller who was able to read the inscription personally cannot be excluded. The correspondences between *Description A* and *Description B* on the one hand, and the three sources that have been analysed above (*DLE*, *Inscription A*, *Inscription B*) on the other, are summarized in Table 2.

Description A *Leiðarvísir*	Description B *Borga skipan*	Lateran Basilica *DLE*	Lateran Basilica *Inscription A*	*Sancta Sanctorum DLE*	*Sancta Sanctorum Inscription B*
The Blood of Christ	The Blood of Christ	Two ampules with some of the blood of the Lord and with water from his side	Two ampules with some of the blood of the Lord and with water from his side		
The Garment of Mary	The Garment of Mary				Part of the veil of the Mother of God
A great part of the bones of John the Baptist	A great part of the bones of John the Baptist			Two bones of John The Baptist	
The foreskin of Christ		The foreskin of the Lord		The foreskin and the umbilical cord of Christ	The foreskin and the umbilical cord of Christ
Milk from the breast of Mary					Milk from the sacred breasts
A part of Christ's crown of thorns	(The Cross of John the Baptist)				(Part of the Holy Cross)
The Tunic of Christ		The seamless garment of Christ / The purple garment of Christ	The seamless garment of Christ / The purple garment of Christ		

Table 2: Correspondences between the relics mentioned in *Description A*, *Description B*, in the *DLE*, in *Inscription A* and in *Inscription B*. In brackets are relics for which a textual correspondence has been conjectured.

The only relics that do not find a correspondence in the three sources taken into account are 'the thorns from Christ's crown of thorns' in *Description A* and 'the cross of the Baptist' in *Description B*. Thorns from Christ's crown were – and still are – traditionally kept in the Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme (Buchowiecki 1967: 625; see Hulbert 1923: 408). References can be found to several churches of Rome that, in the course of the Middle Ages, claimed to possess this relic, but there is no reference to its presence in St John Lateran (see the subject index of Miedema 2001: 834, under the entry *Dornen von der Dornenkrone*). The presence of this relic in the Lateran is not attested either in the German or the Dutch editions of the *IEUR*, which have been thoroughly examined and compared with their Latin sources by Nine Miedema (2001: 166-84).

Other hypotheses can be put forward to explain this anomaly. In the first place, the presence of 'the thorns from Christ's crown of thorns' in *Description A* could be based on information drawn from the personal experience of an Icelandic pilgrim. According to this first, on-the-spot-note-taking hypothesis, after his visit to Rome this pilgrim did not recollect exactly all the different relics he saw or heard of in Rome; at the moment of writing down his description of the Lateran, or of reporting on the information he had acquired in Rome to the author of *Description A*, he might have erroneously placed the 'thorns from Christ's crown' in the Lateran. This explanation cannot be logically excluded. A second possible hypothesis is that the author of *Description A* might have misplaced in the Lateran this relic, after having found in written sources a reference that correctly located the thorns from Christ's crown of thorns in Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. Strong and direct relations, however, have been shown between *Description A*, on the one hand, and *DLE* and *Inscription B*, on the other. A third hypothesis that envisages for this passage a possible misinterpretation of a Latin source, or a successive scribal error, can therefore be put forward. Comparing the list of *Description A* with the *DLE* and *Inscription B* – their textual relation with *Leiðarvísir* has already been highlighted – one might wonder whether in a previous version of the Icelandic text there might have been a reference to one of the most important relics kept in the *Sancta Sanctorum*, the relic of the 'Cross of Christ', rather than to his crown of thorns. The *DLE* mentions in the Chapel of San Lorenzo in Palatio two fragments of the Holy Cross inside the *arca cipressina* (§3.7.2.4): a fragment is in the *crux de smalto depicta* (VZ: III 356[12-13]), a second fragment, *de ligno illo sanctae crucis*, is in the

capsa deaurata (VZ: III 356[15-17]); a third piece, *de ligno Crucis Domini*, is under the Acheiropoieta (VZ: III 358[3]). *Inscription B* mentions as the last relic a *pars de cruce sancta* (§3.7.2.5). One might wonder whether the Latin partitive *de ligno crucis Domini*, or the expression *pars de cruce sancta*, might underlie the partitive *af þorngjörð Krists*, '[a part of] Christ's crown of thorns', attested in *Description A* (l. 76). The author of *Description A* might have misinterpreted the Latin expression referring to the 'Part of the Holy Cross'. Alternatively, a later scribe might have misread a previous correct reference to **af Krossi Krists*, '[a part of] the Cross of Christ', copying it as *af þorngjörð Krists*. There are cases in *Leiðarvísir* of clear misreading or wrong transcriptions of Latin expressions, for example those of the names *Ante Portam Latinam* (l. 84, see §3.11) and *Via Traiana* (l. 117, see §1.4.7.2).

This hypothesis might find an indirect confirmation in the fact that the text of *Description B* attested in *Hauksbók* reports the information that in the Lateran there is the *cros Iohannis Baptista*, 'the cross of John the Baptist' (Simek 1990: 492 c[9]; see §3.2). In later German and Dutch versions of the *IEUR* there is a reference to the fact that in the Lateran a double cross was kept that was made from the iron of the sword with which the Baptist was beheaded (Miedema 2001: 185, n. 61). The German version of the *IEUR* attested in MS Trier, Stadtbibliothek, Hs. 830/1370 8vo (written *c.* in 1500, Miedema 1996: 138-39) reports that in the Lateran *ist eyn cruce gesatz, dat ist gesmeit van dem swerde, da sent Iohan baptist myt inthoeubdiget wart*, 'is kept a cross that is forged from the sword with which St John the Baptist was beheaded' (Miedema 2003: 136[4-5]). Similarly, the Middle Dutch version of the *IEUR* attested in The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 133 F 1, reports on fol. 25[v] that in the Lateran is *een cruce dat dubbel es ende dat is ghemaect van den swaerde, daer sunte Ian baptiste mede onthooft was*, 'a cross that is double and that is forged from the sword with which St John the Baptist was beheaded' (Miedema 2003: 179[16-18]).

It seems improbable, however, that the information reported by the version of *Description B* attested in *Hauksbók* refers to this late tradition reported in German and Middle Dutch versions of the *IEUR*. We have seen that the list of relics in *Description B* is very close to *Description A* (the sequence of the first three relics coincide) and, like this, probably depends on the list of the relics in the *Sancta Sanctorum* of *DLE* and *Inscription B*. It is therefore more plausible to interpret the reference to the *cros Iohannis Baptista* in the text of *borga skipan* (Simek 1990: 492, c[9]) as 'the cross [of Christ in the Church] of John the Baptist'. In this case, the *cros*

Iohannis Baptista would confirm the presence of the relic of the True Cross in the source on which both *Description A* and *B* are based. This would also be an indirect confirmation for the hypothesis put forward above that the mention of '[a part of] Christ's crown of thorns' attested in *Description A* derives from a misreading of a reference in the Latin source to 'a part of the Holy Cross' kept in the *Sancta Sanctorum*'.

The comparison of the lists of the Lateran relics in texts so different from each other in terms of their authorship, purposes and place of composition has given valuable indications about their relative and absolute dating, but it has also made possible a different evaluation of this section of the Icelandic itinerary. The description of the Church of John the Baptist in *Leiðarvísir* cannot be the work of Abbot Nikulás as an eye-witness, but it was most probably written by a later author using Latin sources in the course of the thirteenth or fourteenth century. The list of relics in *Leiðarvísir* cannot therefore be considered a page from the pilgrim-diary of a northern traveller. It is an erudite composition based on a variety of sources that reveals a complexity and a textual stratification of the Icelandic itinerary that is also confirmed by an analysis of the following description of Rome.

3.8   The Church of Santa Maria Maggiore

After St John Lateran *Leiðarvísir* mentions the second bishop's see, which is in Santa Maria Maggiore, where the pope celebrated mass at Christmas and Easter: *Annar byskups stoll er ath mario kirkiu þar skal pafi messo [sy]ngia ioladag & [p]ascha-dag*, 'The second bishop's see is in the Church of Mary, there the pope must sing mass on Christmas day and on Easter day' (ll. 77-78). This liturgical information coincides with the tradition of the *Stationes ecclesiarum*, where it is reported that the principal mass was to be celebrated *in natalem domini ad Sanctam Mariam*, 'on Christmas at Santa Maria', and *in Dominico Sancto ad Sanctam Mariam*, 'On Easter Sunday at Santa Maria' (Rusch 1970: 109-10). Equally, in the *IEUR* of MS Cotton. Faustina B VII (f. 16vb) it is said that indulgences can be obtained *in adventu ad sanctam Mariam Maiorem*, 'on the Advent at Santa Maria Maggiore', and *in Pascha ad sanctam Mariam Maiorem*, 'at Easter at Santa Maria Maggiore'; the *Ordo romanus* of Benedictus Canonicus, which includes a thorough description of the rituals to be followed by the pope and his court, indicates that *In adventu Domini* [...] *stacio ad Sanctam Mariam Maiorem*, 'On the Advent of the

Lord the station is at Santa Maria Maggiore', and that the Pope *ad Presepium debet cantare missam*, 'must sing mass at the manger' (VZ III: 210-11). For Easter, the *Ordo* of Benedictus tells us that *In die sanctae Resurrectionis* [...] *stacio est ad Sanctam Mariam Maiorem*, 'On the Day of the Holy Resurrection the station is at Santa Maria Maggiore' (VZ, III 216). The author of *Description A* thus gives for the second patriarchal church information that was available both in the *IEUR* tradition and in the Latin descriptions of Rome. *Description B* lists Santa Maria Maggiore as the second principal church, like *Description A,* without giving further information: *Annath er ath mario musteri*, 'the second [principal church] is in the Church of Mary' (Simek 1990: 492[6]).

3.9   San Lorenzo fuori le mura

After Santa Maria Maggiore, the author of *Description A* provides us with analogous liturgical information for the third patriarchal church of the list, that of Saints Stephen and Lawrence, i.e. San Lorenzo fuori le mura: *þridi er at kirkiu stephani & laurenti þar skal pafi messo syngia enn viij. dag iola & hatidir þeira sealfra*, 'The third [bishop's see] is in the Church of Stephen and Lawrence, the pope must sing mass there on the octave of Christmas and on the feast of these same saints' (ll. 79-80). The information reported by *Description A* is correct and available in the *ordines romani*. The two Latin genitives in the Icelandic text hint strongly that a Latin text served as a model. In the *Ordo romanus* of Benedictus Canonicus we find corresponding information about the pope's stations: *In Festivitate sancti Stephani pontifex vadit ad Sanctum Stephani ubi est stacio*, 'On the feast-day of St Stephen the pontiff goes to St Stephen, where there is a station' (VZ: III 214; cf. Werlauff 1821, 45 nn. 96-7); for the feast of St Lawrence, the *Ordo* says that *domnus pontifex in basilica eius in agro Verano ... facit vesperum'*, 'the Lord pontiff says vespers in his [St Lawrence's] basilica in the field of the Verano' (VZ, III 221[14-15]). *Description B* mentions San Lorenzo fuori le mura as the fourth patriarchal church (Simek 1990: 492[7-8]) without adding further information.

3.10 Sant'Agnese fuori le mura

The Church of Sant'Agnese, mentioned in *Leiðarvísir* after the basilicas of St John Lateran, Santa Maria Maggiore and San Lorenzo fuori le mura, interrupts the series of the patriarchal churches: in the Church of Sant'Agnese there is no *biskups stoll,*

'bishop's see', like the ones *Description A* locates in the other three basilicas (ll. 73, 77, 79); nevertheless, *Description A* asserts that Sant'Agnese is the *dyrliguzt j alri borginni*, 'the most splendid in the entire city (ll. 80-81). The Church of Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, which is visible at the present time, was built by Pope Honorius I (625-38), as will be discussed shortly. The itinerary refers to the legend of Constantia (18 ll. 3-7), which is not linked to this church but to the large building next to it. This building, which has been in ruins for many centuries, is what is technically called a circus-shaped basilica (i.e. one in the form of a long rectangle with a semicircular end; see Figure 1, p.164). A brief sketch of the extensive and complex archaeological history of the area of Sant'Agnese will now be given, as it will be of great help in reaching a better understanding of this passage of *Description A*.

3.10.1 The Constantinian Basilica of Sant'Agnese and the Basilica Built by Pope Honorius I

The circus basilica was built by Constantia (also named in the sources Constantina and Constantiana), daughter of Constantine, between 337 and 351, when she was living in Rome (Fusco 2004: 12-13). The external dimensions of this structure are considerable: it is 98.27 meters long and 40.87 meters wide (Venturini 2004: 29).

The *Liber pontificalis* is a source of fundamental importance for reconstructing Constantine's building activity in Rome and his policy towards the Church of Rome, and by extension the history of the basilica of Sant'Agnese (Geertman 2004: 75-86). The *Liber Pontificalis* gives a list of the basilicas built in Rome by the emperor; this is inserted in the life of Pope Sylvester I (314-35) and lists the donations Constantine made to the Church (Duchesne 1955-57: I 172-87). The formula *eodem tempore fecit basilicam*, 'at that time he built a basilica', is used to attribute their construction to Constantine (Fusco 2004: 12). The list in the *Liber Pontificalis* includes the following: the Basilica Constantiniana, i.e. St John Lateran (Duchesne 1955-57: I 172); the Basilica of St Peter (Duchesne 1955-57: I 176); the Basilica of San Paolo fuori le mura (Duchesne 1955-57: I 178); the Basilica *in palatio sessoriano*, 'in the Sessorian Palace', i.e. Santa Croce in Gerusalemme (Duchesne 1955-57: I 179); the Basilica of Sant'Agnese (Duchesne 1955-57: I 181); and the Basilica of Santi Marcellino e Pietro (Duchesne 1955-57: I 182).

Soon after the basilica of Sant'Agnese was built in the fourth century it fell into disuse: at the beginning of the sixth century it was already in decay (Fusco 2004:

20), as testified by the *Liber Pontificalis* in the life of Pope Symmacus (498-514), where we read that he *absidam beatae Agnae quae in ruinam inminebat et omnem basilicam renovavit* 'restored the apse of Sant'Agnese, which was threatening to collapse, and the whole basilica' (Duchesne 1955-57: I 263). In the course of the seventh century the building was finally abandoned, so that Pope Honorius I (625-638) built a new basilica which is preserved to this day, *ad corpus* 'at the body' of St Agnes: *Eodem tempore fecit ecclesiam beatae Agnae martyris, via Numentana, miliario ab urbe Roma III, a solo, ubi requiescit, quem undique ornavit, exquisivit, ubi posuit dona multa*, 'At that time he had the Church of the blessed martyr Agnes built up from the ground on the Via Nomentana, three miles from the city of Rome, and he decorated this church all over, and was attentive to every detail and made many donations to this church' (Duchesne 1955-57: I 323). After the ancient building fell into ruin, the remaining walls were used for other purposes, including as an enclosure for farmed land around an adjoining monastery (Magnani Cianetti 2004: 75). The original function of the Constantinian *basilica sanctae martyiris Agnae* remained obscure for a long time: its circus shape, its dimensions and its position outside the walls of the city are not obviously similar to other Constantinian basilicas that have remained in use up to the present day. In the Renaissance, and in the following centuries, it was believed to be an ancient racecourse or a theatre (Esposito 2004: 44). In the last century, the studies of Richard Krautheimer were instrumental in clarifying its function. In his article 'Mensa – Coemeterium – Martyrium' ('Stone Table [serving both as altar and ceremonial banquet table] – Cemetery – Martyr's Shrine,' the three key elements of a circus-basilica), he explains how the 'coemeteria-basilicas' outside the walls of Rome found their source in 'the relationship between the martyr's tomb, a burial ground for the faithful, and the celebration of funeral banquets both in honour of the martyr and of ordinary mortals' (Krautheimer 1960: 33).
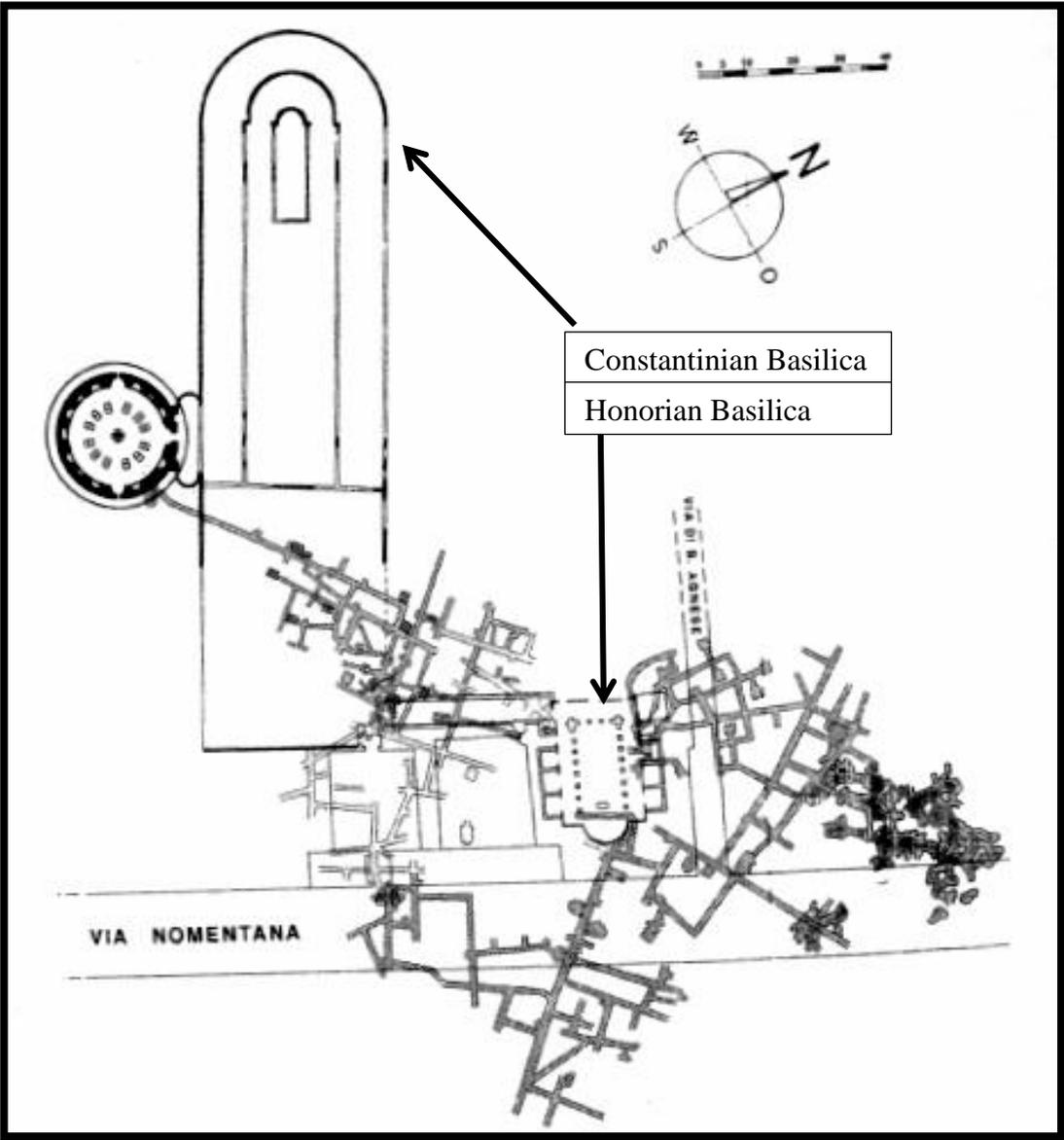
Figure 1: The Constantinian Basilica and the Honorian Basilica of Sant'Agnese (Fiocchi, Bisconti, and Mazzoleni 1998: 28; text box is mine)

Krautheimer clarifies how Sant'Agnese and the other funerary basilicas fell progressively into decay:

> When the floors of the coemeteria-basilicas were all covered with graves, leaving no space, and when, at the same time the custom of funeral banquets fell into disuse and was frowned upon, the structures, in the course of the late fifth and sixth centuries, lost their raison d'être. Their original function was forgotten, even more so since basilicae ad corpus, beginning with the late sixth century, began to rise alongside them over the graves of the martyrs. (Krautheimer 1960: 34-35)

Recent excavations, the results of which are explained in *La basilica Constantiniana di Sant'Agnese*, edited by Marina Magnani Cianetti and Carlo Pavolini (2004), confirmed Krautheimer's thesis and reinforced it with archaeological evidence, putting Sant'Agnese in the context of the other Constantinian circus-basilicas.

3.10.2 The Honorian Basilica in Pilgrim Guides

It is significant that the Constantinian basilica of Sant'Agnese mentioned in *Leiðarvísir* was already being omitted from the pilgrim guides from the seventh century (Krautheimer 1960: 22; Venturini 2004: 36). In the *Notitia ecclesiarum urbis Romae*, 'List of the Churches of the City of Rome', the pilgrim is invited to go on along the Via Nomentana *ad ecclesiam sanctae Agnae, quae formosa est, in qua sola pausat – et ipsam episcopus Honorius miro opere reparavit* 'to the Church of Sant'Agnese, which is beautiful, and in which only she rests – and Bishop Honorius repaired this same church magnificently' (VZ: II 78-79). In *De locis sanctis martyrum quae sunt foris civitatis Romae*, 'On the Holy Places of the Martyrs Outside the City of Rome', it is observed that Sant'Agnese, on the Via Nomentana, is *mirae pulchritudinis, ubi ipsa corpore iacet* 'extraordinarily beautiful, where her mortal remains rest' (VZ: II 115). The Einsiedeln Itinerary, from the second half of the eighth or the first half of the ninth century, and Sigeric's *Itinerarium*, written at the end of the tenth century, include in their lists only a Church of 'St Agnes', which can be identified with the church built by Pope Honorius I (VZ: II 185; Ortenberg 1990: 199, 214; see §1.4.5 and §2.2.3.1). The *MUR* simply refer to a *cimiterium Sanctae Agnetis,* 'cemetery of St Agnes' (VZ: III 27[6]). Significantly, William of Malmesbury, in the topographical excursus on Rome included in his *Gesta regum Anglorum* (written in the first half of the twelfth century, Thomson 2003: 3-13), also mentions only the medieval basilica of Sant'Agnese, the *ecclesia Sanctae Agnetis et*

corpus 'the Church of St Agnes and her body' (VZ: II 144-45). In the *Stationes ecclesiarum* of the twelfth-century MS BL Cotton. Faust. B. VII, two stations are *ad sanctam Agnetem* (folio 17rb, 17va), clearly referring to the seventh-century basilica; in the *IEUR* editions that have been compared in this thesis (§3.3) only Sant'Agnese fuori le mura is mentioned, without any references to the legend of Constantia (Huelsen 1927: 145; Weißthanner 1954: 63; Schimmelpfennig 1988: 657).

3.10.3 Written Sources for Sant'Agnese in *Leiðarvísir*

Taking into account the early decay of the Constantinian basilica and its consequent absence from the pilgrim guides after the seventh century, how can one explain the presence of this same *Agnesar kirkia* associated with Constantia in *Leiðarvísir*, traditionally dated around the mid-twelfth century? Scholars who have commented on this passage have missed this historical discrepancy, which is of fundamental importance if we are to understand and contextualise this text. Werlauff (1821: 45), Kålund (1913: 76) and Magoun (1940: 273, 282) did not distinguish between the two churches, erroneously attributing to Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, built by Honorius I, the legend of the Constantia foundation, linked with the early circus-basilica. The difference between the two churches has been briefly pointed out in Marani (2006: 643) and (Waßenhoven 2008: 37-38); the question has then been highlighted in Marani (2009; on which §3.10 is based).

The similarities with written sources here are quite strong. The formulation of the legend of Constantia given in the *Vita* of Sylvester I in the *Liber Pontificalis* is very close to that from *Leiðarvísir*:

> Enn austr þadan ij. milur er agnesar kirkia hun er dyrliguzt j allri borginni hana lét gera Constantia dottir Constantini konungs er hon tok fyrry tru en hann & bad hon leyfis ath lata gera agnesar kirkiu en konungr leyfdi henne utan borgar ath radi Silvestri pafa. (ll. 80-83)
> But two miles east from there is the Church of Agnes, the most splendid in the entire city. Constantia, daughter of King Constantine, had this built when she accepted the faith before him, and she asked leave to have the Church of Agnes built, and the king gave her leave to build it outside the city on the advice of Pope Sylvester.

In the section of the *Liber Pontificalis* dealing with the basilica of Sant'Agnese, we find the information that Constantine *eodem tempore fecit*

basilicam sanctae martyris Agnae ex rogatu filiae suae et baptisterium in eodem loco ubi et baptizata est soror eius Constantia cum filia Augusti a Silvestro episcopo, 'at that time made, after the request of his daughter, the basilica of the holy martyr St Agnes and the baptistry in the same place where also his sister Constantia, together with the emperor's daughter, was baptised by Bishop Sylvester' (Duchesne 1955-57: I 180).

If the author of *Description A* drew on this text, however, it is likely that he did so through the tradition of Bede's *De temporum ratione* 'On the Reckoning of Time', which is a treatise, very popular throughout the Middle Ages, on methods for calculating time and subdividing it into units, and which also includes different views of the cosmos. Its last section is a world chronicle structured on the 'Six Ages of this World', a solemnisation, as Faith Wallis observes, of 'the link between chronology and computus' (Bede 1999: 353). Bede used several sources for this chronicle. He 'combed for items of general ecclesiastical interest the *Liber Pontificalis*, but building projects exercised a disproportionate fascination for him' (Bede 1999: 366). In fact, Bede uses the *Vita* of Pope Sylvester I in the *Liber Pontificalis*, omitting the list of the donations made by Constantine to the single basilicas, but listing 'in loving detail' Constantine's churches (Bede 1999: 366):

> Constantinus fecit Romae, ubi baptizatus est, basilicam beati Iohannis baptistae, quae appelatur Constantiniana. Item basilicam beato Petro in templo Apollinis, necnon et beato Paulo, corpus utriusque aere cypro circumdans quinque pedes grosso. Item basilicam in palatio Sosoriano, quae cognominatur Hierusalem, ubi de ligno crucis Domini posuit. Item Basilicam sanctae martyris Agnae ex rogatu filiae suae, et baptisterium in eodem loco, ubi et baptizata est soror eius Constantia cum filia augusta. Item basilicam beato Laurentio martyri via Tiburtina in agro Verano. (Bede 1977: 509)
>
> Constantine had the basilica of the blessed St John the Baptist built in Rome. He was baptised in this basilica, which is called Constantiniana. Also the basilica in honour of the blessed Peter on the temple of Apollo, and also [one] in honour of the blessed Paul, enclosing the body of each of the two in [sarcophagi of] five-foot-thick Cyprian copper. Also the basilica, which is called Hierusalem, in the Sessorian Palace, where he put a piece of the wood from the True Cross. Also the basilica of the holy martyr St Agnes, in accordance with the request of his daughter, and a baptistry, in the same place, where also his sister Constantia was

baptised together with the emperor's daughter. Also the basilica of the blessed martyr Lawrence on the Tiburtina in the field of Verano.

The list of Constantine's basilicas, including the reference to the legend of the building of Sant'Agnese, is reported in *Silvesters saga* (Unger 1877: II 255 [19]-256[3], 255 [29–33]). This saga, which is handed down in manuscripts from the thirteenth and fourteenth century (Widding 1963: 332), is based on a *Vita Sancti Sylvestri* (Mombritius 1978: II 508-31). In *Silvesters saga*, after the narration of the first deeds performed by Constantine after his conversion, we find an adaptation of the same passage of *De temporum ratione* quoted above. It is not present in the Mombritius version of the Latin *vita*. This could mean that it was added by the Icelandic author of *Silvesters saga* or that it was included in the Latin version of the *Vita Sancti Sylvestri* at his disposal, thus confirming both the importance given to Constantine's building activity and the circulation in Iceland of Bede's *De temporum ratione*. It is possible that the world-chronicle was known also as a separate work, since the 'Six Ages of This World' formed 'a thematically distinct section' in *De temporum ratione* and, 'as a result, from very early on in the manuscript tradition, there was a tendency to detach this section from the rest of the book' (Bede 1999: 363). In the *Vita Sancti Sylvestri*, Constantine ends the speech that he makes after his conversion by saying this:

> Ut autem notum sit universo orbi romano vero Deo et Domino Iesu Christo nos inclinare cervices, intra palatium meum ecclesiam Christo arripui construendam ut universitas hominum comprobet, nulla dubietatis in corde meo vel præteriti erroris remansisse vestigia. (Mombritius 1978: II 514[21–24])
>
> In order to make known to the whole city of Rome that we bow our heads to the true God and to the Lord Jesus Christ, I have agreed that a church should be built within my palace in honour of Christ, so that everyone might accept as true that no doubt or trace of past error remains in my heart.

After these words the people present exclaim, *Qui Christum negant male depereant*, 'May those who deny Christ perish miserably' (Mombritius 1978: II 514[25]). This passage is followed very closely in *Silvesters saga*, where Constantine concludes his speech with these words:

> hefir (ek) til þess latid kirkiu gera vid holl mina, at allr romaborgar lydr viti þat
> vist, at ek þiona Kristi sialfum sönnum gudi, sva at eingi ifi ennar fornu villu er
> eptir i hiarta minu. (Unger 1877: II 255[14-16])

> I have given leave for a church to be built next to my hall, so that all the people of
> Rome may know for certain that I serve Christ and the true God, and that no doubt
> of past error is left in my heart.

The people reply much as in the *Vita Sancti Sylvestri*: *Fariz þeir aller, er Kristi neita*,
'May all those who deny Christ perish' (Unger 1877: II 255[19]).

Significantly, the author of *Silvesters saga* takes Constantine's reference to
the building of St John Lateran *intra palatium meum* and extends it by inserting the
passage quoted above from Bede's *De temporum ratione*. He gets some names and
places mixed up, he integrates the list of churches given by Bede with ordinal
numbers, and about St Agnes he says:

> Enn let hann giöra ena fiordu kirkiu til dyrdar enni helgu meyiu Agnete. Þessa
> kirkiu let hann giöra at bæn dottur sinnar, þeirar er Constancia nefnd. Sia kirkia var
> gior eptir skirn dottur hans ok i þeim enum sama stad, sem hon var skird. (Unger
> 1877: II 255 [29-33])

> And he [Constantine] had a fourth church built to the glory of the virgin St Agnes.
> He had this church built at the request of his daughter, who is called Constantia.
> This church was built after the baptism of his daughter and in the same place where
> she was baptised.

The statement that Constantine had the church built 'at the request of his daughter,
who is called Constantia' is in agreement with *Leiðarvísir*. The corresponding
passages of *Leiðarvísir*, *& bad hon [Constantia] leyfis ath lata gera Agnesar kirkiu,*
and of *Silvesters saga*, *at bæn dottur sinna*, both seem to be modelled on the Latin *ex
rogatu filiae suae*. In *Silvesters saga* we also find that 'the church was built after the
baptism of his daughter, in the same place where she was baptised', which
corresponds to the statement that Constantia 'accepted' the Christian faith before the
emperor (l. 82). The final remark of *Description A*, that Constantia 'asked leave to
have the Church of Agnes built, and the king gave her leave to build it outside the
city on the advice of Pope Sylvester' (l. 83), is a way of including the figure of St
Sylvester, who is indissolubly related to the legend of Constantine. The expression
ath radi Silvestri pafa appears to be modelled on the Latin *ex suggestione* rather than
ex rogatu (*Silvestri episcopi*). In the *Vita* of Pope Sylvester in the *Liber Pontificalis*,

however, we find both expressions when the author narrates the building of the basilicas of St Peter and St Paul (Duchesne 1955-57: I 178). The source of *Leiðarvísir* must have been very close to that of *Silvesters saga*, and the different words and constructions used to render the original Latin in the two texts strongly indicate that they drew on it independently. This source was most probably the world-chronicle of Bede's *De temporum ratione*. The diffusion and circulation in the Icelandic tradition of *De temporum ratione*, and in particular of the passage enumerating the churches built by Constantine, is confirmed by the fact that this is used also in *Veraldar saga*:

> hann let kirkiv gera i Latran Joani baptista ok Johanni postvla. þar er pafa stoll. Petrs kirkiv let hann ok gera i þeim stad sem Petr var crosfestr. pals kirkiv let hann gera fyrir vtan Latran þar sem hann var hoggvin. i Rvmaborg let han gera þa kirkiv er heitir Iervsalem ok þar let hann vera kros drotins vars. Constantinvs let gera Agneskirkiv at bon Constancie d(ottvr) s(innar). lavrencius let hann kirkiv gera. (Jakob Benediktsson 1944: 59[3-11])
>
> He [Constantine] had a church built in the Lateran in honour of John the Baptist and John the Apostle. The throne of the pope is there. He had also the Church of Peter built in that place where Peter was crucified. He had the Church of Paul built outside the Lateran, in the place where he was killed. In Rome he had that church which is called Jerusalem built, and he ordered the Cross of our Lord to be kept there. Constantine had the Church of Agnes built in accordance with the request of his daughter Constantia. He had the Church of Laurentius built.

It is noteworthy that the phrasing *at bon [Constancie]* is used here, as in *Silvesters saga*. Stefán Karlsson has highlighted how this passage in *Veraldar saga*, as it has been handed down to us, is based on two sources (1977: 125-30). The first one is *De temporum ratione*, which was probably used indirectly and through the mediation of a more detailed version of *Veraldar saga*; the second is *Silvesters saga*. Extremely significant is the presence in *Veraldar saga* of a reference to the *pafa stoll* in St John Lateran, as this occurs in *Description A* (l. 74) but not in *De temporum ratione* nor in the *Vita* nor in the saga of St Sylvester, a fact which hints at a possible common source for *Leiðarvísir* and *Veraldar saga* when they describe St John Lateran. *Description B* does not mention the 'throne' but the *heimili*, 'the home' (Simek 1990: 492[8]), of the pope, a reference to his residence but also a probable *lectio facilior* for *cathedra pontificalis* (§3.7.1).

The legend of St Agnes is also handed down in one of the *vitae sanctorum*, the *Vita Sanctae Agnetis* (Mombritius 1978: I 40-44). *Agnesar saga meyjar*, the translation into Icelandic of the *Vita Sanctae Agnetis*, is first attested in a fragment (Copenhagen, MS AM 238 I fol.) from *c.* 1275-1325, but it is likely that this was copied from a manuscript of the mid-thirteenth century (Unger 1877: I ix; Widding 1963: 298; handrit.is: AM 238 I fol). In this *vita* we find the story of how Constantia, daughter of Constantine, suffering from wounds, went to the tomb of St Agnes and was cured by an apparition of the saint saying to her '*Constanter age Constantia*', "'Act constantly, Oh Constantia!'" and to accept Christianity (Mombritius 1978: I 44$^{6-8}$); after being healed, Constantia *patrem et fratres augustos rogat ut basilica beatae Agnetis construeretur et sibi illic mausoleum collocari præcepit*, 'asked her father and brothers to have the basilica of St Agnes built, and she instructed them to place there a mausoleum for herself' (Mombritius 1978: I 44$^{12-14}$). *Agnesar saga meyjar* is a close translation of this *Vita Sanctae Agnetis*. After being healed - as in the *Vita* - Constantia *bad fodur sinn ok brędr, at þeir lofadi kirkio at gera til dyrdar Agnesu, ok let hon ser i þeiri kirkio grauf gera* 'asked her father and her brothers to give leave for a church to be built to the glory of Agnes, and she had a grave made for herself in that church' (Unger 1877: I 21$^{27-28}$). In the *Vita Sanctae Agnetis* (and in *Agnesar saga meyjar*), as in *Leiðarvísir*, there is a reference to the legend of the building of the basilica of Sant'Agnese, but Constantia asks not only Constantine to build the church, as she does in *Description A*, but also her brothers; in addition, in the *Vita* she also asks them to build a mausoleum for her, which is not mentioned in *Description A*, the *Vita Sancti Sylvestri*, *Silvesters saga* or *Veraldar saga*. These differences lead one to believe that the author of *Description A* did not use the *Vita Sanctae Agnetis* for his description of the Constantinian basilica.

The topographical information given in *Description A* is similar to that reported in other medieval pilgrim guides about the church built by Pope Honorius: Sant'Agnese is said to be 'two miles east from there [i.e. from the Church of Saints Stephen and Lawrence]' (l. 80) The *Liber Pontificalis* says in the life of Pope Honorius that the church was built *miliario ab urbe Roma III* 'three miles outside the city' (Duchesne 1955-57: I 323). Another topographical point comparable to that given in *Leiðarvísir* is in the *Notitia ecclesiarum urbis Romae*, where we find the indication that the (seventh-century) Church of Sant'Agnese comes after St

Emerentiana, which is *ad orientem* 'to the east' (VZ: II 78), as the *Agnesar kirkia* is *austr*.

3.10.4 Possible Written Sources for the Description of the Church of Sant'Agnese

As we have seen, *Description A* also contains the information that 'the Church of Agnes is the most splendid in the entire city' (ll. 80-81). This observation can be interpreted otherwise than simply as an aesthetic assessment based on the personal experience of a traveller. It is relevant that a similar judgement on the visual impact of the Honorian church is present in the tradition of the pilgrim guides: in the *Notitia ecclesiarum urbis Romae* the church is called *formosa* 'beautiful' (VZ: II 79); in *De locis sanctis martyrum quae sunt foris civitatis Romae*, Sant'Agnese is said to be *mirae pulchritudinis* 'of extraordinary beauty' (VZ: II 115). It is thus likely that the judgement on the splendour of Sant'Agnese could find its explanation not in the personal and direct experience of a visitor of the church, but in evaluations that were common in the tradition of written sources. This would be in line with the fact that in narrating the legend of Constantia *Description A* draws on a tradition which was well disseminated in Iceland, as is proved by the fact that *Veraldar saga* and two of the *Heilagra manna søgur*, for the most part translated from Latin and with a rich manuscript diffusion, mention the story of Constantine building the Church of Sant'Agnese on the advice of Pope Sylvester and on the request of his daughter Constantia. There are, in addition, noteworthy correspondences between the topographical information about Sant'Agnese in *Description A* and indications on the position of the Honorian basilica available in the pilgrim guides. In these the same basilica often receives the epithet 'splendid'.

Two hypotheses can be put forward to explain the fact that the reference to the Constantinian basilica is historically incongruent with the traditional dating of *Leiðarvísir* and that the information about Sant'Agnese is in all probability taken from written sources. The first possibility is that, similar to the inaccurate information regarding the presence of the 'thorns from Christ's crown of thorns' in the Lateran (§3.7.2.7), a pilgrim actually visited the basilica *ad corpus* of Sant'Agnese, but once he had gone back to Iceland he turned to written sources to rekindle his memory and to reinforce it with their authority. He could then have found, in the sources at his disposal, topographical information about the Honorian

basilica, which he correctly used to locate the basilica existing in the twelfth century, and information about the building of the Constantinian basilica, which he confused with the seventh-century basilica that he actually saw and recollected. It is also possible that in an *Urtext* of *Leiðarvísir* there was simply topographical information on Sant'Agnese and that the legend of Constantia's foundation was added to it later. This possibility is linked to the second, more likely hypothesis, that the description of the basilica of Sant'Agnese is not based on personal experience but exclusively on written sources. The description of Sant'Agnese contains details that are historically inaccurate but are not incompatible with the traditional twelfth-century dating of the itinerary. If one considers, however, that *Description A* follows the structure and the contents typical of early versions of the *IEUR* (§3.6), and that not only are the descriptions of St John Lateran (§3.7) and of St Peter's (§3.20) probably based on written sources, but they also include details that are incompatible with a twelfth-century dating of the itinerary, the hypothesis that the description of Sant'Agnese exclusively relies on written sources, rather than on the inaccurate memories of an erudite traveller, seems entirely plausible.

On the basis of the correspondences identified in the present analysis, we can attempt to identify the possible written sources on which the author of *Description A* might have based the description of Sant'Agnese. In the first place, Bede's world-chronicle in *De temporum ratione* seems to have played an important role in *Leiðarvísir*, as it did for *Veraldar saga*. Further evidence of the diffusion in medieval Iceland of textual material on Rome from Bede's work is the fact that the world-chronicle in *De temporum ratione* is also used in the Icelandic version of the *Vita sancti Sylvestri* to recall the importance of the building activity of Constantine in Rome, and that the corresponding passage is also present in *Veraldar saga*, showing interesting parallels with the story of St Agnes narrated in *Description A*. The insertion in *Veraldar saga* of a reference to the 'the throne of the pope' in St John Lateran, which is present in *Description A* but not in Bede, shows a remarkable correspondence between *Leiðarvísir* and *Veraldar saga*, and might be taken as evidence for the existence of a written source common to these two texts. The author of *Description A* appears to have made use of the *Vitae Sanctorum*, which was an obvious source for those who wanted to describe the holy places in Rome where saints had been martyred. In the description of Sant'Agnese there are remarkable analogies with the *Vita Sanctae Agnetis* and the *Vita Sancti Sylvestri*. The analogies

between the Icelandic versions of these *Vitae* and *Description A* reinforce the likelihood of the hypothesis that the description of Sant'Agnese is entirely based on a Latin model.

3.11 The Porta Latina and San Giovanni a Porta Latina

After Sant'Agnese, *Leiðarvísir* works in the Porta Latina and the Church of San Giovanni a Porta Latina: *þadan ero iiij milur i borgina austan i hlid þat er heitir anteportam latinam þar er kirkia Iohannis postola*, 'From there it is four miles west into the city to that gate, that is called *ante portam latinam*. The Church of John the Apostle is there' (ll. 83-85). Once again *Description A* clearly shows the use of a Latin model and a misunderstanding deriving from a poor knowledge of Latin: *ante portam latinam* should instead be part of the name of the church. The *porta latina* is included in the *MUR* list of the gates of Rome without mentioning the church (VZ: III 17). The locution *ante portam latinam* is part of the full name of the church. This full name is also attested in the *IEUR*, including the earliest version in MS Cott. Faustina B VII (f. 16vb). In Manuscript Roma, Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Vat. Lat. 4265 (second half of the fourteenth century, Miedema 1996: 77), we find the information that *in sancti Iohannis ante portam Latinam, ubi positus est in oleo bulienti, potest homo liberare animam de purgatorio*, 'In San Giovanni a Porta Latina, where he [St John] was put in boiling oil, a man can free a soul from purgatory' (Weißthanner 1954: 63; see Huelsen 1927: 148). The text attested in MS AM 194 8vo clearly shows in this passage the use of a Latin written source.

3.12 The Palace of Diocletian

Description A also strays from geographical fact, indicating that *fra kirkiu iohannis er skamt til hallar þeirar er atti deoclacianus konungr*, 'From the Church of John it is a short distance to that hall, which King Diocletian owned' (l. 85). On the assumption that the description of Rome is based on an actual visit of the city, Kålund (1908: 76) and Magoun (1940: 283) point out that Nikulás probably visited both *Thermae* and confused the Baths of Diocletian with those of Caracalla (or *Antonianae*), which are closer to the Church of San Giovanni a Porta Latina. The *Thermae Antonianae* are in fact mentioned in the *MUR* (VZ III: 20) in the list of the baths before the *Thermae Dioclitianae* and they are also included in the shortened version of the *MUR* of MS Cott. Faustina B VII (f. 16rb).

It has been shown, however, that *Leiðarvísir* cannot be considered a travel account (§2), and that not only do significant passages of the description of Rome (§3.7, §3.20) depend on written sources, but they are also incompatible with an attribution to Abbot Nikulás. As for the wrong reference to the Constantinian Basilica in the description of Sant'Agnese (§3.10.4), the possible influence of a written source on this passage cannot be neglected. The wrong positioning of the 'Hall of Diocletian', or the mix-up with the Thermae of Caracalla, cannot be ascribed simplistically to an error of an eye-witness, but it is likely to derive from a misreading of a written source. *Leiðarvísir* refers to the *Thermae Dioclitianae* as the 'Hall of Diocletian'. The term 'palace' (*palatium*) is used in the *MUR* (VZ: III 60) to refer to the Baths of Diocletian (and for many other large buildings in this work); it is included also in the *MUR* of MS Cotton. Faustina B. VII (f. 16r). The *Palatium Diocleciani* – and its remnant – could not be so 'insignificant' (Kålund 1908: 76), if it is also included in the list of *Palatia* presented by Magister Gregorius in his *Narracio de mirabilibus urbis*, 'Narration of the Marvels of Rome', probably written in England (Gregorius 2000: 277) in the twelfth or thirteenth century. Magister Gregorius considered the 'palace' of Diocletian a noteworthy place which had to be included in his *Narracio* (Gregorius 2000: 291): *Palatium etiam Diocleciani preterire non possum*, 'I cannot omit to mention the Palace of Diocletian'. Kedar (2005: 270) emphasises that Benjamin of Tudela too mentioned exclusively the Baths of Diocletian, as does *Description A*. It is not unlikely that the *Palatium Diocleciani* was included in the description of Rome on the basis of the notoriety of this emperor in the hagiographic tradition, especially because of his role in the *Vita* of St Sebastian, to which, as will be shown below (§3.15), there is also a probable indirect reference in *Leiðarvísir*.

3.13 Santa Maria in Domnica and Santi Giovanni e Paolo

After the 'Hall of King Diocletian' there is the *Mario kirkia*, 'The Church of Mary' (l. 86), identified by Magoun (1940: 283) as Santa Maria in Domnica on the basis of its proximity to the Baths of Caracalla. Even though this church is commonly mentioned in the *IEUR* (see MS Cotton. Faustina B VII, f. 16[va] and Schimmelpfennig 1988: 656-57), there are many in Rome consecrated to the Mother of Christ, and we have seen how the identification of the 'Hall of King Diocletian' is problematic so

that also the 'Church of Mary' cannot be unequivocally identified as Santa Maria in Domnica.

The identification of the *Mario kirkia* with Santa Maria in Domnica is, however, strengthened by its proximity to the next church in the itinerary, Santi Giovanni e Paolo, which can be located with certainty (Kålund 1913: 76; Hülsen 1927: 277; Magoun 1940: 283). These saints are described as two court officers of Constantia (daughter of Constantine): *þa er kirkia iohanni & pauli martirum þeir [voro hird]menn Constancio*, 'Then there is the Church of the Martyrs John and Paul. They were men of Constantia's retinue' (ll. 86-87). There is a similar definition in the hagiographic tradition. We find it for instance in Bede's *Martyrologium*, where he mentions the martyrdom *Joannis et Pauli fratrum, quorum primus praepositus, secundus primicerius fuit Constantiae virginis, filiae Constantini*, 'of the brothers John and Paul, of whom the first was chamberlain, and the second dignitary of the virgin Constantia, daughter of Constantine' (*PL*: XCIV 956).

3.14 The Pantheon

The Church of All Saints, i.e. the Pantheon, is mentioned after Santi Giovanni e Paolo: *þa er allra heilagra kirkia micil & d[yrlig & er o]pin ofan sem pulkro kirkia i hierusalem* 'Then there is the large and splendid Church of All Saints and it is open at the top like the Church of the Sepulchre in Jerusalem' (ll. 87-88). Even though there is no church in Rome of this name today, as Magoun points out (1940: 283), we should bear in mind that the name is often explained in the sources with reference to the Christianisation of the temple. Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon on 13 May 609 to Mary and the martyrs, and the dedication date of the church was celebrated as the Feast of All Saints until this was moved to 1 November (Bede 1969: 148). The *MUR* explain the history of the dedication of the church to Mary, the origin of its name and of the Feast of All Saints:

> Venit Bonifacius papa tempore Focae imperatoris cristiani. Videns illud templum ita mirabile dedicatum ad honorem Cibeles, matris deorum, ante quod multotiens a daemonibus Cristiani percutiebantur, rogavit papa imperatorem ut condonaret ei hoc templum; ut sicut in kalendis novembris dedicatum fuit ad honorem Cibeles, matris Deorum, sic illud dedicaret in kalendis novembris ad honorem beatae Mariae sempre virginia, quae est mater omnium sanctorum. Quod Caesar ei concessit, et papa cum omni Romano populo in die kalendis novembris dedicavit;

et statuit ut in isto die Romanus pontifex ibi celebret missam et populus accipiat corpus et sanguinem Domini, sicut in die Natalis Domini; et in isto die omnes sancti cum matre sua Maria sempre virgine et caelestibus spiritibus habeant festivitatem, et defuti habeant per ecclesias totius mundi sacrificium pro redemptione animarum suarum. (VZ: III 35)

Pope Boniface [IV] came to the throne in the time of the Christian Emperor Phocas. Seeing that such a marvellous temple was dedicated to the honour of Cybele, mother of the gods, and that before this temple the Christians were often stricken by demons, the Pope requested the Emperor to donate this temple to him; so that, as on the Calends of November it was dedicated to Cybele, mother of the gods, on the Calends of November he might likewise dedicate it to the honour of the Blessed Mary, ever-virgin, who is the mother of all the saints. The Emperor granted this to him, and the Pope dedicated the temple on the Calends of November together with the whole Roman people; and he ordered that on that day the Roman pontiff should celebrate mass there and the people should take the body and the blood of the Lord, as on Christmas day; and that on the same day all the saints with their mother, the ever-virgin Mary, and with the heavenly spirits should have a feast, and that throughout the churches of the world the dead should have a sacrifice for the redemption of their souls.

In Magister Gregorius's *Narracio*, the temple is called *omnium sanctorum ecclesia*, 'the Church of All Saints' (Gregorius 2000: 293). Bede, in his *Historia ecclesiastica*, explains how the Pantheon was converted into a church:

Hic est Bonifatius quartus a beato Gregorio Romanae urbis episcopo, qui inpetravit a Focate principe, donari Ecclesiae Christi templum Romae, quod Pantheon vocabatur ab antiquis, quasi simulacrum esset omnium deorum; in quo ipse, eliminata omni spurcitia, fecit ecclesiam sanctae Dei genetricis, atque omnium martyrum Christi, ut exclusa multitudine daemonum, multitudo ibi sanctorum memoriam haberet. (Bede 1969: 148)

Boniface was the fourth bishop of Rome after the blessed Gregory. He succeeded in his request to the Emperor Focas, that a Roman temple should be donated to the Church of Christ: it was called Pantheon from ancient times, as if it were a simulacrum of all the gods. Wherein he, after all the filth had been turned out of doors, made a church in honour of the holy Mother of God, and in honour of all the martyrs of Christ, so that, when the multitude of devils had been shut out, a multitude of saints could be remembered there.

Bergr Sokkason, who became abbot of Munkaþverá in 1325, explicitly quotes the above-mentioned passage in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* about Boniface IV and the Pantheon in his *Nikolaus saga erkibyskups* (Unger 1877: II 53$^{27\text{-}54}$). Bergr Sokkason used the *Vita beati Nicolai episcopi* by John of Bari, significantly enriching the original with other sources, which were analysed in their complexity by Ole Widding (1961; Unger 1877: I xv-xvi). The passage in *Nikolaus saga* explains how Boniface considered it opportune to consecrate the Pantheon to the Holy Trinity, to Mary and *i gofgan allra guds heilagra*, 'in honour of all the saints of God' (Unger 1877: II 54$^{2\text{-}3}$). The explanation is also present in Bede's *Martyrologium* (*PL*: XCIV 913, 1087). It is very likely, however, that the source for the denomination of the Pantheon in *Leiðarvísir* as *Allraheilagrakirkja* could again be the world-chronicle of *De temporum ratione*, where we find two references to the Pantheon, both of them giving an explicit explanation of its name. In the first passage Bede explains how the Pantheon was considered originally *omnium deorum . . . habitaculum* 'the dwelling-place . . . of all the gods' (1977: 499). In the second it is again connected with Pope Boniface IV:

> Idem [Focas] alio papa Bonifatio petente iussit in veteri fano, quod Pantheum vocabatur, ablatis idolatriae sordibus ecclesiam beatae semper virginis Mariae et omnium martyrum fieri, ut, ubi quondam omnium non deorum, sed daemoniorum cultus agebatur, ibi deinceps omnium fieret memoria sanctorum. (Bede 1977: 523)
> This same [Focas], responding to another request of Pope Boniface, ordered that, after all the filth of idolatry had been removed, a church should be founded in the ancient temple which was called Pantheon, in honour of the blessed and ever-virgin Mary and of all the martyrs, so that the memory of all the saints would be kept from then on in that same place, where once the cult not of all the gods, but of all the demons was practised.

Interestingly, we find that the same passage is used in *Veraldar saga*, where it is stressed how the new name of the church is in honour of Mary and *allra heilagra*:

> Focas var kei(sari) viii. ár. hann gaf Bonifacio pafa blothus þat er Pantheon het. hann rensadi þat af blotvm ok gerdi at Mariv kirkiv ok allra heilagra. þaþan af hofz allra heilagra messo halld. (1977: 66 ^{16}-67 ^{3})
> Focas was emperor for eight years. He gave to Pope Boniface a heathen temple, which was called Pantheon. He cleansed that of idols and turned it into the Church

of Mary and of All Saints. From this arose the observance of the Feast of All Saints.

The information is then added that the Pantheon *er [o]pin ofan sem pulkro kirkia i hierusalem*, 'is open at the top like the Church of the Sepulchre in Jerusalem' (ll. 87-88; see §2.6.2). This reference to the dome's opening is usual in the *IEUR*: *Habet in medio centri in cacumine aperturam rotundam magnam, nec habet aliam fenestram*, 'It has a round opening in the middle of the top and has no other window' (VZ: IV 82).

3.15 The Church of San Paolo fuori le mura

The next item of the itinerary after the Pantheon, namely the Church of St Paolo fuori le mura, is to the west outside the city: *Vestr fra borg[ginni] er pals kirkia þar er munclifi & borg um utan er gengr or roma* 'To the west outside the city is the Church of Paul. A monastery is there, and round about a suburb that extends out from Rome' (ll. 88-89). The *Notitia ecclesiarum urbis Romae* gives the same topographical information that the church is *ad occidentem* 'to the west' (VZ: II 89). The monastery to which *Description A* refers was a large monastery attached to the basilica (Magoun 1940: 284). The *burg* mentioned in *Description A* is a suburb grown up around the basilica and the monastery. The area suffered frequent attacks from the Saracens and was therefore fortified by Pope John VIII (872-882) in 880: this fortified borough was called *Iohannipolis* or *Castrum Sancti Pauli* (Magoun 1940: 284; Armellini 1891: 930-31). In the tradition of the *IEUR* we find significant similarities. In Manuscript Montserrat, Biblioteca del Monestir, Cod. I, there is the information about San Paolo fuori le mura that *est ibi etiam monasterium antiquum monachorum nigrorum et bene devotum et pulcherrimum claustrum*, 'an ancient and very devout Cistercian [lit. of the black monks] monastery is there and a very beautiful cloister' (VZ: IV 86). A reference to the monastery can also be found in the shortened version of the *MUR* preceding the *IEUR* in MS Cotton. Faustina B. VII. In this version we find a list (based on an *Ordo Romanus*) of the Roman *Monasteria Monachorum*, 'The Monasteries of Monks': the first monastery of this list is in the *Ecclesia Sancti Pauli via hostiensi* (MS Cotton. Faustina B. VII, fol. 15va).

San Paolo fuori le mura is the third in the list of the patriarchal churches in *Description B*. The Basilica is said to be *þar sem er hofut sancti pauli apostoli þar er via ostiensi*, 'in the place where the head of Paul is kept and where the Via Ostiensis

is' (Simek 1990: 492[7]). As we have seen (§3.7.2.4), the information on the *höfuð sancti Pauli apostoli* is inexact, because this relic was in the Lateran at the latest from the eighth or the ninth century (Blaauw 1994: 167). The formula *via ostiensi* is a clear signal that this passage is based on a Latin source.

3.16 The Catacombs and San Sebastiano fuori le mura

After San Paolo fuori le mura *Leiðarvísir* adds that *[þar] er stadr sa er heitir catacumbas*, 'the place that is called *catacumbas* is there' (l. 89). The expression *stadr sa, er heitir catacumbas* is clearly a translation from the common Latin formula *in loco qui dicitur catacumbas* (Werlauff 1821: 46; Magoun 1940: 284-85). This expression occurs for the first time in the *Liber Pontificalis* in the life of Pope Hadrian I (772-795), who is said to have renovated the *ecclesiam Apostolorum foris porta Appia miliario tertio in loco qui appellatur catacumbas, ubi corpus beati Sebastiani martyris cum aliis requiescit*, 'the Church of the Apostles outside the *Porta Appia* at the third mile in that place which is called *catacumbas*, where the body of the blessed martyr Sebastian rests with others (Duchesne 1955-57: I 508). As is apparent from this passage, the formula *in loco qui dicitur catacumbas* is used very early to indicate where the Basilica of San Sebastiano fuori le mura stands. The basilica was originally denominated *ecclesia apostolorum* because in the third century the catacombs were temporarily used as a place of burial for the two apostles (Armellini 1891: 896-97; see also Kålund 1913: 77). In the *Acta Sancti Sebastiani*, of uncertain authorship, it is narrated how Diocletian ordered that St Sebastian be beaten to death and his body thrown into the *Cloaca Maxima*, so that the Christians would not worship him as a martyr. After his death, however, St Sebastian appeared in a dream to Lucina indicating where she could find his body and asking her to bury it *ad catacumbas*, close to the relics of the apostles:

> In cloaca illa quæ est iuxta circum inuenies corpus meum pendens in gunfo. Hoc itaque dum tu leuaueris perduces ad catacumbas: et sepelies me in initio criptæ iuxta uestigia apostolorum. (Mombritius 1978: II 476[41-43])
>
> You will find my body in that sewer which is beside the circus, hanging from a hook. After you have lifted it down from that, bring it to the catacombs, and bury me just inside the crypt, beside the remains of the apostles.

Bede reports the same version of the story in his *Martyrologium* (*PL*: XCIV 817-18) but he also refers briefly to the catacombs in two passages of *De temporum ratione*.

In the first he narrates how Pope Cornelius (251-53), since he was asked by Lucina to do so, removed the body of the Apostle Paul *de catacumbas,* 'from the catacombs', and put it on the Via Ostiense (Bede 1977: 505); in the second it is reported that Pope Damasus (366-384) decorated the basilica *in catacumbas* (Bede 1977: 511), that is, the Church of St Sebastian. The source for both passages is, again, the *Liber Pontificalis* (Duchesne 1955-57: 150, 212).

In *Sebastianus saga*, an adaptation of the *Acta* quoted above, we find that St Sebastian says to Lucina:

> Leitadu liks mins, ok muntu finna þat hanga a staur i gang nockurum, ok hefir þat eigi nidr fallit i saur; þat skalltu færa i stad þann, er Catacumbas heitir, ok grafa hia fotum Petri ok Pauli guds postola. (Unger 1877, II 234[36]-35[3])
>
> Search for my body, and you will find it hanging from a stake in a certain passage, and it has not fallen down in the filth; you shall bring it to the place which is called catacumbas, and bury it at the feet of Peter and Paul the apostles of God.

The wording *i stad þann, er Catacumbas heitir*, is very close to that of *Leiðarvísir* (*þar er stadr sa, er heitir catacumbas*). This passage of *Sebastianus saga* reinforces the identification of the locality mentioned in the itinerary with the catacombs on the Via Appia, as already proposed by Kålund (1913: 77), or, more precisely, with the Basilica of San Sebastiano fuori le mura itself, which stands in that area and was denominated very early *Basilica Sancti Sebastiani ad catacumbas* (Hülsen 1927: 460; Armellini 1891: 897). The Basilica of San Sebastiano fuori le mura is commonly mentioned in the *IEUR* (Hülsen 1927: 142-43; VZ: III 88; Hulbert 1923: 408; Weißthanner 1954: 63) but without specifying that it is *in loco qui appellatur catacumbas*. It is likely that the author of *Description A* has drawn on the hagiographic or historiographic tradition to add this information to the itinerary.

3.17 The Tiber

After San Paolo fuori le mura and the catacombs have been written about, we find the observation that all parts of the city described so far are 'beyond the Tiber': *þetta er allt fyrir utan tifr hon fellr i gegnum borgina roma hon het fordum a[lbula]* 'All

this is beyond the Tiber. It flows through the city of Rome. It was formerly called Albula' (18 ll. 89-90).[77] The Icelandic *fyrir utan Tifr* is formed from the Latin *Transtiberim*, a very common expression which also occurs in the *MUR* (VZ: III 17, 18, 26, 64). *Description A* then gives the ancient name of the river. Although Kålund and Simek (l. 90) complete the manuscript lacuna as *Albana* (1909: 18[19]; 1913: 77), Magoun's reading *Albula* must be the correct interpretation. Magoun argues that this name, attested in Virgil's *Aeneid* (VIII. 332) and in Ovid's *Fasti* (II. 389; IV. 65; V. 645) and Metamorphoses (XIV. 324), could have been known to Nikulás from either of these sources or communicated to him in Rome (1940: 285). *Albula* is also attested in other classical sources, e.g. in Livy's *Ab urbe condita* (I. 3, 5) and in Plinius Maior's *Naturalis Historia* (III. 5, 9). The old name of the Tiber is however present in several medieval sources with which the author of *Description A* could have been familiar. Augustine, for example, in *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, 'On Genesis against the Manichees', after mentioning the old biblical names of the Ganges and the Nile, writes that *sicut nunc tiberis dicitur fluuius, qui prius albula dicebatur*, 'similarly the river, which was once called *Albula*, is now called Tiber' (*PL*: XXXIV 203); the same clause (*tiberis dicitur fluuius, qui prius albula vocabatur*) can be found in *De Genesi ad litteram*, 'On the Literal Meaning of Genesis' (Augustine 1894: 241[2]). Isidore of Seville interprets the old name of the Tiber, explaining that it *antea Albula antiquum nomen a colore habuit, quod niuibus albus sit*, 'once carried the old name *Albula* because of its colour, since it was white [*albus*] because of the snows' (Isidore of Seville 1911: XIII 21, 27). Significantly, we find a reference to the old name of the Tiber again in Bede's world-chronicle at the end of *De temporum ratione*: *Tyberinus Sylvius annis VIII, a quo et fluvius appellatus est Tyberis, qui prius Albula dicebatur* 'Tyberinus Sylvius reigned eight years. And the River Tiber, which was once called *Albula*, gets its name from him' (1977: 477). The sentence *hon hét fordum A[lbul]a*, found in *Leiðarvísir*, is very close to the Latin relative clause *qui prius Albula dicebatur*.

3.18 The Castle of Crescentius

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[77] See note 54.

After a topographical summing up *Description A* adds the information that *Crescencius kastali er hestr i borginni fyrir hedan ána [hardla] rikr*, 'The Castle of Crescentius is the highest in the city on this side of the river. [It is very] magnificent' (l. 91). The name derives from the powerful Roman family Crescenzi, which owned (and fortified) the Mausoleum of Hadrian from the tenth until the mid-twelfth century (Borgatti 1931: 94-111). In this period the Mausoleum was commonly known as *Castellum*, *Castrum*, *Arx* or *Turris Crescentii* (Borgatti 1931: 100). Castel Sant'Angelo is also mentioned in the *MUR*: in one passage it is called *Castellum Crescentii* (VZ: III 23); in a second passage it is mentioned in connection with the Terebinth of Nero (a round travertine structure no longer extant on the site of S. Maria Traspontina, Lanciani 1892: 271; see VZ: III 46, n. 1), which is said to be *tantae altitudinis quantum castellum Hadriani*, 'as high as the Castle of Hadrian' (VZ: III 45). Like *Description A*, the *MUR* highlights the dominant position in the city of Castel Sant'Angelo. *Castellum Crescentii* is also mentioned in the *Narracio* of Magister Gregorius (2000: 282, 297).

3.19 The *Kauphús* of Peter the Apostle

After Castel Sant'Angelo *Leiðarvísir* reports that *þa er kauphus petrs postola hardla mikit & langt* (ll. 91-92), 'Then there is the market of Peter the Apostle, very large and long'. This is the only occurrence of *kauphús* which is registered in Cleasby and Vigfusson's and in Fritzner's dictionaries (s.v.). The *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* also registers only this occurrence (Degnbol, et al. 2012: s.v. *kauphús*). Scholarly analyses of this passage have put forward slightly differing interpretations of the word, but the possibility of a corruption of the text has thus far not been taken into consideration.

After summing up the interpretations of the word given in the past, it will first be shown that the existence of an intense commercial activity near St Peter's is confirmed by archaeological evidence and medieval primary sources. Besides confirming the possibility of interpreting *kauphús* as 'market', an alternative hypothesis will also be put forward. The market of St Peter's is in fact not mentioned in any description or pilgrim guide of Rome, which, on the contrary, often mention before St Peter's the *cantharus Sancti Petri*, a large and magnificent fountain. The plausibility of this second hypothesis can be indirectly reinforced by the fact that certain details in the description of the Basilica of St Peter's, as will be seen in the

analysis of this passage, are based on written sources and are incompatible with the traditional dating and attribution to Abbot Nikulás.

3.19.1 Interpretations of Kauphús

As appears in Figure 2 (p. 184), the palaeographic reading of the word *Kauphús* in the text of MS AM 194 8o is not open to doubt:

Figure 2: MS AM 194 8o, fol. 14ʳ, detail.

Werlauff acutely saw *kauphús* as a *domus, in qua mercatura exercetur, qualem basilicam dixere veteres Romani*, 'house, where commerce is practised, as Romans intended the meaning of basilica' (Werlauff 1821: 46), a place constructed for the transaction of *negotia*, not so different from a modern commodity exchange. Cleasby's dictionary (s.v.) translates *kauphús* as 'shop', and Fritzner explains that it is a *hus hvori der kjøbes og sælges*, 'a house where one buys and sells' (s.v.). Kålund (1913: 58) translates *kauphús* using the Danish calque *udsalgshus*, 'a house of sale', which he explains further as an *udsalgsted* or a *bazar*, 'a shop' or a 'bazaar' (1913: 78). According to Kålund, *kauphús* could indicate the covered portico of St Peter's, which connected Castel Sant'Angelo to the church, or, less likely, the big atrium in front of the church. Since it summarises many of the problems related to the interpretation and the identification of *kauphús*, it is helpful to quote the whole passage from Kålund's commentary:

> After this comes the very large and long '*køb-hus*' (shop, bazaar) of St. Peter's. Since the Church of St Peter is named immediately after this, this building should be sought in the so-called *Borgo*, the part of the city between Castel Sant'Angelo and St Peter's, which during the Middle Ages was the foreign quarter of Rome, but the demonstration is difficult. It can be observed that the whole *Borgo* is now and then called *Porticus* (*-a*) *St Petri*, after a covered colonnade which led to the

Church of St Peter's from about Castel Sant'Angelo, where a gate provided access
to that; possibly this could be the *købhus*. Among the local buildings, by the way,
one can perhaps very briefly draw attention to the hostel established by the English
kings, from which around 1200 originated the Hospital of S. Spirito, which is
extant to this day. It seems less reasonable that *købhus* could indicate the atrium of
Old St. Peter's. (Kålund 1913: 78)[78]

Magoun (1940: 286), sharing Kålund's opinion, believes the *kauphús* was the
'shopping-arcade or Bazaar' connecting Castel Sant'Angelo and St Peter's, and
translates it as 'bazaar' (1940: 280); Raschellà (1985-86: 561) finds a compromise
solution, using the word *mercato*, 'market', but adding *portico* in round brackets;
Lacroix (2000: 241) opts directly for *portique*; Simek (1990: 487) follows Magoun
and proposes in his German translation the term *Bazar*, which is also used by
Waßenhoven (2008: 56).

3.19.2 The Area around Medieval St Peter's

In their present state, the Basilica and the Square of St Peter's are the result of a
complete and radical reconstruction made in the course of the sixteenth and
seventeenth centuries. They are entirely different from the medieval basilica, to
which *Description A* refers, which Constantine began to build shortly after 320 and
finished shortly before 333 (Blaauw 1994: 452-53). Sible de Blaauw (1994: 451-463)
gives a picture of the architectonical history of the Basilica, and Achim Arbeiter
(1988: 51-61) sums up the questions connected to the dating of the building works.

In front of the Constantinian basilica there was an atrium enveloped by a
quadriporticus, probably contemporaneous with the rest of the building, that had the
same width and length as the nave (Picard 1974: 855; Blaauw 1994: 463-66). The

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[78] '*Derpå kommer det meget store og lange St Peters 'køb-hus' (udslagssted, bazar). Da
umiddelbart efter dette St Peters-kirken nævnes, må bygningen altså søges i den såkaldte Borgo,
bydelen mellem Engelsborg og Peters-kirken, i middelalderen Roms fremmedskvarter, men dens
påvisning er vanskelig. Merkes kan, at den hele Borgo undertiden benævnes Porticus (-a) St Petri
efter en bedækket søjlegang, som førte til Peters-kirken omtrent fra Engelsborg, hvor en port dannede
indgangen til den, – muligvis kunde dette være St Peter's købhus. Af herværende bygninger kan ellers
måske snarest fremhæves det af engelske konger anlagte herberg, hvoraf c. 1200 det store, endnu
bestående hospital S. Spirito fremgik. At 'købhuset' skulde betegne den gamle St Peters kirkes store
strium, snes mindre rimeligt*'.

first account of the *atrium* is in a letter of Paulinus of Nola, written in early 396, which is probably also the earliest account of Old St Peter's, where it is narrated how a large crowd of the poor gathered for a banquet given in memory of the wife of the senator Panmachius, so that there was hardly enough room *intra basilicam, et pro januis atrii, et pro gradibus campi*, 'inside the basilica, in front of the doors of the atrium and in front of the steps of the square' (Paulinus of Nola 1894: 93; see Picard 1974: 856-57). This open court with a garden in front of the basilica was famous throughout Christendom from the seventh century on as *Paradisus Sancti Petri* (Blaauw 1994: 524). The *paradisus* is mentioned in the twelfth-century *MUR*, when the area around St Peter is described: (VZ: III 44-47). It is also present in the *IEUR* of MS Cotton. Faustina B VII, where its length is indicated: *longitudo paradisi lxxii passum*, 'The paradise is seventy-two paces in length' (f. 17ra). This inclusion of the paradise of St Peter's in a list where dimensions of the important churches and basilicas are given confirms its autonomous relevance as a sacred place, and it is noteworthy how *Description A* also puts emphasis on the dimensions of the *kauphús*.

The *Curtina Sancti Petri*, or *Platea Sancti Petri*, was the square that extended in front of St Peter's and its atrium. It was connected to Castel Sant'Angelo by the covered portico that, as we have seen, Kålund and Magoun identify with the *kauphús* (Blaauw 1994: 456). This covered portico, probably built in the fifth or early sixth century, is first mentioned by Procopius of Caesarea in his *History of the Wars*, written around the mid-sixth century, where he refers to the στοά, 'the roofed colonnade', which led to St Peter's from the Tiber bridge (Procopius 1919: V. XXII. 21; Krautheimer 1985: 18). Carlo Cecchelli (1957: 241), however, does not believe that a real *Porticus* was ever built, but believes that this name referred to the many houses with porticos placed along the street leading from Castel Sant'Angelo to the *Platea Sancti Petri*.
Figure 3 (p.187), a well-known reconstruction of Old St Peter's by made by Brewer in 1891, can give us an idea of the structure of the Constantinian basilica:
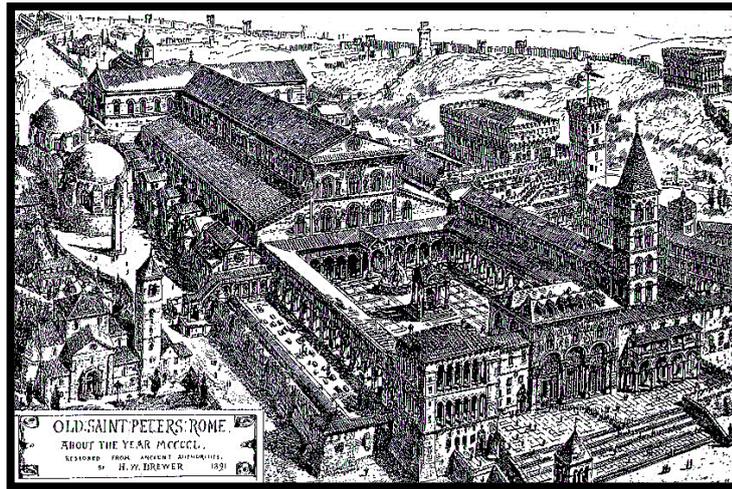
Figure 3: Old St Peter's reconstructed by H. Brewer (Picard 1974: 863)

Figure 4 (p.188), a city plan of Rome published in 1577 by Etienne Du Pérac-Lafréry and Antonio Lafreri (Bannister 1968: 5), represents the urban context around St Peter's, which at that time was still medieval. In the map the new basilica is under construction but the old nave is still visible, as is the district of the Vatican.

3.19.3 Evidence of Trading Activities around Medieval St Peter's

In the Middle Ages there were often markets near the churches. Richard Krautheimer (2000: 261-69) describes the growth and the importance of the *Borgo* (from the medieval Latin *burgus*, a fortified settlement), also known as the Leonine City. This was the part of Rome around the Vatican included in the walls erected by Pope Leo IV during the ninth century.
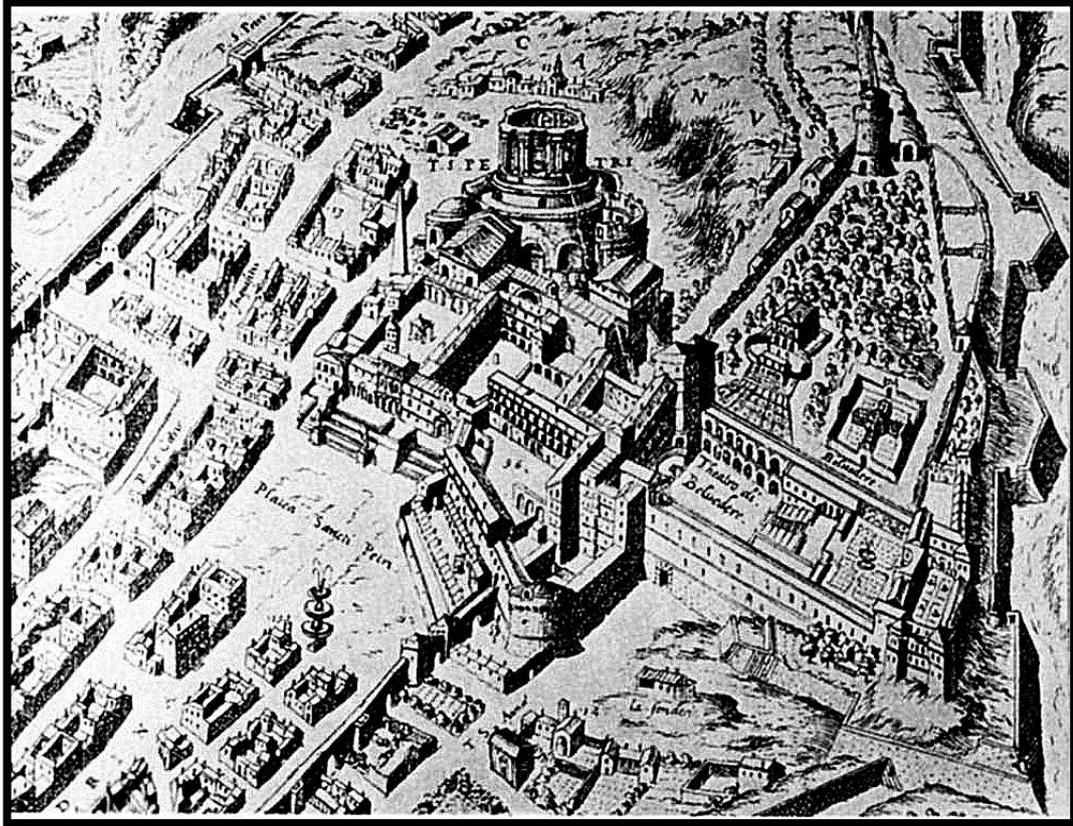
Figure 4: The area of St Peter's in 1577 (Bannister 1968: 5).

Krautheimer explains how 'inside the Leonine City, the streets from St Peter's to the bridge were the important traffic lanes and a major shopping centre for visitors and pilgrims'(2000: 266). The interpretation of the word *kauphús* as a place where goods were bought and sold, a 'market', can be supported by historical evidence of business activity near St Peter's. As early as the fourth century, an intense commerce is attested in the area: 'Wine merchants, vendors of oil, fishmongers would have set up their stalls in front of the church along Via Cornelia coming from the Tiber bridge [...] so would presumably vendors of lamps and small religious trinkets to be offered at the shrine' (Krautheimer 1985: 17-18). From the second half of the fifth century there was an ever-growing increase of the number of pilgrims come from afar, so that 'sellers of wood and charcoal [...] cobblers, clothiers, bakers, money changers, vendors of *generi alimentari'* would have been around to meet the pilgrims' manifold needs' (Krautheimer 1985: 23); from the later ninth to the eleventh century 'nothing is known regarding the frequency of pilgrimages' to St Peter's, but 'by the end of that century the pilgrims were back, flocking to St Peter's from all over the

West', and in this period 'private commercial activity took over to provide for the needs of the pilgrims as well as of the permanent residents of the Borgo' (Krautheimer 1985: 31). Benedictus Canonicus in his *Ordo Romanus* (1143-44) mentions several of these traders, such as the *paliarii*, the 'sellers of straw',[79] and the *fiolarii*, 'sellers of phials' (VZ: III 224). Krautheimer describes the area, stressing how 'by the High Middle Ages, the main thoroughfares of the Borgo, the square in front of the church and the atrium and its steps had become one big bazaar' (2000: 266).

Some eleventh- and twelfth-century contracts relating to business properties around St Peter's, conserved in the Archivio Capitolare di San Pietro, provide evidence to confirm that business in that area must have been flourishing. In 1041 Vuilielmus, a *negotiens*, a 'trader', bought a house in the Leonine City. The house was sold *cum [...] ergasteriis duobus ad preponenda negotia in portico maiore [cum] pergola et curte ante se*, 'with two shops to do business in the large portico, and with a pergola and courtyard in front of it' (Schiaparelli 1901: 460). In 1043 Petrus de Rapizzo rented two houses, one of which was *coniuncta cum portico Sancti Petri cum argasteria in integrum intus portico ad negotia repreponendum*, 'linked to the portico of St Peter, together with shops inside the portico for doing business' (Schiaparelli 1901: 462). In 1127 Filippo de Goio sells *caminata cum argasterio ante se cum uno casalino post se*, 'a room heated by a fireplace, with a shop in front and a cottage at the back' (Schiaparelli 1902: 277). In 1144 Sarracenus, son of Gregorius de Ceca, rents

> medietatem unius domus terrinee tegulicie in integrum cum medietate de ponteca infra se et medietatem de argasteriis ante se in porticu maiori, atque et medietatem de cripta post se subtus Metam Sancti Petri et omnibus suis pertinentiis
> half of a single-storied house of brick with half of the storeroom inside, and half of the shops in front of its large portico, and half of the vault, near the Meta Sancti

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[79] This is how Krautheimer (2000: 364) translates this word, which VZ (III: 224) interprets as sellers of *palia*, 'vestments'. It is also possible to consider these *paliari* as sellers of a special kind of *pallia*, 'linen strips (or the episcopal *pallium*) that were lowered down to touch the martyr's grave' (Krautheimer 2000: 86).

Petri [west of Castel Sant'Angelo], together with all its appurtenances. (Schiaparelli 1902: 285)

Eighty years later, in 1224, there were so many merchants and traders in the area that the situation around St Peter's was probably out of control. The senators Anibaldus and Napoleone commanded for this reason that *nulli omnino liceat infra ipsam basilicam et in porticu eius, paradiso et in ecclesia Sancte Marie in Turribus et in capite graduum ac in universis gradibus aliquid vendere vel comparare*, 'no-one may sell or buy anything inside the basilica or in its portico, in the paradise, or in the Church of Santa Maria in Turribus, at the top of the steps, or on any of the steps' (Bartoloni 1948: 179). The two senators justified their ordinance by a reference to Matthew 21:13, adding that the Lord *ementes et vendentes eiecit de templo, inquiens: 'domus mea domus orationis vocabitur'*, 'cast out of the temple those who were buying or selling, saying: "my house shall be called a house of prayer"'. This ban did not prove to be particularly effective. In the following centuries the trade in the area remained thriving, as is thoroughly shown by Pio Pecchiai (1951) in his study on the stands and the shops in front of the Basilica of St Peter during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries.

The information reported in *Leiðarvísir* seems thus to be confirmed by historical evidence, but no reference to a 'market of St Peter' can be found in the medieval Latin descriptions of Rome that this thesis has taken into account: no market of St Peter's is mentioned in the seventh-century *Notitia ecclesiarum Urbis Romae* or in *De locis sanctis martyrum qui sunt foris civitatis Romae* (VZ: II 94-99; 106-7); in the *MUR* (VZ: III 43-46; see Parthey 1869: 49-51); or in the *IEUR*. These two facts, the lack of references to the market of St Peter in the medieval pilgrim guides and the abundance of historical evidence for its existence, may lead one to believe that the information given in *Leiðarvísir* is based on direct experience and not on written sources. It is interesting, however, that a market, most probably the market of St Peter (Guidi 1877-78: 198; de Simone 2002: 87-89; cf. Krautheimer 2000: 364), is mentioned in the description of Rome given by the Arab geographer al-Idrīsī in his *Book of Roger*, completed in 1154 at the court of Roger II, the Norman king of Sicily (Oman 2008). al-Idrīsī's description of Rome is full of fantastic elements and, using oriental – possibly Greek – written sources, he transferred onto Rome much information which originally was about Constantinople (de Simone 2002: 87; Guidi 1877-78: 213, 217). The market he describes runs from

the eastern to the western gate. He says that there are lines of huge columns in it, most of which are made of stone while some are of brass, as are their shafts, bases, and capitals; near these columns are the shops of the merchants. A river, which crosses the city from east to west, flows in front of these arcaded loggias and of the shops. The floor of the river is said to be entirely covered with copper slabs, so that it is impossible to drop anchor in it (de Simone 2002: 88). It is significant that we find this description of the market of St Peter in a work that we know to be based on written sources and that is full of fantastic elements that clearly cannot derive from the author's direct experience, the copper floor of the Tiber being a case in point.

The reference of *Leiðarvísir* to a 'shopping centre' near St Peter's is thus not incompatible with documentary and archaeological evidence. It has been shown that the whole area – the atrium, the *platea*, the streets radiating from the square, and the covered portico leading to St Peter's from Castel Sant'Angelo – was a huge bazaar. Raschellà (2001: 207) reckons that *kauphús* refers to a 'shop' and does not correspond to the meaning of *porticus*; nonetheless he follows Kålund and identifies it with the roofed colonnade. One might wonder, however, whether the term *kauphús*, as Kålund and Magoun believed, could really indicate the *porticus sancti Petri*, a roofed colonnade, which can hardly be described as a *hús*, a single 'shop' or covered building. Raschellà's explanation that 'Old Norse does not have a term corresponding to portico' (2001: 207) is not convincing. In fact, other Old Norse terms could be used to identify the structure of the portico connecting Castel Sant'Angelo to St Peter's: *forhús* indicated the porch of a house, *forkirkja* a 'church porch'; and *forskot* a 'vestibule, a porch' (Cleasby and Vigfusson 1957: s.v.). In sum, even though the word *kauphús* has an unambiguous palaeographic reading in MS AM 194 8° and its meaning can be clearly interpreted as that of a 'building where trade is conducted', a 'shop', it has not been highlighted sufficiently (with the partial exceptions of Werlauff 1821: 46 and Raschellà 2001: 207) that this *hapax legomenon* does not correspond to a precise reference to a single *hús* for *kaupa* in front of medieval St Peter's, where trade was practised in a dispersive and somewhat chaotic way.

In addition to these semantic observations, one might wonder why, in introducing one of the holiest and most important centres of cult and pilgrimage in the Christian *oecumene*, the Basilica of St Peter was associated with such a secular activity as trading, especially as all other topographical references in the text are to

great Christian or pagan monuments. As we have seen in the ordinance of the senators Anibaldus and Napoleone, an awareness of the profane nature of the business developing around St Peter's was not foreign to its contemporaries. Not only does *Kauphús Petrs postola,* the 'market of Peter the Apostle', find no correspondence in the Latin pilgrim guides describing St Peter's reviewed in this thesis, but it is also a linguistically problematic *hapax legomenon* in the Old Norse tradition: it is therefore worth taking into consideration the possibility of a corruption of the text at this point.

3.19.4 The *Cantharus* of St Peter

In the tradition of texts on Rome we find other objects mentioned as being in front of St Peter's. One of the most important was the *cantharus sancti Petri*, a big laver for the ablutions of the worshippers, located in the middle of the *Paradisus sancti Petri*. The *cantharus* is first mentioned by Paulinus of Nola in the same passage of *Epistula* 13 quoted in §3.19.2. Paulinus addresses the senator Panmachius and describes the Basilica of St Peter packed with needy people; in doing so he gives important indications about the basilica's structure (Paulinus of Nola 1894: 94-95).

Annewies van den Hoek and John Hermann (2000: 180-89) offer a detailed and convincing reconstruction of the use of the *canthari* in church courtyards both in the Latin West and in the Greek-speaking East. *Cantharus* is originally a Greek word (κάνθαρος) with various meanings, one of which was a kind of drinking cup with large vertical handles (Liddell and Scott 1996: s.v.). In Latin 'the *cantharus* was also employed in a new sense, namely as a *cantharus aquarius*. This was a water vessel that was used as a fountain or basin, rather than a drinking cup', and it is likely that 'the *cantharus* that Paulinus praised under the bronze canopy in the atrium had the form of a vase' (Hoek and Hermann 2000: 181, 203). The *cantharus* of St Peter's was already in the middle of the atrium by the fourth century. A colossal bronze pine cone, known familiarly as the *Pigna*, was positioned to decorate the *cantharus* and to work as a fountain head, probably as early as the eighth century (Krautheimer 1937-80: V 173; Blaauw 1994: 464-65). Its ancient symbolic significance as life and rebirth was reused with a new Christian meaning, becoming a sign of the centrality of the papal power, as Margaret Finch explains:

> Throughout the medieval period, the papacy nurtured the idea of Rome as the world's nucleus, the caput mundi. The papacy claimed political as well as religious authority, and the traditional salutation in papal bulls, *Urbi et Orbi*, implies that Rome is the center of civilization. For the papacy, the Vatican was the hub of the universe, and the pine cone in the atrium of St Peter's was the Christian *umbilicus*. The *Pigna* in front of St Peter's marked the nucleus of the Church's jurisdiction. (Finch 1991: 20)

The *Pigna* is mentioned also in the version of the *IEUR* attested in the *Liber rubeus*, which contains the indication that *in porticu Sancti Petri est pinea cuprea, extimatur in latitudine XXXV palmis, in longitudine XVI*, 'in the portico of St Peter is a copper pine-cone, it is estimated that it is thirty-five spans in width, and sixteen in length' (VZ: IV 80). Dante refers to the *Pigna* in Canto XXXI of *Inferno*, thus confirming its relevance in the medieval imaginative world. At the entrance of the ninth circle Dante compares the face of a giant he sees there to the *Pigna*:

> La faccia sua mi parea lunga e grossa
> come la pigna di San Pietro a Roma,
> e a sua proporzione eran l'altre ossa. (Inf. XXXI. 58-60)
> His face seemed to me as long and huge as the pine cone of St Peter's at Rome, and his other bones were in proportion with it. (Alighieri 1970: 330-31)

After the *Pigna* was added, the *cantharus* was successively further embellished. In the *Liber Pontificalis* it is narrated how Pope Symmachus (498-514) decorated the basilica of St Peter's with marbles and that *ad cantharum beati Petri cum quadriporticum ex opere marmoribus ornavit et ex musivo agnos et cruces et palmas ornavit*, 'he embellished the area around the cantharus of St Peter with a quadruple porch made out of marble, and he adorned it with lambs and crosses and palms made of mosaic' (Duchesne 1955-57*:* I 262; see Picard 1974: 858 and Hoek and Herrmann 2000: 184). In the fourth century St John Chrysostom explains in several passages of his works how washing rituals were not sufficient to clean the souls of the faithful (Hoek and Herrmann 2000: 185-86). We find a description of the magnificence of the *cantharus* in the *MUR,* where the information about Pope Symmachus is repeated, and the *Pigna* is first mentioned:

In Paradiso Sancti Petri est cant[h]arum, quod fecit Simachus Papa, columpnis porfireticis ornatumque tabulis marmoreis cum grifonibus connexae, pretioso caelo aereo coopertae, cum floribus et delfinis aereis et deauratis aquas fundentibus. In medio cant[h]ari est pinea aerea, quae fuit coopertorium cum sinnio aereo et deaurato super statuam Cibeles, matris deorum, in foramine Pantheon; in quam pineam subterranea fistula plumbea subministrabat aquam ex forma Sabbatina, quae toto tempore plena praebebat aquam per foramina nucum omnibus indigentibus ea, et per subterraneam fistulam quaedam pars fluebat ad balneum imperatoris iuxta aguliam (VZ: III 44-45)

In St Peter's Paradise is a *cantharus*, which Pope Symmachus made. It is erected with pillars of porphyry and adorned with marble tablets joined together with griffins and covered with a top of precious bronze, with flowers and dolphins made of bronze and gilded, and pouring water. In the middle of the *cantharus* is a bronze pine cone that, with a roof of gilded bronze, covered the statue of Cybele, mother of the gods, in the opening of the Pantheon. An underground lead pipe administered to this pine cone the water that came from the aqueduct Sabatinus. Since it was always full it poured water through the holes of the nuts to those who wanted it, and through an underground pipe a part of the water flowed to the emperor's bath near the obelisk.

This description of the *cantharus* from the *MUR* was included by Petrus Mallius in his *Descriptio Basilicae Vaticanae* (VZ: III 430), confirming the relevance of this site outside the tradition of the pilgrim guides as well. In Figure 5 (p. 195), we can see a drawing by Il Cronaca preserved in the Uffizi. It contains a first-hand depiction of the *cantharus* in the third quarter of the fifteenth century, which can give an idea of the magnificence of this monument.
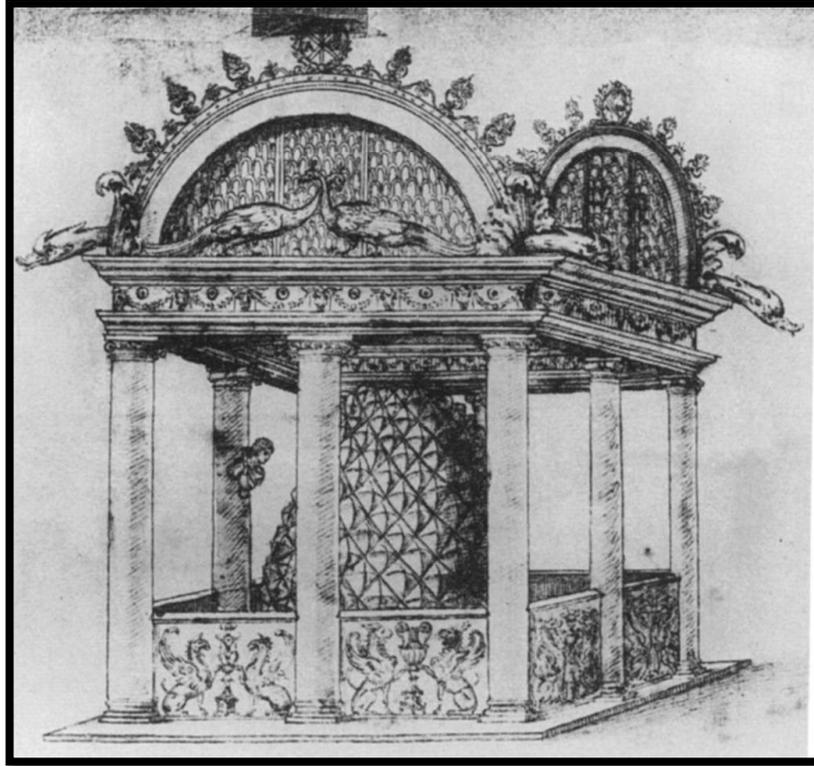
Figure 5: Il Cronaca (attrib.), Cantharus and Pigna of St Peter's, drawing, *c.* 1475-1485, Uffizi (Finch 2000: 16).

Single parts of the *cantharus*, which was destroyed during the building of the new basilica, are still visible in the Vatican Museums, as the pine cone and the peacocks now in the *cortile della Pigna* (Figure 6, p. 195).

Figure 6: The *Pigna* in the *Cortile della Pigna* (wikipedia.org).

The pilgrims and the faithful coming to St Peter's approached the church from the east, and, after entering the atrium, had the chance to wash in the *cantharus*. The *cantharus* marked the *omphalos*, the navel, of the Christian world, and it was also the place where the pilgrims, having reached their destination, could perform their ablutions before entering the basilica. These ablutions had a clear practical and ritual meaning (Blaauw 1994: 504), which is also confirmed by inscriptions found on basins elsewhere. Hoek and Hermann (2004: 186-87) give two significant examples: a famous palindromic Greek inscription preserved on some basins reads Νίψον ἀνομημα, μή μόναν ὄψιν, 'wash your lawless deeds, not only your face', exemplifying the practical and ritual function of the fountains situated in front of churches; on a Christian marble column of the sixth century found in Viterbo, which was probably the base for a water vessel, was written *Xr(ist)iane laba manus et ora ut remittant(ur tibi peccata)*, 'Christian, wash your hands and pray, so that your sins may be forgiven' (Hoek and Hermann 2004: 187).

The symbolic value of the *cantharus* was already clear to Paulinus, who, after writing that the *cantharus sancti Petri* provided water for the hands and the faces of the faithful, that is for their practical necessities, added that:

> non sine mystica specie quattuor columnis salientes aquas ambiens. decet enim ingressum ecclesiae talis ornatus, ut quod intus mysterio salutari geritur spectabili pro foribus opere signetur. nam et nostri corporis templum quadriiugo stabilimento una euangelii fides sustinet et, cum ex eo gratia, qua renascimur, fluat et in eo Christus, quo uiuimus, reueletur, profecto nobis in quattuor uitae columnas illic aquae salientis in uitam aeternam fons nascitur nosque ab interno rigat et feruet in nobis, si tamen possimus dicere uel sentire mereamur habere nos cor ardens in uia, quod Christo nobiscum inambulante flammatur. (Paulinus of Nola 1894:95)

> Not without secret meaning does it [the *Cantharus*] surround the water spouts with four columns; such a decoration is proper for the entrance of the church in order that what is done inside by the mystery of salvation may be marked by the noteworthy work outside. For one single faith of the gospel also sustains the temple of our body with a fourfold support; and, since the grace by which we are reborn flows from it, and Christ, in whom we live, is revealed in it, surely a fountain of water springing to eternal life is born in that place for us on four columns of life; and it waters us within and boils in us, if only we should be able to say or deserve to feel that we have a burning heart on the road, which is kindled when Christ is walking with us. (Hoek and Herrmann 2000: 175)

It is significant that in the *Leiðarvísir* description of St Peter's, which follows immediately the indication of the *kauphús*, the first detail refers to an indulgence for the pilgrims visiting the basilica (ll. 92-93). Apart from the questions connected to its problematic dating (see below §3.20.2), this reference to a 'plenary indulgence' granted to the pilgrims coming to St Peter's presents a strong thematic link with the symbolic value of the *cantharus* as a fountain to wash the body and purify the soul 'so that sins may be forgiven', as the inscription on the Viterbo Column reads (Hoek and Herrmann 2004: 187).

The magnificence of this renowned fountain in the atrium of medieval St Peter's, its practical and symbolic importance for the pilgrims, representing the possibility of purification of the body and the soul before entering St Peter's, and its relevance in the medieval pilgrim guides are in contrast to the absence of any explicit mention in the sources of a 'Market of St Peter's' as such. As we have seen, only references to the intense trade activity in the area are attested, whereas a local term corresponding to the *kauphús* of St Peter in *Leiðarvísir* cannot be found in primary sources. These observations make the presence and the interpretation of the word *kauphús* in the text of *Description A* problematic. The description of St Peter's, which follows immediately in the text, contains details that are incompatible with the traditional twelfth-century dating of the itinerary and which reinforce the hypothesis that this section is text-based. This fact not only strengthens the assumption that the reference to the *kauphús* is based on written sources and not on the direct experience of the author of *Description A*, but should induce us to take into account the possibility of a corruption of the text at this point.

It is worth considering the possibility of a scribal transcription error prior to, or in the instance of, MS AM 194 8vo: perhaps *kauphús* was read for the Latin word *cantharus*, abbreviated *canth'9* and with the 'n' appearing as a 'u'. Transcription errors are not infrequent in the text of *Leiðarvísir* we have in MS AM 194 8vo. The possible corruption of *cantharus* to *kauphús* would not be very dissimilar to an example of a scribal error that we find further on in the itinerary. *Flaiansbru* is mentioned twice in the text as the name of an alternative route from Rome to Brindisi (ll. 117, 119). This form has to be emended to *Traiansbru*, 'Traian's causeway', which translates *Via Traiana*, the Latin name of a part of the *Via Appia* (Hill 1983: 183-84; see §1.4.7.2).

3.20 The Church of Peter the Apostle

The description of St Peter's is the most extensive and detailed description of a church in the whole itinerary. It is composed of 126 words, which include the only complete Latin sentence in *Leiðarvísir*. The other two most detailed church descriptions in *Leiðarvísir*, the descriptions of St John Lateran and of the Sepulchre Church, are composed of sixty-five and sixty-seven words respectively. An analysis of the details included in the description of St Peter's can give useful information for the dating of *Description A* and the evaluation of its possible sources.

Leiðarvísir begins by depicting the Basilica of St Peter as *gaufga*, 'noble', and *hardla mikil & dyrlig*, 'very large and splendid' (l. 92); after this we find the information that *þar er lausn oll of vandredi manna of allan heim*, 'in that place is full release from the troubles of men from the whole world' (ll. 92-93). In §3.20.1 and §3.20.2 it will be argued in favour of interpreting this as a reference to the plenary indulgence granted to the pilgrims visiting St Peter's. This interpretation has consequences for the dating of this passage, because the first *indulgentia plenaria* was only granted in 1300.

3.20.1 The First Plenary Indulgence of 1300

In the early church, indulgences were linked to the *absolutio* and the *commutatio*, or *redemptio*, the 'commutation' and 'reduction' of severe canonical punishments (Hödl 1977-99: 43; Frugoni 1999: 34-37). The concept and practice of indulgence as 'the remission by the Church of the temporal penalty due to forgiven sins, in virtue of the merits of Christ and the saints' (Cross 2005: s.v. Indulgence) began in the eleventh century and was analysed and developed by the scholastics of the thirteenth century (Hödl 1977-99: 44-46). In 1063 Pope Alexander II gave a plenary indulgence to those who went to Spain to fight the Moors, and at the synod of Clermont in 1095 Pope Urban II granted a plenary indulgence to those who went on the Crusade. The complete remission of punishment for the crusaders remained for a long time the only plenary indulgence established by the Church (Paulus 1922: I 195-211; Frugoni 1999: 37-38).

In the twelfth century, the popes only seldom granted indulgences of more than one year for those who bestowed alms or visited a church (Paulus 1922: I 157-77). As for St Peter's, it is relevant that there is no reference in the sources to a plenary indulgence before the one given by Boniface VIII in 1300. Petrus Mallius in

his *Descriptio Basilicae Vaticanae*, written under the pontificate of Alexander III (1159-1181; VZ: III 375), reports the indulgence of three years given by Pope Callixtus II on March 25 1123 for the consecration of the main altar that he had restored:

> In qua videlicet consecratione praedictus domnus papa Calixtus, sicut invenimus in libris nostris scriptum et a maioribus nostris accepimus, fecit remissionem ad eam devote venientibus trium annorum annualiter et cancellis ferreis, ut apparet, praedictum sacrosanctum altare circumsaepsit. (VZ: III 435).
>
> In this consecration the above-mentioned Lord Pope Callixtus, as we have found written in our books and learned from our forefathers, established an indulgence of three years for those who devoutly came there [to St Peter's] every year, and he enclosed, as can be seen, the above-mentioned sacrosanct altar with an iron grating.

In 1181, in a letter *Ad archiepiscopum et episcopos per Sueciam constitutos*, 'To the archbishop and to the bishops who are in Sweden' (*PL*: CC 1315-16), Pope Alexander III granted three years of indulgence to the Swedish pilgrims visiting the *limina apostolorum*, as the sepulchres of St Peter and St Paul were called, and likewise two years to the English pilgrims, and one year to the pilgrims from the continent:

> De caetero noveritis quod cum unusquisque secundum laborem suum debeat mercedem accipere, apostolorum limina visitantibus citra mare annum Anglicis biennium vestratibus autem quia remotissimi sunt: et quia se constituerunt sedi apostolicae censuales; et cum majori labore accedunt triennium de injuncta poenitentia peccatorum, de quibus vere compuncti sunt et confessi, de beatorum Petri et Pauli potestate confisi auctoritate apostolica relaxamus. (*PL*: CC 1316 AB)
>
> For the rest you will be apprised of the fact that, since everyone shall receive his reward according to his labour, we remit, on the basis of the apostolic authority and trusting in the power of the blessed Peter and Paul, one year of the punishment inflicted for the sins, of which they have really repented and which they have confessed, to those who visit the *limina apostolorum* coming from this side of the sea; two years to the English; three years to the people from your country because they are very remote, and because they are allowed to be tributaries of the Apostolic See.

Interestingly, a similar distinction is also present in MS Cotton Faustina B.VII, at the beginning of the version of the *IEUR* contained in this manuscript, after the list of the five patriarchal churches:

> In quacumque die causa orandi quilibet intraverit, XL dies de iniuncta sibi penitentia relaxantur. Quid indulgentiae recipiant viciniores et quid remotiores peregrini visitantes limina apostolorum Petri et Pauli: si sunt Angli vel Scotti vel Hibernienses habent indulgentiam trium annorum, Francigene, Yspani, Teutonici trium annorum, Lumbardi, Tuscani, Apulei vnius anni. (MS Cotton Faustina B.VII, f. 16vb- 17ra).
>
> On whichever day whoever will enter [the five patriarchal churches] to pray will be given forty days of remission from the penance inflicted to them. The pilgrims visiting the churches of the apostles Peter and Paul will receive a certain indulgence, whether they come from a nearer or a more distant land: if they are English or Scottish or Irish, they receive an indulgence of three years, if they are French, Spanish or German of three years, [if they are] Lombard, Tuscan, or Apulian of one year.

The extent of the indulgences granted to the pilgrims who did not come from Italy is more generous than in the letter written in 1181 by Pope Alexander III. In particular, the indulgence given to the English is three years instead of the two-year indulgence indicated in the letter. The same three-year indulgence is granted to the 'continental pilgrims', who in 1181 were given a one-year indulgence. If we interpret the expression *citra mare* from the letter of Alexander III as 'from this side of the sea', that is 'in Italy' (Glare 1968: s.v. *citra*) and not 'from the continent', as proposed by Maccarrone (1983: 731), the one-year indulgence indicated in the text of MS Cott. Faust. B. VII for the pilgrims coming from 'Lombardy, Tuscany, or Apulia' would correspond to that given in 1181 to the *apostolorum limina visitantibus citra mare*. The correspondences between these two texts and the major extent of the indulgences granted in MS Cott. Faust. B VII suggest that this version of the *IEUR* was composed later than the papal document. A more precise dating than the second half of the twelfth century could not be found for this manuscript, probably written in England (Miedema 2003: 20), but on the strength of this comparison with the letter of Alexander III to the Swedish bishops, 1181 can be proposed as *terminus post quem* of the version of the *IEUR* contained in MS Cott. Faust. B VII.

Romanus, who revised the *Descriptio Basilicae Vaticanae* under Pope Celestine III (1191-1198) or at the beginning of the pontificate of Innocent III (1198-1216; see VZ: III 376-79), specifies the information (already in Petrus Mallius, see Maccarrone 1983: 732) of a *remissio* on November 18 (the day of the dedication of St Peter's), on Maundy Thursday, and on Ascension Day:

> Et quia sollempnitas maxima est, maximam remissionem apostolica providentia omnibus ad eam devote venientibus condonavit. Quae videlicet remissio, apostolica praevidentia sic tripartita distinguitur, ut Romanis et circumdiacentibus, unius anni; Tuscis et Lombardis et Apulis et ceteris mare non transeuntibus, duorum annorum; sed et his qui maria transmeare noscuntur, trium annorum maneat remissio peccatorum. Similis eademque remissio facta probatur in hac beati Petri basilica in Caena Domini, quando consecratur ibi sanctum Chrisma, in Ascensione Domini similiter. (VZ: III 385)

> And since this is a solemnity [the day of the dedication of the Basilica] of the utmost importance, the papal intervention has granted the greatest remission to those who will devoutly come to it [the Basilica of St Peter's]. That is, this remission is distinguished by the papal intervention in three different parts: a remission of one year for the Romans and for those who live in the surrounding areas; of two years for the Tuscans, the Lombards, the Apulians, and the others who do not cross the sea; but a remission of three years must be granted to those who are able to travel across the sea. An identical remission is determined in the basilica of the blessed Peter on Maundy Thursday, when the anointing is consecrated there, and similarly on Ascension Day.

The levelling in this passage of 'the Tuscans, the Lombards, and the Apulians' to 'the others who did not cross the sea' can confirm the interpretation of the *visitantes citra mare* in the letter of Alexander III as pilgrims from 'Italy' and not from the 'continent', as Maccarrone put forward (1983: 731).

Apart from the crusaders' indulgences, Pope Innocent III granted only a few indulgences: in a letter of 21 April 1198 he mentions the indulgence granted to the pilgrims to Rome and to Santiago (Paulus 1922-23: I 175). It is relevant that Pope Innocent refers to this indulgence without specifying its extent or confusing it with the crusaders' indulgence: at the end of the twelfth century there was not any definite indulgence for the pilgrims to St Peter's, and pilgrimage to Rome was not connected to an indulgence, nor did pilgrims come to obtain more indulgences than elsewhere, as happened in 1300 (Maccarrone 1983: 731). In 1208 Innocent III created a new

indulgence of one year on the Sunday after the Epiphany Octave, when the *Veronica* was brought in procession from St Peter's (Maccarrone 1983: 733). Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, MS D. IV. 4., written at the beginning of the thirteenth century, contains a list of *stationes* and the corresponding indulgences: one year and forty days could be obtained in the period from the Sexagesima till the Sunday after Easter, an indulgence of forty days for the five patriarchal churches and the *Sancta Sanctorum* (Schimmelpfennig 1968: 47-48).

In the thirteenth century a tendency to create too generous indulgences was developing, so that the Fourth Council of the Lateran (1215) limited their extent to one year for the dedication of a church and forty days for the anniversary (Maccarrone 1983: 733-34). In 1240, however, Pope Gregory IX granted an indulgence of three years and three quarantines for those who visited St Peter's between Pentecost and the Octave of St Peter and St Paul (Frugoni 1999: 44). In 1289 Pope Nicholas IV increased the daily indulgence that was granted in St Peter's from forty days to one year and forty days (Maccarrone 1983: 740). Another important indulgence was connected with the Franciscan tradition. Around the mid-thirteenth century authenticity was credited to a plenary indulgence to be conceded on 2 August. This was, in 1216, the day of the consecration of the small church near Assisi from where the Franciscan movement started; however, for a large part of the thirteenth century the only plenary indulgences were the crusaders' (Frugoni 1999: 37-39). A plenary indulgence for visiting a church was officially bestowed only in 1294 by Pope Celestine V to the visitors of the Church of Santa Maria in Collemaggio in L'Aquila (Frugoni 1999: 39-41).

Pope Boniface VIII revoked this indulgence the following year, but the ground was clear for the plenary indulgence that on 22 February 1300 he granted with a *bulla* for the visitors to the basilicas of St Peter and St Paul on the occasion of the first Jubilee. This was the first plenary indulgence ever granted for visiting St Peter's in Rome (Frugoni 1999: 48-50; Maccarrone 1983: 748-52). Boniface had the text of his bull *Antiquorum habet fida relatio* carved on marble and put up on the walls of the basilica (Frugoni 1999: 49). This is still visible up to the present day in the portico of the new Basilica (Figure 7, p. 203). The *bulla* begins by stating that 'there is a reliable account of the ancients' that *accedentibus ad honorabilem Basilicam principis Apostolorum de Urbe concessae sunt magnae remissiones et indulgentiae peccatorum*, 'to the visitors of the venerable Basilica of the Prince of

the Apostles in Rome have been granted great remissions and indulgences for sins' (Friedberg 1959: 1303). Boniface VIII granted for the first time a *plenissimam veniam* to the pilgrims who visited St Peter's and St Paul's Outside the Walls in 1300:

> non solum plenam et largiorem, immo plenissimam omnium suorum concedimus veniam peccatorum, statuentes ut, qui voluerint huius indulgentiae a nobis concesse fore participes, si fuerint Romani ad minus triginta diebus continuis vel interpolatis et saltem semel in die, si vero peregrini fuerint aut forenses simili modo diebus quindecim, ad Basilicas easdem accedent. (Friedberg 1959: 1304)
>
> We grant not only a full and larger, but a complete remission of all their sins, establishing that those who want to be participants of this indulgence that has been granted by us, if they are Romans, they shall enter the same basilicae for at least thirty consecutive days or non-consecutive, and at least once a day; if they are pilgrims or foreigners, they shall enter the same basilicae in the same way for fifteen days.

Figure 7: The marble inscription in the Portico of St Peter's with the text of the *bulla Antiquorum habet fida relatio*, promulgated on 22 February 1300 by Boniface VIII. (saintpetersbasilica.org).

Dante gives an idea of how the pilgrims came in crowds to Rome for the jubilee. In Canto XVIII of *Inferno* he describes the eighth circle of Hell, *Malebolge*, and

compares one of the bridges running from the outer circumference of the circle to its centre to Ponte Sant'Angelo, which was in front of Castel Sant'Angelo and was the only bridge connecting the two banks of the river in that area at the time of the jubilee:

> Come i Roman, per l'essercito molto,
>
> l'anno del giubileo, su per lo ponte
>
> hanno a passar la gente modo colto,
>
> che da l'un lato tutti hanno la fronte
>
> verso 'l castello e vanno a Santo Pietro,
>
> da l'altra sponda vanno verso 'l monte. (Inferno XVIII, 28-32)
>
> Thus the Romans, because of the great throng, in the year of the Jubilee have taken measures for the people to pass over the bridge, so that on one side all face toward the Castle and go to St Peter's, and on the other side they go toward the mount. (Alighieri 1970: 184-85)

In the bull of Boniface VIII recurs the same distinction among pilgrims on the basis of their country of origin that was first specified in the letter of Alexander III in 1181.

3.20.2 The 'Full Release from the Troubles of Men from the Whole World'

As we have seen, *Description A* gives the information on St Peter's that *þar er lausn oll of vandredi manna of allan heim*, 'in that place is full release from the troubles of men from the whole world' (ll. 92-93). *Lausn* has been interpreted as a reference to the 'absolution from sins' granted to the pilgrims visiting St Peter's. Cleasby and Vigfusson's dictionary in fact defines *lausn* as 'release', 'liberation', but also, in a second acceptation, as 'absolution from sin or ban' (Cleasby and Vigfusson: 1957 s.v.). Kålund has translated *lausn öll of vandræði manna of allan heim* with *fuld afgørelse for folks vanskeligheder hele verden over*, 'a full settlement for the troubles of men from all over the world' (1913: 58). Magoun has translated the sentence as 'full absolution from the perplexities of men the wide world over', referring to *lausn*

as 'indulgence' in his commentary on *Description A* (Magoun 1940: 280, 286). Raschellà has translated the passage as 'complete liberation from the pains for the men of the whole world' (1985-86: 561-63),[80] commenting that it means that 'all those who go on a pilgrimage to the Basilica of St Peter receive the full remission of the temporal punishments or "plenary indulgence"' (1985-86: 576-577, n. 50).[81] Similarly, Simek and Waßenhoven have translated *lausn öll of vandrœði manna* as *voller Ablass von den Nöten der Menschen'* 'full indulgence for the difficulties of the men' (Simek 1990: 487; Waßenhoven 2008: 56[134]).

The interpretation of *lausn* as 'absolution', 'remission' or 'indulgence' in the description of St Peter's in *Leiðarvísir* is confirmed by its frequent use with this meaning in sagas that relate a pilgrimage to Rome. Carla Cucina (1998) has analysed the different typologies of pilgrimage described in the body of saga literature, selecting examples of *peregrinatio devotionis causa*, 'pilgrimage to a holy place performed in the true spirit of devotion'; *peregrinatio poenitentialis,* 'pilgrimage considered within the medieval penitential system'; and *peregrinatio poenaliter causa,* 'pilgrimage as a punishment inflicted by civil courts' (Cucina 1998: 83). More recently, Shafer (2011) has shown that absolution is one of the central functions and significances of journeys to Rome and Jerusalem as described in the sagas: it emerges that in the sagas a *peregrinatio poenitentialis* or *poenaliter causa* has often a *lausn* as its final purpose.

A famous example of *peregrinatio poenaliter causa* is at the end of *Njáls saga*, where for his role in the burning of Njáll and his family Flosi Þórðarson is condemned by the *Alþingi* to pay compensation, live in exile for three years, and make a pilgrimage to Rome:

> Flosi fór þaðan suðr um sjá ok hóf þá upp gǫngu sína ok gekk suðr ok létti eigi, fyrr en hann kom til Rómaborgar. Þar fekk hann svá mikla sœmð, at hann tók lausn af páfanum sjálfum ok gaf þar til mikit fé. (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954: 461-62)
> From there Flosi sailed south across the sea and started on his pilgrimage, walking all the way, and did not stop till he came to Rome. There he had the great honour of

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[80] '*La completa liberazione dalle pene per gli uomini di tutto il mondo*'.
[81] '*Tutti coloro che si recano in pellegrinaggio alla basilica di S. Pietro ottengono la remissione totale delle pene temporali o "indulgenza plenaria"* '.

receiving absolution for himself from the pope, and he paid a large sum of money for it.

It is relevant that Flosi also had to pay pecuniary compensation to the Church in order to receive *lausn* (on this passage, see Cucina 1998: 151-52; and Shafer 2011: 15-16). After Flosi has returned north, *Njáls saga* tells that Kári Sölmundarson also started his pilgrimage to Rome the following summer, where he received *lausn* (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954: 462).

A clear example of a *peregrinatio poenitentialis* to Rome that was made in order to receive absolution can be found in *Orkneyinga saga*, where the pilgrimage of Þorfinnr jarl Sigurðarson is succinctly reported: *Réð þá jarl til suðrfarar. Fór hann þá til Róms ok fann þar páfann, ok tók hann þar lausn af honum allra sinna mála*, 'The jarl then began his pilgrimage. He went to Rome and had an audience with the pope and there he received absolution from him for all his sins' (Finnbogi Guðmundsson 1965: 80). Another significant example of *lausn* used in the meaning of 'absolution' in the context of a *peregrinatio poenitentialis* to Rome can be found in *Spesar þáttr*. This *þáttr*, included in the last chapters of *Grettis saga* and set in Byzantium, tells the story of the love between the Icelander Þorsteinn and the Greek woman Spes, who obtain by deception the annulment of Spes's previous marriage, get married, and go then to live in Norway. In their old age they decide to expiate the sins of their youth by going on a pilgrimage to Rome:

> Fóru þau nú allan veg, þar til er þau kómu til Rómaborgar. Svá sem þau kómu fram fyrir þann, er til þess var skipaðr, at heyra skriptamál manna, þá sǫgðu þau sannliga allt, hversu farit hafði og með hverjum klókskǫpum þau hǫfðu sinn hjúskap bundit. Þau gáfu sik auðmjúkliga undir þvílíkar skriptir sér til yfirbótar, sem hann vildi á þau leggja. En fyrir þann skuld, at þau hǫfðu sjálf orkazk hugar á at bœta sína meinbugi án allri þröngvan og hatri af kirkjunnar formǫnnum, þá var þeim létt um allar álǫgur, svá sem fremst mátti vera en beðin með blíðu, at þau skipaði nú sem skynsamligast fyrir sinni sál og lifði hreinlega þaðan í frá, at fenginni lausn allra sinna mála. (Guðni Jónsson 1936: 288)
>
> They travelled the whole way till they came to the city of Rome. When they appeared before him who was appointed to hear the confessions of people, they told him truly everything that had happened and with what cunning they had been united in matrimony. They submitted humbly to any penance that he should lay on them for the atonement of their sins. But because they had themselves decided to

atone for their sins, without anyone forcing them and without anger from the heads of the church, they were relieved of all fines as much as possible, and they were gently bidden that they should concern themselves in the wisest way for their souls' health, and from then on live cleanly, after receiving absolution from all their sins.

Another significant description of a pilgrimage to Rome can be found in *Íslendinga saga*. After having attacked Bishop Guðmundr Arason together with his father Sighvatr Sturluson, Sturla Sighvatsson is condemned to exile in order to expiate his and his father's guilt. Sturla ends his banishment with a *peregrinatio poenitentialis* to Rome:

> Sturla fekk lausn allra sinna mála í Rómaborg ok fǫdur síns ok tók þar stórar skriptir, hann var leiddr á millum allra kirkna í Rómaborg ok ráðit fyrir flestum höfuðkirkjum. Bar hann þat drengiliga, sem líkligt var, en flest fólk stóð úti ok undraðiz, barði á brjóstit ok harmaði, er svá friðr maðr var svá hǫrmuliga leikinn, ok máttu eigi vatni halda bæði konur ok karlar. (Kålund 1906-11: 450-51)
>
> Sturla received absolution for all his sins and his father's in Rome, and he did there a severe penance: he was led from church to church in Rome and he was flogged before most of the cathedrals. He bore that bravely, as might be expected, and many people stood by and watched in wonderment, beat their breast, and bewailed that such a handsome man should be treated so harshly, and neither men nor women could hold back tears.

Significantly, this episode of *Íslendinga saga* introduces a distinction between simple churches and cathedrals, which Sturla has to visit in order to receive absolution. The lection of the *Króksfjarðarbók* (MS AM 122 a fol.) adds the information that Sturla was led to the churches of Rome *berfœttr*, 'barefoot' (Kålund 1906-11: 450), with a clear reference to the tradition of the pilgrimage *nudibus pedibus* (see Cucina 1998: 148). Cucina (1998: 147) has observed that the pilgrimage of Sturla, who also atones for his father's sins, is an example of *peregrinatio delegata*, made on behalf of someone else, a practice which became common in the late Middle Ages.

It is relevant that in *Njáls saga* the extent of the *lausn* granted to Flosi and Kári is not specified, whereas Þorfinnr jarl Sigurðarson in *Orkneyinga saga*, Þorsteinn and Spes in *Spesar þáttr*, and Sturla Sighvatsson in *Íslendinga saga* receive in Rome *lausn allra sinna mála*, 'absolution from all their sins'. It is likely that this sentence corresponds to the Latin expression *remissio* (or *absolutio*) *omnium*

peccatorum, a formula referring to an *indulgentia plenaria* granted to the pilgrims visiting St Peter's (for examples of occurrences in the *IEUR* tradition of this very common Latin expression, see Weißthanner 1954: 59-63; Hulbert 1923: 405-409; and the Bull *Antiquorum habet fida relatio*, §3.20.1). If *Orkneyinga saga*, *Spesar þáttr* and *Íslendinga saga* refer to a *remissio omnium peccatorum*, the corresponding passages must be dated after 1300, as will be argued for the passage of *Leiðarvísir* mentioning the *lausn öll*. This assumption is compatible with the datings of the manuscript traditions of *Orkneyinga saga*, *Grettis saga*, and *Íslendinga saga*.

Because of the differences in the subject and in the setting, *Spesar þáttr* was once thought to be the work of a different author from the rest of *Grettis saga*, while it is now generally agreed that *Spesar þáttr* was part of the saga since its composition (Guðni Jónsson 1936: xv-xvi). Even though the earliest manuscripts date from the late fifteenth century, Guðni Jónsson dates the composition of the saga to between 1310 and 20 (1936: lxxvi, lxix-lxx), whereas Örnólfur Thorsson suggests a fifteenth-century dating (1994: 918-24; see also Vésteinn Ólason 2007: 115). *Orkneyinga saga* has a complex textual history, so that it has recently been argued that its original text cannot be reconstructed with the methods of the old philology but should rather be considered a 'work in progress' (Jesch 2010). No single manuscript contains the entire *Orkneynga saga*; the most extensive text is preserved in *Flateyjarbók* (Reykjavík, MS GKS 1005 fol.), which was written between 1387 and 1394 (handrit.is 2012: GKS 1005 fol.; see Jesch 2010: 154-59 for an overview of the manuscript tradition). The passage telling of the pilgrimage to Rome of the jarl Þorfinnr is attested only in *Flateyjarbók* (1860-68: II 421; see Finnbogi Guðmundsson 1965: 80). *Íslendinga saga* is attributed to Sturla Þórðarson (1214-84), but it is preserved only in the *Sturlunga saga* compilation. This is attested in two fourteenth-century manuscripts, *Króksfjarðarbók* (MS AM 122 a fol.), written between 1350 and 1370 (handrit.is 2012: AM 122 a fol.) and the *Reykjarfjarðarbók* (MS AM 122 b fol.), written between 1375 and 1399 (handrit.is 2012: AM 122 b fol., see Úlfar Bragason 2007: 428-29 for the preservation of *Sturlunga saga*). It is plausible that the information on the *indulgentia plenaria* present in the episode of the pilgrimage to Rome of Sturla Sighvatsson is an addition made by the compiler of *Sturlunga*, who, as has been recently demonstrated, had an active role in assembling the material in the compilation (see Úlfar Bragason 2007: 432-33).

The examples of pilgrimages to Rome reported in the sagas that have been analysed confirm that the interpretation of *lausn* as 'absolution' or 'remission' in the passage of *Leiðarvísir* is fully plausible. *Description A*, however, does not indicate, like *Spesar þáttr*, *Orkneyinga saga* and *Íslendinga saga* that in St Peter's there is *lausn allra mála*, 'absolution from all the sins', but refers to *lausn öll of vandræði*. According to Cleasby and Vigfusson's dictionary *vandræði* has a basic meaning of 'difficulty', 'trouble', 'perplexity' (Cleasby and Vigfusson 1957: s.v. *vandræði*). Fritzner gives as the basic meaning of *vandræði* a *vanskelig Stilling hvori en eller flere befinder sig*, 'difficult situation that one or more people are facing'; in the plural Fritzner adds the acceptation of *fiendtligt Forhold mellem Personer*, 'hostile relations between people' (Fritzner 1883-96: s.v. *vandræði*). Baetke translates the two acceptations of *vandræði* with the German *Schwierigkeit, Unannehmlichkeiten, Ungelegenheiten, schwierige Stellung, Lage*, 'difficulty, troubles, inconvenience, difficult situation, circumstances'; and with *Feindseligkeiten, Zwistigkeiten*, 'hostilities, discord'(Baetke 2002: s.v. *vandræði*).

An example of *vandræði* used as object of the verb *leysa*, 'loose', 'solve' (of which *lausn* is a deverbative), can be found in Chapter 20 of *Njáls saga*, in which, among the other good qualities of Njáll, it is said that *hann leysti hvers manns vandræði, er á hans fund kom*, 'he solved the problems of every man who came to see him [about them]' (Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1954: 57). If one considers the meaning of *lausn* as 'absolution, remission', the *vandræði* of the pilgrims that are solved by their visit to St Peter's must be of a different nature than the practical or personal problems of Njáll's visitors. *Vandræði* in *Description A* cannot be interpreted as a reference to the sins of the pilgrims visiting St Peter's. This would be hardly compatible with its attested acceptations; furthermore, we have seen that *Spesar þáttr, Orkneyinga saga* and *Íslendinga saga* use a different formula, indicating that the pilgrims receive in St Peter's *lausn allra sinna mála*, 'absolution from all their sins'. It can be plausibly argued that the word *vandræði*, as used in the description of St Peter's in *Leiðarvísir*, does not refer to the 'sins' of the pilgrims, but to the consequences of these: the temporal punishment due to an individual's sins, which can be remitted by an indulgence. Temporal punishments were both the earthly penances sanctioned by the Church in this world and the purgatorial punishments, which were necessary in the afterlife to purify the souls of the dead in order to admit them to the presence of God (Frugoni 1999: 35-36). A common medieval Latin word

to indicate this temporal punishment is *poena*. *Poena* has in a first acceptation the meaning of 'penalty for committed offence, punishment'; but it can also mean 'penance', and 'difficulty, trouble, pains' (Latham and Howlett 1997-: s.v. poena); 'suffering, misfortune, affliction' (Niemeyer 2002: s.v. poena). *Poena* is commonly used in connection with indulgences as the object of their remission. We find a clarifying example in a definition of *Indulgentia* given by Henry of Ghent (*c.* 1217-1293) in the *Questio 14* of his *Quodlibet XV*:

> Est autem indulgentia remissio poenae temporalis debitae peccatis actualibus poenitentium, 'temporalis' dico, non remissae in absolutione sacramentali facta a praelato Ecclesiae rationabiliter et ex rationabili causa per recompensationem de poena indebita iustorum. (Henry of Ghent 2007: 114)
>
> And in fact the indulgence is the remission of a temporal punishment due for the present sins of the public penitents; and I say temporal, that is a punishment that was not remitted in a sacramental absolution, which was given reasonably and for a good reason, by virtue of the undue punishment of the just.

Another illustrative example can be found in the bull *Unigenitus*, issued in 1343 by Pope Clemens VI to grant the celebration of the jubilee every fifty years, instead of every hundred years as established by Boniface VIII (Friedberg 1959: 1305). In the bull the Pope proclaimed the theory of indulgences, based on the Treasure of the Church:

> Quem quidem thesaurum non in sudario repositum, non in agro absconditum, sed per betaum Petrum cœli clavigerum, eiusque successores, suos in terris vicarios, commisit fidelibus salubriter dispensandum, et propriis et rationabilibus causis, nunc pro totali, nunc pro partiali remissione poenae temporalibus pro peccatis debitae, tam generaliter quam specialiter, (prout cum Deo expedire cognoscerent,) vere poenitentibus et confessis misericorditer applicandum. (Friedberg 1959: 1304).
>
> And this Treasure is not put away in a shroud, or hidden in the ground, but [Christ] entrusted it to be dispensed – through blessed Peter, who holds the keys of Heaven, and his successors as vicars on earth – to the faithful, for proper and reasonable causes, at times for total, at times for partial remission of punishment due for temporal sins; and to be applied mercifully to them that are truly penitent and who have confessed, sometimes in a general grant, sometimes individually (as they consider it pleasing to God).

The text of the bull distinguishes between a partial and a total *remissio* of a *poena temporalis*, giving official recognition to a theory that had been developed for centuries by Christian scholars.

One can suggest that the *lausn öll of vandrædi* in *Description A* corresponds to a *plena remissio poenae* (*temporalis*). The term *vandrædi* can thus be interpreted as a loan translation of the Latin *poena*. The author of *Description A* has probably translated the Latin *poena* with *vandrædi*, referring to its acceptation of 'pains, difficulties, troubles'. Raschellà translates *vandrædi* with the Italian *pene*, which means, like its Latin analogue, both 'punishments' and 'pains, difficulties' (Raschellà 1985-86: 561). Even though a likely connection between *vandrædi* and *poena* has been shown, it has seemed preferable to translate the Icelandic word with 'troubles'. A translation with 'punishment' or 'pains' would have shown more clearly the probable derivation of *vandrædi* from *poena*, but the fact remains that *vandrædi* does not have these meanings among its attested acceptations.

The adjective *öll*, 'full', 'complete', applied to *lausn* indicates the extent of the indulgence, which is clearly not partial but plenary (Raschellà 1985: 576-77). Similarly to the Latin expression *plena remissio*, or *plena/plenaria indulgentia*, *Leiðarvísir* employs this adjective to refer to the 'remission of temporal punishments', the plenary indulgence, and not to the sins, as in *Spesar þáttr* and *Orkneyinga saga*. The universal character of the indulgence, as proclaimed by Boniface VIII in his bull of 1300 (§3.20.1), can be compared to the fact that *lausn öll of vandredi*, 'the full release from troubles', which *Leiðarvísir* associates with St Peter's, is for the men *of allan heimí*, 'from the whole world' (l. 92). The information reported by *Leiðarvísir* that plenary indulgences were granted in St Peter's was common knowledge in the medieval world (see §3.20.1 for the success of the first jubilee). We have also seen that there are probable references to plenary indulgences in the sagas. It is therefore likely that the reference to an *indulgentia plenaria* in *Description A* derives from the general knowledge of its author, rather than being directly based on one of the countless written sources reporting it.

The fact that the description of St Peter's in *Leiðarvísir* refers to a 'plenary indulgence' that could be gained there makes it extremely problematic to keep its dating around the mid-twelfth century and sets 1300 as a *terminus post quem* for this passage. The traditional early dating of the itinerary becomes even more problematic

if one considers that other details in the description of the interior of St Peter's are hardly compatible with a composition around the middle of the twelfth century.

3.20.3 The High Altar

After the reference to the indulgence granted to the visitors to St Peter's, *Leiðarvísir* offers an indication of the orientation of the basilica: *& skal austan ganga i petrs kirkio*, 'and one must enter the Church of Peter from the east' (l. 93): the entrance, or rather the entrances, were indeed on the east side of the church (Magoun 1940: 286; Blaauw 1994: 457). *Leiðarvísir* continues by adding that *alltari i midri kirkio þar er petrs ork undir alltara & þar var hann i myrkvastofa*, 'the altar is in the middle of the church. The sarcophagus of Peter is there under the altar, and he was there in a dungeon' (ll. 93-94). The Basilica of St Peter was built on what was considered to be the tomb of the Apostle. The simple monument that marked the place of Peter's burial before the construction of the Constantinian basilica was an *aedicula* or a τροπαῖον, as is defined by Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, in his fourth-century *History of the Church* (Eusebius of Caesarea 1903-09: II 25, 7). The high altar of the basilica was placed over the *tropaion* (see Figure 8, p. 213, n. 1). In the sixth century Pope Gregory the Great modified the disposition of the altar, installing an annular crypt under the *mensa* 'to regulate and control the approach of pilgrims to a venerated site, and concomitantly to link the shrine closely to the altar where the Eucharist was celebrated' (Krautheimer 2000: 86; see Blaauw 1994: 542-47).

Basilica Sancti Petri

Pianta con ricostruzione della disposizione liturgica dei sec. XII-XIII

1. Altare maggiore
2. Confessione
3. Cattedra
4. Subsellia
5. Cripta
6. Ambone del vangelo
7. Candelabro del cero pasquale
8. Ambone dell'epistola
9. Colonna 'degli spiritati'

10. Oratorium S. Crucis (DBV)
13. Altare S. Johannis ad fontem (DBV)
15. Altare S. Luciae (DBV)
16. Oratorium SS. Processi et Martiniani (DBV)
17. Oratorium S. Mariae in oratorio (DBV)
    Altare S. Mariae Pregnantis (doc. 1303)
18. Oratorium S. Hadriani (DBV)
19. Oratorium S. Leonis (DBV)
20. Altare S. Sixti (DBV)
21. Oratorium S. Mariae in choro canonicorum (DBV)
    Altare S. Mariae de Cancellis (DBV)
22. Altare S. Pastoris (DBV)
23. Oratorium Mariae / Veronicae (DBV)
24. Oratorium S. Gregorii (DBV)

30. Altare de Ossibus Apostolorum (doc. 1058)
31. Altare S. Bartholomaei (DBV)
32. Altare S. Silvestri (DBV)
33. Altare S. Mauritii (DBV)
34. Altare S. Catharinae (LA 1383)
35. Altare S. Alexii (Cronaca 1209)
36. Altare SS. Philippi et Jacobi (DBV)
37. Altare SS. Simonis et Judae (DBV)
38. Altare S. Bonifatii (ca. 1295)
39. Altare S. Jacobi (doc. 1319)
40. Altare S. Mariae Magdalenae (doc. 1319)

41. Altare S. Nicolai (doc. 1279)
42. Altare S. Abundii (DBV)
43. Altare Veronicae (DBV)
44. Altare S. Antonini (DBV)
45. Altare S. Tridentii (DBV)
46. Altare S. Blasii (LA 1305)
47. Altare S. Martialis (epist. 1031)
48. Altare S. Egidii (DBV)
49. Altare S. Mariae in Turri (iscr. 1130-1143)

a. Fontes magni
b. Fontes minores
c. Chorus canonicorum
d. Luogo della cathedra Petri (?)
e. Rota (porfido)
f. Rota (marmo egizio venato)
g. Rota porfiretica
h. Rota (marmo egizio venato)

A1. Altare S. Andreae
A9. Altare S. Johannis Chrysostomi (?) (Guida 1375)
B1. Altare S. Petronillae
B7. Altare S. Angeli (doc. 1320)

C. Battistero
D. Secretarium antiquum
E. Secretarium novellum
F. Oratorium S. Martini
G. Cappella di S. Tommaso / battistero sec. XV
H. Cappella del coro di Sisto IV (1479)
I. Coro d'inverno sec. XV
J. Sagrestia maggiore sec. XV / posizione della sagrestia sec. XIV (?)
K. Biblioteca sec. XV
L. Sagrestia ausiliaria sec. XIV
M. Cappella di S. Ambrogio (DBV)
N. Chiesa di S. Vincenzo (DBV)
O. Palazzo papale (doc. 1151)
P. Canonica

In linee punteggiate strutture posteriori

Figure 8: Reconstruction of St Peter's in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Blaauw 1994: Appendix, N. 26).

The information reported by *Leiðarvísir* on the position of the high altar in St Peter's is present in the tradition of the *IEUR*. In particular there are relevant correspondences with the version contained in the *Liber Rubeus*, MS Montserrat, Biblioteca del Monestir, Cod. I (see §3.6). The description of the interior of St Peter's in this text begins with the information that *Primo est ibi altare maius in capite ecclesiae, in quo nullus audet ce[le]brare nisi Summus Pontifex. Et subtus altari est corpus sancti Petri, vel maior, pars et beati Pauli, consocii sui*, 'First of all, there is the high altar in the choir of the church, in which no one dares celebrate except the pope. And under the altar is the body of St Peter, or a large part of it, and [the body] of the blessed Paul, his companion' (VZ: IV 79[26]- 80[1]). MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 4265, dated 1375 (Parthey 1869: xiii; Huelsen 1927: 137), includes on folios 209ra-216ra a version of the *MUR* followed by a description of the main churches of Rome and by a version of the *IEUR* (edited by Huelsen 1927: 137-56 and Weißthanner 1954: 59-63). In the description of the churches which in MS Vat. Lat. 4265 precedes the text of the *IEUR* and follows a version of the *MUR* (Parthey 1869: 13; Miedema 1996: 77-78, see §3.6), we find that *in medio est altare maius sancti Petri, ubi nullus nisi solus papa consuevit celebrare, sub quo maiore altare est medietas reliquiarum de corpore Petri et Pauli, et ibidem sessorium sancti Petri*, 'in the middle is the high altar of St Peter, where it is customary that no one but the pope celebrates mass, under which high altar are half of the relics of Peter and Paul's bodies, and in the same place is the seat of St Peter' (Parthey 1869: 50).

The indication of *Leiðarvísir* that the altar is *i midri kirkio*, 'in the middle of the church' (l. 93), can be compared to the expressions *in capite ecclesiae* of the *Liber Rubeus* and *in medio est altare maius sancti Petri*, which is in MS Vat. Lat. 4265 and corresponds closely to the Icelandic text. The following information in *Leiðarvísir* that *þar er Petrs örk undir alltara*, 'the sarcophagus of Peter is there under the altar' is very similar to the formulation of the *IEUR* that *subtus altari est corpus sancti Petri*. The indication that only a part of the body of the saint is here, together with part of the body of St Paul, is a reference to the later legend on the division of the bones of St Peter and St Paul, which is also reported in *Description A* (see §3.20.7).

3.20.4 The Prison of Peter

The following comment about St Peter in *Description A* that *þar var han i myrkvastofa*, 'he was there in a dungeon' (l. 64), deserves some attention. Werlauff (1821: 469) rightly observes that no reference to a prison of Peter in the area of the basilica can be found in the sources, and that the area is not compatible with the traditional site where Peter was incarcerated, the Church of San Pietro in Carcere, or even with San Pietro in Montorio, where according to one tradition he was crucified. Kålund affirms that 'drawing on some unknown source the itinerary adds that Peter was also imprisoned here – perhaps in connection with the fact that St Peter's was built on the circus of Caligula, which in the Middle Ages was called *Palatium Neronis*' (Kålund 1913: 78).[82] Magoun (1940: 286) confirms that 'the traditional place of Peter's (and Paul's) confinement was the Mamertine Prison, later the site of San Pietro in Carcere, a long way off'. In the *Einsiedeln Itinerary*, written between the middle of the eighth century and the middle of the ninth, a *Fons s. Petri ubi est carcer eius*, 'spring of St Peter, where his prison is' (VZ: II 190), is mentioned. In the catalogues written between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries there is no reference to the Church of San Pietro in Carcere; this church, built on the Mamertine Prison, is first mentioned in the *IEUR* (Huelsen 1927: 422). In the *IEUR* of MS Vat. Regina 520 (dated 1364)[83] an indulgence of one hundred years is granted *in ecclesia que dicitur Custodia, in qua incarcerati fuerunt b. Petrus et Paulus, ubi nutu dei aqua manavit in qua dicti apostoli baptisaverunt Processum et Martinianum*, 'in the church that is called *Custodia* [Prison], in which the blessed Peter and Paul were incarcerated, where upon a nod from God water poured, in which the said apostles baptised Processus and Martinianus' (Huelsen 1927:153). MS, St Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 1093 (end of the fourteenth century, Miedema 1996: 80) gives the same version of the legend but specifies that one thousand years of indulgence are granted *in ecclesia S. Petri apostoli que dicitur custodia Martiniani, ubi sanctus*

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[82] '*Fra uvist hvilken kilde tilføjer Vejviseren, at her Peter wae også i fængsel – muligvis i tilslutning til Peters-kirken var bygget op til Caligulas cirkus, som i middelalderen kaldtes Palatium Neronis.*'

[83] It is relevant that MS Vat. Reg. 520, as has been seen, also includes a transcription of the inscription outside the *Sancta Sanctorum* that listed the relics kept there (see above §3.7.2.5). This further confirms the possibility that the compiler of *Leiðarvísir* was able to find much of the information he needed in few Latin manuscripts.

Petrus et sanctus Paulus incarcerati fuerunt, 'in the Church of St Peter the Apostle, which is called *Custodia Martiniani* [Prison of Martinianus], where St Peter and St Paul were incarcerated' (Huelsen 1927: 153). As we have seen, the reference in *Leiðarvísir* to the *myrkvastofa* of Peter located under the basilica does not have any correspondence in the sources. It might again be interpreted as an imprecise memory of a piece of information received in the course of a real journey to Rome. It has already been shown, however, how especially in the analysis of the description of St John Lateran the *IEUR* play an important role among the sources used by the Icelandic compiler. In this case, it is not unlikely that the author of *Description A* may have transposed into the Basilica of St Peter the location of the *Custodia*, the *myrkvastofa*, of Peter that the *IEUR* placed in another *ecclesia Sancti Petri apostoli*. The Church of San Pietro in Carcere might have been easily confused with the Constantinian basilica, and its denomination *Custodia* may have been considered by the Icelandic compiler an indication that the prison of Peter was under St Peter's in the Vatican.

3.20.5 The Dimensions of St Peter's

Leiðarvísir continues by giving the measurements of the basilica in Latin: *Ecclecia Petri CCCCLX a foribus longa ad sanctum alltare sed lata CCXXX p[e]dum*, 'The Church of Peter is four hundred and sixty feet long from the door to the holy altar and two hundred and thirty feet wide' (ll. 94-95). Commentators agree that a written source must underlie this passage, which is the only complete Latin sentence in *Leiðarvísir* (Kålund 1913: 78; Raschellà 1985-86: 577). It has been calculated that the length of Old St Peter's from the door to the *apex* of the apse was 123.21 meters, and that the width of the five naves was 66.39 metres and of the transept 90.91m (Arbeiter 1988: 62; Blaauw 1994: 457). If we divide the real measures by the number of feet indicated in *Leiðarvísir*, the result is that a foot is *c.* 268mm for the length, and *c.* 289mm for the width. These values of the foot approximately correspond respectively to the Nurnberg *pes minor* (278, 300 mm) or to the foot of Hamburg and Köln (286, 251 mm; *Lexikon des Mittelalters*: s.v. Fuß). The measurements of St Peter's given in *Leiðarvísir* are very similar to those indicated in MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale Codex Parisinus Latinus, 8071, a late ninth- or tenth-century sylloge of various texts, among which there is also a collection of inscriptions from Old St Peter's (De Rossi 1888: II 50). The Codex Parisinus reports that *Aecclesia*

sancti Petri habet in longitudine pedes CCCXC in latitudine vero pedes CCXXVI excepto illo throno, 'The Church of St Peter is three hundred and ninety feet in length and two hundred and twenty-six feet in width, except the throne' (De Rossi 1888: II 57). De Rossi (1888: II 57) considers *excepto illo throno* to refer to the length and calculates an overall length of 400 feet, comparing it to the measurements taken in the sixteenth century by Tiberius Alpharanus. In this case the two measurements would be even closer: MS Parisinus length 400 feet (390+*thronus)*, width 226 feet; *Leiðarvísir* length 460 feet, 230 feet. The measurements of St Peter's in spans appear not only in this very ancient anthology of inscriptions, but also in the *IEUR* preserved in the *Liber Rubeus*, where we find that *tenet in longitudine dicta ecclesia, a kathedra sancti Petri usque ad Portale, palmos DCXV; in latitudine CCCXXX*, 'the above-mentioned church is six hundred and fifteen spans in length, and three hundred and thirty in width' (VZ: IV 80). Interestingly, MS Cotton. Faust. B VII, after the *IEUR* and before the *Stationes ecclesiarum*, gives on folio 17[ra] the measures of the basilica. After these measurements of St Peter's, the text of MS Cotton. Faust. B VII (f. 17ra) gives those of the Paradise of St Peter's and of the Church of St Paul. This confirms that the measurements of the Basilica of St Peter were available in a variety of texts on the city of Rome that the author of *Description A* could have had at his own disposal.

3.20.6 The Cross of Peter

Leiðarvísir continues the description of the interior of St Peter's by adding: *ok þi ner stod cros Petri, þa er hann v[ar] pindr, sem nu er haallt[ar]e*, 'and Peter's cross when he was tortured stood near where the high altar now is' (ll. 95-96). According to the tradition, St Peter was crucified in the Circus of Nero, which was in the area were the church was built (Magoun 1940: 286; Blaauw 1994: 456-57). The *MUR* (VZ: III 46) report that Peter was crucified next to an *aedificium rotondum*, which could not be identified precisely. Some scholars (VZ: III 46n.1) believe that later manuscripts of the *MUR* might have generated a possible confusion between this monument and the terebinth under which Peter was buried. Petrus Mallius writes in his *Descriptio Basilicae Vaticanae* that Pope Cornelius had the body of St Peter buried *prope locum ubi crucifixus est*, 'near the place where he was crucified' (VZ: III 383[16-17]; see the life of Pope Cornelius in the *Liber Pontificalis*, Duchesne 1955-57: 150); he also reports that Pope Sylvester put a golden cross on the body of Peter

(VZ III: 384[11-12]), and describing another golden cross, which he himself had seen, that was donated by Leo IV and placed on the right of the altar (VZ: III 391[16-20]; see Blaauw 1994: 546). The description of the churches of Rome in MS Vat Lat. 4265 gives a description of the interior disposition of St Peter's, saying that in the church *ubi intratur versus levam in muro superius est crux sancti Petri, iuxta quam requiescunt corpora apostolorum*, 'where one enters, on the left in the upper wall is the cross of St Peter, next to which lie the bodies of the apostles' (Parthey 1869: 50). As we have seen above (§3.20.3, see also §3.20.7), according to the tradition reported in the *IEUR*, the bodies of Peter and Paul were situated under the high altar. The information given in *Leiðarvísir* that the Cross of Peter was close to the high altar is therefore similar to that present in the tradition of the *IEUR*. A more generic formulation regarding the place of crucifixion of Peter is also at the beginning of the description of St Peter's in the *IEUR* of MS Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. hist. 2° 459, where it is reported that St Peter's was *in eodem loco constructa, ubi sanctus Petrus Apostolus fuit crucifixus pedes desuper*, 'built in the same place where St Peter the Apostle was crucified feet up' (Schimmelpfennig 1988: 649).

3.20.7 The Bones of Peter and Paul

The item of information immediately following is particularly relevant, because it is another detail whose presence in the description of the interior of St Peter's is hardly compatible with the traditional mid-twelfth-century dating of the Icelandic itinerary. *Description A* refers to the fact that under the main altar *ero half bein Petri & Pauli guds postola, og half hvorteggi ero i Pals kirkiu*, 'are half the bones of Peter and Paul, apostles of God, and the other half of both are in the Church of Paul' (ll. 96-97). This is a reference to the altar *de ossibus apostolorum*, first mentioned in 1058, and to the legend of the weighing and division of the apostles' bones by Pope Sylvester, who donated them to the two basilicas (Blaauw 1994: 672; see Figure 8, p. 213, n. 30). As Engelbert Kirschbaum has shown (1959: 209-11), the first attestation of this legend is in a twelfth-century inscription found on the antique sarcophagus in which Petrus Leonis (Pierleone), a wealthy and influential Roman, was buried. On the sarcophagus was this inscription:

> Te Petrus et Paulus (con)servent, Petre Leonis.
> Dent animam caelo, quos tam devote amasti:

Et quibus est idem tumulus, sit gloria tecum. (Kirschbaum 1959: 209)

May Peter and Paul keep you, Pierleone!

May they, whom you so devoutly loved, present your soul to the heaven!

And may you share their glory, as you share their grave!

Kirschbaum (1959: 209) explains how the legend arose. The Pierleoni were wealthy and powerful. Petrus Pierleoni, son of Petrus Leonis, became a cardinal in 1120 and was elected as the Antipope Anacletus II (1130-38). Pierleone probably died around 1128, so on 25 March 1123 his son was possibly present at, or might have heard about, the urn with joint relics of Peter and Paul used by Pope Callixtus II to consecrate his new altar: 'It was no far step to imagine similar joint relics at St Paul's, especially when one recalled the two heads in the third great Roman basilica, the Lateran' (Kirschbaum 1959: 209). The Pierleone inscription does not contain any reference to the legend of the two halves of the bodies of Peter and Paul, which is mentioned in *Leiðarvísir*, but it only refers to a common *tumulus* for the two Apostles, so that 'it would be reasonable to suggest that the solemn dedication of the altar in 1123 was the starting point of this legend' (Kirschbaum 1959: 209-10). In the course of the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries this legend extended in connection with the ancient feast of the *Divisio Apostolorum* and with the altar dedicated to both apostles close to the *Confessio* in St Peter's (Kirschbaum 1959: 210; Blaauw 1994: 672). The feast of the 'Dispersion of the Apostles' commemorated the departure of the apostles from Jerusalem to do their missionary work in the various parts of the world, but it progressively merged with the legend of the division of the apostles' relics by Pope Sylvester. We find a detailed version of the legend, along with the first reference to the new interpretation of the *Divisio Apostolorum*, in the *Summa de ecclesiasticis officiis*, 'Compendium of Liturgy', written in Paris before 1165 by Jean Beleth (1976: 29-30). In a first passage Jean Beleth analyses the two different interpretations of the *divisio apostolorum*:

> In quibusdam vero ecclesiarum kalendariis invenitur *De divisione apostolorum*, quando eorum corpora separata fuerunt. Postquam autem a principibus Romanis pacem habuit ecclesia, voluerunt unicuique propriam constituere basilicam. Unde cum de ossibus discernendis hesitarent, facto triduano ieiunio divina revelatione descendit vox de celo dicens: Minora sunt ossa Petri piscatoris, maiora vero Pauli predicatoris, et ita divisa sunt, et unicuique ecclesia dedicata et hec est una divisio.

> Item postea legitur divisio, sed alia est, quia post mortem Christi duodecim annis simul fuerunt apostoli. Cum autem dividendi essent per partes mundi, minus composuerunt symbolum, et de hac divisione dictum est. (Beleth 1976: 128)
>
> In those calendars of the church [the day of] the Dispersion of the Apostles can be found, that is, when their bodies were separated. After the Roman emperors granted peace to the church, they wanted to build a basilica for each of the two [apostles]. Since they were uncertain in distinguishing their bones, after a three-day fast, by a divine revelation a voice came down from the Heaven saying: 'The smaller bones belong to Peter the fisherman, the bigger to Paul the preacher'. And so they were divided, and a church was dedicated to each of the two, and this is the first interpretation of division. But after this, one reads of a second and different division, because after the death of Christ the apostles were together for twelve years. When they had to separate and to go to the various parts of the world, they composed the Creed of the Apostles, and this division is meant.

In another passage Jean Beleth analyses the *questio* whether the two apostles died on the same day. After explaining his negative answer to this *questio*, he tells how the apostles were buried together in the same place, until Constantine converted to Christianity and decided to build a church for each of them. The problem of how to separate their bodies arose:

> Et cum vellent corpora separare et dubitarent, que ossa essent Petri et que beati Pauli, orantibus illis et peracto ieiunio responsum est celitus maiora esse ossa predicatoris, minora vero piscatoris. Et sic ossa ab invicem separata in suis posuerunt ecclesiis. (Beleth 1976a: 271)
>
> And since they wanted to separate their bodies but were uncertain about which bones belonged to the Peter and which to the blessed Paul, after they had prayed and fasted, the response came from Heaven that the bigger bones belonged to the preacher, the smaller to the fisherman. And so, after the bones were separated from each other, they placed them in each of the churches.

Further on, Jean Beleth repeats the two different interpretations of the *Divisio Apostolorum* (Beleth 1976a: 273). It is noteworthy that in each of these three passages in which the authoritative theologian explains the different interpretations of the *Divisio Apostolorum* in his manual of liturgy, written shortly before 1165, there is no reference to the information that the bones of the Apostles had been divided in half, as in *Description A*: in the legend reported by Jean Beleth the bones are sorted out on the basis of their dimension thanks to a *vox de celo*.

Petrus Mallius was the first to connect explicitly the altar *de ossibus apostolorum* with this legend (Blaauw 1994: 672). In the *Descriptio Basilicae Vaticanae*, written under the pontificate of Alexander III (1159-81), the element of the weighing of the bones by Pope Sylvester is first introduced, but it is not mentioned that the two halves were placed in the basilicas:

> Ante aditum, qui vadit in confessionem beati Petri, est altare apostolorum Petri et Pauli, ubi eorum ossa pretiosa, ut dicitur, ponderata fuerunt. (VZ: III 421[9-11])
>
> In front of the entrance, which leads to the *Confessio* of the blessed Peter, is the altar of the apostles Peter and Paul, where their precious bones, as is said, were weighed.

The first explicit reference to the division of the bones into two halves by Pope Sylvester and the distribution of these two halves between St Peter's and St Paul's is in the *Mitrale* of Sicardus of Cremona, written shortly before 1195 (*Lexikon des Mittelalters* 1977-1999: VII 1833). Sicardus resumes the *questio* that had already been tackled by Jean Beleth, introducing the new element of the division of the bones into two halves:

> Sed demum, Christiana religione crescente, cum utrique Apostolo Christiani propriam aedificassent ecclesiam, ut vellent eorum corpora separare, dubitarent autem quae cujus essent ossa, orantibus illis, responsum est majora fore praedicatoris, minora piscatoris, et sic ab invicem separata in propriis sunt ecclesiis collocata. Alii dicunt quod Sylvester papa volens ecclesias consecrare, tam magna quam parva ossa in lance, summa cum reverentia ponderavit. Et medietatem in una ecclesia medietatem in alia collocavit. (*PL*: CCXIII 416-417)
>
> While Christianity was establishing itself, the people were building for each of the Christian apostles his own church and wanted to separate their bones; they were uncertain to whom the bones belonged and, because they prayed, it was answered that the bigger bones belonged to the preacher and the smaller to the fisherman and so, after they were separated from each other, the bones could be put in their own churches. Others say that Pope Sylvester wanted to consecrate the churches and weighed with the utmost reverence both the big and the small bones on the pan of a pair of scales. And he placed one half in one church, and one half in the other.

Guillame Durandus draws on Sicardus and reports the legend in his *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, 'Treaty on Liturgy', written before 1286 (Durandus 2000: 59).

This version of the *Divisio apostolorum* had a widespread diffusion from the fourteenth century onward (Kirschbaum 1959: 211, 241 n. 65). It also finds its place in the tradition of the *IEUR*: the text of MS Vat. Reg. 520 (dated 1364) reports a simplified version of the legend:

> Et sciendum est quod in urbe Romana requiescunt VIII corpora apostolorum, videlicet in ecclesia beati Petri apostoli iacet medietas corporis eius et medietas sancti Pauli [apostoli], quae inventa fuerunt in uno tumulo, et dubitatio erat universo populo quae [erant] ossa sancti Petri et quae erant ossa sancti Pauli, et ideo ponderaverunt ossa pondere, et posuerunt unam medietatem in ecclesia sancti petri apostoli et aliam medietatem in ecclesia sancti Pauli sub maiore altare. (Huelsen 1927: 138)
>
> And it has to be known that in Rome the bodies of eight apostles rest, that is to say that in the Church of the blessed Peter the Apostle lies half of his body, and half of the body of St Paul the Apostle, which were found in a single grave. All the people were uncertain which were the bones of St Peter and which were the bones of St Paul, and so they weighed the bones in a balance and placed one half in the Church of St Peter the Apostle and the other half in the Church of St Paul the Apostle under the high altar.

Unlike in the legend reported by Sicardus, Pope Sylvester is not mentioned in this account. A similar formulation is also present in the description of St Peter's in MS Vat. Lat. 4265 (see §3.20.3) with reference to the high altar *sub quo maiore altare est medietas reliquiarum de corpore Petri et Pauli, et ibidem sessorium sancti Petri*, 'under which high altar is half of the relics of Peter and Paul's bodies, and in the same place is the seat of St Peter' (Parthey 1869: 50). In the *IEUR* edited by Hulbert it is stated that *medietas corporum Petri et Pauli requiescit ad sanctum Petrum, reliqua vero medietas ad sanctum Paulum*, 'half of the bodies of Peter and Paul rest in St Peter's, and in truth the other half in St Paul's' (1923: 407). This formulation is very close to that of *Leiðarvísir*, that in the Basilica of St Peter *ero half bein Petri et Pauli guds postola, og half hvorteggi ero i Pals kirkiu*, 'are half the bones of Peter and Paul, apostles of God, and the other half of both are in the Church of Paul' (ll. 96-97).

The legend of the division of the bones is first attested in 1165 in the *Summa* of Jean Beleth, but only at the end of the twelfth century does the story develop a reference to their separation into two halves deposited in St Peter's and in St Paul's.

It is on this version that *Description A* draws, probably through the intermediation of the *IEUR*. The late origin of this legend and the fact that it is first attested in this form at the end of the twelfth century makes it implausible that it could already have been reported in *Leiðarvísir* around the mid-twelfth century. Fourteenth-century *IEUR* attest the *divisio apostolorum* in a form close to that of *Leiðarvísir*, so that the influence of the *IEUR* on the Icelandic text seems to be significant in this passage as well. The textual relation between the description of St Peter's and the *IEUR* is also confirmed by the analysis of the other details of the interior of the church.

3.20.8 The Altars of Pope Sylvester and Pope Gregory

Leiðarvísir continues the description of the area around the high altar by adding that *i ha-alltara ero folgin XXV beina lerisueina Christz þeira er Petro fylgdu i Romaborg*, 'under the high altar are concealed twenty-five bones of those disciples of Christ who accompanied Peter to Rome' (ll. 97-98). The reference of this passage has not been identified with certainty (Kålund 1913: 79; Magoun 1940: 286). A similar detail, however, can be found in a reference to the presence in St Peter's of the relics of twenty-five martyrs. We do not have further information about their story and identity, but the presence of the relics *sanctorum xxv*, 'of twenty-five saints', is attested, together with the relics of other saints, in an inscription probably written in the eighth century and found in St Peter's (Silvagni 1943: Tab. XXXVII, n. 3). The *Martyrologium* of Bede registers on the seventh of August in Rome *passio sanctorum martyrum numero viginti quinque*, 'the passion of the holy martyrs, twenty-five in number' (*PL*: XCIV 1001). This relic is also attested in MS Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. 16.I. Aug. 4o (mid-fifteenth century, Miedema 1996: 143-44), in which a Swabian version of the *IEUR* reports the translated text of the inscription, referring to *die hailig funf vnd zwainczig martrer*, 'the holy twenty-five martyrs' (Miedema 2003: 95[12]; see also Miedema 2001: 323, 335). It seems likely that the 'twenty-five bones of those disciples of Christ who accompanied Peter to Rome' attested in *Description A* can be related to the tradition of the anonymous 'holy twenty-five martyrs', whose relics are attested to be kept in St Peter's. It can be conjectured that a scribe inverted the order of two words in this passage of *Leiðarvísir*, writing *XXV beina* instead of **beina XXV*. This scribal-mechanical reversal would be similar to the inversion of the order of the names 'Schleswig' and 'Hedeby' at the beginning of the itinerary (l. 5, see § 1.4.2). The

following emendation of the text attested in MS 184 8vo can thus be proposed: *Í háaltara eru folgin beina XXV lærisveina Krists þeira* [...], 'Under the high altar are concealed the bones of those twenty-five disciples of Christ [...]'.

After this information *Leiðarvísir* adds that *I Petrs kirkiu er alltari Silvestri pape, þar sem hann hvilir*, 'In the Church of Peter is the altar of Pope Sylvester, where he lies buried' (ll. 98-99). In Old St Peter's there was an altar dedicated to Sylvester I (314-35; see fig. Figure 8, p. 213, n. 32), as indicated by *Leiðarvísir*, but this pope was never buried there. The *Liber Pontificalis* says that Pope Sylvester *sepultus est in cymiterio Priscillae, via Salaria*, 'is buried in the cemetery of Priscilla on the Via Salaria' (Duchesne 1955-57: I 187). It has been proposed that Pope Sylvester had planned a new site to bury the popes on the Via Salaria, and most of the popes of the fourth and the fifth centuries were actually interred there (Borgolte 1989: 39-40). In the seventh century the *Notitia Ecclesiarum* invited pilgrims to follow the Via Salaria *ad Sancti Silvestri ecclesiam, ibi multitudo sanctorum pausat: primum Silvester sanctus papa et confessor,* 'to the Church of St Sylvester, where a multitude of saints rest: first St Sylvester, Pope and Confessor' (VZ: II 76; see Borgolte 1989: 40). We have a letter of Pope Paul I (757-67) to Pepin the Short in which the pope states that in 762 he had moved the remains of Sylvester to San Silvestro *in capite* (Duchesne 1955-57: I 466); according to a different tradition, King Aistulf of the Lombards transferred the body of Sylvester to the abbey of Nonantola, near Modena (Montini 1957: 89-90). Petrus Mallius offers interesting information on the altar of Sylvester in St Peter's in his *Descriptio Basilicae Vaticanae*, writing that *iuxta sepulchrum domni [H]adriani IIII est altare sancti Silvestri papae, in quo, sicut accepimus, brachium eius est reconditum*, 'next to the sepulchre of Lord Hadrian IV is the altar of the Holy Pope Sylvester, in which, as we have learned, his arm is concealed' (VZ: III 390[8-10]). Petrus Mallius refers in this passage to a relic of St Sylvester kept in his altar in the old basilica of St Peter, but he confirms that the pope had never been buried there. Kålund (1913: 79) notes this incongruence, whereas Magoun (1940: 286) does not take it into account.

The wrong information on the place of Pope Sylvester's burial can perhaps be better understood if we consider the next detail given in *Leiðarvísir*, that *Gregorius alltari er i Petrs kirkiu, þar sem han hvilir*, 'the altar of Gregory is in the Church of Peter, where he lies buried' (19[2-4]). The body of Gregory the Great was originally buried in the narthex of the basilica. It was transferred to the interior of the basilica in

828-29 by Pope Gregory IV (827-44), after a Frankish monk had in 826 stolen the relics of Gregory the Great from the tomb in the narthex (Blaauw 1994: 574; see Figure 8, p. 213, n. 24). The new altar built by Gregory IV was close to the inside wall of the basilica façade (Blaauw 1994: 575). An observation on the chapel and the tomb of Gregory the Great made by Michael Borgolte (1989: 186-87), and confirmed by Sible de Blaauw (1994: 575), is relevant for the interpretation of the passage in *Leiðarvísir*: it was no earlier than the end of the twelfth century that the body of Pope Gregory the Great was moved, when Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) had it interred under his altar. Borgolte (1989: 186) quotes a passage from the *Catalogus pontificum* of Viterbo: *Tempore suo elevavit corpus beati pape Gregorii et onorifice in altare eiusdem beati recondivit*, 'During his pontificate [Innocent III] had the body of the blessed Pope Gregory exhumed and interred it again with honours in the altar dedicated to the blessed Pope'. The information on the position of the sepulchre of Pope Gregory can be found with a formulation close to *Leiðarvísir* in the *IEUR*, where in the list of the five privileged altars of St Peter's is included *altare beati Gregori pape iuxta sepulchrum eius*, 'the altar of the blessed Pope Gregory, close to his sepulchre' (Schimmelpfennig 1986: 650). The expression *iuxta sepulchrum eius* is close to *Description A*'s indication that the body of Gregory is *þar sem han hvilir*. This last detail given by *Leiðarvísir* on the interior of St Peter's casts further doubts on the possibility of keeping an early dating for the Roman section of the itinerary and strengthens the hypothesis that it was based on later written sources, among which the fourteenth-century tradition of the *IEUR* has probably played a decisive role.

It is relevant that the references of the Icelandic text to the altars of Gregory and Sylvester are almost identical: *I Petrs kirkiu er alltari Silvestri pape, þar sem hann hvilir; Gregorius alltari er i Petrs kirkiu, þar sem han hvilir* (ll. 99-101). The reference in *Leiðarvísir* to the tomb of Sylvester, which had never been in St Peter's, can be explained by supposing that an Icelandic scribe accidentally copied the sentence *þar sem hann hvilir* from the passage about Gregory the Great as he was writing the information about Sylvester.

3.21 The Needle of St Peter's

After this last note on the interior of the basilica, *Description A* gives us the position of the obelisk of St Peter's: *petrs nal er hia úti fyrir vestan*, 'The needle of Peter

outside to the west' (l. 100)'. In Old St Peter's the obelisk was located east of the side-chapel of St Andrew, on the south side of the Basilica (see Figure 3, p. 187, and Figure 4, p. 188). The indication 'to the west' is correct if one considers it 'in reference to the east end of St Peter's, that is, pretty well up toward the west end of the old Basilica' (Magoun 1940: 287). The word used in this passage for obelisk, *nál*, appears to be a translation of the medieval Latin *acus*, originally meaning 'needle', or of its diminutive *agulia*, a form which appears in the *MUR*: *Iuxta quod* [*Sanctus Andreas*] *est memoria Caesaris, id est agulia, ubi splendide cinis eius in suo sarcophago requiescit*, 'Nearby [Sant'Andrea] is the memorial of Caesar, that is the Needle where his ashes splendidly rest in his sarcophagus' (VZ: III 43$^{7-9}$). The ashes of Gaius Julius Caesar were preserved, according to the legend, in a bronze sphere on top of the obelisk. Another reference in the *MUR* to the *agulia* is at the end of the passage quoted above describing the cantharus (VZ: III 45^{5}, see §3.19.4). Magister Gregorius reports that *hanc autem pyramidem peregrini 'Acum beati Petri' appellant*, 'the pilgrims call this obelisk the "Needle of St Peter"' (Gregorius 2000: 299).

3.22 The Number of the Roman Churches

Description A closes with two final observations on the city of Rome. The first is about the total number of the Roman churches, which were so many that no one knew them all: *Sua hafa frodir menn sagt ath eingi se sua frodr at vist se ath viti allar kirkior i romaborg*, 'Learned men have said that no one is so wise as to know all the churches in the city of Rome' (ll. 100-101). In the *incipit* that became typical for the *IEUR* from the fourteenth/fifteenth century the number of the churches in Rome was traditionally said to be 'one thousand five hundred and five' (§3.6; see Miedema 2003: 23). The information in *Leiðarvísir* could derive, however, from another observation which was commonly contained in the *IEUR*, where the topos of the innumerability was often used in connection with the indulgences granted at the Lateran. The description of the Lateran in the *IEUR* often starts with the observation, usually attributed to Pope Boniface, that *ecclesie Lateranensis indulgentie numerari non possunt nisi a deo solo*, 'the indulgences of the Church of the Lateran cannot be reckoned except by God' (Schimmelpfennig 1988: 651; see also Huelsen 1927: 140; Weißthanner 1954: 60-61).

3.23 *Róma*, *Latrán* and *Rómaborg*

According to the final observation in *Description A*, the name *Róma* properly refers to the area on the right bank of the Tiber: *Roma heiter fyrir <nordan> tifr en latran [f]yrir s[unnan] & þo allt saman romaborg*, 'North of the Tiber it is called "Rome" and south "Lateran", and yet the whole together is called "the city of Rome"' (ll. 101-103). This same distinction between *Róma* and *Rómaborg* is reported also in the *Vegr til Róms*, in a passage that has already been analysed for a possible parallel with the measurements of Rome given in *Description A* (see §3.4). Rome is the last stop after Viterbo: *til Roma Borgar 40 mylur, vt vm sialfa Róm og Latran 4 mylar, til S: Páls 4 mylur*, 'to the city of Rome 40 miles. All around Rome itself and the Lateran four miles: to the Church of St Paul four miles' (Simek 1990: 511, a). A significant textual parallel to this topographical distinction between *Róma* and *Latrán* can also be found in the *Fóstbrœðra saga*, 'The Saga of the Sworn Brothers'. This saga narrates the pilgrimage of Bjarni of Stokkanes, a secondary character who makes a *peregrinatio devotionis causa* to Rome and dies on that journey (for a study of this kind of pilgrimages, see Cucina 1998: 90-132; and Shafer 2011: 17-24). The lection attested in *Möðruvallabók* (Reykjavík, MS AM 132 fol., written between 1330 and 1370, handrit.is 2012: AM 132 fol.; see Björn and Guðni 1943: lxx-lxxvii for a description of the stemma) reads: *Heldr Bjarni suður til Danmerkr og gengr út til Róms og sækir heim inn heilaga Pétr postula og Pál postula, og í þeirri för andast Bjarni*, 'Bjarni heads south to Denmark and from there goes to Rome on a pilgrimage, and he visits the churches of St Peter the Apostle and of St Paul the Apostle, and Bjarni dies on that journey' (Björn and Guðni 1943: 257). Sigificantly, Bjarni goes to the two basilicas that the *bulla* of Boniface VIII required people to visit in order to have a plenary indulgence granted (§3.20.2). Before reporting the death of Bjarni, the *Codex Regius* version of the saga (lection R, attested in Reykjavík, AM 142 fol., written 1690-97 by Ásgeir Jónsson, handrit.is 2012: AM 142 fol.) inserts an interesting excursus on the topography and the history of Rome:

> Rómaborg létu gera bræður tveir; hét annarr Romulus, en annarr Remus. Þeir váru tvíburar. Borgin var gǫr eptir inu óarga dýri; var dýrit ristit á jörðunni, og þar upp af váru reistir borgarveggir. Er hǫfuðit dýrsins fyrir norðan ána ... Er sá hluti borgarinnar kallaðr Roma, en sá hlutr, er fyrir útan ána er, heitir Latransborg eða Latran eða Latera, en þat þýðisk síður. En þá er borgin var algǫr, þá urðu þeir ósáttir um þat, af hvárs nafni borgin skyldi nafn taka, og því réð Romulus bróður sínum fjörráð og drap hann. Var þá borgin kennd við Romulum og kǫlluð

Rómaborg. Bjarni kom til Rómaborgar og vitjaði þar heilagra staða, því að eigi er sá staðr í Rómaborg at eigi sé roðinn með blóði heilagra manna. (Björn and Guðni 1943: 257, n. 1)

Two brothers had the city of Rome built. One was called Romulus, the other Remus. They were twin brothers. The city was built in the shape of the fierce animal [the lion]. The [shape of the] animal was drawn in the ground, and the walls of the city were built following that [shape]. The head of the animal is north of the river...This part of the city is called '*Róma*', while the part which is on the other side of the river is called 'the city of the Lateran' (*Latránsborg*), or '*Latrán*', or '*Latera*', and this means 'flanks'. And when the city was finished, they disagreed over which of the two names the city should be named after, and therefore Romulus plotted against the life of his brother and killed him. The city was then known after Romulus and was called 'the city of Rome' (*Rómaborg*). Bjarni came to the city of Rome and visited the holy places there, because there is no place in the city of Rome that is not reddened with the blood of the saints.

The excursus of *Fóstbrœðra saga* gives the same topographical information as *Description A* (see Cucina 1998: 106, n. 71). In *Leiðarvísir* it is said that the part of the city 'north of the Tiber [it] is called "Rome" and south "Lateran"' (ll. 101-103); in *Fóstbrœðra saga* the orientation is given in relation to the head of the Lion, the part of the city called '*Róma*', which is 'north of the river', and the Lateran is said to be 'on the other side of the River', that is south.

David McDougall (1984) has shown that the legend of the foundation of Rome in the shape of a lion given in *Fóstbrœðra saga* draws on a widespread medieval tradition (see also Springborg 1985). According to this tradition many important cities had the shape of an animal: McDougall (1984: 260-61) has pinpointed two significant passages that contain the legend of a theromorphous foundation of Rome and explain the origin of the name of the Lateran. In the first passage, Honorius Augustodunensis explains in his twelfth-century encyclopaedic work *Imago Mundi* the meaning of the shape of the lion and explains the origin of the name of the Lateran:

In hac est urbs Roma, a Romulo constructa, et sic dicta. Antiqui civitates secundum praecipuas feras, ob significationem formabant. Unde Roma formam leonis habet, qui caeteris bestiis quasi rex praeest. Hujus caput est urbs a Romulo constructa: lateritia vero aedificia utrobique disposita: unde et Lateranis dicitur. (*PL*: CLXXII 129)

In this [Italy] is the city of Rome, built by Romulus and called after him. The ancients built their cities in the shape of particular wild beasts for their meaning. Thus Rome has the shape of a lion, who rules like a king over the other beasts. Its head is the city built by Romulus: the buildings on both sides are constructed of brickwork (*lateritia*), and therefore it is also called Lateran.

The second passage is from the *Otia Imperialia* by Gervase of Tilbury and gives an explanation of the name of the Lateran close to that of *Fóstbrœðra saga*, relating it to the Latin *latus*, 'side, flank':

Italiae caput Roma est, ut diximus, civitas a Romulo constructa. Romani caput imperii; ad formam leonis ob insignem sui dominationem formata [...] Huius caput est a ponte Tiberis usque ad primitiva Romuli menia, latera utrimque aedificia palatiorum constructa, unde et Lateranis dicitur, ubi palatium est, olim Constantini, nunc Domini Papae. (Gervase of Tilbury 2002: 260-63)

Rome is the capital of Italy, as we have said, a city built by Romulus. The head of the Roman Empire, it is shaped like a lion because of its outstanding dominion. [...] Its [the lion's] head extends from the bridge over the Tiber and to the earliest walls of Romulus. Both its flanks (*latera*) are supplied by palaces; therefore the area where stands the palace, once of Constantine, now of the lord Pope, is called Lateran.

One can add to the two sources identified by McDougall a third passage from Chapter 10 of the *Speculum Ecclesiae* by Gerald of Wales. After giving the measurements of St Peter's and St Paul's, Gerald writes that the dimensions of the Lateran church seem to be in the middle between the first two, and he then explains the origin of its name:

Notandum hic autem quod Lateranum a latentibus ranis uel latrantibus, quia in loco illo antiquitus, ut dicitur, palus erat ranis abundans, uocabulum accepit. Alii dicunt ut dictum est a latere leonis, quoniam urbs formam leonis praetendit, et palatium Constantini situm fuit in latere leonis, sicut et Capitolium a capite fertur denominatum esse, quasi in capite leonis situm. (Gerald of Wales 1873: IV 283)

It must be observed here that the name 'Lateran' derives from 'hidden' (*latentes*) or 'croaking' (*latrantes*) frogs, because in olden time there was in that place, as they say, a marsh full of frogs. Others say that the word derives from the 'flank' (*latus*) of the lion, because the city makes the shape of a lion, and that the palace of

Constantine was located on the flank of the lion, as it is said that the Capitol is named after 'head' (*caput*), as if it were located on the head of the lion.

It is relevant that in Gerald of Wales' passage, the name of the Lateran is explicitly derived from the Latin *latus*, as in the *Fóstbræðra saga*.[84] As McDougall has remarked,

> The author of the Codex Regius version of *Fóstbroeðra saga* may well have had access to a complete text of the *Imago Mundi* or known the passage on the building of Rome from a *florilegium*. However, the idea that the imperial city was shaped like the king of beasts was clearly a commonplace, and may simply have been recalled as such by an author whose memory was replete with antiquarian learning derived from many sources. (McDougall 1984: 264)

An analogous observation can be made about the author of *Description A*, who could have taken the information on the topography of *Rómaborg* and its division into *Róma* and *Latrán* (also contained in the *Vegr til Róms* and in *Fóstbræðra saga*) directly from a written source, or could have simply drawn on his antiquarian learning. The source for the information on the topography reported by the author of *Description A* may have been a Latin text, or even *Fóstbræðra saga* itself.

Finally, an interesting textual parallel between the *incipit* of *Description B* and the excursus on Rome in the *Codex Regius* version of *Fóstbræðra saga* can be observed. The description of Rome in *borga skipan* begins with the assertion of the superiority of Rome over every other known city: *Roma borg er yfir ollum borgum & hia henne ero allar borgir ath virða sva sem þorp þviat iord & steinar & streti oll ero Rodin i blodi heilagra manna*, 'The city of Rome is superior to all cities, and, compared with it, all other cities are to be considered as villages because the earth and the stones and all the streets are reddened with the blood of saints' (Simek 1990: 492^{1-2}). As we have seen, *Fóstbræðra saga* uses the same image of the city of Rome *roðinn með blóði heilagra manna* 'reddened with the blood of saints' to explain the

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[84] The origin of the name 'Lateran' from *latentes ranae*, to which Gerald of Wales refers, derives from the medieval legend of Nero's pregnancy. According to this story, which was widespread in Europe, Nero summoned his court doctors because he wished to experience pregnancy. These gave him to drink a potion containing a tiny frog that was then vomited by the emperor (see Graf 1882: 338-45; Zapperi 1991: 115-20).

reasons for the pilgrimage of Bjarni of Stokkanes to Rome (Björn Þórólfsson and Guðni Jónsson 1943: 257, n. 1).

The topos of the city of Rome as 'reddened with the blood of saints' was widespread in the medieval tradition (Stella 2001: 284-90). This representation derives from Rev: 17, 5-6, where Babylon the Great is said to be 'drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus'. We find a first significative example of this image in stanza 7 of an eighth-century Carolingian hymn attributed to Paulinus II of Aquileia, *Felix per omnes*:

> O Roma felix, quae tantorum principum
>
> es purpurata pretioso sanguine!
>
> Excellis omnem mundi pulchritudinem
>
> non laude tua, sed sanctorum meritis,
>
> quos cruentatis iugulasti gladiis. (Paulinus of Aquileia 1979: 160)
>
> O happy Rome, stained purple with the precious blood of so many princes!
>
> You excel all the beauty of the world, not by your own glory,
>
> but by the merits of the saints whose throats you cut with bloody swords. (Ó Carragáin and Neuman de Vegvar 2007: 1)

This motif attached to the hagiographical superiority of Rome (*purpurata pretioso sanguine*) an aesthetic value (*Excellis omnem mundi pulchritudinem*), and became a widespread topos in medieval Latin poetry (Stella 2001: 286-87; see Szövérffy 1957: 229-32 for other examples). We also find this motif in the first strophe of *In SS. Petri e Pauli*, a tenth-century hymn probably composed in the Veronese area; this song was well-known among the pilgrims, who used to sing it when they finally arrived within sight of Rome (De Marco 1981):

> O Roma nobilis, orbis et domina,
>
> Cunctarum urbium excellentissima,
>
> Roseo martyrum sanguine rubea
>
> Albis et virginum liliis candida,
>
> Salutem dicimus tibi per omnia,
>
> Te benedicimus: salve per secula. (Blume and Dreves 1886-1922: 219)
>
> O illustrious Rome, empress of the world, most excellent of all cities, red with the roseate blood of martyrs, bright with the white lilies of virgins, we welcome thee and bless thee – hail through all ages! (Forster 1948: 91)

The motif of the streets of Rome reddened by the blood of the martyrs became a common epithet of the city. It is even present in the vision in which Bridget of Sweden received the call to go to Rome (on the Roman years of Bridget of Sweden, see Morris 1999: 93-117). In 1349 she heard the voice of Christ, who ordered her to go to Rome with the words:

> Vade Romam, ubi platee strate sunt auro et sanguine sanctorum rubricate, ubi compendium, id est brevior via, est ad celum propter indulgencias, quas promeruerunt sancti pontifices oracionibus suis. (Collijn 1924-31: 477-78)
>
> Go to Rome, where the streets are paved with gold and reddened with the blood of saints; where there is a *compendium*, that is a shorter route, to heaven because of the indulgences, which the holy pontiffs have merited because of their prayers.

In the vision of Bridget of Sweden the topos of Rome's superiority over every other city, together with the image of its streets 'reddened with blood', is combined with the doctrine of indulgences based on the Treasure, that is the merits, of the Church. This motivation for Bridget of Sweden's journey to Rome can be compared to Bjarni of Stokkanes's, who goes to the 'churches of St Peter the Apostle and of St Paul the Apostle', the two basilicas that the pilgrim had to visit in order to receive a plenary indulgence.

Like other relevant information given in *Description A*, the topographical observation at the end of the description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir* cannot be considered only the product of the individual experience of a traveller. If we put this item of information in the context of other descriptions of Rome, a network of explicit and implicit textual relations with Icelandic and Latin sources is revealed. *Description A* contains the same distinction between *Róma*, *Latrán* and *Rómaborg* that is present in the *Vegr til Róms* and in the *excursus* on Rome in the *Codex Regius* version of *Fóstbrœðra saga*; the *excursus* of *Fóstbrœðra saga* contains the same reference to the 'streets of Rome reddened with the blood of saints' present in the *incipit* of *Description B*, a topos which is also attested in numerous Latin sources.

4   Conclusions and Connections

Leiðarvísir has been unanimously defined by scholars, directly or indirectly, as a travel account (§2.1). Chapter 2 has shown that there are no internal or external elements that allow us to consider it as a narrative characterized by a non-fiction dominant relating in the first person a journey that the reader, on the basis of a referential pact with the author, supposes to have taken place in reality, by assuming that author, narrator and principal character coincide (Borm 2004: 17; see §2.2.2). Unlike texts that can be categorised as travel accounts, *Leiðarvísir* does not show a narrator in the first person (§2.2.3.1); it does not include any reference to a subject making a journey (even in a third person meta-account, §2.2.3.2), but it is an impersonal text listing a series of stops along a route; it does not show any reference to the 'autoptic principle', attesting that what is reported is based on the author's personal experience (§2.2.3.3); and it does not include any direct reference to a historical journey on which the account is based (§2.2.3.4). On the contrary, *Leiðarvísir* has all the features typical of an impersonal pilgrim guide (§2.5). The implausibility of considering *Leiðarvísir* a travel account is logically independent of the problematic nature of its dating to the mid-twelfth century and its attribution to Abbot Nikulás (§1.5).

One might legitimately ask why, in spite of the absence of any positive evidence, *Leiðarvísir* has been considered a description of a real journey, that is a travel account, and not simply the description of a real route, that is an impersonal guide. The numerous Latin *Innominati* guides (§2.4, 2.6.1), which show structures and details similar to *Leiðarvísir*, have never been considered as individual travel accounts; as early as the nineteenth century scholars identified them as guides rather than as *relations de voyage* (de Vogüé 1860: 407). A possible explanation might lie in a peculiar gap in the manuscript tradition: as we have seen, no Old Norse travel accounts have been handed down to us (§2.3.1). Old Norse and Icelandic culture and history is permeated and determined by the dimension of 'travel', in much the same way that 'travel writing' plays a fundamental role in Old Norse literature. However, no travel account written by a traveller using the information gained during his real journey has come down to us. This gap contrasts with the richness of Old Norse travel writing. *Leiðarvísir* is the only text in the Old Norse tradition which lends

itself to miscategorising as a travel account, having some features that can be misunderstood as typical of a travel account. It describes in detail a long route from Iceland to the Holy Land, and the *explicit* attributes it to an Abbot Nikulás (§1.2.1, 1.3): this was identified with the first abbot of Munkaþverá, of whom the annals report the return in 1154 from a journey abroad, even though the destination of Nikulás's journey is not specified and the *explicit* does not establish a connection between the text and a real journey (§1.3.2, §2.3).

The categorisation of *Leiðarvísir* as a guide and not as travel account is independent of the problematic nature of its dating to the mid-twelfth century and its attribution to Abbot Nikulás. The itinerary in fact shows several *termini* that are incompatible with a twelfth-century dating and, consequently, with its attribution to Nikulás of Munkaþverá (§1.5). The description of Rome, in particular, includes relevant details that date from after the mid-twelfth century. The list of relics in the Lateran includes two Marian relics that were moved there after 1159, probably at the end of the twelfth century (§3.7.2); the reference to a plenary indulgence for the visitors to the Basilica must date from after 1300, when Boniface VIII granted for the first time a plenary indulgence for the pilgrims coming to Rome on the Jubilee (§3.20.1, §3.20.2); the body of Pope Gregory is said to be under its altar, where it was moved only under the papacy of Innocent III (1198-1216; §3.20.8).

Description A also shows numerous elements that indicate its reliance on written sources: the *incipit* and the structure of *Description A* are probably based on a Latin version of the *IEUR* (§3.6); the list of relics in the Lateran and the description of St Peter's are similar in their details and wording to analogous descriptions present in the tradition of the *IEUR* (§3.7.2, 3.20); the liturgical information given for Santa Maria Maggiore (§3.8) and San Lorenzo fuori le mura (§3.9) can commonly be found in the *Ordines Romani*; the information on Sant'Agnese fuori le mura (§3.10), San Sebastiano fuori le mura (§3.16), the Pantheon (§3.14), and the Tiber (§3.17) is similar to descriptions present in both Latin and Old Norse hagiographic and historiographical tradition; the description of Sant'Agnese refers to the circus-shaped basilica founded by Constantia, which in the twelfth century was already in ruins, a detail that can be explained by connecting it to the use of written sources containing analogous information, such as Bede's world chronicle in *De temporum ratione* and the *Vitae sanctorum*; the topographical information on the city of Rome given at the beginning (§3.4) and at the end (§3.23) of *Description A* is comparable to analogous

information reported in the *Vegr til Róms* and in descriptions of Rome attested in Latin sources and Old Norse sagas; relevant sites mentioned in *Description A*, like Castel Sant'Angelo (§3.18) and the Obelisk of St Peter's (§3.21), are mentioned in the *MUR*. The description of Rome in *Leiðarvísir* must be dated to after the twelfth century, and it appears to be based on a variety of written sources, which the author of *Description A* selected among those at his disposal and elaborated on in an original way. It is likely that the author of *Description A* used for this text 1) a Latin version of the *IEUR*, probably contained in a single manuscript together with a version of the *MUR* and the *Stationes ecclesiarum*: these texts are often attested in a single manuscript, as for example in MS BL Cotton. Faust. B VII or in MS Lambeth Palace 527[85]; 2) descriptions of and references to Rome attested in the Latin and Old Norse hagiographic tradition; 3) information contained in Latin or Old Norse *Itineraria*; 4) descriptions of and references to Rome found in saga literature; and 5) possibly descriptions of Rome included in *collectanea* or encyclopaedic work like, for example, the *Otia Imperialia* by Gervase of Tilbury (2002: 261-71) or the *Speculum Ecclesiae* by Gerald of Wales (1873: IV 268-86; see §3.7.2.7, §3.23).

4.1   An Urtext of *Leiðarvísir*

Relevant *termini* (§1.5.1) in the textual version of *Leiðarvísir* attested in MS AM 194 8vo are incompatible with its dating to before 1159-1160 (the date of Nikulás's death according to the annals, §1.3.2), thus making its attribution to Abbot Nikulás of Munkaþverá unsustainable. The fact, however, that the *explicit* attributes the itinerary to an abbot Nikulás, who can be plausibly identified with the first abbot of Munkaþverá, is a piece of information which is not usually given for geographical texts and cannot be simply dismissed (§1.2, §1.5.2, see Finnur Jónsson 1894-1902: II 116, 948).

The attribution to Abbot Nikulás can only be kept by assuming the existence of an *Urtext* of *Leiðarvísir* that has been changed in the course of the more than two centuries that intervened between its composition in the mid-twelfth century and the compilation of MS AM 194 8vo in 1387. Not much can be said about this *Urtext*,

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[85] For the frequency of the inclusion of these texts in a single manuscript, see the catalogue of the Latin manuscripts containing the *Mirabilia, Stationes* and *IEUR* provided by Miedema (1996: 24-95).

given the absence of other witnesses. One can only suppose a progressive enrichment and updating of the *Urtext* by later scribes. The passages including the termini datable to after the mid-twelfth century can be identified as later textual insertions. It is likely that the text attested in MS AM 194 8vo includes other later additions that, however, do not contain datable items of information and cannot therefore be identified.

For the reasons that have been summarised above, the description of Rome attested in MS AM 194 8vo cannot be considered the work of Nikulás of Munkaþverá and should therefore be regarded as a later addition. It cannot be said with certainty whether *Description A* substituted for an older description or whether it was added to the *Urtext*. One might argue that the later scribe inserted new information without deleting the original text. A similar procedure can in fact be detected in the reference in *Leiðarvísir* to both Deventer and Utrecht. As we have seen (see §1.4.3.3), by the end of the twelfth century Deventer had taken the role of Utrecht as a stop for pilgrims going to Rome from Iceland, and it is therefore likely that a later scribe added the name of Deventer without deleting the earlier reference to Utrecht (Piebenga 1993).

It can be postulated that the *Urtext* of the description of Rome included only the list of the five patriarchal churches taken from the version of the *IEUR* on which the beginning of *Description A* is based (§3.6). Indirect confirmation of this supposition can be derived from the fact that in *Description A* only the first three patriarchal churches are introduced by an ordinal (§3.1, §3.5, §3.6), while in *Description B* all five patriarchal churches are (§3.2). *Description B* in fact lists only the five patriarchal basilicas, whereas *Description A* includes other Roman churches: the break in the sequence of ordinals in *Description A* could signal that the original series was interrupted by a later addition of further information. It is impossible to say whether *Description A* was inserted by a single scribe or derives from multiple insertions. The list of Lateran relics is compatible with a thirteenth-century dating. In fact, the list of relics in *Description B*, which is probably based on the same source, is attested in a part of *Hauksbók* dated between 1290-1334 (§3.6). The description of St Peter's in *Description A* dates from after 1300 and was composed in the course of the fourteenth century (§3.20).

4.2   The Structure of *Leiðarvísir*

This conclusion on the later insertion of *Description A* into the Urtext of *Leiðarvísir* suggests a final remark on the structure of the whole itinerary. Simek (1990: 271) observes that the structure of *Leiðarvísir* is determined, in conformity with the itinerary genre, by the sequence of places along the route described by its author. Simek (1990: 271) identifies an *epische Grundstruktur*, a 'basic epic structure', in this necessary sequence, proposing a division of the itinerary into five main sections. The first one is a prologue, containing the indication of the circumference of Iceland and the route to Ålborg, where the actual itinerary begins. The main part of the itinerary, which includes the route from Ålborg to Acre, is subdivided into the second and the third sections: the stretch of itinerary between Ålborg and Rome, and the one between Rome and Acre. The fourth part begins at Acre and contains the description of the Holy Land. The fifth part is an epilogue, in which the main stages and distances are given for the return journey and which is followed by the *explicit*. Simek (1990: 271) observes that the description of Rome constitutes a caesura in the structure of the itinerary, dividing it into two unequal halves, and that a symmetry can be identified in this structure because, aside from the prologue and the epilogue, a division of the itinerary into three main parts can be established: from Scandinavia to Rome; Rome and the Mediterranean; the guide to the Holy Land.

Simek's division is based on the geographic sequence of the itinerary. If one considers that the description of Rome attested in MS AM 194 8vo was probably added by a later scribe or scribes, a different structure can be proposed. After the prologue from Iceland to Ålborg, a first section from Ålborg to Rome can be identified (§§1.4.2, 1.4.3, 1.4.4, 1.4.5, 1.4.6). This first section is an *Itinerarium romanum*, like the *Vegr til Róms*, which describe a route from Lübeck to Rome by indicating only stops and distances (Simek 1990: 511-12). The second section is an *Itinerarium ad loca sancta* that describes the route from Rome to the Holy Land and to the River Jordan (§1.4.7, 1.4.8, 1.4.9, 1.4.10). The description of the return journey from the River Jordan to Ålborg (§1.4.11) can be considered the epilogue of the itinerary. If one does not include the 440 words of *Description A* (which as we have seen must have been added later and in the *Urtext* was probably considerably shorter), the first and the second section of *Leiðarvísir* are of similar length (respectively 934 and 1047 words). This division of the structure of *Leiðarvísir* into two main parts is similar to the division of the structure of the *Itinerarium*

Burdingalense (§2.2.3.1) into an *Itinerarium romanum* and an *Itinerarium ad loca sancta* which was identified by Milani (2002: 38).

As observed by Simek (1990: 271), a reference to oral sources, *svá er sagt*, 'it is said that' (l. 1), introduces the beginning of the prologue; an analogous reference marks the beginning of the first section of the itinerary, *svá telja Rómferlar,* 'pilgrims to Rome say' (l. 4, see §2.3). It is noteworthy that the *Itinerarium romanum* of *Leiðarvísir* begins with a reference to pilgrims to Rome as sources: this formula serves the function of an *incipit* of this section and also defines its contents. It is also significant that the description of Rome is introduced by *svá er sagt*, the same formula used for the beginning of the itinerary, and it is closed by an analogous reference to oral sources: *Sua hafa frodir menn sagt*, 'Learned men have said' (l. 100). These references to oral sources can be considered not only as a device to reinforce the truthfulness of the information given in the text through authorities that are not named more precisely (Simek 1990: 271), but also as narrative signals employed to mark a break in the text-continuum. In fact, these formulas mark the beginning of the prologue and of *Leiðarvísir* as an autonomous text (see §1.2.1); the beginning of the first section (the itinerary to Rome); the beginning of the description of Rome; and the end of the description of Rome and the beginning of the second section (the *Itinerarium ad loca sancta*). The epilogue describing the return journey is not introduced by a similar formula but by the description of the method of measuring the altitude of Polaris on the banks of the Jordan (§1.4.10), which is also a powerful caesura in the narrative structure.

The identification of a narrative structure in the text further corroborates one of the central points of this thesis. *Leiðarvísir* is a sophisticated work composed by an erudite scholar. This scholar (who, at least for a conjectured twelfth-century *Urtext*, can probably be identified with Nikulás, first abbot of Munkaþverá) described in detail a real route to the Holy Land, organising his text into a quadripartite narrative structure: prologue, *Itinerarium romanum, Itinerarium ad loca sancta* and epilogue. He enriched the itinerary with relevant information about the places along the route, selecting from the sources at his disposal such material as would be interesting and useful for both a travelling pilgrim and a sedentary scholar. The original version was successively enriched and updated with analogous criteria by one or more later scribes. A multiplicity of sources was used in the composition of the itinerary:

written texts played a fundamental role, but there is also evidence that oral information collected by real travellers was used. Thus in *Leiðarvísir* the levels of geography, topography, practical information for pilgrims, history and literary tradition are closely intertwined in an elaborate rhetorical structure.

This thesis has provided a new reading of *Leiðarvísir* as an impersonal and erudite guide. Rather than diminishing the itinerary's interest, the fact that *Leiðarvísir* cannot be considered a subjective account based on the real journey of an individual, but is the product of scholarly elaboration selected from a variety of sources, renders its analysis even more stimulating and relevant for a better knowledge of medieval Icelandic culture. Not only does *Leiðarvísir* give a unique view of geographical knowledge in medieval Iceland, it also sheds light on the typology of texts that an Icelandic scholar had on hand, and illustrates the indissoluble relation between real places and their fantastic representation in the Old Norse imaginative world.

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Names of Icelanders are alphabetised by their first name. According to the Icelandic standard, ð follows d and þ; æ, œ, ö, ø, and ǫ follow z. In the digital version of this thesis all references in text to online publications (for example references to descriptions of manuscripts in www.handrit.is) are hyperlinked, but they are not underlined or in a different font colour.

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