This matter, which arose during my Master's Degree in European Languages and Cultures, is relevant in Old Norse Literature because there is no acknowledgement in this genre. This work has now been reexamined and updated considering the remarkable contributions of the critics that, for the last few years, have been developing the various aspects of *Leiðarvísir*. The present text is the result of this reassessment and therefore it is a contribution to this topic in general and, more specifically to the geographical part, except for the Italian passage, which has already been studied extensively by many researchers, and translated by Professor Raschellà. This piece is made up of a small introduction about the author and his work, a partial translation of *Leiðarvísir* and some geographical notes.

Introduction

We know very little about the author of *Leiðarvísir* and his name is also uncertain*:* Nikulás Bergsson or Bergþórsson.
He was a Benedictine monk, who is reported to have returned to Iceland in 1154 after a pilgrimage to the Holy Land; in 1155 he was consecrated abbot of the monastery of Munkaþverá, founded in 1155 by the bishop of Hólar*,* Bj?rn Gilsson (Magnússon 1898:193). Here he remained until his death, which occurred around 1159–60. We have been handed down three stanzas by Nikulás, that were part of a *drápa* in honour of the Apostle John entitled *Jóansdrápa postula* (see La Farge).
The author knew skaldic art: close to the traditional *kenningar*, adapted here to express Christian concepts, like God and the apostles, new terms appear, used only by Nikulás – e.g. *sárvæginn* "sin-indulgent" – or attested in these stanzas for the first time – *goðdómr* "godhead", *almáttr* "almighty"*.* Another *drápa* by Nikulás – *Kristsdrápa* – is so much more interesting in this respect, because in it the poet brings together images of the Old and the New Testament.
The first part of this other *drápa* tells that the Israelite explorers carried the grapes hanging from a long pole (Num. 13, 24); in the second part of the *drápa* it is mentioned Christ hung on the cross.
This is one of oldest surviving examples of skaldic poetry concerning Christian topics and themes and it is possible that the initiator of this practice was Nikulás Bergsson. His name is mainly related to the composition of *Leiðarvísir* (*itinerarium*), the account of his pilgrimage

from Iceland to Rome and to the Holy Land. *Leiðarvísir* is not a literary work in the ordinary sense, but a medieval *Baedeker*, a travel guide or *itinerarium* as this genre was called in medieval Latin. The exact date of Nikulás's journey is unknown, however the chronological indications allow us to collocate the journey in the years after 1150, between 1149 and 1154 (Simek 1990: 264-267) and it lasted three years between 1151 and 1154, while the compilation of the *itinerarium* necessarily had to take place between 1154 and 1158/9 – the year of his return to Iceland – and 1160, the last term indicated in the sources as the year of his death (Raschellà 1985-6: 544). Indeed, it is reported by the abbot Nikulás Bergsson that he returned from a journey in 1154 and died between 1158 and 1160 (Marani 2006: 638). Other considerations based on internal text analysis, like its linguistic form showing characteristics of marked archaism, seem to confirm this dating.
The first critics (see Rafn 1852: 395; Riant 1865: 80-81; Solmi 1933: 1208) have argued that the *Leiðarvísir* was written by Nikulás Sæmundarson, who was consecrated abbot of the Monastery of Þingeyar (Hill 1983: 176) in 1148 and died in 1158 (Magnússon 1898:153), but evidence of the dates disproves this assumption; after all, it was not supported by the most critics (see Kålund, Magoun, Hill and Raschellà).

Nothing similar to the *itinerarium* was witnessed in the field of Old Norse literature with as direct and detailed form as in the *Leiðarvísir*.
We find in this travel account, in addition to the citation of several *mansiones* (Stopani 1990: 35–36) located on the route to the Holy Land, the indications of the distance between them and the cities, described in all their facets, very useful for those who undertook the same journey.
The journey begins from Iceland, through stretch of sea to Norway, to Denmark's coasts, West Germany and, along the upper reaches of the Rhine, passing through Switzerland and Italy. From here begins a new coastline itinerary that, touching in several points the coast of the Balkan Peninsula and the Greek Islands, leads to Asia Minor and follows onto Turkey and then to Jerusalem.
In addition to the important religious, geographical, anthropological information and the road conditions that the abbot Nikulás gives us minutely, we often find mythological-pagan references belonging to Germanic cultures (Raschellà 1995: 258-259; Lönnroth 1992: 37). The references to the sacred religious legends and to the ancient pagan ones, makes this *itinerarium* unique in its kind in the Old Norse Literature.
In fact, the legends referring in many ways to Germanic culture are set in clear opposition to

the Christian spirit of the time. The author puts these references whenever he is around places to reminding the various mythological figures known in ancient times.
Thus, this pilgrim's guide, permeated by a strong sense of devotion, also provides the opportunity to know not only geographical and religious notions of Medieval Scandinavia but also the literary tradition of these peoples.

Translation

The full-text English translation is based on a manuscript that is preserved in the Arnamagnæan Collection (Copenhagen) ms. AM 194, 8vo (dated 1387) and a single folio from another copy of the itinerary made ca. 1400 in AM 736 II, 4to that is placed in the *landafræði* section (pp. 12:26–23:21) in *Alfræði íslenzk: Islandsk encyklopædisk litteratur*, I. Cod. mbr. AM 194, 8vo; edited by Kr. Kålund, København 1908. The section concerning Italy is preserved in the manuscripts AM 544, 4to, (*Hauksbók* early XIVth century) and AM 766 b, 4to, (AM 194, 8vo manuscript transcription performed by Árni Magnússon). The variants of these two manuscripts are contained in the critical apparatus of the Kålund edition. The part concerning Italy is dealt with by Raschellà (1985–1986).

It is said that it takes seven days to circumnavigate Iceland if the wind is at your back; but the wind changes direction, which is natural, as the wind cannot always blow in the same direction. So, the journey between Iceland and Norway (see Jackson, Podossinov 1997: 87) takes that long. From Norway you go first to Aalborg in Denmark.
The pilgrims that go to Rome say that from Aalborg it takes two travelling days to reach Viborg. From there it takes a week to reach Hedeby. Then it is a short distance for Schleswig, then a one-day journey to reach the river Eider.
Here meet the following countries: Denmark and Holstein, Germany and Wend-land. Afterwards a one day trip you reach Itzehoe in Holstein. Then you cross the river Elbe and enter Stade. In Germany people are kinder and the Scandinavian people have a lot to learn from them.
In Stade there is the Bishop's Cathedral in the Church of Saint Mary. Then it takes two travelling days to reach Verden. Then, within a short distance, you reach Nienburg. Successively there is Minden where there is the Bishop's Cathedral in the Church of Saint Peter. Now languages change.
Later a two-day trip you reach Paderborn, where there is the Cathedral of Saint Liborius, who is buried there. Then you travel for four days to reach Mainz, in between there is a village

called Horhausen, another one called *Kiliandr*[1], and there is *Gnita-heiðr*, where Sigurðr killed Fáfnir. There is another road that takes you from Stade to the east of Germany, to Harsefeld, from there to Walsrode, and then to Hannover, and to Hildesheim, there is a Cathedral in which Saint Gotthard is buried. Then you continue towards Gandersheim, then to Fritzlar and then to Arnsburg, a short distance away from Mainz which we saw earlier. The Scandinavians travel through these two main roads to reach Mainz; if you follow these roads, you will see that it is the path followed by a lot of people.

There is another route to take from Norway to Rome: to Frisia, onto Deventer or to Utrecht, where the pilgrims get their bourdon, haversack and benediction for their pilgrimage to Rome. It takes six-day[2] journey from Utrecht to Cologne, where there is the Archbishop's Cathedral in the Church of Saint Peter. The emperor is consecrated by the bishop of Cologne in the Church called Aquisgrani. Then there is a three-day journey from Cologne going up the river Rhein to Mainz, where there is the Archbishop's Cathedral in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul. Then there is a one-day trip to Speyer, where there is the Cathedral in the Church of Saint Mary. Afterwards there is a one-day journey to Seltz. Then there is another travelling day to Strasburg, where there is the Cathedral in the Church of Saint Mary. Then it is a three-day journey to Basel. Afterwards follows one day of travel that leads from the river Rhein to Solothurn. Then there is a one-day trip to Wiflisburg; the town was big before Loðbrók's sons destroyed it but now it is small. Then there is a one-day trip to Vevey; it is located near the Lake of Geneva, where the paths of the Franks, Flemish, Welsh, English, Germans, and Scandinavians, those men who go to the Great Saint Bernard towards the south, meet.

Then there is a one-day trip to Saint Maurice d'Agaune, where the body of Saint Maurice lies with all his troop of six thousand six hundred and sixty-six men. Then, there is Bourg Saint Pierre. From Saint Maurice d'Agaune it is a two-day trip to Saint Bernard's Hospice, which is situated on the top of the mountain. On the mountain pass there is the Hospice of Saint Peter (the old monastery of the village of Bourg-Saint-Pierre fell into disuse after the opening of the famous Great Saint Bernard Hospice, founded by Saint Bernard in the 11th century. See Stopani 2003: 59); here you often find snow on the rocks and ice on the lake during Saint Olaf's Day (29th July) in the summer.

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Not far from Durazzo there is Saint Mary of Kassiopi. Then there is Port Guiscard. Then there is Cape Malea. Following, there is a short distance to the island of Sapientza or *Sikiley*; in this

place there are volcanoes and hot water as in Iceland. Successively there is a city, called Martini, in the land of the Slavs. Then one has to sail to an island, called Kos, where the routes from Apulia and from Constantinople merge, this island is to the north of Apulia and by sea you go to Crete. Off the coast of Kos there is an island called Rhodes. Then it is necessary to navigate to Greece and to *Kastellorizon*. Then there is Patara. There bishop Nicholas was born and his school is still there. Then there is the city of Myra, where he was bishop. Then there is a short distance to Cape Gelidonya in Turkey. Then there are two days by sea to Cyprus. There is an inlet that the Scandinavians call Gulf of Antalya and the Greek call Gulf of Satalie. In Cyprus there is a city called Paphos, where there is a garrison of Varangians and where the king of the Danes Eiríkr, son of Svein the brother of Canute the Holy, died. He left an endowment in Lucca, so that anyone speaking Nordic languages could drink fully and freely, and he built a hospice eight miles south of Piacenza, where they could refresh themselves. Canute was granted by Pope Paschal permission to move the Archiepiscopal Seat from Germany to Denmark. From Cyprus there is a two-day journey by sea to Saint John of Acre, which is located in the Holy Land. Then comes *Capharnaum,* which in ancient times was called *Þolomaida*. Succeeding there is *Caesarea.* Then comes Joppa, Christianized by King Baldwin of Jerusalem and Sigurðr, son of Magnús, King of Norway. Then comes Ashkelon, which is located in the Land of the Saracens and is pagan. In the east of the city of Saint John of Acre there is Tiro, then Sidon, then Tripoli and then Latakia. There, there is an inlet, that we call Gulf of Antiochia. Successively in the mainland there is Antakya, where the Apostle Peter set his Patriarchal Seat. All these cities are in Syria. The Galilee Region is located inland away from the city of Saint John of Acre. In this place there is a huge mountain called Tabor where the prophets Moses and Elias appeared. Later there is Nazareth, where the Archangel Gabriel met the Virgin Mary and where Jesus Christ lived for twenty–three years. There comes a town called Jenin. Afterwards there is the Fortress of John (Nikulás has correctly identified this location, but it was not a castle but a fortified city, today Sabastiya), that in the past was called Samaria; there are the Sanctuary of Saint John the Baptist and Jacob's well, where Christ asked a woman to give him water to drink. Then comes the great city of Nablus. Then there is a city called *Casal*. Later there is al-Bireh.

Then you go up to Jerusalem, which is the most famous city in the world, celebrated everywhere in the Christian world, because there you can still see the miracles of the Passion of Christ. There is the Church where Christ was buried and the place where the Cross of the Lord was erected; you can clearly see the blood of Christ on a rock as if it were still fresh and it will remain this way forever until Judgment Day; here people see the light of Easter Day at

sunset. It is called the church of the Holy Sepulcher and it is open above the tomb (the ceremony was suppressed by Pope Gregory IX on 1238. See Hill 1983: 193).
This is the centre of the world, where the sun shines in equal measure during the Feast Day of Saint John. Here is the Hospice of Saint John the Baptist, the most imposing in the world. Then there is the Tower of David. In Jerusalem there are also the Temple of God and the Temple of Salomon.
South of the city of Jerusalem there is a mountain called Sion, where the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and Christ dined on the evening of Holy Thursday and there is still the table where he dined.
Four miles south, one finds Bethlehem, a small and pretty city, where Christ was born.
From here there is a short distance to the Bethania Castle, where Christ rose Lazarus from the dead. In the southern area of Jerusalem there is the lake called Dead Sea, where God destroyed two cities, Sodoma and Gomorrha on each side of the sea, there the river Jordan flows and does not join the Dead Sea, because it is holy water. East of the city there is a hill called Mount of Olives where Christ ascended to heaven. Between the Mount of Olives and the city of Jerusalem there is a valley called the Valley of Josaphat, where the Tomb of Our Lady is. Succeeding there is a long path to Mount Quarantana, where Christ fasted and Satan tempted him.
In this place there is the Rock of Abraham. There was Jericho. Afterwards there is the plain of Abraham. It is only a short distance from there to the river Jordan, where Christ was baptized; the Jordan flows from north-east to south-west.
Then beyond the river there is Saudi Arabia, and on the other side there is the region of Jerusalem, which they call Syria.
On the banks of the river there is a small Chapel, where Christ took off his clothes: in later times the Chapel was built in order to testify this event.
On the banks of the Jordan, if a man lies on his back on the ground and raises his knee and his fist then pulls his thumb up, over these he can see the North Star, so high that nothing is higher.
Starting from the river Jordan, one has to make a five-day trip to Saint John of Acre and from there it takes fourteen days by sea to Apulia in order to cover 1800 miles; then a fourteen-day journey overland from Bari to Rome, then a short trip of six weeks[3] from the south to the Alps, and three travelling days towards the north to Hedeby.
Going along the eastern way, after a trip of nine weeks you will find the Saint-Gilles-du-Gard way.

From Hedeby there is a seven-day journey to Viborg. Then halfway between them there is the river Skodsborg. From Viborg there is a two-day trip to Aalborg.
This guide and placement of the cities and all the information were written according to the account of Abbot Nicholas, who was wise and very popular, endowed with a good memory and highly educated, prudent and truthful, and here ends this narration.

Toponyms Notes

Aalborg, (*Álaborg*) North Jutland, Denmark. (13_{4-5}, 23_{17})[4].

Viborg, (*Vébiörg*) Jutland, Denmark. This city has been mentioned in *Gísli Súrsson's Saga*.
In chapter 5 of *Gísla saga* Súrssonar reads: "They went south to Denmark, to the trading town called Vebjörg (Viborg); they stayed there during the winter with Sigrhadd; they were three together there, Gisli, Vestein and Bjalfi; they were good friends and exchanged many gifts. At this time Christianity had come into Denmark, and Gisli and his companions let themselves be prime-signed; it was a custom at that time much used by the men who were on trading journeys for they could then hold free intercourse with Christians" (Boyer 1992: 65). (13_{6}, 23_{16-17}).

Hedeby, (*Heidabær*) Jutland. Was an important trading settlement, it flourished from the 8th to the 11th centuries. Hedeby was abandoned after its destruction by a fire in 1066. (13_{6}, 23_{14-15}).

Schleswig, (Slesvik) is one of the oldest cities of the Baltic region. Schleswig-Holstein is the northernmost of the 16 federal states of Germany, the Danish name is Slesvig-Holsten. (13_{7}).

Eider, (*Ægisdyr* "Egdor[e]) is the longest river of the German state of Schleswig-Holstein. The river starts in the south of Kiel, ending in the North Sea. During the High Middle Ages the Eider was the border between the Saxons and the Danes, as reported by Adam of Bremen in 1076 (Raschellà 1999: 145). For centuries it divided Denmark and the Holy Roman Empire. (13_{7}).

Holstein: *Hollsetuland*, in the account of the journey and historically this name refers to a

larger region, containing both present-day Schleswig-Holstein and South Jutland County (13_{8-10}).

Wend-land, *Vin[d]land*. (Cleasby-Vigfússon 1969: 708; Zoëga 2004: 492). We can assume that the lack of the *–D-* is due probably to a copyist's error. The Wends or Sorbs, are a minority Slavic populations who lived in an area known as Lusatia in the eastern corner of Germany bordering the Czech Republic (Fortson 2004: 430). They are the last of the Slavic people who lived until the Early Middle Ages in most of what is now East Germany. (13_{9}).

Itzehoe, *Heitsinn[a]*, is the "district town" of the Steinburg and it is located on the west coast of Schleswig-Holstein, the northernmost land of the Federal Republic of Germany. (13_{9-10}).

Elbe River, (*Saxelfr*), It is one of the longest rivers in Europe. In the Middle Ages it formed the eastern limit of the Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne (from AD 768 to 814). (13_{10}).

Stade, (*St?duborg*), adjacent town to the river Elbe. ($13_{10-11-22}$).

Verden, (*Ferduborg*), is a small town situated on the river Aller and is on the north of Hannover. (13_{14}).

Nienburg: *Nyioborg*. (13_{14-15}).

Minden: *Mundioborg*. (13_{15}).

Paderborn, (*P?ddubrunnar*), city in central Germany, historical city of Westfalia, chosen by Charlemagne for the Diets in 777 and in 799. In this city Charlemagne met Pope Leon III and signed the alliance between the Church and the Empire. It became an Episcopal Seat in 805 and now is seat of a Roman Catholic archbishop. (13_{17}).

Mainz: *Meginzoborg*, is a German city situated at the confluence of two extremely important rivers, the Rhein and the Main. (13_{19}, 14_{4-15}).

Kiliandr and *Gnita-heiðr*: We focus on the first Germanic heroic legend told by the abbot. *Gnita-heiðr*, is the place where Dragon Fáfnir – according to the Nordic version of

Nibelungenlied – builds his hiding place to hide dwarf Andvari's gold. This legend appears in the heroic poems of the Edda, *Reginsmál* "The Lay of Regin" and *Fáfnismál* "The Lay of Fafnir": here it refers to Sigurd and Regin's travel arrangements to Gnita-Heath; here they had to kill the dragon and steal its treasure. *Gnita-heiðr* is also mentioned in *Völsunga saga* "The Saga of the Volsungs", chapter 18 where Sigurd attacks and kills Fáfnir (Finch 1965: 30–32).

Unfortunately, the Old Norse sources are not precise regarding the geographical information, although in *Reginsmál* – it is said that Sigurðr plunges the sword into the Rhine that Reginn forged for him – it is obvious to deduce that the event took place not far from the Rhine. Nor it helps to compare the German sources, since in the *Nibelungenlied* (str. 89: 1–2) it is said that only "Hort der Nibelunges der was gar getragen ûz einem holen berge"[5] (quoted from Brackert 1992: 24).

All hypotheses made on the identification of *Gnita-heiðr* as a town located along the path of abbot Nikulás and in particular about the reason that may have led the abbot to the conclusion that the hiding-place is in the place he indicated are unsatisfactory (Raschellà 1995: 265).

Magoun has studied the matter, hazarding an hypothesis (Magoun 1943: 217), considering very likely that *Kiliandr* could be identified with Kilianstädten, a place located in the Hesse region and situated in the valley of the River Nidd, and so the final stretch of the road that led from Padeborn to Mainz, he supposes that *Gnita-heiðr* may be an Icelandic adaptation of *Nitahe*, or *Nitehe*, a late medieval name of the Nidd Valley (actual Niddagau) (Magoun 1944: 323-324).

The abbot – who was passing through an area often associated to the legend – would have easily connected the name of *Nitahe* with that to him more congenial and familiar of *Gnita-heiðr*.

The other hypothesis (Höfer 1888: 290–296; Höfler 1959: 107–113), put forward by Höfer and subsequently drawn by Höfler, shows relevant inconsistencies, it states that *Gnita-heiðr* might be a place located between Minden and Paderborn, that is the equivalent of the name of today's Knetterheide. This toponym seems to have been attested only starting from 1687 but its more ancient form is unknown. Another type of inconsistency is that this place is located at least 150 miles to the north to point indicated by the abbot. (13_{20}).

Harsefeld: *Horsafell*. ($13_{22\text{-}23}$).

Walsrode: *Val[f]oborg*. (13_{23}).

Hannover, (*Hana[b]ruinborg*), the city is a major centre of northern Germany. In medieval times, Hannover was a small village of ferrymen and fishermen that became a comparatively large town in the 13th century due to its position at a natural crossroads. (13_{23}, 14_{1}).

Hildesheim, (*Hilldishe[imr])*, is a city in Lower Saxony, Germany. It is located in the homonymous district, on the banks of the Innerste river. (14_{1}).

Gandersheim, (*Gandurheimr*), is a town in southern Lower Saxony, Germany, located in the south of Hildesheim. During the 10th century, Gandersheim was one of the most important towns of Saxony. (14_{3}).

Fritzlar: *Fridlar*. (14_{3}).

Arnsburg: *Arinsborg*. (14_{3}). Werlauff (1821: 38) supposes that this place can be Marburg.

Deventer, (*Devent*). is a city in the Salland region of the Dutch province of Overijssel *(*Netherlands) situated on the east bank of the river IJssel. (14_{9}).

Utrecht (*Trekt*) is the capital and most populous city of the Dutch province of Utrecht. the founding date of the city is usually related to the construction of a Roman fortification (*castellum*), probably built in around 47 AD. In Roman times, the name of the Utrecht fortress was simply *Traiectum* denoting its location on the Rhine at a ford. Traiectum became Dutch Trecht. In fact, the name of this city was *Traiectum ad Rhenum*, later became *Ultrajectum*, and then Utrecht (Schmitz 1857: 234). ($14_{9\text{-}10}$).

Cologne, (*K[oln]isborg*), is the northernmost colony founded by the Romans and is located on both sides of the Rhine River. ($14_{11\text{-}12\text{-}14}$).

Aquisgrana now Aachen, (*Aquis[g]rani*), has historically been a spa town in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. A cultural and strategic center during the Carolingian dynasty and Holy Roman Empire, Aachen, known for its hot springs, was the location of first-century Roman baths. By the late fourth or early fifth century, Roman structures had been transformed into a

Christian cult site (Jeep 2001: 1). (14_{13-14}).

Mainz, (*Meginzoborg*). The passage where it is mentioned contains an evident incongruity (Rachellà 2001: 201.2012). Although Mainz was the seat of an archbishop, its cathedral was not dedicated, as today, to the Saints Peter and Paul, but to the Saints Martin and Stephen (Magoun 1944: 328-329).
Magoun thinks that this piece doesn't refer to Mainz Cathedral but to Worms Cathedral (dedicated to Saint Peter: St Peter's Cathedral), a city that unexplainably is absent from the itinerary: according to Magoun this is the consequence of a scribal error, a missing out of a sentence or the fusion of two passages previously different, therefore what in the abbot's guide refers to the Cathedral of Mainz originally was referred to that of Worms, also associated by Nikulás to another important church of the same city, the Church of Saint Paul (Magoun 1944: 328-329). (13_{19}, 14_{4-15}).

Speyer, (*Spiro*), Speyer (formerly known as *Spires* in English) is a city of Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany. The name "Spire" has been evoked since the Celtic period. Populated by the German tribe known as the Nemetes, the town then went by the name of *Civitas Nemetum*. While under Roman control, Spire became an important military camp along the borders of the Rhine, and later a flourishing Roman colony. (14_{16}).

Seltz (*Selsborg).* A small town in the north-east of France, department of the Lower Rhine, situated at the influx of the Seltzbach into the Rhine (see *The Edinburgh gazetteer, or geographical dictionary* 1822: 521). (14_{18}).

Strasburg, (*Strans[bor]g*), city of the Alsace region in northeastern France, located close to the border with Germany, it is the capital of the Bas-Rhin département. From the 4th century, Strasbourg was the seat of the Bishopric of Strasbourg, mentioned by Nikulás. (14_{18}).

Basel, (*Boslaraborg*), situated on the Rhine, was a large river port, Switzerland's only outlet to the sea and the terminus of the Rhine navigation; for many centuries the Mittlere Brucke in Basel was the only bridge on the Rhine. (14_{20}).

Solothurn, (*Solatrar*), Switzerland. (14_{21}).

Wiflisburg, (*Vivilsborg*), the German name of the Swiss city of Avenches. In this city there is another important Germanic legend mentioned by the abbot: the *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, the legendary Danish king, who lived in the 11th century, of whom also Saxus Grammaticus talks in the IX book of the *Gesta Danorum*.
In chapter 13 of the saga it is told that Ragnar's sons, the Vikings, after raiding England, decided to leave for the conquest of the *Suðrríki*, in the other words Southern Europe and fight in every town they encounter on their way, till they reach *Vífilsborg*, a "big, populous and strong" city, so called because of the name of its ruler *Vífill*. Once they arrive, they besiege the city that in that moment is undefended because of the absence of *Vífill* and his army. But the walls of the city are too strong to be pulled down and the Vikings exhausted prepare to abandon their attack. The inhabitants of the town lean out of the walls and flaunt as a sign of derision, all their treasures. Irritated by the provocation Ragnar's sons made a plan: they set the wall on fire, so they melted and they invaded the city. Some of the citizens managed to escape, but the remaining ones were all killed. The Vikings take all the treasures they find and they left after burning the city (Meli 1993: 75-77). (14_{21}).

Vevey, (*Fivizuborg*), is a small town on the north shore of Lake Geneva, Switzerland. (15_{1}).

Marteinsvatn is the Lake Geneva, called Lake of Saint Martin by the abbot. (15_{2}).

Great St. Bernard Pass, *Mundio-fiall*. There are two passes with this name in the Alps: Great St. Bernard Pass, between Italy and Switzerland and the Little Saint Bernard Pass between Italy and France. They are both named after the hospice for travelers founded in the 10th century near Great Saint Bernard Pass by Saint Bernard of Menthon (923-1008) (Room 2005: 325). This latter road was first clearly marked out by Sigeric in 990; the use of the Great Saint Bernard pass, which was to be sure on the Roman road to Basel and the Rhine, is first suggested for our pilgrims by French travel about 700 (Parks 1954: 50).
(15_{9-12}, 16_{7-8}, 23_{13}).

Bourg St. Pierre, *[Pe]trs-kastali*, in Switzerland, in the canton of Valais, on the road to the Great Saint Bernard Pass. (15_{1}).

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Durazzo, (*[D]uracur*), in the Republic of Albania. The old name of this city is Dyrrhachium. (20_{18}).

Saint Mary's Kassiopi, (*Marioh?fn*) Corfú, Greece. (20_{19}).

Port Guiscard (Phiskardo), (*Visgardzh?fn*). On the Island of Kefalonia, Greece. It took its name from the Norman leader Robert Guiscard, who, during his second invasion of Kefalonia, died of a heart attack on July 17th 1085 near Cape Panormos. It is said that originally he was buried there. Panormos was changed to Piskardo after Guiscard and after the 13th century it became Fiskardo. (20_{19}).

Cape Malea (or Ákra Maléa) *Eng[ils-n]es*, is a peninsula in the southeast of the Peloponnese in Greece. Is called *Engilsnes* by King Sigurðr Jorsalafari (*Saga Sigurðar Jórsalafara, Eysteins ok Ólafs*, cap. 11 See Aðalbjarnarson 1941–51: 252). ($20_{19\text{-}20}$).

Sapientza, (*Paciencia*); is a small island in Greece off the southern coast of the Peloponnese. (20_{20}).

Sikiley: the manuscript reads as if this is an alternative name for *Paciencia*. It is unclear, because originally the name *Sikiley* was the Old Norse name used to indicate Sicily. Kålund, hypothesizes, that *til* was missing and so it was "a short distance to *Paciencia* or [*til*] *Sikiley*". Another hypothesis*:* considering the long-distance between *Sikiley* and *Engilsnes*, and that the abbot probably got confused – because of the similarity between the two names – is that *Sikiley* was the island of Kythera, otherwise as known as Cerigo (*Sicillo*), near at *Engilsnes*. (16_{26} , 19_{11} , $20_{20\text{-}21}$).

Martini: the abbot visited this city after *Engilsnes*. This toponym means that there was a church dedicated to Saint Martin, but not necessarily that the city was called Martini. It is the same case of Bolsena, called: *Kristino-borg* (for the latter and for the description of the Italian places see: Raschellà 1985-1986: 559; Riant 1865: 85) (20_{22}).

Bolgaraland, not Bulgaria, but "land of the Slavs" (Hill 1983: 186), Slavs settled in the

Peloponnesus and In the 9th century were converted to Christianity by the Emperor Michael III. (20_{23}).
Miklagardr, literally *big city*, Icelandic place name used to indicate Byzantium and Constantinople, mentioned by Sigurðr Jorsalafari and by many other travelers who took that route. (20_{24}).

Rhodes (*Roda*), is an island in Greece, located in the eastern Aegean Sea. It is the largest of the Dodecanese islands. (20_{26}).

Kastellorizon, (*Raudakastali*), literally *Red Castle*, is a Greek island just three miles off the coast of Turkey. (20_{27}).

Patara (*Patera*) Turkey. Saint Nicholas of Myra was born here about the year 270. (20_{27}).

Myra, (*Mirreaborg*), Turkey. Here Saint Nicholas was a popular bishop at Myra in the 4th century AD. (20_{29}).

Cape Gelidonya, *Ialandane[s]* in *Tyrkland* on the southern coast of Turkey. ($20_{30\text{-}31}$).

Cyprus (*Kiprar*), was the way for those who went to the Holy Land. (20_{31}, $21_{2\text{-}10}$).

Gulf of Antalya, (*Átalsfiordr*) Turkey. The abbot tells us that the Greeks called it *Satalie*, name surely derived from *Attalea*. We can assume that the consonant *S* is due to a scribal error. (21_{1}).

Beffa: *Paphos*. Here, there was the garrison of the Varangians or Varyags referred to as *Variagians*, they were people from the Baltic Region (See Raschellà 2001: 11-13), and they were Scandinavian mercenaries who served only the wealthiest rulers. The king of Denmark, Eiríkr Sveinsson (1095–1103), died in this place near the end of a protracted journey to Jerusalem His older brother, Canute the Holy, was King of Denmark from 1080 until 1086. Canute was an ambitious king who sought to strengthen the Danish monarchy and devotedly supported the Roman Catholic Church. (21_{2}).

Piacenza, (*Plazinzo-borg*), Here alludes to King Eiríkr Sveinsson who founded a hospice for

pilgrims. (15_{22-25}, 21_{7-8}).

Saint John of Acre, (*Acrsborg* or *Akrsborg*), now Akko or Acre, Israel. It was captured by King Baldwin I of Jerusalem in 1104. ($21_{10-16-21}$, 23_{10-11}).

Holy Land: *Iorsalaland* "Land of Jerusalem". (21_{11}, 23_{2-3}).

Chafarnaum: *Capharnaum*, Israel. This city is located on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. The abbot Nikulás wrote that his original name was *Þolomaida*. (21_{11}).

Caesarea, (*Cesarea*), Israel, today Horbat Qesari. (21_{12}).

Iaffa: called Jaffa or Joppa, Palestine. An important Roman and Byzantine locality during the first centuries of Christianity, it is frequently mentioned both in the Old Testament and in New. (21_{12}).

Askalon today's *Ashkelon*. The city was captured by a Crusader army led by King Baldwin III of Jerusalem in 1153. (21_{14-15}).

Serkland literally "Land of Serkir" (Saracens). The name *Serkir* derives from the Arabic word *Sharkeyn*, "Oriental". This name was used for the Saracens, and in the Latin text as well to indicate Assyrians and Babylonians (Cleasby-Vigfússon 1957: 523). (21_{15}).

Saint John of Acre, *Acrsborg*. (21_{15}).

Tiro, (*Syr*) Lebanon. It is supposed that Nikulás has transcribed the name in the same way as he heard it: Sûr, which was the Arabic place name of this city. (21_{16}).

Sidon, (*Seth*); now Saïda, Lebanon. This city is mentioned in the *Saga Sigurðar Jórsalafara*, here Sigurðr helps Baldwin. (21_{16}).

Tripoli, (*Tripulis*) Lebanon. This city was captured by crusaders in 1109. (21_{16}).

Latakia, (*Lic*) Syria. (21_{16}).

Gulf of Antiochia, *Anþekiofiordr*, Turkey. (21_{17-18}).

Ant[h]iochia: Antiochia now Antakya, Turkey. (21_{18}).

Galilea: Galilea, Nikulás called the Galilee: *herath* district or country. (See "herað": *district, country* in Zoëga 2004: 195). (21_{20}).

Tabor: Mount Tabor, is located in Lower Galilee in Israel. Mount Tabor was an important sacred site in the Crusader period, and many hermits lived in cells on the mountain slopes. It is the site of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ (Mt 17:1–9; Mk 9:2–10; Lk 9:28–36) also known as well as the church of transfiguration is an important Christian Holy Land Pilgrimage. (21_{22}).

Nazareth, (*Nazaret*), located in Israel's Galilee Region, is the cradle of Christianity. it was here that Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Holy Virgin and announced the Nativity of the Saviour (Lk 1: 26). (21_{23}).

Ginea, (*Gilin*), today Jenin in northern Samaria, Israel. (21_{25}).

Iohannis-kastali, Fortress of John: Nikulás has correctly identified this location, but it was not a castle but a fortified city, today Sabastiya. (21_{25}).

Samaria: Samaria. The territory of Samaria was the central region of the biblical Land of Israel, today located in the northern West Bank, the geographical limits of this region in the land of Israel were never clearly defined in the Bible. (21_{26}).

Neapolis, (*Nepl*), actual Nablus City, Palestine. Latin name, probably Nikulás called it Neapolis because that place name derives from French form: *Naples*. (21_{28}).

Casal: Error for *casalia*, so village? *Casale*, is a really common element in place–names (Hill 1983: 191), therefore we cannot be sure on this city name. (21_{29}).

Maka Maria: is *Magna Mahumeria*, actual al-Bireh or el-Bira, 15 kilometers north of Jerusalem.

(21_{29-30}).

Hierusalem: is another toponym that the abbot uses to indicate Jerusalem. (22_{10}).

Synai: Mount Sion, The Cenacle on Mount Zion, claimed to be the location of the Last Supper and Pentecost. (22_{14}).

Betania, *Bethania (kastali)*: is a fortified city, for this the abbot called this city "castle". In this place there is the sepulchre of Lazarus for this reason therefore is frequently visited and included in the itineraries of pilgrims. (22_{18-19}).

Quarantana, (*Querencium*) actual Deir el Quruntul, near Jericho. (22_{28}).

Hiericho: Jericho. Nikulás uses the Latin form for the toponym, not only for this but also for: *Hierusalem*, *Mons Oliveti, Templum Domini*. (22_{30}).

Saudi Arabia: *Rabitaland*. (23_{2}).

Romaborg: City of Rome, the abbot describes in detail the churches and the places visited by him (See for the part concerning Italy Raschellà 1985–1986).
(13_{5}, 14_{8}, 17_{15-16}, 18_{17-19}, 19_{1-6-8}, 20_{8}, 23_{13}).

Mundio (fiall): Literally *Mounts*, the Alps. (15_{9-12} , 16_{7-8} , 23_{13}).

Ilians-vegr: Ilians–way, or Saint–Gilles–du–Gard in southern France. This path was famous in ancient time and for this the abbot mentioned it. (15_{25}, 23_{14-15}).

Sc?duborgaraa: In the Middle Ages it was called *Skodborg*, river in midway between Jutland and Schleswig, the current name is river Kongeå. (23_{16}).

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Publications

1 Written in italics the name of the places which have not a certain location.

2 The manuscript quotes: *er [V]I dag[a]* Kålund who corrected adding *[V]* assuming that six days were needed to get from Utrecht to Cologne.

3 In the Middle Ages, this was considered as short journey.

4 These numbers refer to the pages and the verses of the Kålund edition.

5 The hoard of King Nibelung entire did they bear forth from a mountain hollow.