



Master's Thesis Projects

## The Retrospective Methods Network

# RMN

### Newsletter

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### Die altwestnordischen Adaptionen des Nicodemusevangeliums (*Gesta salvatoris*): Übersetzung und Kommentar [‘The Old West Norse Adaptions of the Gospel of Nicodemus (*Gesta Salvatoris*): Translation and Commentary’]

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Research project undertaken for completion of the degree of Master of Arts in Scandinavian and German Medieval Philology at Kiel University; the thesis was submitted 4 February 2019 (the project was supported with a mobility grant by Direktoratet for internasjonalsisering og kvalitetsutvikling i høgare utdanning (Diku) Supervisors: Klaus Böldl (Kiel University), Odd Einar Haugen (University of Bergen).

The apocryphal *Evangelium Nicodemi* [‘The Gospell of Nicodemus’] was originally composed in late Antiquity and has since been one of the most popular non-canonical Christian texts. During the Middle Ages and early Modern period, *Evangelium Nicodemi* was translated or adapted into most of the West European vernaculars, based on its several Latin redactions. In the North, there have been both complete and partial translations of the text in Iceland, Denmark and Sweden. The best known of those is probably the 13<sup>th</sup> century Old Icelandic *Niðrstigningar saga* [‘The Saga of the Descend’] which translates the second part of *Evangelium Nicodemi*, the *Descensus christi ad inferos* [‘Christ’s Descend into Hell’], according to 12<sup>th</sup> century Troyes redaction of the text (cf. Izydorczyk & Bullitta 2017: 577–578) and which is usually considered to incorporate, to some extent, elements of Nordic mythology into the Christian text (cf. Haugen 1993: 430).

The first part of this project’s two components is an updated overview of the vernacular translations and adaptations of *Evangelium Nicodemi* in Iceland and Scandinavia, including both prose works and poetry in West Norse, East Norse and Modern Icelandic. The overview focuses on the

different redactions of these texts, their manuscripts transmission and how they relate to the Latin tradition.

The second part is a commented translation of the two Old Icelandic adaptations of *Evangelium Nicodemi* into German, neither of which has been translated into German before. The translation of *Af fangelsi Ioseps* [‘On the Imprisonment of Joseph’] is based on the edition by Bullitta (2016). For *Niðrstigningar saga* both text redactions, the older redaction A and the younger redaction B, are translated based on the edition by Bullitta (2017). The commentary provides contextual information about the biblical and apocryphal personage of these texts.

#### Works Cited

##### Sources

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