

Jörn Bockmann / Sebastian Holtzhauer (Hg. / eds.)

# **St. Brandan in europäischer Perspektive – St. Brendan in European Perspective**

Textuelle und bildliche Transformationen –  
Textual and Pictorial Transformations





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Jörn Bockmann / Sebastian Holtzhauer (Hg. / eds.)

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## Reading the ‘Navigatio Brendani’ in the Middle Ages: Text and Contexts (and a Lost Fragment Recovered)

### Abstract

Brendan’s story was conveyed through oral channels, through tales of other saints where Brendan appears as a character, and ultimately through vernacular translations; its primary root and background, however, is certainly the Latin text known as ‘Navigatio Brendani’. This paper will retrace the history and the geography of its diffusion, illustrating the endeavour of Giovanni Orlandi – and then mine – to prepare, over the course of several decades, a critical edition based on all the witnesses. I will then examine an aspect which does not transpire from the map alone, that is to say, the way in which the text was read, understood, loved or rejected in various contexts. Signs of these different reactions are the juxtaposition of certain other texts in the manuscripts transmitting the work; the presence of spontaneous illustrations; critical annotations, on the manuscripts themselves and elsewhere; and manipulations of the text in certain witnesses. Finally, the paper reports the discovery of the initial sheet of the ‘Navigatio’ which belonged to manuscript Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Hist. 4° 155, as a fragment now preserved in Switzerland.

Brendan’s story was conveyed through oral channels, through tales of other saints – such as Machutus and Brigida<sup>1</sup> – where Brendan appears as a character, and ultimately through vernacular translations; its primary root and background, however, is certainly the Latin text known as ‘Navigatio Brendani’. This paper will retrace the history and the geography of its diffusion, illustrating the endeavour of Giovanni Orlandi – and then mine – to prepare, over the course of several decades, a critical edition based on all the witnesses (121, but 142 counting the reliable indirect witnesses). I will then examine an aspect which does not transpire from the map alone, that is to say, the way in which the text was read, understood, loved or rejected in various contexts.

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1 See also in this volume Dorothy Bray: “Saint Brendan and Saint Brigit. The Evolution of a Hagiographical Tale”.

## 1. History and geography of the text's transmission

The anonymous author of the written redaction of the legend must have been an Irish monk, active in the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> As it usually happens, however, there are no extant witnesses of the first phase of the work's tradition in Ireland, and we have to wait until the 10<sup>th</sup> century to see the earliest preserved manuscripts, already found on the Continent. It is hard to say when and where the 'Navigatio' might have crossed the English Channel, but we can assess one fact: throughout the Carolingian Age there is no trace of the diffusion of the text, not a sign of its presence within the libraries of the Frankish empire, including those which were genetically related to the Insular world (Fulda, Reichenau, Sankt Gallen, etc.). The text's arrival in Continental Europe, therefore, seems more likely to belong to the second immigration wave of Irish *peregrini*, from the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century onwards – pilgrims that were hosted in reserved colonies, or integrated in existing monasteries or new foundations, particularly in the bishopric cities in the area between the Moselle and the lower Rhine. These pilgrims, as we all know, played an important role in the monastic reform that took place in Lorraine in the years 930–940 (known as 'Gorze reform', but equally promoted by St. Maximin's abbey in Trier).<sup>3</sup> It is probably not a coincidence that the network of monasteries involved in such a reform is also connected to the earliest diffusion of the 'Navigatio Brendani': the four 10<sup>th</sup>-century witnesses<sup>4</sup> are all connected to this environment, as well as many manuscripts dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century.

There is obviously no time to provide a full description of the whole picture, but we can consider as an example manuscript Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 17740 (M<sup>1</sup>), composed before 993 and brought into the library of St. Emmeram under the abbotship of Ramwold (975–1001), who had come from Trier to start the reform; this manuscript, coming from the area of Trier, was also used as an exemplar for the massive production of copies to be distributed to the

2 See *Orlandi*, *Navigatio*; *Dumville*, *Two Approaches*; and for the whole chapter *Orlandi/Guglielmetti*, *NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI II* (critical edition with a selective apparatus, a commentary and an introduction focusing both on historical-literary context, and on the textual transmission) and *Guglielmetti*, *NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI III* (the same critical text with the whole apparatus and more complete philological *prolegomena*).

3 See for example *Wagner*, *Gorze au XI<sup>me</sup> siècle*; and *Semmler*, *Iren in der lothringischen Klosterreform*.

4 Manuscripts London, British Library, Add. 36736 (L<sup>1</sup> in *Orlandi/Guglielmetti*, *NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI II*), from Sankt Maximin; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud. misc. 410 (O<sup>1</sup>), of unknown origin, but which has to be by the abbey of Neuvillers in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when its *descriptus* Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 563 (W<sup>1</sup>) was copied there; Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Theol. 1727 (Ha), 10/11<sup>th</sup> century, from Berge (Magdeburg); and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 17740 (M<sup>1</sup>), described below.

Bavarian monasteries, to the point where its descendants amount to as many as twenty-three! It would be somewhat incautious to argue that the monks were programmatically encouraged to read the 'Navigatio' within the hubs of the reform, but the text surely benefited from the productive liveliness of this context, where manuscripts were frequently copied and disseminated; the natural interest for the saint displayed by the Irish communities that settled in the German area at the time, and by those brought up in the same context at an even later time, must also be considered a relevant factor.

The region of the Rhine and High-Lorraine, therefore, was the area where the Continental success of the 'Navigatio' originated. The tradition of the text depends on an archetype that was either copied in or brought to this region, and it branches out into five families – as the tables of the *stemma codicum* (divided due to lack of space) demonstrate.<sup>5</sup>

Family  $\alpha$  (Table 1) comprises thirty manuscripts, almost all of Southern German origin, including the above-mentioned Munich manuscript ( $M^1$ ); among the witnesses depending on it, there are also the model for the reproduction of the 'Navigatio' within the 'Magnum Legendarium Austriacum' (*MLA*,  $\alpha^5$ ) and the model of the German translation of Johann Hartlieb (*VolgHar*,  $\alpha^{15}$ ). There is also an Italian branch ( $\alpha^7$ ), which in turn is the origin of the Old Venetian version (*VolgVen*).

Family  $\beta$  (Table 2) includes ten steady witnesses and, up to the first three chapters, the fourteen manuscripts of group  $\beta\epsilon$  (where the remaining text was copied from the  $\epsilon$  family), a cluster which also includes the three *codices antiquiores* other than  $M^1$ : this family spread from the area of Rhine and Lorraine, where it originated, towards the East (from Saxony to Northern Italy) and towards France. In the same framework we can also find family  $\delta$ : a very small one, as it counts only three complete witnesses and one abbreviation, connected to the area of Saint-Omer, whose oldest attestation dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

Family  $\gamma$  (Table 3), dating back at least to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, includes twenty-seven witnesses; it seemingly originated in the French region, where the highest number of copies is found, but its articulation is varied, and it also touches the Iberian Peninsula, Italy, the Swiss and German area, as well as England; as a matter of fact, its biggest subset,  $\gamma^7$ , belongs to the Anglo-Norman area. This group also comprises a translation into the Langue d'Oil and a Tuscan version (*VolgOit* and *VolgTos*).

The last family,  $\epsilon$ , divided into two tables (4–5), comprises a little less than half of the 'Navigatio' tradition: forty-three witnesses, plus the fourteen witnesses belonging to  $\beta\epsilon$ , a group which belonged to  $\beta$  as far as the first chapters are

5 I reproduce the *stemma* published in my 2017 edition (pp. 153–157), with the addition of the Old French version in  $\epsilon^4$  not yet classified at the time (*VolgOit II*).

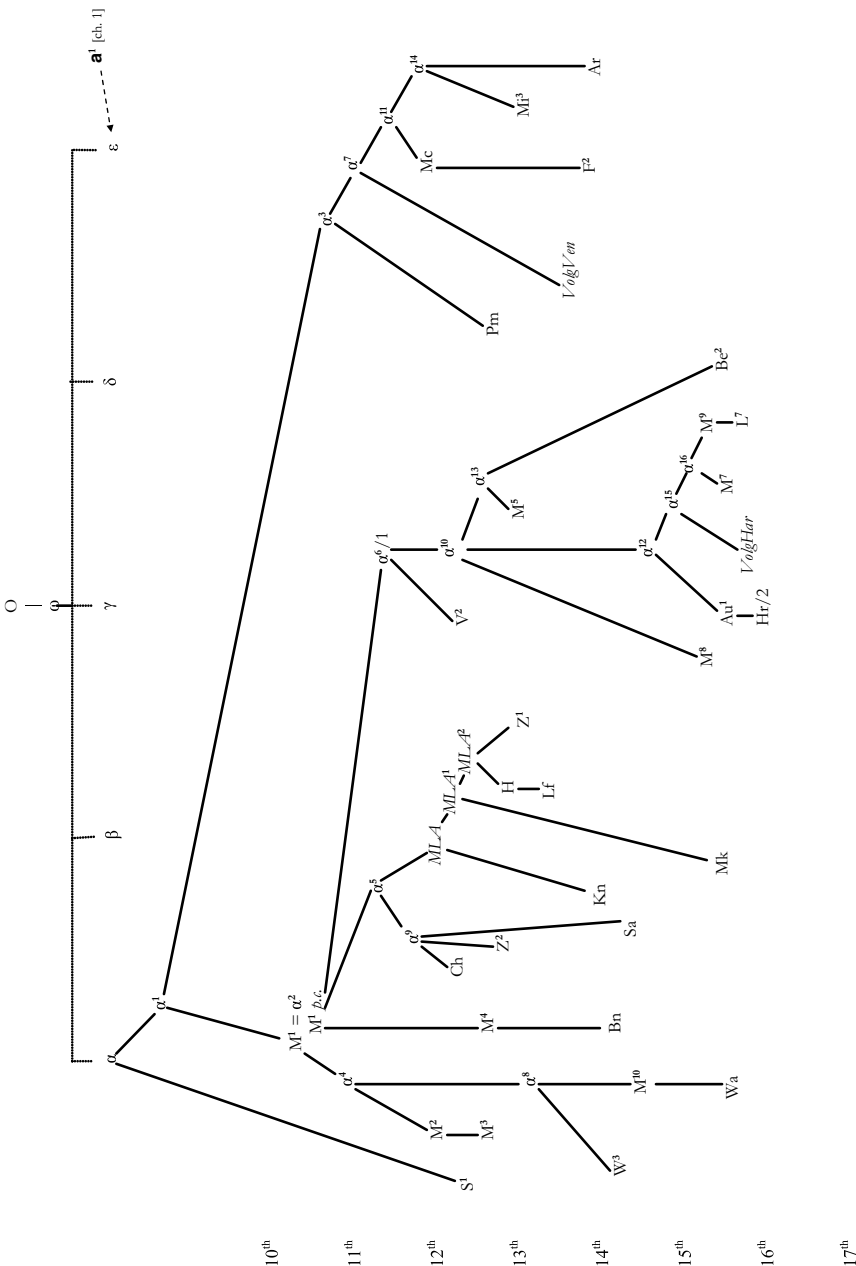
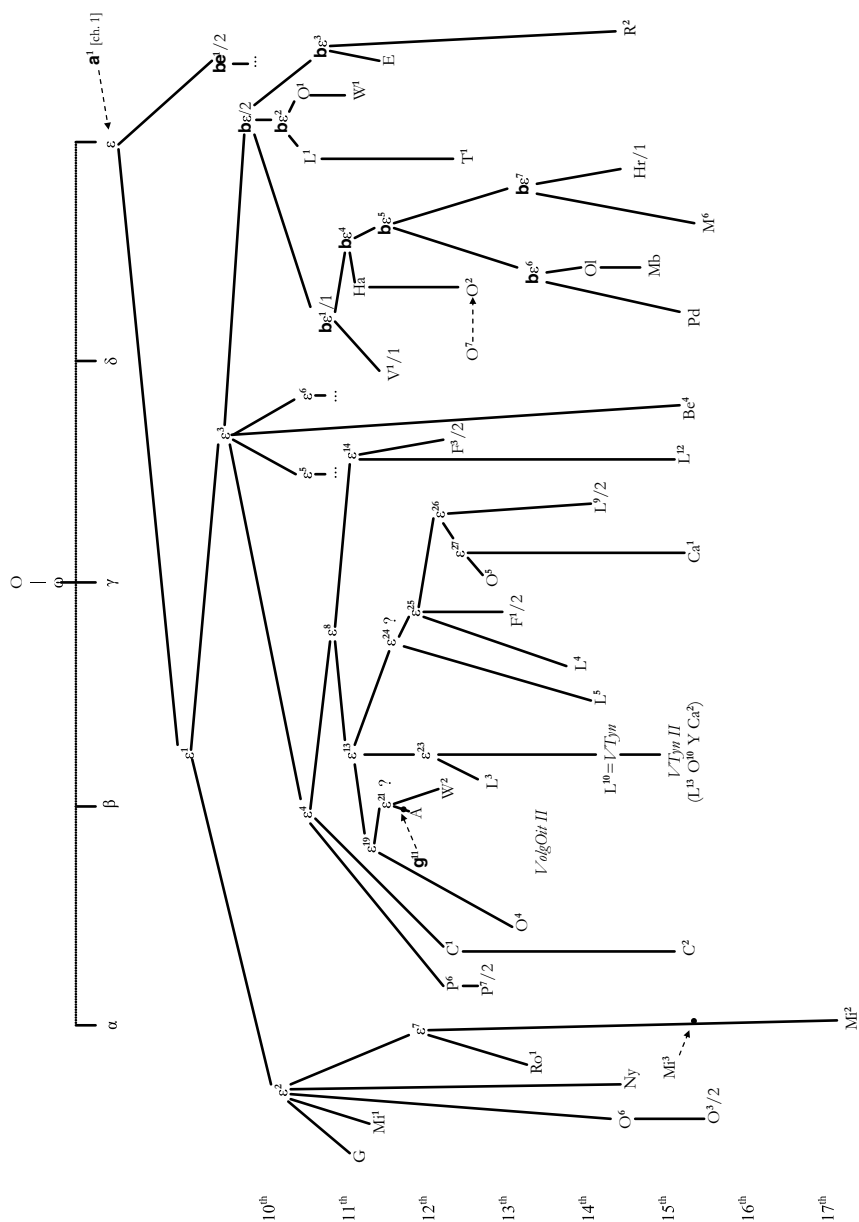


Table 1, Family  $\alpha$





Table 4, Family  $\varepsilon$  – first part

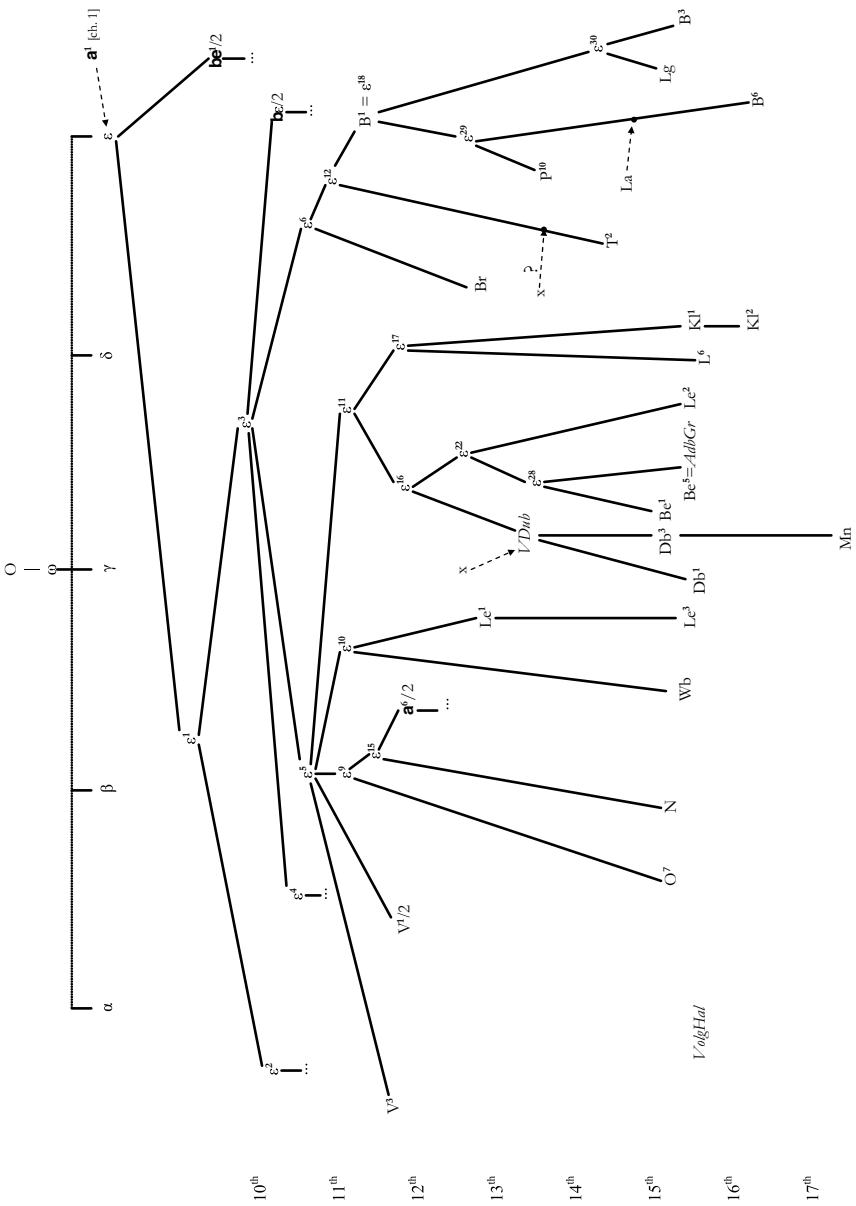


Table 5, Family  $\epsilon$  – second part

concerned, as we have already mentioned; Heinrich Haller based his German translation (*VolgHal*) on some model belonging to  $\epsilon$ , and the same can be said for Hermann Greven’s abbreviation (*AdbGr*,  $\epsilon^{28}$  group). This family dates back to at least the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and it originated in the area of the Rhine, while its subsequent ramifications caused it to expand to the entire German and French region (including a group,  $\epsilon^4$ , located in the Anglo-Norman area, just like  $\gamma$ , and the source of another translation in Old French, *VolgOit II*) and as far as northern Italy (with part of the  $\epsilon^2$  group). To the same  $\epsilon^2$  group – it is worth emphasizing – belongs the manuscript Gent, Rijksuniversiteit – Centrale Bibliotheek, 401 (G, beginning of 11<sup>th</sup> century, from north-east France or Low Rhineland), which was adopted by Carl Selmer as the basis for his edition of the ‘Navigatio’: an unhappy choice, as this family’s text is remote from that which has to be retained the original one.<sup>6</sup>

If we consider the extant tradition in its entirety, as well as the geographic distribution of the manuscripts, the result is as shown in the graphic diagram (Table 6):

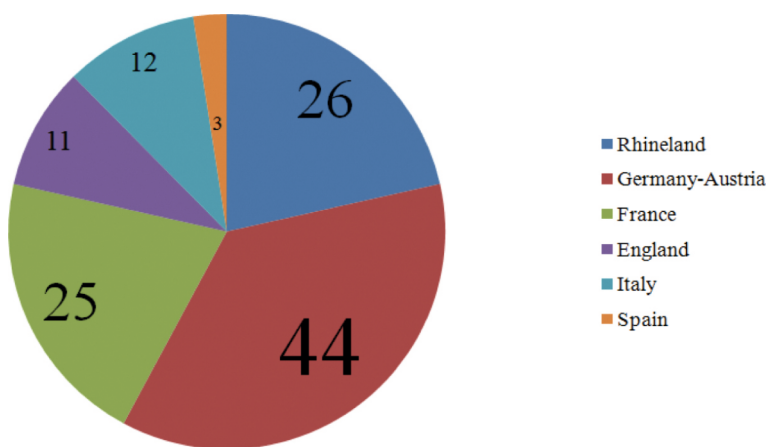


Table 6, Geographic distribution of ‘Navigatio Brendani’-manuscripts

The partition is obviously rather approximate, but it provides some insight into the quantity of copies available in the various European areas (Rhineland stands out due to its historical relevance, as we have assessed before), and it shows a prevalence for the German-speaking area and the Rhine area, which corresponds to the dimensions of the family which is more closely related to it, that is  $\epsilon$ .

<sup>6</sup> Selmer, *NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI I*, published in 1959. Although Selmer traced a very selective (and largely wrong) *stemma codicum*, he opted for a non-reconstructive approach, relying on a single, very deceptive witness. On Selmer’s edition value, see Orlandi, *Considerazioni*; and the editions by Orlandi and me mentioned above.

Another diagram (Table 7) also describes the development of the tradition over time, allowing us to see some differences between the diverse areas.

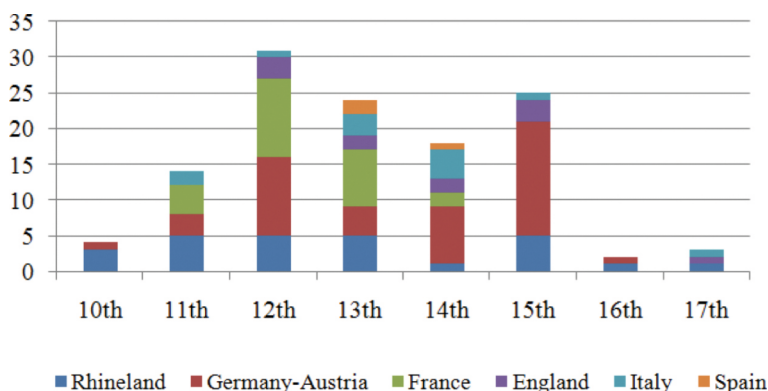


Table 7, Development of manuscript tradition from 10th until 17th c.

The most evident one is the decreasing interest shown by the French area towards the Latin 'Navigatio', while copies in the German-Austrian area, on the other hand, tend to multiply, especially between the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Apparently, neither the presence of many manuscripts already preserved within the libraries from the previous centuries, nor the competition of vernacular versions of the story dampened the interest for the production of new copies (while perhaps this happened in France, where the success of various translations and re-elaborations in the vernacular was more precocious and incisive).

Nevertheless, all this can only testify to the high availability of manuscripts and the density of their presence in time and space, but it says nothing about the contexts within which the text was read: for this reason, it is necessary to examine more closely the history of each single witness, their codicological layout and the traces left by the readers.

## 2. A variegated text's reception

The first question one should ask is who ordered and owned these manuscripts, although the answers to this question might be insufficient since our vision is influenced by the usual processes of transmission of medieval manuscripts. It is well known that the collections which have come down through the centuries from Middle Ages to the early Modern Age are mostly ecclesiastical, and we are not able to find much information about the private libraries of the laymen, often lost or merged into the assets of religious institutions. It is therefore not surprising that all the manuscripts of the 'Navigatio', whose medieval origin or

provenance is known to us, are located in monastic or ecclesiastical libraries; as a matter of fact, however, a number of copies may very well have been in the hands of laymen.

Let us admit that the audience of the 'Navigatio' was comprised mostly of monks and clergymen, as is natural considering the topic and the protagonist of this story. The point is: was this tale perceived as a strictly 'monastic' tale, in a hagiographical and edifying sense – more dynamic than the usual lives of saints, but with the same aim and ascribable to the same genre?

### 2.1. 'Travelling companions' of the 'Navigatio' in its manuscripts

One way to find an answer to this question is to study the logic behind the structure of the miscellanies in which the 'Navigatio' was copied. Being a short text, which could not occupy an entire volume on its own, it is always accompanied by some 'travelling companions', very diverse from one another. Considering its relative brevity, it was almost never transcribed in a single volume (except for two cases already pertaining to modern times); if we exclude the eight manuscripts where the text is isolated because it has been reduced into a fragment or an excerpt from an originally larger volume, we are left with 111 manuscripts, of which we can study the principles of composition – sometimes based on a consistent project, sometimes one more hesitant.<sup>7</sup>

With a certain degree of simplification, the manuscripts that preserve the 'Navigatio' can be divided in two categories. The first category comprises religious volumes in a strict sense, with specifically devotional and hagiographical purposes: *legendaria* and *passionaria*; selective hagiographic collections; codices containing ascetic and theological treatises. The second category encompasses volumes which are not strictly 'religious' (collections of medieval recounts of journeys to the Far East and other geographical texts), or that indulge in a religious sentiment deeply imbued with fantasy and novelty ('*Vitae Patrum*', the so-called epic *passiones*, New Testament apocrypha, *visiones* of the afterlife). The presence of all these genres in a single group might appear strange, but it is justified by a common denominator: the journey, the passionate discovery of the exotic, of the marvellous (and the horrific) that are hidden beyond the customary boundaries (be it Brendan's ocean, the Egyptian desert of the Hermits, Odorico da Pordenone's China, or the Heaven and the Hell of the Other World voyagers). Besides, the 'Navigatio' itself belongs to different genres simultaneously: hagiographic, because its protagonist is a saint, but also odeporic, as it provides a recount of his journey to a marvellous and faraway land, and it is also visionary,

7 About this matter, see also *Guglielmetti*, *Il divertimento*, pp. 57–61.

since Brendan visits hellish and heavenly lands as well. Many of its narrative motifs are reminiscent of the 'Vitae Patrum' and the apocrypha, that is the kind of religious literature that often slips into the field of *mirabilia*.

Somewhat more than half of these 111 manuscripts belong to the first category, and attest the reception of the 'Navigatio' according to the status into which it could more easily be framed, that is as a hagiographic text providing the example of a saint to pious readers – one which could be mixed with many other *vitae* and *passiones*. 48 manuscripts, on the other hand, belong to the second category, the 'exotic' and 'fantastic' one, at least in relation to a relevant part of their content. This tendency has been visible since the very beginning of the diffusion of the text in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, in every geographic area. Below, we can see more precisely the frequency of each of these pairings, sometimes with a single genre, sometimes with more than one genre simultaneously:<sup>8</sup>

- apocrypha and fictional hagiography ('Evangelium Nicodemi', 'Pseudo-Matthaei Evangelium', 'Vita Adae et Evae', 'Vitae Patrum', 'Vita Barlaae et Iosafat', etc.): 34 manuscripts (24 + the mixed ones recorded below), 10<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> c.
- *visiones* ('V. Tnugdali', 'V. Drithelmi', 'V. Pauli', 'V. Baronti', 'V. Wettini', 'V. Fursei', 'V. Anseli', 'Purgatorium s. Patricii', etc.): 18 manuscripts (8 + the mixed ones), 11<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> c.
- exotic journeys / geography (Jean de Mandeville, Odorico da Pordenone, William of Rubruck, 'Epistola presbyteri Iohannis', Holy Land and *Insulae fortunatorum* materials, etc.): 10 manuscripts (4 + the mixed ones), 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> c.
- mixed genres: apocrypha/hagiography + *visiones*, 6 manuscripts; *visiones* + journeys, 2 manuscripts; apocrypha/hagiography + journeys, 2 manuscripts; apocrypha/hagiography + *visiones* + journeys, 2 manuscripts

These numbers suggest that many readers of the 'Navigatio' understood its eccentric and polymorphic nature – at the intersection of various genres – and its literary potential beyond its monastic content. Of course, we are still dealing with religious literature, whose deepest aim is the edification of the reader; it is also undeniable, however, that even if, in this kind of text, the element of marvel was a means and not an end, this aspect was probably sought after by many readers who were attracted by an interest in the narration itself. Just like apocryphal and visionary literature, and the other genres mentioned earlier, the 'Navigatio' must be included among the works which were subject to a para-religious fruition, verging on entertainment literature unwillingly or without confessing it.

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8 For instance, there are a total of 34 manuscripts wherein the 'Navigatio' is accompanied by apocryphal texts and entertaining hagiographies, ten of which also contain visions or exotic travels, or both.

## 2.2. 'Navigatio's illustrators

There is yet another hint of the readers' appreciation for the funny and fantastic aspects of Brendan's story: the sketches and the drawings which in various manuscripts illustrate the most interesting characters and the most striking episodes. Unlike the vernacular versions, the Latin 'Navigatio' never circulates in illustrated manuscripts, and it is usually preserved in plain volumes, devoid of illuminations. This aspect has luckily stimulated and freed the fantasy of some of its readers, who autonomously decided to add single sketches or entire sets of lively drawings in the margins.<sup>9</sup>

Someone reading an 11<sup>th</sup> century manuscript from Remiremont (E = Épinal, Bibliothèque multimédia intercommunale Épinal-Goldbey, 147) was struck by the episode of the monk who, inspired by a demon, steals a precious bridle,<sup>10</sup> and made a drawing representing the devil holding the bridle in front of the monk, as it is described within the text. In a codex from Anchin dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century (P<sup>13</sup> = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 2333 A), someone else decided to portray Judas, one of Brendan's most eccentric encounters. The beginning of the text in a 13<sup>th</sup> century French manuscript (P<sup>10</sup> = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 5371) was decorated with a small fish, that perhaps was meant to represent Iasconius – the character that probably best serves as a symbol with which to identify the entire work. In the margins of an English manuscript dating back to the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century (O<sup>5</sup> = Oxford, Lincoln College, lat. 27) we can find as many as eight drawings: the dog that welcomes and leads the monks on the first island which they visit; once again the tempting devil and the thieving monk; the sheep and the lamb taken from the flock on the Island of the Sheep, Iasconius, the spirit-birds of the *paradisus avium*, the pillar in the middle of the ocean. Drawings of these characters and many more are found in two manuscripts from Pegau, one of which, dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, served as the model for the transcription of another, copied in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Le<sup>1</sup> = Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, 844, and Le<sup>3</sup> = 838); and the scribe of the *codex descriptus* not only reproduced the drawings of its exemplar, but also added many of his own (among which is probably a portrait of Lucifer).

Animals and devils: these choices exemplify the playful attitude of the readers-illustrators. What makes this phenomenon even more relevant is the typology of the manuscripts where it occurs: we are not able to determine precisely the author and the exact origin of these sketches, except for the last manuscript, produced in the Benedictine monastery of Pegau. All the other manuscripts that we have

9 All the drawings described below are published in *Guglielmetti*, *Il divertimento*, pp. 69–78.

10 On the episode, see also the paper by Christoph Fasbender in this volume.

mentioned, however, are miscellanies whose contents are mostly hagiographic or religious, which were transcribed and put into circulation in the monastic environment! It is not, therefore, the same milieu of those witnesses that we mentioned earlier, oriented by nature towards a literary fruition of the text; instead, these manuscripts belong to a stricter environment, and their purpose is more serious; nonetheless, the narrative and frivolous aspects have been enjoyed, and this appreciation was exhibited with a visual sign, for the amusement of future readers.

This consideration is especially true for the case of the most glaringly spontaneous illustration of the 'Navigatio', which we can precisely localise and which defies our expectations, as it brings us straight into the heart of a Charterhouse. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century – a little more than a century after its foundation – the library of the Mainz Carthusians possessed as many as five copies of the text, all of different origin and belonging to five different textual branches (a concentration that would sound incredible, if this was just a matter of sheer chance). Four of them, in pairs, were involved in operations of collation and contamination – a sign of great interest in the text itself.<sup>11</sup> In the case of one of them, the reason was the mutilation of a manuscript (O<sup>3</sup>, β family = Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud. misc. 44), which had lost the final quire; a new quire was prepared to restore it, and the text of this quire was copied from manuscript Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud. misc. 173 (O<sup>6</sup>, ε family), also preserved in the Charterhouse. The manuscript utilised as a model, O<sup>6</sup>, had a distinctive feature which must have appeared irresistible to the scribe who took care of the integration: a set of twenty pictures drawn in the margins, of exceptional quality, illustrating almost each and every episode of the text, from the encounter with Iasconius to Paul the Hermit. What then, subsequently, did the restorer of O<sup>3</sup> do (or one of his brethren involved in the task)? He also copied almost all the drawings (fifteen in total) in the corresponding sections of O<sup>3</sup>.

The first drawing is devoted to Iasconius (ch. 10), represented with two trees, a monk and a cauldron on his back; the second one to the *paradisus avium* (ch. 11); a set of four pictures illustrates the church and the life in Ailbe's community (ch. 12); the next illustrates the monks sleeping because of the soporific water in ch. 13 and then Iasconius again, in ch. 15. We reproduce<sup>12</sup> this last couple of images in O<sup>6</sup> and O<sup>3</sup> (Figure 1), as an example of their style (as well as of the very different skills of both the first illustrator and his imitator).

11 About contaminations in our text's transmission, in addition to the critical editions by Orlandi and me mentioned above, see *Guglielmetti*, *Navigando con Brendano*. The Mainz case we are focusing on here is described in *Guglielmetti*, *Illustrating* (where the whole set of illustrations is also reproduced from the manuscripts).

12 The following pictures are Indian ink drawings by myself, reproducing exactly the pen lines by the two illustrators of O<sup>6</sup> and O<sup>3</sup>.

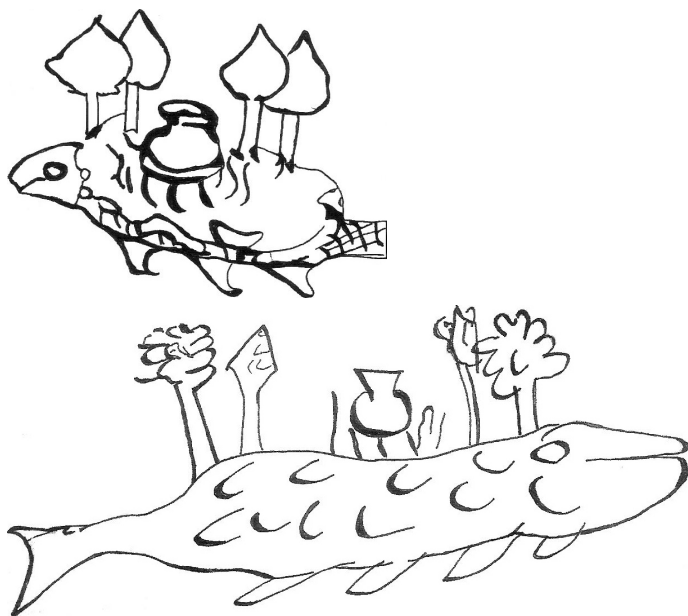


Figure 1, Iasconius in mss. O<sup>6</sup>, f. 122r, and O<sup>3</sup>, f. 41v

The attack of the sea monster and the fight between the monster and the beast sent by God, that tears the attacker into three pieces (ch. 16), also inspire another three pictures; Figure 2 shows the third couple in O<sup>6</sup> and O<sup>3</sup>.

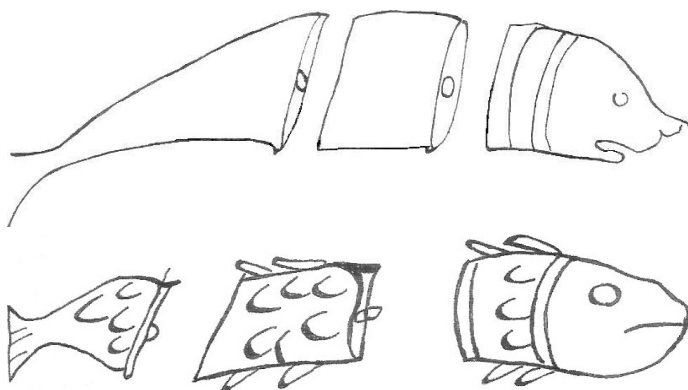


Figure 2, The sea monster in mss. O<sup>6</sup>, f. 123v, and O<sup>3</sup>, f. 43r

Our manuscripts also carry sketches of the bird carrying a large quantity of fruit (ch. 18); of the attack of the griffin and of its struggle with the previous bird that saves the monks (ch. 19); of the pillar in the Ocean (ch. 22); and of the island of the devil-blacksmiths attacking Brendan's boat (ch. 23) (Figure 3).



Figure 3, The devil-blacksmith in mss. O<sup>6</sup>, f. 128v and O<sup>3</sup>, f. 48r

The skill and the sensibility of the first illustrator are impressive; in its own way, so is the dedication with which the second, in spite of his evident lack of ability, tries to follow in his footsteps. Therefore, a 15<sup>th</sup> century Carthusian could decide – and actually did decide – that the story of the Irish abbot saint deserved to be made even more enjoyable and engaging by the illustrations of its marvellous characters. Then again, the favour of the Carthusians towards the ‘Navigatio’ is confirmed by two coeval episodes pertaining to the indirect tradition: the translation into the vernacular produced at Schnals by Heinrich Haller and the abbreviation compiled in Köln by Hermann Greven, who included Brendan in his *legendarium*.<sup>13</sup> Speaking more generally, considering the monastic contexts, the dissemination of the manuscripts shows a growing appreciation for Brendan’s story beyond the actual aim of its fruition, be it edifying or amusing depending on the situation. Benedictines, Cistercians,<sup>14</sup> Carthusians, Premostratensians, Cross-bearing Brethren: all the orders were involved in the transmission of the text.

13 Again, see Guglielmetti, *NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI* III, respectively pp. 317–318 and pp. 140, 349–350. On the reception of the work in Carthusian circles and its illustration (in spite of the prescriptions of the *consuetudines*!), see also Holtzhauer, *Die Fahrt eines Heiligen*, pp. 189–216.

14 On the Cistercians’ reading of the ‘Navigatio’, see in particular the paper by Katja Weidner in this volume.

### 2.3. Critics (and supporters)

The Dominicans, on the other hand, manifest an overt aversion towards the text. Vincent of Beauvais' (c. 1190–1264) pungent comment (not on the saint himself, but on the legend) is well known: *apocrypha deliramenta* ("apocryphal deliria");<sup>15</sup> Vincent's opinion doomed Brendan to be excluded from the *legendaria* of the Order of Preachers.<sup>16</sup> An exception to this ban is Bartholomew of Trent (Bartholomaeus Tridentinus, c. 1190–1251), who in the same years during which Vincent was writing his negative opinion, inserted an abbreviation of the 'Navigatio' in his 'Liber epilogorum in gesta sanctorum'. Bartholomew, however, applied severe censorship to some contents, deemed too unorthodox: in particular, the existence of bird-angels fallen with Lucifer and yet unpunished and the notion of the 'rest for the damned' granted to Judas, as well as the whole episode in which Brendan is so merciful towards Judas that he takes on the devils in order to protect him.

[...] sed quod ibi dicitur, quod non peccando consenserunt [*scil.* the bird-spirits] et penas non sustineant et similia, contrarium est fidei et non credendum, nisi forte dicatur quod dyabolus mendax est et cetera. (LIBER EPILOGORUM, p. 143, ll. 22–24)

But what is told there, that they did not give their consent by sinning and would not suffer pain and such things, is contrary to the faith and not to be believed, unless we want to say that the devil is a liar, etc.

[...] Quod autem ibi legitur, quod refrigerium habeat [*scil.* Judas] certis temporibus, et quod oraverunt pro eo, et de conflictu demonum, et fere totum quod de Iuda ibi dicitur non credo, quod in inferno nulla sit redemptio, nisi forte velis dicere quod dampnati, sicut et demones, incendia sua secum ferunt. (LIBER EPILOGORUM, p. 144, ll. 50–55)

[...] As for what is said there, that he has relief at certain times and that they prayed for him, and about the conflict with the demons, and practically everything that is said there about Judas I do not believe it, because in hell there is no redemption, unless it means that the damned, like demons, carry their fire with them.

As it seems, Bartholomew's reception is rather ambiguous, and it is probably intended as an antidote more than an enhancement: if everybody tells this version of the tale, greater perils shall be avoided... None of the other Mendicant orders shows particular signs of interest. However, Brendan can be considered a hero in many respects, but perhaps not for the spiritual qualities that are relevant in this environment.

15 'Speculum historiale', XXI 81: *Huius autem peregrinationis historiam propter apocrypha quaedam deliramenta que in ea videntur contineri penitus ab opere isto resecaui* (SPECULUM QUADRUPLIX, t. IV, p. 843).

16 On this topic, see *Guglielmetti/Nessi*, *Le avventure di Brendano*.

Speaking of theological criticism like the one expressed by Bartholomew, we can verify from other sources how the 'Navigatio' has provided food for thought and how its more eccentric contents have sparked the reaction of its readers. The same objections which he raised, and not only them, are the object of a note on the flyleaf of manuscript Vatican City, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, Reg. lat. 481 (V<sup>1</sup>), coming from the Benedictine monastery of Sankt Petrus und Paulus in Paderborn – a manuscript presenting codicological units of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and 12<sup>th</sup> century, probably produced *in loco*. At f. IIr, already used for a summary of contents, next to the item 'Vita Brendani', a later, Gothic hand left a warning for the readers:

In ea multa vix credibilia pleraque etiam fidei non valde consona, nisi piissimum offenderint lectorem, inveniuntur. Nondum enim persuasum mihi est secundum sanam et catholicam fidem terram aut terrenam felicitatem sanctis esse aut promissam aut pro retributione dandam. Itemque nec angelos apostatas Deo laudes per diei tempora certa solvere, nisi blasphemos et obstinatos in malo quidam dicat posse Dei effici laudatores. Quis non horreat Iude proditoris penas aliquo interpolari refrigerio? Occurrent multa lectori que veritatis amatorem in risum compellent.<sup>17</sup>

In this [*scil.* 'Vita'] many things are found which one could hardly believe, and many of them are not in harmony with our faith, without offending a pious reader. For I cannot convince myself that, according to the holy Catholic faith, the saints might be promised or rewarded with land or earthly happiness. Nor that apostate angels could praise God at certain times, unless one says that people who are blasphemous and obstinate in evil can become people praising God. Who would not be horrified by the idea that the punishment of Judas, the betrayer, might be interrupted by some interval of solace? The reader is going to run into many things that will make any lover of truth laugh.

Among other things *vix credibilia*, three elements are particularly disturbing for this critic: the materiality of the *terra repromissionis sanctorum*, a far-too-earthly paradise; the ambiguous status of the bird-angels, and the *refrigerium* granted to Judas. The tone, however, is not too harsh and censorial all in all: *Nondum enim persuasum mihi est* is a kind way to express dissent; as the ending confirms, the commentator invites the readers to have a laugh when facing all those fantasies, but he never suggests that the story should not be read.

The author of the well-known satire against Brendan annotated within manuscript O<sup>5</sup> (the same English witness of the 'Navigatio' that we have already encountered, containing eight drawings) is much more ferocious; the text has already been published and is renowned,<sup>18</sup> therefore I will only make a brief reference to it. A 13<sup>th</sup>-century hand used a blank flyleaf at the beginning of the

<sup>17</sup> Unpublished text, in my own transcription.

<sup>18</sup> See Meyer, *Satire en vers rythmiques*; Plummer, *VITAE SANCTORUM HIBERNIAE*, vol. II, pp. 293–294; and Howlett, *A Verse Critique*, pp. 125–135.

volume to write a small poem of sixty verses, where the author of the legend is accused of having shamed the saint, by ascribing to him adventures that are only good for entertaining old maids and fooling idiots. The charges are the following: the irresponsibility of an abbot who abandons three thousand monks to wander across the sea; the unlikelihood of the fish Iasconius; the theological error concerning the fallen, yet not damned, spirits; the naivety of a paradise imagined as a common island. What is the sentence? *Ergo, fratres, has fabellas decet igni tradere / ut sic saltem sevos ignes valeas evadere* ("Therefore, brethren, we must throw this nonsense into the fire, to avoid at least hellfire"): to make sure that the readers avoid the flames of hell, that instead await those who believe in such falsehoods. (It is curious, en passant, how the image of Brendan throwing a book of *mirabilia* into the fire is the initial act of the 'Reise-Fassung', the German 'Voyage of St. Brendan'... Some sort of revenge of literary history against harsh critics).

O<sup>5</sup> is not the only manuscript where we can find reactions against the legend, funny drawings and outpourings of complaints for the bizarre contents of the text. Even O<sup>6</sup>, the aforementioned Rhenish codex with the rich and artistic set of images, bears a note of a later hand in the margin next to the *incipit* (f. 109r): *Ficta sunt omnia, non cohaerent* ("It's all fake, it doesn't make sense").

As a representative of the opposite faction, more lenient particularly towards the issue of Judas' treatment, we can mention the compiler of the collection of excerpts found in manuscript Vatican City, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, Vat. lat. 13395 (V<sup>3</sup>), an 11<sup>th</sup> century manuscript whose origin is unknown – perhaps German. This scribe built an anthology from different sources, including the chapter on Judas of the 'Navigatio', which he introduced thus (f. 83r):

Quid autem mirum est, si Christus dominus, cuius misericordie non est numerus, prescivit et predestinavit in gloriam filiorum Dei, qui ne ipsi quidem perditionis filio traditori scilicet suo misericordie manum subtraxit? Denique nonnulli emerite sanctitatis viri et corde credunt et ore vera confitentur, que de traditore Iuda in gestis beati patris Brendani in hunc modum leguntur.

What is there to wonder if Christ the Lord, Whose mercy has no limits, has known and foreseen everything for the glory of the sons of God – He, Who did not deny His mercy even to the son of reprobation, His own betrayer? As a matter of fact, there are many men of well-established sanctity who are convinced of and declare the truth of Judas' tale as it can be read in the deeds of St. Brendan, as follows.

Who are the *nonnulli emerite sanctitatis viri*, that this compiler seems inclined to trust? Probably, as the expression *ore confitentur* suggests, he is not hinting at written sources, but perhaps conversations which he himself had or overheard in person. This might actually be a testimony of spontaneous debates among brethren belonging to the same community, the trace of the sharing of impressions and doubts that the reading of such an unconventional text might well

generate. The anonymous author of the ‘Navigatio’, who grants the damned the highest number of resting days ever attested,<sup>19</sup> would have certainly liked to know that he contributed to the confirming of the generosity of Christ, at least for such a welcoming audience.

#### 2.4. Text's treatment in manuscripts

All these opposite reactions, sometimes attested within the same manuscripts, tell us how the reading of this work would affect the audience, and how its fruition was hardly passive and silent. Still, there is one more active reaction left to discuss, beyond the operations that were made around the text: how did the tradition behave in relation to the text itself, with regard to the basic operation of transcribing its Latin form? There are two ways of answering this question. With extreme freedom, considering language and style; with overall accuracy, considering the contents.

As regards the first field, the language of the ‘Navigatio’ – easy, close to the vernacular, full of hibernisms – has led many copyists to intervene with systematic tweaks, aimed at ‘improving’ the text and cleaning up its form. From the scribes’ point of view, these operations were certainly an improvement: irregular constructions were standardized, verbal tenses and verbal forms were corrected and purified from vernacular influences, some particles were added to smooth out the transition between one sentence and the next, the *ordo verborum* was adjusted to the classical norm, and so on. Sometimes this maquillage appears to be more discrete, sometimes more invasive, and sometimes entire sentences have been rewritten. Let us consider an example of a sentence which underwent this process. This is the text as it was restored in the critical edition, then as it appears in three different groups or families:

In tantum sibi erat taedium ut effudisset lacrimas provolutis genibus atque deprecasset Deum dicens [...] (NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI III, pp. 518–519)<sup>20</sup>

His concern was so great that he burst into tears, falling on his knees, and he besought God saying [...]

ε family: Ac de hoc tantum sibi erat taedium ut effunderet lacrimas provolutis genibus atque deprecaretur Deum dicens [...]

γ<sup>11</sup> group: Quae res tantum viro Dei taedium genuit, ut etiam lacrimas fundendo genibus provolutis Deum deprecaretur dicens [...]

19 See McNamara, *Navigatio Sancti Brendani*, pp. 172–182.

20 The sentence, belonging to ch. 11, describes Brendan’s distress in wondering what the tree covered with white birds means.

δ family: Tandem etiam tedio preoccupatus fiebat ita ut involutis genibus lacrimas effudisset atque Dominum deprecaretur dicens [...]

The ε family adjusts the incipit (*Ac de hoc tantum*) and changes the subjunctives to the regular imperfect form. A consistent and fairly moderate strategy. The γ<sup>11</sup> group modifies the passage more deeply, totally replacing the initial expression (*Quae res tantum viro Dei taedium genuit*) and transforming the coordination *effudisset atque deprecasset* into gerundive + subjunctive, once again correctly inflected in the imperfect form. The rewriting in the δ family is just as substantial: the initial sentence is once again altered, and the consecutive clause is slightly tweaked.

There are even more groups or single manuscripts that freely operate to elevate language and style, to different degrees. As a matter of fact, this attitude can be burdensome on the text and actually cause a proper transformation, but it does not affect its contents. The interventions on this level are less frequent, and mostly in the shape of additions of two different sorts: small amplifications to make the narration richer and more dynamic, usually limited to tiny and irrelevant details; actual interpolations, which contain relevant information. Many examples of the first kind occur in the group ε<sup>18</sup>, such as in Brendan's answer to the monks asking him which one of them will stay among the *virī fortes* (ch. 17): the simple *ait* in the original text is replaced by the more elaborate *digito designavit eum dicens* ("he pointed a finger at him saying", NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI III, p. 598 – this group of manuscripts originated in the 11<sup>th</sup> century in the area of Liège, and this explains the Gallicism *désigner quelqu'un / quelque chose du doigt*, "to point a finger at somebody/something"). Evidently, small additions and *divertissements* like this do not change the essence of the narration. In a group which we have already encountered, γ<sup>11</sup>, however, we also find one of the few meaningful additions that testify the will to adapt the story to a new context. The group is comprised of twelve manuscripts, mostly from the Anglo-Norman and Flemish area, and it originated no further back than the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In the section of the text where Brendan is choosing his 14 travelling companions (beginning of ch. 2), the subfamily contains this interpolation:

Igitur sanctus Brendanus, de omni congregatione sua electis binis fratribus septem [...] + inter quos fuit preclarissimus ac Deo dignus adolescens Macutus qui a Deo ab infantia sua est electus et usque ad finem vite permansit in Dei laudibus. Quod si quis noscere voluerit perlegens eius venerabilia gesta inveniet eius opera prima et novissima quae preclara habentur. His assumptis venerabilis pater Brendanus [...]

So, saint Brendan, after choosing 14 brethren by his community [...]

Among them was the illustrious and God-worthy young Macutus, who was chosen by God from childhood and persevered in God's praise until the end of his life. If anyone

wants to know all this reading his venerable deeds he will find his most illustrious first and last works. After taking them with himself, the venerable father Brendan [...]

In short, the interpolation specifies that among the chosen ones there is St. Machutus, whose deeds can be read elsewhere: that is, in one of the three 'Vitae Machutis', which actually link his biography to that of the Irish saint, telling that Machutus had been Brendan's disciple in Wales, at Llancarfan, and that he had accompanied him twice on a journey at sea, similar to the ones described in the legend of Brendan according to the 'Navigatio' and the 'Vitae Brendani'. The fusion between the two hagiographies can be traced back to the Early Middle Ages, and Machutus' cult was still very much alive in the Breton, Norman and Welsh area: the fact that this is the area of origin of almost all the manuscripts of this family is no coincidence.<sup>21</sup> One of these witnesses (Ru<sup>2</sup> = Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, 1393, a late 12<sup>th</sup> century copy from Jumièges) even goes as far as to attribute the authorship of the 'Navigatio' to Machutus himself, in the initial title: *incipit vita sancti brendani abbatis et confessoris edita a venerando discipulo eius Macuto* (NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI III, p. 700)!

This is the only case of manipulation of the text aimed at fitting it into a local hagiographical context, and more in general, the only attempt to reshape the text and update it in order to make it suitable for a different context; this is surprising. Nobody, for instance, does what many vernacular versions do, that is amplify the infernal and heavenly descriptions with richer and more sensational details in comparison to the plainness of the original. It seems like the Latin readers were satisfied with the amount of wonders that the text already contained.

There is only one more operation that is worth mentioning, and once again it has something to do with hagiography: the interpolation of a spurious ending in order to narrate what the 'Navigatio' does not tell, that is the pious death of the saint. In spite of the title that was almost unanimously reported by the manuscripts, the 'Navigatio' is not some *vita Brendani*: the story is centered on a single episode of the Irish abbot's life, that is the journey, and it ends with it, it does not describe what happens afterwards. However, this anomaly, this deviation from the usual hagiographic pattern, has annoyed more than one reader, leading to the redaction of five different endings, revolving around the same ideas and the same *topoi*: Brendan's merry return to his brethren at Clonfert; his recount of the *mirabilia* that he has witnessed; his peaceful demise. We find the more significant examples in three groups:  $\gamma^4$ ,  $\gamma^{11}$  and  $\epsilon^1$ .

The first one,  $\gamma^4$  (one of the highest sub-branches of the  $\gamma$  family), adds a slight allusion to Brendan's death: *ibique dies vite sue finivit in pace* ("there he ended

21 About Machutus' legend, see *Orlandi/Guglielmetti*, NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI II, pp. xciv–xcvi; *Mac Mathúna*, Contributions; *Id.*, The Structure and Transmission, pp. 216–217; *Picard*, Aquitaine and Ireland, pp. 182–187.

his days in peace", NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI III, p. 701); this means that most of the family reports a text that has been made more conventional, be it only through a small touch. This ending is developed autonomously by an offshoot of  $\gamma^4$  itself, the aforementioned 'Norman' group  $\gamma^{11}$ , and it comprises all the three themes – the return, the recounting, the saint's death:

Quem cum fratres vidissent glorificaverunt Deum pro recepto patrono. Cum quibus loquebatur mirabilia Dei que viderat et audierat. Postea dies vite sue finivit in pace regnante domino nostro Iesu Christo [...]. (NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI III, p. 701)

When the brethren saw him, they glorified God for getting their abbot back. He spoke to them about the wonders of God he had seen and heard. Then he ended his days in peace, reigning our Lord Jesus Christ [...].

The ending created by  $\epsilon^1$ , built around the same topics, is much longer and more elaborate:

Fratres autem illum gratulantissime susceperunt, glorificantes Deum qui tam amabilis illos noluit patris aspectibus deprivari, cuius absentia tam diu fuerunt orbat. Tunc beatus vir predictus caritati eorum congratulans narravit omnia que accidisse recordatus est in via et quanta ei Dominus dignatus est miraculorum ostendere portenta. Postremo etiam velocitatem obitus illius certa attestatione notavit secundum iuvenis predictum in terra repromissionis sanctorum. Quod etiam rei probavit eventus, quia cunctis post se bene dispositis parvo interiacente temporis intervallo sacramentis munitus divinis inter manus discipulorum gloriose migravit ad Dominum. (NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI III, p. 702)

The brethren welcomed him with great joy, glorifying God who had not wanted to deprive them of the sight of such a lovable father, whose absence they had suffered so long. Then the blessed man, rejoicing in their charity, recounted all that he remembered happening on the journey and how great wonders the Lord had deigned to show him. Finally, he also communicated with full certainty the approaching of his death according to the prediction of the young man in the Promised Land of the Saints. And the facts proved it, because after leaving all the dispositions, in a short space of time, he took the sacraments and migrated gloriously to the Lord surrounded by his disciples.

This means that about fifty manuscripts present the text in a form that somehow betrays its originality and its non-conventional nature; for many medieval readers, such a peculiar text actually ended with the usual hagiographical topos of the death of the protagonist, foreseen and accepted saintly and peacefully. The damage caused by this interpolation is even bigger, because the former editor, Carl Selmer, based his edition on a witness belonging to this family, thus publishing this ending as the final, authentic chapter (cf. NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI I, pp. 81–82). As Selmer's text has become the vulgate, the work has been read, interpreted and commented upon for the last fifty years on its misleading basis.

I would like to conclude with one observation concerning this aspect. The long effort to build an edition based on all the witnesses, with a critical apparatus providing an overview of all their variants, might seem like a waste of time, and it is certainly not the kind of philological research that is popular nowadays. On the other hand, however, this is the only way to provide the scholars who study the success of Brendan's legend with solid and useful data. We are all very much interested in knowing what the anonymous author wrote in Ireland in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, but we also want to know how the text actually circulated from then on, how it was read and how it changed through time and space – what was the text that was known and translated in 15<sup>th</sup> century Bavaria, or reshaped into a new story in 12<sup>th</sup> century England or 13<sup>th</sup> century Italy. We also want to know the signs of the 'life' of the text, using every manuscript wherein a reader has left some traces. I hope that with this brief overview I have been able to give an idea of the many stories that the manuscripts of the 'Navigatio' can tell.

## Appendix

A new fragment, a manuscript restored: Manuscripts Bischofszell, Historisches Museum, and Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Hist. 4° 155 (S<sup>1</sup>)

The conference in Flensburg was a very happy occasion for a discovery that allowed the filling of a small gap in the manuscript tradition of the 'Navigatio': thanks to Alessandro Scafi's communication, I was informed of the existence of a fragment of the text on the back of a cosmic map now preserved at the Historisches Museum in Bischofszell, in the Swiss canton of Thurgau (which earlier belonged to the collection of the Swiss art historian Albert Knoepfli). The sheet had already been mentioned in 2000, in a cartographic field, by Anna-Dorothee von den Brinken, but had escaped the attention of Brendan studies since that short section of the text was not the point of interest.<sup>22</sup>

On the front of the sheet (measuring 208 × 165 mm) there is a map of the cosmos that follows the archetype found in many manuscripts of the 'Etymologiae' by Isidore of Seville (c. 560–636), illustrating Book XIII: not the famous *mappa mundi* O-T, which corresponds to the contents of Book XIV, but the representation of the five climate zones. The version of the drawing in the Bischofszell fragment adds the four rivers of paradise to the usual elements.

22 The map is the subject of a short paper, cf. von den Brinken, *Das Weltbild*; see also Scafi, *Mapping Paradise*, pp. 168–169. I would also like to thank my colleague for having immediately made the reproduction of the paper available to me.

The reverse of the parchment shows the beginning of the 'Navigatio Brendani', in writing and with a decoration of the initial letter<sup>23</sup> that von den Brinken compares with examples of the southern German area of the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The scholar tried to motivate the juxtaposition between the text and the map by referring to the *terra repromissionis sanctorum* and its ideal location in the geography of the cosmos, but it is not really necessary to look for a link between the two sides of the sheet once its origin is recognized.

With full evidence, the fragment was extracted from a well-known witness of the 'Navigatio': Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Hist. 4° 155 (S<sup>1</sup>), from the Benedictine monastery of St. Nikolaus in Comburg (near Stuttgart), which now numbers 151 sheets of 235 × 175 mm. As was already clear thanks to the numbering of the folios before the mutilation, the codex has suffered two losses of sheets inside: ff. 1r–26v contain Honorius Augustodunensis' (c. 1080–1154) 'Imago mundi'; the former ff. 27–28 are missing; from the current f. 27r we find the 'Navigatio', acephalous, which ends at f. 42v mutilated by another sheet (45 in the previous foliation); the manuscript then continues with two writings by Hugh of St. Victor (c. 1096–1141), the 'Homiliae in Ecclesiasten' (ff. 43r–140v) and part of the 'Eruditiones didascalicae' (ff. 141r–151v, section VII 4–24). Because of the removal of the missing sheets, our text begins with § 1.14 (from *terra repromissionis sanctorum*) and ends at § 28.16 (with *Post multa vera curricula temporum declarabitur*).<sup>24</sup>

The coherence between manuscript S<sup>1</sup> and the fragment leaves no room for doubt: the text of the page ends with the words exactly before, *ad insulam quae dicitur*, the hands of both the copy and the marginalia are identical. The parchment trimmed to its current size no longer bears the sheet number, but we can identify it with the former f. 28 of the Stuttgart codex; at least one of the three sheets removed is thus found, and at the same time the map has a more convincing context. It was not there to illustrate the 'Navigatio' that follows it, but rather the 'Imago mundi' by Honorius, whose text ended, complete, in the middle of f. 26v. Evidently, the whole of the following sheet (the one still lost) and our fragment contained the figurative (or perhaps not only figurative) complements to the treatise, for example also the other typical *mappa mundi* with the continents; images that somebody subtracted. It is possible that something similar happened to the final sheet of the work, the former f. 45: at the end of the text just

23 The S, as tall as six writing lines, is adorned with white stylized phytomorphic motifs partly reworked in red.

24 For the description of the manuscript, see *Guglielmetti*, *NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI* III, p. 94; and *von Heyd*, *Die historischen Handschriften*, pp. 71–72. Throughout the text, starting from the first page, i. e. from the fragment of Bischofszell, a hand datable to the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century notes in the margin in Latin the characters and places gradually encountered; there are also notes in Middle High German.

a few lines are missing,<sup>25</sup> which must have occupied just a part of the recto of f. 45; perhaps the rest and/or the verso were used again for illustrated complements that attracted the same unfortunate attention.

The finding of the missing part of the text at the beginning of S<sup>1</sup> allows the critical apparatus to be completed with the relevant variants, which fully confirm the position assigned to it: it alone constitutes one of the two branches into which the  $\alpha$  family is divided. Also in this section of the text, it shares with the rest of  $\alpha$  some distinctive readings of the family, but does not share other readings typical of the manuscripts of the other branch,  $\alpha^1$ ; moreover, it reports a considerable amount of innovations of its own. We list here the variants with reference to the critical text:<sup>26</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sanctus Brendanus, filius Finlocha nepotis Alti, de genere Eogeni stagni Len regionis Mumenensium ortus fuit. Erat vir magnae abstinenciae et in virtutibus clarus, trium milium fere monachorum pater. <sup>2</sup>Cum esset in suo certamine in loco qui dicitur Saltus Virtutum Brendani, contigit ut quidam patrum ad illum quodam vespere venisset, nomine Barrindus nepos Neil. <sup>3</sup>Cumque interrogatus esset multis sermonibus a praedicto sancto patre, coepit lacrimare et se prostare in terram et diutius permanere in oratione. <sup>4</sup>Sanctus Brendanus erexit illum de terra et osculatus est eum dicens: 'Pater, cur tristitiam habemus in adventu tuo? Nonne ad consolationem nostram venisti?' <sup>5</sup>Magis laetitiam tu debes fratribus praeparare. Indica nobis verbum Dei atque refice animas nostras de diversis miraculis quae vidisti in oceano'.

<sup>6</sup>Tunc sanctus Barrindus expletis sermonibus Brendani coepit narrare de quadam insula dicens: <sup>7</sup>Filiolus meus Mernoc atque procurator pauperum Christi confugit a facie mea et voluit esse solitarius. Invenit insulam iuxta Montem Lapidis, nomine Insula Deliciosa. <sup>8</sup>Post multum vero tempus nuntiatum est mihi quod plures monachos secum habuisset et Deus multa mirabilia per illum ostendit. Itaque perrexi illuc ut visitassem filiolum meum.

<sup>9</sup>Cumque appropinquarem iter trium dierum, in occursum mihi festinavit cum fratribus suis: revelavit enim Dominus sibi adventum meum. <sup>10</sup>Navigantibus nobis in praedictam insulam occurrerunt obviam sicut examen apum ex diversis cellulis fratres. <sup>11</sup>Erat enim habitatio eorum sparsa; tamen unanimiter illorum conversatio in spe et fide et caritate, una refectio, ad opus Dei una ecclesia perficiendum. <sup>12</sup>Nihil aliud cibi ministratur nisi poma et nuces atque radices et cetera genera herbarum. Fratres post completorium in suas singulas cellulas usque ad gallorum cantus seu pulsum campanae †.

<sup>13</sup>Pernocantibus nobis et perambulantibus totam insulam, meus filiulus duxit me ad litus maris contra occidentem, ubi erat navicula, et dixit mihi: <sup>14</sup>Pater, ascende in navim et navigemus contra occidentalem plagam ad insulam quae dicitur //

25 If we calculate the currently printed text, eight lines, against the 28 ones that each page of the manuscript can host on average.

26 As published in *Guglielmetti*, *NAVIGATIO SANCTI BRENDANI III*, pp. 457–464.

*Title:* Incipit vita sancti Brandani abbatis

1. brandanus (*et sic semper*) ♦ filius *om.* ♦ Finloche ♦ Althi (=  $\alpha$ ) ♦ Staguilen ♦ Mumenensium
2. virtutum] aperuit virtutem ♦ quodam] quadam ♦ Barindus ♦ nepos Neil *om.*
3. lacrimari ♦ et se prostrare] prostratus ♦ oratione] sed *add.*
4. eum est
5. quas
6. barindus ♦ expletis] his *add.*
7. mernoch ♦ cum fugit ♦ esse solitarius] solitarius esse (se esse solitarium  $\alpha^1$ ) ♦ lapiflis ♦ insulam deliciosam (=  $\alpha$ )
8. temporis haberet per eum mirabilia ♦ ostenderet ♦ ut visitassem] visitare ♦ filiolum meum] eum
10. occurrerunt] nobis *add.* ♦ apium
11. perficiendum *om.* ( $S^1$  does not agree with the substitution of *ad opus Dei* in an ecclesia perficiendum by *opus Dei* in an ecclesia perficientes of  $\alpha^1$ )
12. ministrabatur: eis *add.* ♦ atque] et ♦ †] *nihil habet* (=  $\alpha$ )
13. insulam] et *add.* ♦ filiulus meus
14. navem

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