

The Manuscript Circulation of Burchard's 'Descriptio Terre Sancte' and Its Contexts

Abstract In this paper, the authors analyse the manuscript transmission and circulation of Burchard's 'Descriptio Terre Sancte'. The first sections are dedicated to an overview of the geographical distribution of the text's manuscripts, showing how the transmission was concentrated in several key areas. Thereafter, the paper analyses the contexts within which the seven manuscripts of the **a** and **b** families were transmitted. Furthermore, the paper shows how Burchard's text spread across Europe in different phases, with each phase connected with the movement of manuscripts in certain directions. Based on these observations, it establishes the historical context of the 'Descriptio's' textual development as well as its author's own fate and thus explores Burchard's late-career biography and discusses his connection to the cities of Magdeburg and Erfurt. As a result, the paper concludes with the hypothesis that Burchard settled in the Dominican house at Erfurt after concluding his travels and from this point his text was transmitted in two main versions (a shorter and longer version) throughout Europe.

Zusammenfassung In diesem Beitrag wird die handschriftliche Überlieferung und Verbreitung von Burchards 'Descriptio Terre Sancte' analysiert. Die ersten Abschnitte bieten einen Überblick über die geografische Verbreitung der Handschriften und zeigen, dass sich die Überlieferung auf mehrere Schlüsselregionen konzentrierte. Anschließend erfolgt eine Untersuchung der Kontexte, in denen die sieben Handschriften der **a**- und **b**-Familien überliefert wurden. Darüber hinaus lässt sich erkennen, wie sich Burchards Text in verschiedenen Phasen in Europa

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verbreitete, wobei jede Phase mit einer Bewegung der Handschriften in bestimmte Richtungen verbunden war. Ausgehend von diesen Beobachtungen wird der Versuch unternommen, den historischen Kontext der Textentwicklung der ‚Descriptio‘ sowie den weiteren Lebensweg des Autors zu rekonstruieren und Burchards Verbindung zu den Städten Magdeburg und Erfurt herauszuarbeiten. Als Ergebnis lässt sich festhalten, dass Burchard nach Abschluss seiner Reisen am dominikanischen Konvent in Erfurt tätig wurde und sein Text von dort aus in zwei Hauptfassungen (einer kürzeren und einer längeren) europaweit verbreitet wurde.

1 Introduction

The ‘Descriptio Terre Sancte’ is one of the most important sources for the geography, history, and topography of the Holy Land in the late Crusader period.¹ Not only does it provide a detailed and reliable description of the Holy Land and its neighbouring regions, but it also bears witness to the movements and cultural interests of its author Burchard of Mount Zion, an important clerical member of Crusader society, who died after 1285. This Dominican of high social standing travelled the Holy Land not just as a foreign pilgrim; he lived there for more than ten years as part of the Dominican province *Outremer*. He travelled frequently from Acre, capital of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, as a diplomatic envoy through the Mediterranean and thus he wrote his description of the Holy Land not as a stranger, but as a well-informed insider.²

Against this background, it is unfortunate that our knowledge of Burchard’s whereabouts stops quite abruptly in 1285. In that year, after extensive travels across the Mediterranean, which included Italy, he was welcomed by the King of Jerusalem

1 Research for this article has been funded by the Israel Science Foundation (grant no. 1443/17).

2 A biographical overview is given in Denys PRINGLE, *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land, 1187–1291* (Crusader Texts in Translation xxiii), Farnham, Burlington 2012, pp. 46–51. Whereas most manuscripts only provide limited information about Burchard’s life and the reasons for his travels, two manuscripts provide more detailed biographical background as well as new information about Burchard’s further travels outside the Holy Land, cf. Jonathan RUBIN, Burchard of Mount Zion’s *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae*: A Newly Discovered Extended Version, in: *Crusades* 13 (2014), pp. 173–190 and Jonathan RUBIN, A Missing Link in European Travel Literature: Burchard of Mount Zion’s Description of Egypt, in: *Mediterranea* 3 (2018), pp. 55–90, as well as Ekkehart ROTTER, Windrose statt Landkarte, in: *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 69 (2013), pp. 45–106, here pp. 70 and 83. Recently, a biographical overview has also been published as part of the introduction to the edition: Burchard of Mount Zion, *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae*, ed. and trans. by John R. BARTLETT, Oxford 2019.

in Cyprus, where he spent some time at a Dominican house there.³ These further travels are only narrated in a recently discovered continuation of the 'Descriptio' in the MS London, British Library, Add. 18929.⁴ Whether Burchard returned to Europe afterwards or went back to Acre we do not know, as this portion of his travel account ends with his stay in Cyprus. One way of investigating this post-1285 lacuna is by studying the extensive manuscript tradition of Burchard's text. Not only can these manuscripts be analysed as unique witnesses of the historical context in which they were produced, but they also illustrate important patterns of transmission that may help to inform us about Burchard's whereabouts and activities after 1285.

In the following, these manuscript patterns shall be analysed based on an extensive manuscript list of the 'Descriptio's' so-called 'long version', assembled from catalogues and literature by Eva FERRO, Jonathan RUBIN and Michael SCHONHARDT.⁵ In addition, a corpus of seven manuscripts of the so-called **a** and **b** families will be analysed in more detail.⁶ By doing so, this paper provides both an overview of the geographical distribution of the text (section 2) as well as a study of contexts of transmission of the seven manuscripts of the **a** and **b** families (section 3). Overall, we will show that Burchard's text spread across Europe in various different phases, with each phase being connected with the movement of manuscripts in certain directions. Consequently, we aim to explore Burchard's late-career biography and discuss his connection to Magdeburg and Erfurt (section 4).

2 The Geographical Distribution of Burchard's 'Descriptio'

While there have been numerous attempts over the years to produce an exhaustive list of the manuscripts of Burchard's 'Descriptio', each attempt has encountered or created its own set of problems.⁷ This means that until recently a reliable list of this

3 RUBIN, Burchard of Mount Sion's *Descriptio* (note 2), p. 190.

4 On this manuscript and its text see RUBIN, Burchard of Mount Sion's *Descriptio* (note 2), p. 175.

5 An abbreviated printed version can be found in Jonathan RUBIN, The Manuscript Tradition of Burchard of Mount Sion's *Descriptio Terre Sancte*, in: *The Journal of Medieval Latin* 30 (2020), pp. 257–286. The version of this list used for this paper can be accessed online at <https://daks.uni-kassel.de/handle/123456789/40>. Here, the information on manuscripts of the long version used in this paper are listed as well as references to catalogues and literature consulted. In addition to this literature, all manuscripts have been analysed using digital reproductions.

6 The textual tradition of Burchard's long version has been divided on philological grounds by RUBIN (note 5) into five families **a** to **e**. Whereas families **c**, **d** and **e** represent later stages of the text's development, families **a** and **b** have to be considered as near to the author. For further discussion on these families see also RUBIN in this volume.

7 The first such attempt was Reinhold RÖHRICHT, who identified 106 manuscripts, though many either do not contain anything of Burchard's text, only contain excerpts, or are no longer extant. See Reinhold RÖHRICHT, *Bibliotheca geographica Palaestinae. Chronologisches Verzeichnis der auf die Geographie des Heiligen Landes bezüglichen Literatur von 333 bis 1878 und Versuch einer Cartographie*, Berlin 1890, pp. 56–60. However, a closer look at this list shows that

kind did not exist and any proper study of the transmission of the ‘Descriptio’ was nearly impossible. To rectify this, we compiled an up-to-date list of all known manuscripts of the long version.⁸ This process revealed two shortcomings. Firstly, Burchard’s text is commonly confused with other texts, such as Jacques de Vitry’s ‘Historia Hierosolymitana’ or the travel account by Burchard of Strasbourg. Secondly, the geographic and temporal contexts of the various catalogues have resulted in a large

many of these manuscripts either do not include Burchard’s text at all or provide merely later rewritings or excerpts. For instance, Burchard’s ‘Descriptio’ is not included in London, British Library, Cotton Galba A VII; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ashburnham 407; Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Cod. theol. 4° 141; Milan, Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, Morbio 290; Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, H.I.12; Salzburg, Stiftsbibliothek St. Peter, XXXIV 7 (shelfmark not in use); Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 554; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 5265; or St Petersburg, Oeffentliche Bibliothek, 6, 4° (old shelfmark, manuscript unknown to library).

A further attempt was made by Thomas KAEPELLI in the third volume of his ‘Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii’. KAEPELLI distinguished between a shorter ‘a’ version of the text and a longer ‘b’ text of which he identified 41 manuscripts. But KAEPELLI’s work was heavily reliant on RÖHRICHT and has thus fallen foul of unreliable codicological information. See Thomas KAEPELLI, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi*, 4 vol., Rome 1970–1993. Burchard is mentioned in vol. 3, pp. 257–260. In 2013, Ekkehard ROTTER produced a useful list of the short versions of the text (32 in total), but this list only noted 28 long-version manuscripts, including the hitherto neglected witness Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, Ms. I, XII, 5. See ROTTER (note 2). Most recently, BARTLETT (note 2) produced a list of 60 manuscripts based mainly on the work of RÖHRICHT, KAEPELLI and the LAURENT edition. See Burchard of Mount Sion, *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae*, in: *Peregrinatores medii aevi quatuor*, ed. by Johann C.M. LAURENT, Leipzig 1864, pp. 3–18. Unfortunately, BARTLETT’s list of manuscripts is incomplete and not always reliable. He missed several known manuscripts, e.g. Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, Ms. I, XII, 5 or Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, A I 28 (which is actually already included in KAEPELLI’s list). Other manuscripts were wrongly included, such as Chicago, University of Chicago Library, MS 70, which seems to be a reworked and abbreviated version of the text. Oviedo, Biblioteca Capitular de la Catedral de Oviedo, Ms. 18 and Salamanca, Biblioteca Universitaria de Salamanca, Ms. 2761 (listed without shelf numbers) contain a compilation based on Burchard as well as Sanudo’s ‘Liber secretorum fidelium crucis’, but not the actual text of the longer version. Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 354 Helmst. which also transmits a compilation rather than the ‘Descriptio’. Two manuscripts (Prague, Národní knihovna, III. H. 15 and Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 4852) transmit the shorter version. Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, H.I.12 provides completely different texts, according to the library. Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, D.IV.21, however, does contain the longer version but is not included in the list. † Gdańsk, Polska Akademia Nauk Biblioteka Gdańska, Mar. F. 152, has been lost since World War II, but Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Nouv. acq. lat. 781, indicated as missing, still exists. Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 9177 should be Brussels BRB 9176–9177; Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 739 does not seem to exist, but it might be a confusion with Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 733–741 which includes the longer version.

- 8 Cf. note 5 above. First, we reviewed existing lists and checked the listed manuscripts either by researching library catalogues or directly with the holding library if they contained the text. At the same time, we updated the codicological information according to the present state of research, and found new witnesses by searching in established databases as well as in indices of library catalogues, either for the author, the title of the ‘Descriptio’ or the known incipit of the longer versions. Also, we checked editions of similar texts for manuscripts that might contain Burchard’s ‘Descriptio’. In addition, we studied all manuscripts by means of digital reproductions.

amount of variation as far as Burchard's name is concerned,⁹ and a number of different incipits – mainly present in early families of the text – are used to indicate the 'Descriptio'.¹⁰ Despite these hurdles, we updated the list of known manuscripts of the long version of Burchard's 'Descriptio', which currently comprises 64 known witnesses, as well as five excerpts of different length, dating from around 1300 up to the 16th century.¹¹

2.1 Statistical Analysis of the Manuscript Tradition

The number of long-version manuscripts (64) provides a good starting point for a quantitative exploration of the manuscript's transmission, because it helps to place Burchard's 'Descriptio' contextually within the transmission of similar texts. If we add the 32 manuscripts of the short version as listed in ROTTER, we come to an overall transmission of the text in 96 manuscripts. Compared to 150 manuscripts of the history of Jacques de Vitry,¹² 82 Latin manuscripts of Marco Polo's travel account,¹³

9 Although Burchard is currently identified as Burchard of Mount Sion, several different names have been used in older literature and catalogues, such as Burchard of Barby, Burchard de Saxonia, as well as Brocardo in Romance languages.

10 Most witnesses of the long version give the incipit *Cum in veteribus historiis legamus* (sometimes *legimus*). However, two manuscripts of the important *a* family start with the incipit *Quia vidi quosdam devocione* (Bern, Burgerbibliothek, Cod. 46 and Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 41 Weiss.). Other manuscripts are missing the first part of the text, and hence also possess different incipits. It is therefore quite possible that manuscripts of the *a* family have not been identified by older catalogues which were relying on LAURENT's edition.

11 Four of these manuscripts were to our knowledge previously not known to include Burchard, namely Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lat. hist. e. 1; Salzburg, Stiftsbibliothek St. Peter, b III 31; Salzburg, Stiftsbibliothek St. Peter, b X 30; and Warsaw, Biblioteka Narodowa, 8052. Additionally, one manuscript that was thought to be lost, namely Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. lat. oct. 293 (which used to be the manuscript Hildesheim, Gymnasialbibliothek, MS 17), has been rediscovered. The earliest manuscripts that can be dated are Lilienfeld, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 145 (between 1319 and 1323) and Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conv. Sopp. F.IV.733 (which is older than 1322). One Oxford manuscript is dated by its online description to the late 13th century (https://medieval.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/catalog/manuscript_6433). The latest premodern manuscript that can be clearly dated is Nancy, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 1082, which can be dated precisely to 1514 according to its colophon. Also, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 9530 can be dated on palaeographical grounds to the 16th century. One manuscript from Siena was even written in the 18th century, but excluded in this analysis.

12 Jacques de Vitry, *The Historia Occidentalis: A Critical Edition*, ed. by John Frederick HINNEBUSCH (Spicilegium Friburgense 17), Fribourg 1972, p. 33.

13 Christine GADRAT-OUERFELLI, *La diffusion et la circulation manuscrite d'un texte médiéval, l'exemple du Devisement du monde de Marco Polo*, in: Élisabeth MALAMUT and Mohamed OUERFELLI (eds.), *Les échanges en Méditerranée médiévale. Marqueurs, réseaux, circulations, contacts*, Aix-en-Provence 2012, pp. 273–288, here p. 276.

11 manuscripts of Thietmar's pilgrim's account,¹⁴ and eight manuscripts of Burchard of Strasbourg's text,¹⁵ the 'Descriptio's' long version seems to have been well received among contemporaries.¹⁶ A chronological analysis of these witnesses (cf. table and diagram below) suggests that the text became available to European scribes and readers quite early,¹⁷ and continued to enjoy a high level of popularity throughout the Middle Ages. In the 14th century the text had already been widely copied and it continued to be valued during the 15th century, as well as during the course of the early modern period, when several printed editions of Burchard's 'Descriptio' made the copying of manuscripts superfluous.¹⁸ Nevertheless, a few manuscripts were still copied in the 16th century.¹⁹

Tab. 1 | The table shows the dissemination of manuscripts across time, indicating manuscripts close to the turn of a century as 'ex/in'.

Century	13ex/ 14in	14	14ex/ 15in	15	15ex/ 16in	16
MS	5	21	9	25	1	3

While measuring the popularity of Burchard's text through analysis of the chronological distribution of manuscript production dates (Fig. 1) is quite straightforward, assessing its geographic distribution proves more difficult, as in many cases the manuscripts' original area of provenance cannot be established.

Nevertheless, a total of 44 manuscripts can be localized with a reasonable degree of certainty. None of these originated in France, though Burchard's text was later translated into Old French around the middle of the 15th century.²⁰ Only seven of

14 Philip BOOTH, *Thietmar. Person, Place and Text in Thirteenth-Century Holy Land Pilgrimage*. Ph.D. Diss. University of Lancaster, 2017, p. 43.

15 Christiane M. THOMSEN, *Burchards Bericht über den Orient. Reiseerfahrungen eines staufischen Gesandten im Reich Saladins 1175/1176 (Abhandlungen und Beiträge zur historischen Komparatistik 29)*, Berlin, Boston 2018, p. 478.

16 Isidore's 'Etymologies', for instance, can be considered an ubiquitous text: they were transmitted in over 1,000 known manuscripts, cf. José María FERNÁNDEZ CATÓN, *Las Etimologías en la tradición manuscrita medieval estudiada por el Prof. Dr. Anspach*, in: *Archivos leoneses* 19 (1965), pp. 121–384.

17 As mentioned in note 11, the earliest manuscripts that are precisely datable date back to before 1322 and 1323; one manuscript has been dated to the end of the 13th century.

18 RÖHRICHT lists 22 printed editions before the 19th century, 13 of them produced in the 15th and 16th centuries, cf. RÖHRICHT (note 8), pp. 58–59.

19 Nancy, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 1082 (a. 1514) and Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 9530.

20 Only one manuscript survives from Alsace. The French translation was written by Jean Miélot on order of Philip the Good on 1455, cf. Georg DOUTREPONT, *La littérature française à la cour des ducs de Bourgogne. Philippe le Hardi, Jean sans Peur, Philippe le Bon, Charles le téméraire (Bibliothèque du XVe siècle 8)*, Paris 1909, pp. 260–262. We were able to identify two manuscripts

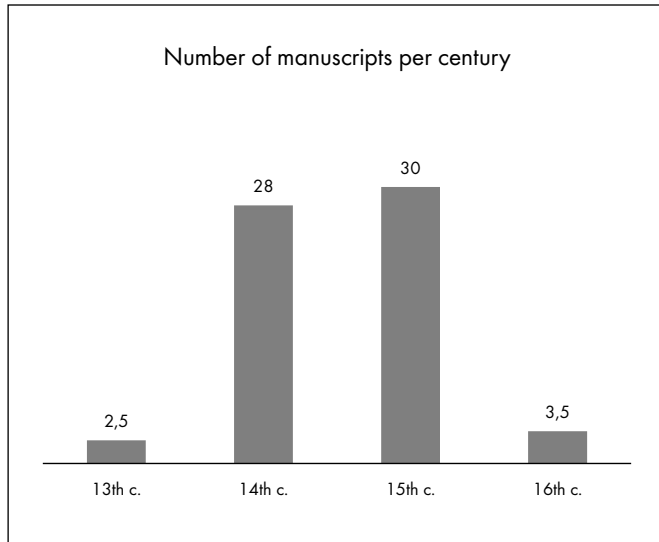


Fig. 1 | The diagram groups manuscripts strictly by centuries, counting manuscripts close to the turn of a century as 0.5 for each neighboring century (Michael SCHONHARDT).

the manuscripts can be traced to more central regions of the Empire (Saxony and Thuringia) with the vast majority (more than 50 %) coming from the Alpine regions which we now associate with the modern-day Republic of Austria and the northern Italian peninsula. More generally, as is clear from the map (see Fig. 2), the distribution of manuscripts is concentrated in the eastern and southern regions of Central Europe.

Moreover, these witnesses, when grouped according to geographic distribution, as well as by the various sub-archetypes which are assumed to have existed as part of the transmission of the text, allow us to draw interesting conclusions about the text's development and popularity. These sub-archetypes contribute to the stemma (see Fig. 3) as established by Jonathan RUBIN and printed here again for the convenience of the reader.²¹

The number of manuscripts transmitted in the different families varies. Some families are smaller than others, with groups *a* (4) and *b* (3) each comprising less than five manuscripts. Others are larger, with families *c* (19), *d* (13), and *e* (25) each comprising more than ten. The families can be separated primarily based on a series of common errors within each group, but also based on the different ending to the text which is transmitted in each group. In its most complete form (Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, Ms. I XII 5, belonging to the *a* family, and London, British Library, Add. 18929,

that transmit the French translation of Burchard's long version: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Français 9087 and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Français 5593.

21 See also RUBIN (note 5) and RUBIN in this volume.

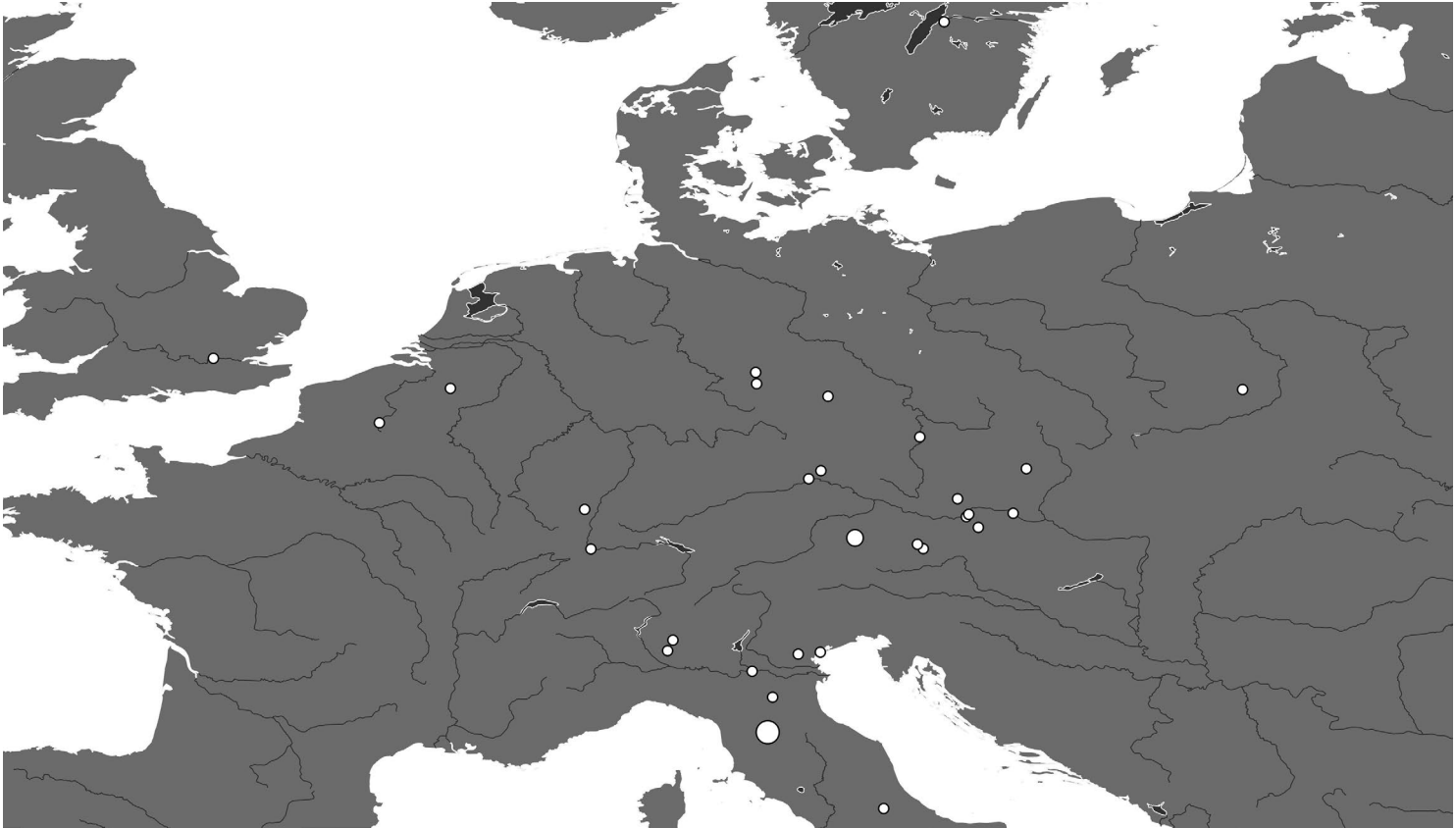


Fig. 2 | The distribution of the manuscripts of Burchard's 'Descriptio Terre Sancte' (Michael SCHONHARDT).

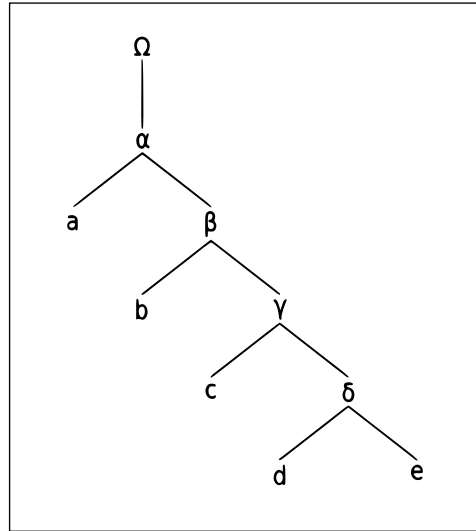


Fig. 3 | Stemma of the long version of Burchard's 'Descriptio Terre Sancte' (Jonathan RUBIN).

belonging to the **b** family), Burchard's text comprises not only the core 'Descriptio' itself, but also a detailed description of Egypt, as well as a travel account reporting Burchard's journey through the Mediterranean via Italy sometime in 1284. Whereas this complete text can be found in manuscripts from families **a** and **b**, the ending of the text is different in families **c**, **d**, and **e**. In all three of these families, the Mediterranean travelogue is entirely absent, and the Egypt section appears in abbreviated form. In the **e** manuscripts, the truncated Egypt section appears in its fullest form, while the **c** and **d** families present their own individual abbreviated Egypt sections, each of which are shorter than those found in **a**, **b**, or **e**. The *explicit* of each of these groups (**c**, **d**, and **e**) also allows us to distinguish them from each other. The **e** family manuscripts each end with the phrase *Sarraceni bona fide*.²² The **d** family manuscripts instead end with the phrase *videre et audire devotissimum est*, with the copyists for this family often adding a note to indicate that nothing further should be copied, thus showing disinterest in anything beyond the scope of the Holy Land.²³ The **c** family manuscripts all end quite abruptly with the phrase *lapidatus est Jeremias*. Consequently, copyists within this family often added something like *non plus inveni*, "I could not find anything else" or similar to show that they themselves were surprised to not

²² This section is not present in LAURENT (note 7).

²³ For instance, in Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 9176–9177; Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, O.III.34; Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conv. Sopp. C.VIII.2861; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 76.56; Warsaw, Biblioteka Narodowa, 8052; Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conv. Sopp. F.IV.733; London, British Library, Harley 3995; Oxford, Magdalen College, MS 43; †Gdańsk, Polska Akademia Nauk Biblioteka Gdańska, Mar. F. 152; Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, D.IV.21.

find more information following this point.²⁴ The groups **c** and **d** thus differ in that the Egypt section in group **d** seems to have been truncated on purpose, for lack of interest in anything beyond the Holy Land, whereas group **c** seems to have suffered an accidental loss in its transmission history.

Taking this into consideration and given the fact that groups **c** and **d** must derive from sub-archetypes that originally included a fuller version of the Egypt section as found in group **e**, it is surprising that not a single witness of the 32 manuscripts of these families (50 % of the total transmission) shares the same *Sarraceni bona fide* ending that is only present in group **e**. This would suggest that the manuscripts of both groups were copied from an incomplete or fragmentary copy of their sub-archetype or that something else obstructed the more complete copying. At first glance, this pattern of textual transmission seems problematic, given that, as attested by the wide circulation of the **e** group (the biggest manuscript family), medieval readers were highly interested in the Egypt section preserved in this version of the text. It seems surprising that copyists did not take the time to transcribe the Egypt section in full. There may, however, be a simple explanation: if sub-archetypes γ and δ had been available to scribes only for a very short time, this may have led to the replication of abbreviated and incomplete copies of the text. To understand how this could happen, it is useful to look at the geographical distribution of the different manuscript groups. As mentioned above, certain clusters of transmission can be identified. Generally, most of the manuscripts were produced in the areas of modern-day Austria and the northern part of the Italian peninsula and remained there. But if the families of the manuscripts are taken into account, the picture becomes more differentiated.

2.2 The Textual Development of the 'Descriptio'

The map (Fig. 4) shows the geographical distribution across the families. Families **a** and **b**, the closest ones to the archetype, are clustered in Saxony and Thuringia,²⁵ which makes sense considering Burchard's presumed biography. However, if we take a look at groups **c**, **d**, and **e**, we get quite a different picture. None of the manuscripts from these groups can be found in this region and only few in the rest of the Empire as a whole. Instead, each of these families has a distinctive centre of transmission of its own. Manuscripts of family **c** are clustered in Austria, whereas witnesses of family **d** are mostly present in Italy. Family **e** can be found both in Italy as well as in

²⁴ For instance, in Hamburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Geogr. 59; Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, A I 28; Klagenfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, Pap.-Hs. 152; Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 3341; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 3759; Zwettl, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 315; Lilienfeld, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 145.

²⁵ In the following, we use the present-day meaning of Saxony and Thuringia, if not indicated otherwise.

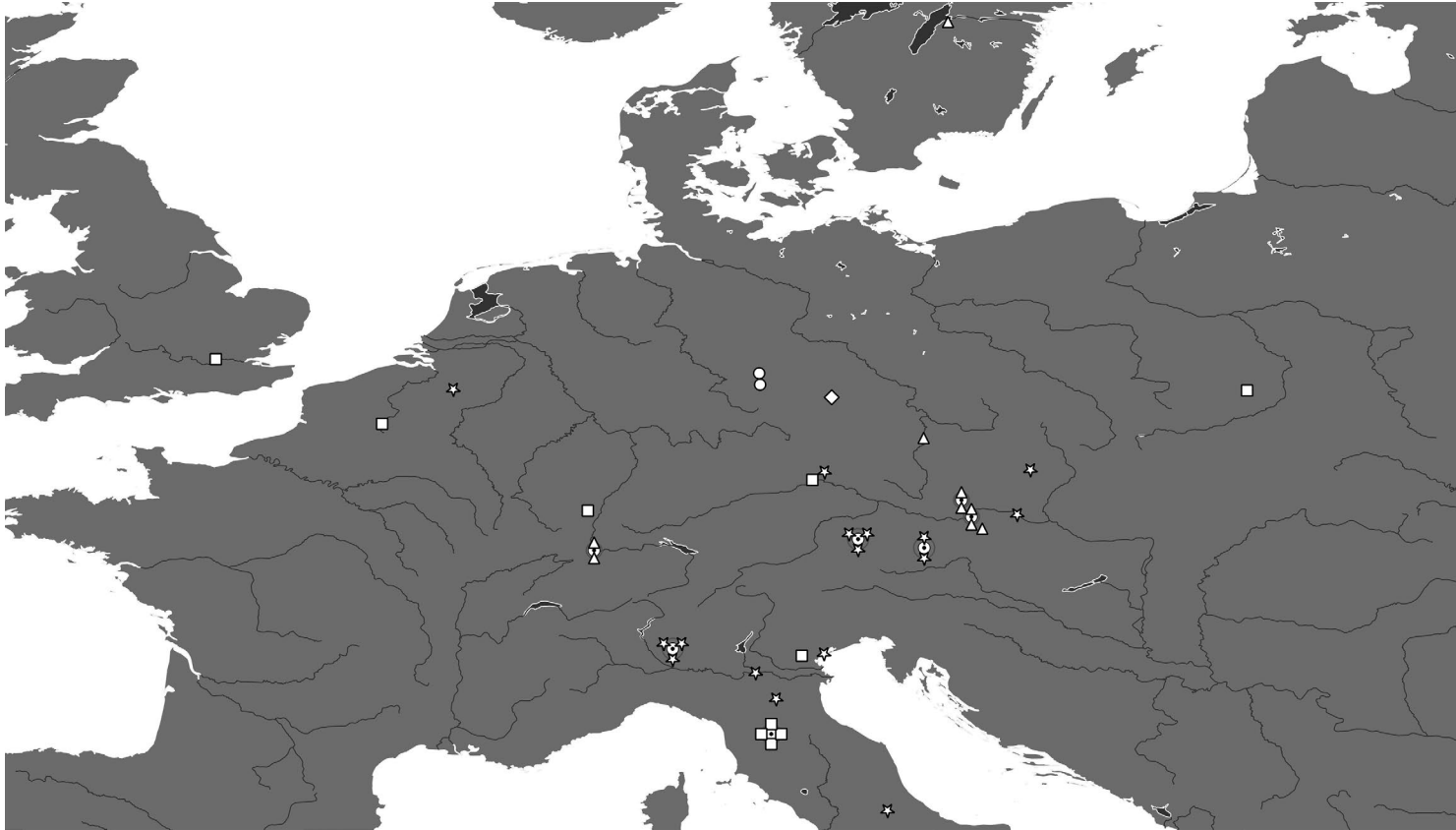


Fig. 4 | The geographical distribution of Burchard's 'Descriptio Terrae Sanctae' across the families (diamond: family **a**, circle: family **b**, triangle: family **c**, square: family **d**, star: family **e**) (Michael SCHONHARDT).

Austria, although all the *e* witnesses from Austria, with the exception of one,²⁶ are dated to the 15th century and not before, suggesting that the text of this group originated in Italy and spread to Austria later on. This chrono-spatial distribution must have happened very quickly, because groups *c*, *d*, and *e* include some of the earliest manuscripts, dating back to the beginning of the 14th century. By the 1320s, roughly speaking, all three groups could already be found in this Alpine region, suggesting that all sub-archetypes were in existence by this early period.

As a more precise location can be attributed to the manuscripts of both groups *a* and *b*, namely Saxony and Thuringia, and since groups *a* and *b* represent textual families closer to the archetype, it is likely that the early development of the text also took place in this region. Given what we know of Burchard's biography, this suggests that Burchard indeed returned to Europe before or in the context of the fall of Acre in 1291. Jonathan RUBIN has shown that the earliest sub-archetypes (α and β) were most likely the product of scribes working from a manuscript glossed by Burchard himself.²⁷ This suggests that a working copy of the text was available to them and that the author was probably still active in this region at the end of the 13th century.

By the first decade of the 14th century, the 'Descriptio' again underwent distinctive changes, leading to the emergence of new sub-archetypes (γ and δ) and of the manuscript families *c*, *d*, and *e* based on these sub-archetypes. These families must have developed around 1300, because they were already widely transmitted in Europe between 1300 and 1325 (cf. Fig. 4). This textual development must have taken place quickly and within a very limited number of manuscripts, as otherwise there would be a greater diversity within the manuscript groups especially in the ending of the 'Descriptio'. Furthermore, all extant manuscripts which depend on sub-archetypes γ (group *c*) and δ (group *d*) appear to stop right before or in the middle of the Egypt section, while the sub-archetypes themselves must have included the full section on Egypt, which was then transmitted into family *e*. One plausible explanation for this could be that the manuscripts transmitting these sub-archetypes were only available to scribes for a short time, meaning that they could not be copied completely. In any case, the 'Descriptio's' early witnesses must have travelled quickly and at the same time spread widely. According to the manuscript evidence, they moved from Saxony and Thuringia into the Alpine regions within a few decades or even years.

This leads to the question of what could explain this pattern of textual development and manuscript transmission. To answer that, it is necessary to consider the earliest

26 There is one exception, namely an early manuscript from Admont, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lat. hist. e. 1. However, in the beginning of the 14th century, many manuscripts were bought by Abbot Engelbert of Admont in Italy, thus making it quite probable that the manuscript was purchased there, see Andrea RZIHACEK-BEDO, *Medizinische Wissenschaftspflege im Benediktinerkloster Admont bis 1500* (Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung Ergänzungsband 46), Vienna 2005, p. 43. This seems to be further confirmed by the characteristics of the scribe's hand, but cannot be said for certain without further study.

27 RUBIN in this volume, p. 18–21.

manuscripts of the 'Descriptio', namely Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 76.56 (first quarter of the 14th century), which has been recently studied in more detail by Ingrid BAUMGÄRTNER and Eva FERRO.²⁸ This manuscript consists of three codicological units written by three different scribes, with Burchard's text present in the second unit (88r–101v). Written by a scribe in the early 14th century, it contains excerpts from Eusebius, an anonymous text about geographical parts and ages of the world, excerpts from Rufinus and Jerome, and finally Burchard's 'Descriptio'. Importantly, this part of the codex has been shown to be more than just a distinct codicological unit and should be seen instead as an independent booklet, a *libellus*, comprising two small quires of three bifolia folded in the middle. The second quire, which comprises the 'Descriptio', also possesses one additional bifolium placed in the middle of the quire, containing a full-page map of the Holy Land. Signs of usage on this parchment – now in the middle of the quire – indicate that initially this map was used independently, as a folded bifolium. Later on, Burchard's 'Descriptio' was added, on a single quire, and the bifolium was bound in the middle of this quire. The text of the 'Descriptio' written on this new quire was also continued, very precisely, in the empty space around the map, on the outer layer of the bifolium. This means that the codicological unit, as currently transmitted, is not representative of the original state of the codex. Instead, the *libellus* containing Burchard's 'Descriptio', with the older map in its middle, was designed to be portable, allowing its user to take it with them on their travels. Such *libelli* were produced much more cheaply and quickly than a codex, and they were perfect for such a purpose. Given the original design of a *libellus*, it is likely that this copy of Burchard initially belonged to a pilgrim, who wanted to or did travel to the Holy Land, with the *libellus* being added to the present codex at a later date.

Such a scenario perhaps provides one possible explanation for the peculiar combination of textual development and manuscript transmission presented above, with the text spreading extremely quickly and widely in a very limited number of now-lost manuscripts. It can easily be imagined that travellers or pilgrims preparing for the journey to the Holy Land copied one of the earlier archetypes in Saxony and Thuringia into some form of portable booklet.²⁹ Such *libelli* may then have been carried further south, following the pilgrim routes through Austria to Italy, where they hoped to board a ship to the Holy Land, maybe at Venice. On their journey, they may have stopped in monasteries and other religious institutions, where they could have temporarily shared their *libellus* for copying. However, when the traveller or pilgrim left, the booklet would

28 Ingrid BAUMGÄRTNER and Eva FERRO, The Holy Land Geography as Emotional Experience: Burchard of Mount Sion's Text and the Movable Map, in: Christoph MAUNTEL (ed.), *Geography and Religious Knowledge in the Medieval World (Das Mittelalter. Perspektiven mediävistischer Forschung 14)*, Berlin, Boston 2021, pp. 247–272.

29 Although pilgrimage to the Holy Land obviously became much more difficult after 1291, it was possible and undertaken by people such as William of Boldensele, a Dominican from Minden (not too far from Magdeburg), in 1334, cf. Colin MORRIS, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West: From the Beginning to 1600*, Oxford 2005, pp. 301–302.

have no longer been available. Furthermore, booklets such as these could very easily get lost or simply destroyed and thus were less likely to survive than larger, more static book copies, and since a *libellus* is much more fragile than a codex it would have been more susceptible to the loss or damage of pages. This in turn might help to explain why manuscript groups *c* and *d* exclusively present fragmented versions of the text, despite the certain presence of the full text in their corresponding sub-archetypes. The emergence of groups *c* and *d* can, therefore, be tentatively linked to pilgrims to the Holy Land copying the text according to their particular needs and circumstances. This suggested scenario sheds light on how texts, or parts of those texts, on pilgrimage were transported and copied during the travels of their owners. Further research in this area beyond the scope of this present chapter, on the provenance and distribution of manuscripts of pilgrimage texts, is necessary to evaluate the processes of transmission during the journey or in certain centres or libraries.³⁰

3 The Contexts of Transmission

Although establishing the broader transmission of the manuscripts of the ‘Descriptio’ leads to several insights into the historical background of its textual development, the information presented thus far does not bring us any closer to understanding Burchard’s own fate post-1285 (the year his travel account ends). However, we can address this question by narrowing our focus to individual manuscripts belonging to the *a* and *b* families.³¹ By analysing these manuscripts’ insights into the historical context of the early stages of textual development, we can gain a better understanding of the author’s original *exemplar* and, by association, Burchard’s whereabouts and activities after 1285. Currently, seven codices are known to be members of these families:³²

Manuscripts of the *a* family:

Bern, Burgerbibliothek, Cod. 46 (14th c.)

Leiden, Universitaire Bibliotheken, BPL 69 (15th c.)

Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 41 Weiss. (15th c.)

Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, Ms. I XII 5 (15th c.)

30 Cf. the introduction in Anthony BALE and Kathryn BEEBE, *Pilgrimage and Textual Culture in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Production, Exchange, Reception*, in: *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 51,1, Special Issue (2021), pp. 1–8 and Michele CAMPOPIANO, *Writing the Holy Land. The Franciscans of Mount Zion and the Construction of a Cultural Memory, 1300–1550*, Cham 2020.

31 See RUBIN (note 5).

32 Another manuscript, Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 18.2 Aug. 4° is closely related to the *a* family, but has been reworked in parts by a late medieval friar William of Zierickzee who travelled to the Holy Land in 1447 and mixed his own accounts with older literature, cf. Leonhard LEMMENS, *Das Pilgerbuch des Franziskaners Wilhelm Walter von Zierickzee*, in: *Franziskanische Studien* 6 (1919), pp. 262–272.

Manuscripts of the **b** family

Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 525 (a. 1353)

London, British Library, Add. 18929 (14th c.)

Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, A CVI 2 (14th c. ex.)

Based on the origins of each codex, the seven manuscripts can be roughly put into three categories:

1. Manuscripts of unclear origin:
Bern, Burgerbibliothek, Cod. 46 (**a**)
2. Manuscripts with connection to the late medieval Low Countries:
Leiden, Universitaire Bibliotheken, BPL 69 (**a**)
Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 41 Weiss. (**a**)
3. Manuscripts from or with a connection to Saxony or Thuringia.
Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, Ms. I XII 5 (**a**)
Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 525 (**b**)
London, British Library, Add. 18929 (**b**)
Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, A CVI (**b**)

3.1 Manuscript of Unclear Origin

Bern, Burgerbibliothek, Cod. 46 is a 14th-century manuscript comprising 141 folia in folio format.³³ It includes a fragmented version of Burchard's 'Descriptio' (1r–18r; explicit: *fit oneri arieti ad portandum*),³⁴ as well as an anonymous world chronicle in seven books (19r–141v). The manuscript does not bear any codicological indication of its place of origin but can be traced back to the early modern French diplomat Jacques BONGARS (1554 in Orléans to 1612 in Paris),³⁵ who acquired it at some point in the 16th

33 Hermann HAGEN, *Catalogus codicum Bernensium (Bibliotheca Bongarsiana)*, edidit et praefatus est Hermannus Hagen, Bern 1875, pp. 58–59.

34 This version of the 'Descriptio' has been mistakenly identified by Paolo CHIESA as a witness of William of Zieriksee's pilgrim's account, which is in fact closely based on an exemplar of the **a** family, cf. Paolo CHIESA, 'Opus Perfecti Magisterii'. Un 'Regimen de Iter Agentibus' Ricavato da Bernardo di Gordon, in: Francesco MONACO and Luca Carlo ROSSI (eds.), *Il mondo e la storia. Studi in onore di Claudia Villa*, Florence 2014, pp. 153–178, here p. 159.

35 BONGARS had a strong interest in matters of philology and history, particularly in the history of the Crusades. He prepared an edition of medieval texts on the Crusades in two volumes in 1611 ('Gesta Dei per Francos', VD17 3:656141B and VD17 3:656145G). Although his fourth volume about the Holy Land and the Crusades did not include Burchard's 'Descriptio', his second volume included Marino Sanudo's 'Liber secretorum fidelium crucis', which is closely based on Burchard, thus explaining the interest of the philologist. This volume also gives information about how Bongars acquired manuscripts of this text via his personal connections. On

or 17th century. BONGARS was not only interested in the diplomatic craft but was also an erudite and well-connected scholar of philology as well as an editor. His famous library consisted of several hundred medieval and early modern manuscripts, mainly collected from monasteries in the Orléans region (such as Fleury) or around Strasbourg, but also on his travels or during his studies in Marburg and Jena. After his death, this collection was sold and finally ended up in the Burgerbibliothek, Bern. Given the fact that no witnesses from France have survived, it is most likely that BONGARS found this codex in Germany, maybe in or around Jena, but this suspicion cannot be confirmed. Another link could be to the Low Countries, where BONGARS also had contacts.

3.2 Manuscripts with Connection to the Late Medieval Low Countries

Two manuscripts of the *a* family can be localized to the late medieval Low Countries. One of these, Leiden, Universitaire Bibliotheken, BPL 69, dates from the 15th century. Its 115 folia contain Martin of Opava's widely transmitted 'Chronicon Pontificum et Imperatorum' (fol. 1r–94r),³⁶ a smaller chronicle excerpt (fol. 96r–99r), as well as a fragmented version of Burchard's 'Descriptio' (fol. 99r–115v) ending with *se cum tabernaculis suis transferunt*. Unfortunately, this paper manuscript does not provide any clues about its precise origin, although it is localized (with a question mark) by the library's database as well as GUMBERT's "Illustrated Inventory" to the region of Arnhem. This is presumably because of the artistic resemblance of some miniatures to Leiden, Universitaire Bibliotheken, BPL 50, which can be safely localized there.³⁷ Other catalogues neither corroborate nor undermine this localization, so there is no obvious reason to doubt it.³⁸

A second manuscript can also be traced to the Low Countries, more specifically to Flanders: Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 41 Weiss.,

BONGARS and his library see Florian MITTENHUBER, Ein Leben für den König, die Bücher und die Wissenschaft: zum 400. Todestag von Jacques Bongars (1554–1612), in: *Librarium: Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Bibliophilen Gesellschaft* 55 (2012), pp. 82–96; Thomas KLÖTI and Florian MITTENHUBER, Bongars Quellenwerk zur Geschichte der Kreuzzüge, in: *Cartographica Helvetica: Fachzeitschrift für Kartengeschichte* 50 (2014), pp. 51–55. For an examination of his erudite connections see Ruth KOHLNDORFER-FRIES, *Diplomatie und Gelehrtenrepublik. Die Kontakte des französischen Gesandten Jaques BONGARS (1554–1612) (Frühe Neuzeit 137)*, Berlin 2009, pp. 86–108. Interestingly, it has been argued that Bongars journey to Eastern Europe was meant to end in Jerusalem, also explaining a possible personal interest in the 'Descriptio', cf. Walther LUDWIG, Die abgebrochene Orientreise von Jacques Bongars im Licht neuer Forschungen, in: Gerlinde HUBER-REBENICH (ed.), *Jacques Bongars (1554–1612). Gelehrter und Diplomat im Zeitalter des Konfessionalismus*, Tübingen 2015, pp. 89–96.

36 A new edition of this text can be found online: Martin von Troppau, *Chronicon Pontificum et Imperatorum*. Online-Edition, ed. by Anna-Dorothee VON DEN BRINCKEN (MGH 2014), <http://www.mgh.de/ext/epub/mt/> (01.06.2020).

37 Peter GUMBERT, *Illustrated Inventory of Medieval Manuscripts*, vol. 2, Leiden 2009, p. 40.

38 See Philipp MOLHUYSEN, *Bibliotheca Universitatis Leidensis. Codices manuscripti*, vol. 3: *Codices bibliothecae publicae latini*, Leiden 1912, pp. 38–39. The database entry can be found at: https://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/permalink/f/1alf3en/UBL_ALMA21222166490002711 (05.06.2020).

a 15th-century composite manuscript comprising 254 folia. Part A includes Cicero's 'Oratio in Q. Caecilium' (fol. 1r–50r) as well as a chronicle from Flanders (fol. 51r–88v), thus pointing to that region as place of origin at least for this part. Its watermark also makes this provenance likely.³⁹ Part B comprises a number of texts on geography and travel, such as Roger Bacon's 'De regionibus' (fol. 91r–120v) and Marco Polo's travel accounts (fol. 121r–160v), as well as 'Itinerarium' (fol. 160v–179r), Odoric of Pordenone's 'Liber de Terra Sancta' (fol. 224r–235v), John of Plano Carpini's 'Historia Mongalorum' (fol. 236r–253v), and Burchard's 'Descriptio' (fol. 179v–197v), followed by an anonymous text on the Holy Land (fol. 197v–225v). It should be noted that this copy of the 'Descriptio' is wrongly identified by the catalogue as Jacques de Vitry due to the uncommon incipit *Quia vidi quosdam devocione*.⁴⁰ Although the manuscript cannot be localized with any more precision, it is nonetheless an interesting witness, because it proves the 'Descriptio's' ongoing relevance in an erudite context despite its historically outdated content. Moreover, at least in this context, the compiler's focus seems to have shifted from an interest in the Holy Land to a broader interest in travel accounts and cultural-geographical descriptions of Asia in general, judging by the manuscripts transmitted alongside the 'Descriptio'. In the 15th century, it seems, Burchard's 'Descriptio' was still seen as a valuable source for geographical and ethnographic knowledge.

Regarding the geographical transmission of Burchard's 'Descriptio', these manuscripts – together with William of Zierickzee's compilation in Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 18.2 Aug. 4°, a manuscript that relied heavily on the text as transmitted in the **a** family – suggest that Burchard's **a** family was available outside medieval Saxony and Thuringia by the 15th century, but not before. This makes it likely that these manuscripts represent a later stage of transmission specific to the northern parts of Central Europe, which was based on the two sub-archetypes nearest to the author (**α** and **β**), strengthening the idea, expressed above, of a development of the other sub-archetype **γ** and **δ** far from these regions. Unfortunately, the manuscripts do not offer further meaningful insight into their production context.

3.3 Manuscripts from or with a Connection to Medieval Saxony or Thuringia

The remaining four manuscripts can all be connected to the regions of medieval Saxony and Thuringia. Interestingly, whereas all of the first three manuscripts characterized above belong to the **a** family, all the manuscripts of the **b** family can be

³⁹ The watermark (Briquet 14177) can be found in southern France as well as Utrecht.

⁴⁰ Hans BUTZMANN, *Die Weissenburger Handschriften* (Kataloge der Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel: Neue Reihe 10), Frankfurt a. M. 1964, pp. 161–164. The manuscript is also described in detail in CHIESA (note 34), pp. 156–157. However, CHIESA identifies the manuscript's version of the 'Descriptio' with William of Ziericksee's pilgrimage account which was based on a witness of the **a** family, thus transmitting the same, rare incipit, cf. note 21, p. 159.

found exclusively in these geographical areas. The first is now kept in London: British Library, Add. 18929.⁴¹ It can be dated to the 14th century and contains Burchard's description of the Holy Land (fol. 1r–42r), an elaborate version of his journey and description of Egypt (42r–44v), an account of his further travels in the Mediterranean (44v–49v) and a further short geographical description of the Holy Land (49v–50v). Together with the manuscript from Zwickau, London is the only manuscript from the Burchard tradition which transmits the continuation recounting his travels outside of Western Asia and Egypt.⁴² The manuscript continues with a Latin abridgement of the legend of Barlaam and Josaphat (fol. 52r–69v),⁴³ an excerpt from William of Conches' 'Philosophia mundi' (69v–71v),⁴⁴ followed by a chapter of Thomas de Cantimpré's 'Liber de natura rerum' (71v–78v).⁴⁵ The codex ends with the narration of around 30 miracles by the Virgin Mary (79r–86v) which can be traced to a Dominican context, and also transmits further excerpts and homilies (87r–102v).⁴⁶

At first glance, the similar layout of the various parts of this manuscript suggests that its texts had already been compiled during the Middle Ages.⁴⁷ However, further palaeographical and codicological analysis reveals that only the first fol. 1r–51v – Burchard's 'Descriptio' – constituted the original manuscript unit. Only in this part of the manuscript are the columns numbered with Arabic numerals. Furthermore, after the diagram of the Holy Land at the end of Burchard's text (fol. 51r), parchment of at least three folia, originally part of this booklet, were cut out, probably because they were empty. This likely happened at the occasion of rebinding, when the small booklet containing the 'Descriptio' was bound together with other, previously independent, codicological units. This hypothesis is further strengthened by strong traces of usage on fol. 52r, the beginning of the presumed new codicological unit comprising the legend of Barlaam, and again after three empty pages on fol. 79r, where the miracles of Mary were copied. Thus, the codex in its present form should be considered

41 Harry WARD, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, 3 vols., London 1883, vol. 2, p. 129.

42 See RUBIN, Burchard of Mount Sion's *Descriptio* (note 2), pp. 175–177.

43 The text seems to be an abbreviated version of 'De sanctis Barlaam et Iosaphat' in the 'Legenda aurea' (inc.: *Barlaam cuius historiam*, BHL 981b), see Constanza CORDONI, *Barlaam und Josaphat in der europäischen Literatur des Mittelalters. Darstellung der Stofftraditionen – Bibliographie – Studien*, Berlin, Boston 2014, pp. 66–70.

44 The excerpt is based on chapters I–V of the 4th book of William's 'Philosophia' and has a strong emphasis on the scientific facts, cutting out William's philosophical argument. See William of Conches, *Philosophia*, ed. by Gregor MAURACH, Pretoria 1980, pp. 88–94.

45 Thomas Cantimpratensis, *Liber de natura rerum*. *Editio princeps secundum codices manuscriptos*, ed. by Helmut BOESE, Berlin, New York 1973, pp. 423–426. The chapter is taken from 'De Ornatu Caeli', which is closely based on William's 'Philosophia'.

46 Joseph KLAPPER, *Erzählungen des Mittelalters in deutscher Übersetzung und lateinischem Urtext*, Breslau 1914, pp. 7–8.

47 All parts of the manuscripts show a two-column layout divided by double lines indicated by pricking marks on top and on the bottom of the page, creating a consistent number of lines throughout the manuscript.

a codicological reworking, where several independent units were bound together at a later date. On the other hand, the similar page layout could suggest that these codicological units originated from the same *scriptorium* or library.

This library can be identified as the Benedictine monastery of St Peter, Erfurt, a city in the heart of Thuringia, owing to the presence of a note of possession on fol. 1r that reads: *Liber sancti petri in erfordia*, thus explicitly mentioning the city Erfurt and the monastery of St Peter. In addition, there appears a note on the first page of this *libellus* that states the name of the buyer of the book, a certain Hermannus Macre.⁴⁸ Although this buyer had been previously identified as Haymarus monachus,⁴⁹ he should instead be identified as an alderman from Erfurt, whose name – Hermann Macer or Macre – is listed as a signatory in charters from the end of the 13th century.⁵⁰ It is not clear if Hermann bought this book with the intent of gifting it to the monastery, or if the manuscript came to St Peter at some later time. Regardless, at least the first part of this codex containing a **b** family's version of Burchard's 'Descriptio' shows a strong connection to Erfurt.

Importantly, this manuscript is not the only witness from the **b** family with a connection to Erfurt, with Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 525 also attesting to such a link.⁵¹ This carefully planned manuscript is particularly interesting because it was written by a single scribe who also signed his work at the end of the volume on fol. 127rb: *Scriptisit hae [sic] omnia Johannes Laurentius sacerdos de Utenhusen Anno domini 1354*. Johannes Laurentius, who should be seen as the owner, user, and, possibly, *spiritus rector* of this codex was a priest from Ottenhausen, about 35 kilometres from Erfurt. We can therefore assume that he planned and realized the project of creating this manuscript (completed in 1354) according to his own particular needs and interests.

Regarding the version of the 'Descriptio' (copied on fol. 58r–74r) in this manuscript, it should be noted that there is no mention of Burchard as the author. Indeed, the text is generically indicated as 'Liber de Terra Sancta' and preceded by a list of cities and places with the corresponding page number. The 'Descriptio's' text ends prematurely on fol. 73v, with the explicit: *que sunt oneri arieti ad portandum*,⁵² and is followed by a short passage about the mountains of the Holy Land with the incipit: *Montes Bethel sunt in Iudea*. The end of Burchard's 'Descriptio' and the beginning of this still unedited text 'Montes Bethel' is almost unperceivable, showing the scribe was perhaps unaware that these final passages did not belong to Burchard's text. This is further suggested

48 *Liber de terra sancta quem comparavit frater Hermannus macre.*

49 W. A. NEUMANN, Beiträge zur Bibliographie der Palästinaliteratur im Anschluss an eine Besprechung, in: Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins 4 (1881), pp. 224–244.

50 Christian MEHR, Vor Petrarca: Die Bergbesteigung eines Mönchs auf Vulcano, in: Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 101 (2019), pp. 317–346, here p. 322.

51 Peter BURKHART, Die lateinischen und deutschen Handschriften der Universitäts-Bibliothek Leipzig, vol. 2: Die theologischen Handschriften, part 1 (Ms 501–625), Wiesbaden 1999, pp. 38–42.

52 Bern, Burgerbibliothek, Cod. 46 Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 41 Weiss., and Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, A CVI 2 also share this explicit, as it makes a lot of sense to stop the text at this point, if one is not interested in the description of Egypt.

by the fact that the scribe put the word *explicit* only after the ‘Montes Bethel’ section. Following ‘Montes Bethel’ he also attached an explanation of the winds, with the different names and directions of the winds explained and translated into German, clearly an aid to understanding Burchard’s way of structuring his text. Notwithstanding this addition, this information demonstrates a clear link between these two manuscripts of the **b** family and the city of Erfurt, and in the case of the Leipzig manuscript, this connection is further indicated through the so-called *Mitüberlieferung*.

Indeed, the *Mitüberlieferung* is of particular importance when considering the context of this codex’s production. Aside from Burchard’s ‘Descriptio’, the codex also transmits a carefully orchestrated ensemble of other texts which reflect not only the interests of Johannes Laurentius, but also allow for this manuscript to be localized. As Laurentius indicates in his table of content, 12 texts can be found in the manuscript:

1. Jacobus de Cessolis: ‘De moribus hominum’ (2r–15v)
2. Ps-Augustinus: ‘De obitu Hieronymi’ (15v–19v)
3. Henricus de Frimaria: ‘Explanatio Passionis Dominicae’ (19v–23v)
4. ‘Expositio super Canticum Canticorum’ (24r–28v)
5. Henricus de Frimaria: ‘De quattuor instinctibus’ (28v–34v)
6. Henricus de Frimaria: ‘Expositio orationis Dominicae’ (34v–38v)
7. Henricus de Frimaria: ‘Expositio salutationis angelicae’ (38v–41r)
8. Hermannus de Saxonia: ‘Confessorium’ (41r–44r)
9. ‘De aliquibus sanctis et festis’ (44r–57v)
10. Burchard of Mount Sion: ‘Descriptio Terre Sancte’ (including ‘Montes Bethel’) (58r–74r)
11. Henricus de Frimaria: ‘Expositio decretalis cum Marie’ (74v–90v)
12. ‘Tractatus virtutum’ (90v–127r)

These texts can be categorized as theological, legal, and hagiographical literature. The largest part of the manuscript is occupied by a series of seven shorter works penned by the scholar Henricus de Frimaria. The prominent place these texts have in the codex not only reveals the importance of this particular author for Johannes Laurentius, but can also help to us deduce its historical context. Henricus de Frimaria (b. 1245) was a German scholar from Gotha, a prominent figure within the Augustinian order, and nominated provincial leader of the Augustinians of Thuringia and Saxony in 1315. In 1317, he became *Magister regens* of the Augustinian *studium* in Erfurt, where he was active for over 20 years until his death in 1340.⁵³

According to the manuscript catalogue, the Leipzig manuscript is the oldest extant source for one of Henricus’ works and was produced only 13 years after his death,

53 For a biographical overview see Adolar ZUMKELLER, Heinrich von Friemar der Ältere, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 4, Munich, Zürich 1989, col. 2091, as well as Robert Glenn WARNOCK, Heinrich von Friemar d. Ä., in: *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon*, vol. 11, Berlin, New York 2004, cols. 623–624.

thus placing the scribe of Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 525 in close proximity to Henricus and to Erfurt. This connection can further be substantiated by the presence of a legal treatise by another author, Hermann of Saxonia, known as '*Confessorium*' or '*Summula*'. Written by the Franciscan author Hermann of Saxonia or Hermann Topelstein, he was a native of Thuringia, being the offspring of a knightly family of the region as well as a member of the Franciscan house of Mühlhausen.⁵⁴ We do not know much else about Hermann, but he was probably active in Erfurt as *lector* at the local Franciscan *studium* around 1330–1340, again only 13 years before our manuscript was produced.⁵⁵ Lastly, the saints mentioned in the hagiographical part of the codex also point to Erfurt as its place of origin, particularly the mention of the *Translatio Severi*, since the relics of Severus, bishop of Ravenna, had been translated to Erfurt in the ninth century and deposited in the church of St Peter.⁵⁶ Taken together, the evidence strongly suggests not only that the manuscript was prepared by a priest from Thuringia, but also that Johannes Laurentius himself had at some point been active in Erfurt, where he had access to the new scholarly literature produced there, quite possibly as a student of the local schools and *studia*.

This connection to Erfurt can, at least indirectly, also be found in the last manuscript of the **b** family, Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, A CVI 2.⁵⁷ This late 15th-century manuscript belonged to the Prague Metropolitan Chapter and indicates its content at the beginning of the book: *Conscripta quedam et questiones super ewangelium Matthei. Concordantie super Bibliam ultimo loca* [unclear word] *et specialiter sancta describuntur* ("Notes and *quaestiones* on the Gospel of Matthew, concordances of the Bible, lastly the description of places [unclear word] and in particular of holy places"). Most of the codex (fol. 1r–233r) is dedicated to the first of these texts, which can be identified as a commentary on the Gospel of St Matthew written by the Augustinian Augustinus de Ancona or Augustinus Triumphus.⁵⁸ This text is followed by

54 Erich H. REITER, A Treatise on Confession from the Secular/Mendicant Dispute: The Casus abstracti a iure of Herman of Saxony, O.F.M., in: *Mediaeval Studies* 57 (1995), pp. 1–39, here pp. 4–5.

55 Volker HONEMANN, Das mittelalterliche Schrifttum der Franziskaner der Sächsischen Ordensprovinz unter besonderer Berücksichtigung deutschsprachiger Zeugnisse, in: Volker HONEMANN (ed.), *Geschichte der Sächsischen Franziskanerprovinz*, vol. 1: Von den Anfängen bis zur Reformation, Paderborn 2015, pp. 603–730, here p. 663.

56 For this vita see Otto BUCHNER, Der Severi-Sarkophag zu Erfurt und sein Künstler. Samt Übersetzung der Vita und Translatio Sancti Severi des Priesters Liutolf, Erfurt 1903, pp. 23–31. Severus was venerated in Erfurt on 31 January, as indicated by the liturgical calendar. See Hermann GROTEFEND, *Zeitrechnung des Deutschen Mittelalters und der Neuzeit* (HTML version from Dr H. RUTH), http://bilder.manuscripta-mediaevalia.de/gaeste/grotefend/kalender/dioec_11.htm (01.06.2020). For the translation of Severus's remains, cf. Matthias WERNER, *Die Gründungstradition des Erfurter Peterskloster* (Vorträge und Forschungen, special volume 12), Sigmaringen 1971, p. 35.

57 Adolf PATERA and Antonius PODLAHA, *Soupis Rukopisu knihovny Metropolitni kapitoly Pražské*, vol. 1, Prague 1910, pp. 134–135.

58 Adolar ZUMKELLER, *Manuskripte von Werken der Autoren des Augustiner-Eremitenordens in mitteleuropäischen Bibliotheken* (Cassiciacum 20), Würzburg 1966, p. 73; Josef KÜRZINGER,

an anonymous concordance of biblical passages dedicated to moral education for preachers (until fol. 309r). The text starts with an alphabetical table followed by the incipit *Contra peccatum simpliciter*, whose unknown author is sometimes wrongly identified with Antonius of Padua.⁵⁹ This text is also transmitted in other manuscripts from Bohemia (such as Erfurt, Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek, CE 2° 131),⁶⁰ as well as in manuscripts from Magdeburg and from other places in that region.⁶¹ After a couple of versified summaries of the books of the Bible, as well as smaller texts, Burchard's 'Descriptio' appears on fol. 324r–351r.

Importantly, this version of the 'Descriptio' can be seen as a twin copy of the one found in Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 525, since it transmits not only a very similar version of Burchard's text, but it also ends with the same short anonymous text about the mountains of the Holy Land 'Montes Bethel', transmitted at least to our present knowledge only in these two codices. This makes it likely that Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, A CVI 2 or at least its *exemplar* and Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 525 share a common production context.

'Montes Bethel' is then followed by a text (fol. 351r–355r) written by the same scribe, which is also the unique to the source: 'De iubilellis', a treatise composed by Dietrich of Nyem in 1403, in which he argues against the abuse of indulgences.⁶² Dietrich was active at the papal court in the second half of the 14th century. However, he directly addressed this treatise to the *magistri et doctores* of Erfurt, as the concluding paratext says (fol. 355ra):

Hec est epistola compilata per dominum Theodericum Nyem quondam episcopum Verden abbreviatorem et scriptorem litterarum apostolicarum domini nostri pape magistris et doctoribus Erfordie commorantibus directa.

This epistle was put together by Dietrich of Nyem, who once was the bishop of Verden and who summarized and wrote the apostolical letters of our pope. This epistle was directed at the professors and doctors living in Erfurt.

Handschriften philosophischer Werke des Augustinus Triumphus, in: Philosophisches Jahrbuch 53 (1940), pp. 355–361; Agostino d'Ancona, in: Dizionario biografico degli Italiani 1, Rome 1960, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/agostino-d-ancona_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/agostino-d-ancona_(Dizionario-Biografico)/) (15.06.2020).

59 See Valentin ROSE, Verzeichnis der Lateinischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin, vol. 2, Berlin 1902, pp. 377–378.

60 Sirka HEYNE, Die mittelalterlichen Codices Erfordenses in der Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha, Gotha 2005, pp. 24–25.

61 See ROSE (note 59), pp. 377–378.

62 About Dietrich of Nyem see Hermann HEIMPEL, Dietrich von Nieheim, in: Neue Deutsche Biographie 3 (1957), pp. 691–692, <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118525549.html> (01.06.2020), as well as Hermann HEIMPEL, Dietrich von Niem (Nieheim), in: Aloys BÖME et al. (ed.), Westfälische Lebensbilder, vol. 5, Münster 1937, pp. 176–192. The text is edited in Hermann HEIMPEL, Dietrich von Niem (c. 1340–1418) (Westfälische Biographien 2), Münster 1932.

He especially criticized a certain Augustinus de Undinis, who was active in the city and had made the inhabitants of Erfurt 'blind'.⁶³ The codex ends with various sermons on fol. 355r–367r. Of course, this textual reference to Erfurt does not constitute a direct connection of this codex to the city, as texts were not restricted in their circulation to the intended receiver. However, the fact that this text is uniquely transmitted in this manuscript suggests that it did not experience a wide circulation. Considering the close connection between the Leipzig manuscript and the Prague manuscript, it does not seem implausible to suggest that Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, A CVI 2's exemplar had its provenance in Erfurt. Reinforcing this notion is the fact that from the 1360s there was a close relationship between Erfurt's *studia* and the university in Prague, making it even more likely that 'De iubilellis' (or indeed the manuscript itself) found its way to its present location from Erfurt, alongside Burchard's *b* family 'Descriptio'.⁶⁴

Whereas the three manuscripts mentioned above all belonged to the *b* family, the last manuscript analysed here is a very important witness from the *a* family: Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, Ms. I XII 5.⁶⁵ This manuscript can be dated on palaeographic grounds to the 15th century and was gifted to the church of St Mary in Zwickau by a certain Johannes Heynemann, as stated in the manuscript itself.⁶⁶ Like the Leipzig manuscript, it contains texts written by Henricus de Frimaria, the leader of the Augustinian church in Erfurt, alongside Burchard's 'Descriptio'. Preceding this it contains an abridgement of Petrus Lombardus 'Sentences' called 'Filia magistri', a work that in the Middle Ages was attributed to Henricus,⁶⁷ as well as Henricus' explanation of the mysteries of mass, a text which is transmitted in only seven

63 Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, A CVI 2, p. 354vb reads: *frater Augustinus de Undinis qui Erfordie interdictum posuit et ibidem videntes cecos fecit.*

64 Robert GRAMSCH, Erfurt – die älteste Hochschule Deutschlands: vom Generalstudium zur Universität (Schriften des Vereins für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde von Erfurt 9), Erfurt 2012, p. 31.

65 The manuscript is described in Renate SCHIPKE, Die mittelalterlichen Handschriften der Ratsschulbibliothek Zwickau: Bestandsverzeichnis aus dem Zentralinventar mittelalterlicher Handschriften, Berlin 1990, pp. 58–60.

66 Although the name Johannes Heynemann can be found several times during the Middle Ages and early modern times, he can be probably identified with a cleric from Zwickau mentioned in charter from 1438. See Emil HERZOG, Schenkung der Lengenfelder Hoyeremühle zum Martinsaltar der Zwickauer Marienkirche, vom Jahre 1438, in: Jahresbericht des Voigtländischen alterthumsforschenden Vereins 20/21 (1845/46), pp. 81–84, p. 81. Here, Johannes is mentioned as celebrating at St Martin's altar, making it likely that he was in fact a cleric of St Mary's, which had such an altar which was then demolished during the reformation in 1525. See Emil HERZOG, Chronik der Kreisstadt Zwickau: Topographie und Statistik, Zwickau 1839, p. 95.

67 Although the text might be falsely attributed to Henricus de Frimaria, this work was often attributed to this author in medieval codices, cf. Franklin T. HARKINS, Filiae Magistri, Peter Lombard's Sentences and Medieval Theological Education 'on the Ground', in: Philipp W. ROSEMAN (ed.), Mediaeval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, vol. 3, Leiden, Boston 2015, pp. 26–78, here p. 39.

manuscripts.⁶⁸ Thus, this manuscript points not only towards Erfurt, but towards the context of *studia* in particular, since abridgements like the ‘Filia magistri’ were often utilized for basic theological training of novices or mendicant friars who had to be acquainted with all four books of the ‘Sentences’.⁶⁹ The Zwickau manuscript also contains various notes that handle a plethora of topics like the properties of herbs, the different forms of sin, the years passed from creation, and some verses on the Trinity in German.⁷⁰ Various notes scattered around the book by the same hand suggest that the manuscript was not intended as an instrument of theoretical theological studies, but rather for enabling priests or friars in their practical pastoral activities such as preaching. All in all, the manuscript seems to have had a very similar function to Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 525: to provide a religious man with the knowledge he needed for his daily duty plus some general knowledge, useful for day-to-day business. Given the particular educational content, it is possible that the owner, Johannes Heynemann, produced or acquired the manuscript in a regional centre of education. While at this stage of research it cannot be proven that this centre was Erfurt, although this is likely given the close proximity to Zwickau, it makes sense at least to understand the production of this (**a** family) version of Burchard’s ‘Descriptio’ as having occurred in or around a Saxon or Thuringian convent.

This preliminary analysis indicates that the majority of the witnesses of the families **a** and **b** point towards Saxony and Thuringia, and to the city and erudite milieu of Erfurt in particular. From the beginning of the 13th century, the city harboured many religious houses and *studia* (Dominican, Franciscan, Augustinian) and was famous as a prominent centre of learning throughout Europe. Studies have also shown that these religious houses formed the nucleus of the important university of Erfurt that was established in 1392 or perhaps earlier.⁷¹ Judging by the manuscript evidence, it seems likely that both early versions of Burchard’s ‘Descriptio’ circulated in Erfurt among the local intellectuals active at the various schools and *studia* – be that Franciscan or Dominican – and were copied within these contexts.

68 Adolar ZUMKELLER, *Manuskripte von Werken der Autoren des Augustiner-Eremitenordens in mitteleuropäischen Bibliotheken* (Cassiciacum 20), Würzburg 1966, p. 138.

69 For purpose and usage of this text see HARKINS (note 67), pp. 26–78; *ibid.*, pp. 34–35. On the ‘Filia magistri’ see also Philipp W. ROSEMAN, *The Story of a Great Medieval Book: Peter Lombard’s Sentences* (Rethinking the Middle Ages 2), New York 2007, pp. 33–52, as well as Raymond-M. MARTIN, *Filia Magistri: Un abrégé des Sentences de Pierre Lombard*, in: *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 2 (1915), pp. 370–379.

70 See SCHIPKE (note 65), pp. 58–60.

71 Helmut G. WALTHER, *Ordensstudium und theologische Profilbildung: Die ‘Studia generalia’ in Erfurt und Paris an der Wende vom 13. zum 14. Jahrhundert*, in: Andreas SPEER and Lydia WEGENER (eds.), *Meister Eckhart in Erfurt* (Miscellanea Mediaevalia 32), Berlin 2005, pp. 75–94, here p. 92. See also Sönke LORENZ, *Studium Generale Erfordense: Neue Forschungen zum Erfurter Schulleben*, in: *Traditio* 46 (1991), pp. 261–290, and Sönke LORENZ, *Studium generale Erfordense: zum Erfurter Schulleben im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert* (Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 34), Stuttgart 1989. For the uncertain date of the foundation of the University of Erfurt see GRAMSCH (note 64), pp. 98–99.

4 Burchard's Connection to Magdeburg and Erfurt

Taking the above into consideration, we are now able to tentatively suggest certain things pertaining to Burchard's career after the end of his diplomatic mission to Cyprus in 1285. Manuscript evidence suggests that the core of Burchard's 'Descriptio' was probably compiled in the Holy Land, with additional details (as evidenced in the *a* family) added to the text up to 1285.⁷² This version can be identified with the now-lost archetype Ω .⁷³ However, as RUBIN has indicated in this collection,⁷⁴ Ω was not the final product of the author's engagement with his material and the *a* and *b* families show further refinement and expansion of the text, possibly by Burchard and probably in conjunction with various scribes. Access to scribes and to a place to rework his text could point towards this stage in its development having occurred at the Dominican house in Cyprus where Burchard resided in 1285. However, the distribution of manuscripts connected to both the α and β sub-archetypes around northern Central Europe strongly suggests that this reworking, commenting, and copying took place in Europe after his final return from the Holy Land.

Burchard's late-career biography should perhaps, therefore, run as follows. Sometime in 1284, Burchard made the decision, for whatever reason, to leave the Holy Land. By this point the archetype (Ω) of the 'Descriptio' was to some extent complete, or at least the material for it assembled, and Burchard travelled through Mediterranean with a copy of this book in hand. While in Italy, he was ordered by the Dominican master to return to the Levant, to serve as a diplomat in various matters and these travels through the Mediterranean, written down in the manner of an ongoing travelogue, ended in Cyprus in 1285. After spending some time at the Dominican house in Cyprus, he then decided to return to his home in Germany, via Italy, without adding a duplication of the travelogue for the return journey.⁷⁵ If correct, it is plausible to date his return to Germany between 1285 and 1286, immediately after the end of his travel account. In all likelihood, the process of rewriting his 'Descriptio' (Ω into α and β) took place in a Dominican institution in Germany after 1286 and possibly before 1291 owing to the lack of any mention of the capture of Acre in that year.⁷⁶

Placing Burchard in Germany after 1285 leads naturally onto the oft-discussed topic of Burchard's place of origin. Most have connected him with Magdeburg, a city in medieval Saxony, some 120 kilometres north of Leipzig. This hypothesis is based

72 See RUBIN, *A Missing Link* (note 2), pp. 60–61.

73 For the philological establishment of this archetype see RUBIN (note 5).

74 RUBIN in this volume, pp. 18–21.

75 Such as the volcanos in southern Italy, see MEHR (note 50).

76 Though given the focus of Burchard's text largely on a biblical past rather than a historical present, he may have omitted references to the siege and fall of Acre because it did not fit into his wider vision for the work. A similar omission occurs in Riccoldo's 'Liber peregrinationis', which was certainly composed after the fall of Acre, cf. Martin M. BAUER, *Ricoldus de Monte Crucis: Epistole ad Ecclesiam triumphantem* (Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters 24), Stuttgart 2021, p. 17.

on a number of arguments, but mainly on grounds of textual references that seem to indicate Burchard's close relationship to this city.⁷⁷ One of these is based on the dedication of Burchard's abbreviated version of the 'Descriptio' (the short version) to a Dominican friar, also named Burchard, who was *lector* in Magdeburg.⁷⁸ Later in this short version other references to Magdeburg can be found, for instance when Burchard, trying to give his reader an impression of Jerusalem's dimensions, compares the holy city to Magdeburg.⁷⁹ Furthermore, he compares the distance between Acre and Nazareth to the distance between Magdeburg and Barby, a village not far away, although this reference must be treated with caution.⁸⁰ Indeed, references to Magdeburg are not limited to the 'Descriptio's' short version. In the description of Egypt found in London, British Library, Add. 18929 and Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, Ms. I, XII, 5, Burchard also describes a giraffe, explaining that the animal had an extremely long neck. To help the reader visualize this peculiar and unknown animal he observes that the animal could touch the roof of the church in Magdeburg with its mouth.⁸¹ Overall, these passages show Burchard's close familiarity with Magdeburg

77 The debate is summarized by BARTLETT (note 2), pp. xxvii–xxx.

78 The dedication reads: *Dilectissimo in Christo Iesu patri fratri Burchardo lectori fratrum ordinis praedicatorum in Magdeburg, frater Burchardus de monte Syon cum omni deuotione orationes in Domino Iesu Christo*, "For our most beloved father in Christ Jesus, Brother Burchard, teacher of the brothers of the Order of Preachers in Magdeburg, Brother Burchard of Mount Zion with all devotion [offers] prayers in the Lord Jesus Christ." Burchard of Mount Zion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 2), pp. 226–227.

79 *[V]idetur autem mihi, et in hoc consenserunt, qui mecum ibi fuerunt et utramque nouerunt, quod Ierusalem amplior multo sit et longior, quam antiqua ciuitas Magdeburgensis, quam includit murus circumiens de sancto Georgio usque ad nouam ciuitatem exclusiue*, "It seems to me, and those who were with me and know both places agree, that Jerusalem is much wider and longer than the ancient city of Magdeburg, which is enclosed within a wall running round from St George's as far as the new city but not including it." Burchard of Mount Zion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 2), pp. 260–261.

80 This reference is based on LAURENT, who explicitly referred to CANISIUS in his introduction: *Priorem textus recensionem expressit Canisius, cuius editio hos, ad quos attendas, locos continet: 'Distat autem (Nazareth) ab Accon per septem leucas. Quod spacium melius estimare potui, quia sepius illuc pertransiui. Videtur michi esse sicut de Magdeburg in Barboy'* ("Nazareth lies 7 leagues from Acre. I have been able to reckon this distance better, because I have often passed through there. It seems to me to be just like the distance from Magdeburg to Barby" (translation from Burchard of Mount Zion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT [note 2], p. xxx). However, as BARTLETT (ibid.) rightly claims, this reference has never been printed by CANISIUS (or BASAGNE for that matter). This is even more confusing, as LAURENT himself stated in his review of CANISIUS's edition that he found this additional passage which is not present in CANISIUS himself in a manuscript from Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka we Wrocławiu, Ms. IF 211, see Johann LAURENT, *Burchardus de Monte Sion*, in: *Serapeum* 21 (1860), pp. 1–11, here p. 5. Indeed, the passage in question can be found on fol. 235v as well as in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 569, fol. 194r. Given this important biographical detail, it is unfortunate that BARTLETT did not collate these manuscripts for his edition.

81 London, British Library, Add. 18929, fol. 44v: *De Babylonia recedens ductus sum ad locum ubi erant 6 leones et 6 elephantes et 60 strutiones in curia et onageri plures. Vidi etiam ibi quoddam mirabile animal, quod scraph Arabica [sic] dicitur, dispositionis mirabilis super modum. Habet enim in longitudine pedes 16 vel amplius, pellem sicut iuuenis capreolus maculosam, s[cilicet] rubeum*

and its Dominican church, making it likely that Burchard spent some time there at one point or another in his life or had at least some other connection to the city.⁸²

Nevertheless, a closer examination of these passages suggests that Burchard did not just refer to the city's size or its churches because of his own familiarity with the city, but because of his reader's familiarity with it. Burchard the author used these examples so that the receiver of his text, Burchard the *lector*, could more easily comprehend his descriptions. Burchard explicitly refers to the church in Magdeburg as "your church" (*ecclesie vestre in Magedeburc*), not "our church", making it quite clear that, despite his intimate knowledge of the city, he did not consider Magdeburg as his city.⁸³ In fact, the only indication which Burchard gives as to his own place of origin occurs when he signs the prologue to the short version as "Burchard de Monte Sion", thus emphasizing his affiliation with the Holy Land, rather than with Magdeburg or any other place in Latin Europe.⁸⁴ So while he knew the city of Magdeburg and its environs well, the evidence does not suggest he was in situ while finishing the 'Descriptio'. It was his readers and not him who possessed a personal connection with the city.

Still, his familiarity with the wider region and his close connection to a Dominican *lector* there prove that Burchard must have been active in the area. Yet if we are to put aside the idea that Burchard lived in Magdeburg when he was working on his text, we must also consider alternative locations. With this in mind, we return to the city of Erfurt. We have already demonstrated how the earliest textual families of Burchard's text demonstrate a strong connection with the city of Erfurt and the Dominican house there. If Burchard himself had been present at Erfurt when he was completing the revision of his text, then this would help to explain the strong association with Erfurt within the *a* and *b* families of the 'Descriptio'. Working in Erfurt, he could have also frequently travelled to Magdeburg, with both cities housing Dominican houses belonging to the same province.⁸⁵ This could explain not only why Burchard was in contact with a *lector* there, but also shed light on his own role inside the Dominican order after his return from the Holy Land, with the possibility that, just like his acquaintance in Magdeburg, our author also taught novices and became a *lector*.⁸⁶ Though we cannot, with confidence, prove Burchard's post-1285 place of

colorem albo permixtum. Priores pedes et crura ita sunt alta, et collum ita longum, quod pro certo dico quod tectum ecclesie vestre in Magedeburc tangere posset ore. Posteriora vero crura demissa sunt, et corpus similiter, ita ut modico ibi sic altius quam camelus. Est autem animal in multis terris rarum et invisum, edited in: RUBIN, Burchard of Mount Sion's *Descriptio* (note 2), p. 184.

82 See BARTLETT (note 2), p. xxx.

83 Although it seems likely that Burchard would return to his region of origin, this is by no means certain. Since as we have seen Burchard's references to Magdeburg are most likely there for his readers, he could have integrated them after settling in the region.

84 See BARTLETT (note 2), p. xxx.

85 WALTHER (note 71), pp. 91–92.

86 BARTLETT argues that the short version's dedication suggests that the *lector* in Magdeburg was Burchard's superior: "It was at this Lector's command and request (*iussione et petitione*) that Burchard had written his account; the Lector was therefore Burchard's superior, but

residence beyond pointing to the broad area of Saxony/Thuringia, recognizing the problematic nature of the traditional Magdeburg connection and the advancement of this Erfurt hypothesis allows new avenues of investigation into Burchard's career.

Given the fact that abridged versions of relevant texts were used at Dominican houses for didactical purposes, this social context might also suggest that the short version of the 'Descriptio' was created with a specific Dominican and educational audience in mind.⁸⁷ It is to be remembered that it is exclusively this short version which features Magdeburg as an important point of comparison throughout. This, in turn, poses an interesting problem in the context of the 'Descriptio's' textual development. If Burchard was working or teaching at Erfurt, one could easily imagine how word of his text travelled along the highly frequented roads between Erfurt and Magdeburg. There, his Dominican colleagues might have seen the need for a description of the Holy Land for the education of future preachers and requested a more concise version of the text. Although the relationship between the short version and the various archetypes of the long version has yet to be studied in detail,⁸⁸ preliminary analysis suggests that the short version might even pre-date the emergence of the sub-archetypes α and β .

That the short version is based on an archetype of the 'Descriptio' close to the author's original can be shown by a striking example in the description of a castle called Adomin or Adumim (which means 'red' in Hebrew).⁸⁹ According to Burchard's short version, this place is called Rotenburg (red castle) in German due to the massive bloodshed that took place there:

De Iericho ad quattuor leucas contra occidentem, in uia que ducit Ierusalem, ad sinistram deserti Quarentene, Adomin castellum, ubi ille qui descendit ab Ierusalem in Iericho, incidit in latrones, quod etiam tempore moderno multis ibidem contingit. Locus idem theutonice Rotenburch appellatur, propter multum sanguinem fusum ibi, est enim locus ille horribilis et periculosus ualde.

Four leagues to the west, on the road leading to Jerusalem, to the left of the desert of Quarentena, is the castle of Adummim, where the man who descended from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, as also happens to many at the same place in modern times. That place is called in German

nevertheless one who respected Burchard's comprehension and experience of the Holy Land.' BARTLETT (note 2), p. xxx. However, the humble style of this dedication letter should not be overemphasized but was part of the genre.

⁸⁷ Similar arguments have been made about the works of Riccoldo of Monte Croce. See Philip BOOTH, *The Dominican Educational and Social Contexts of Riccoldo of Monte Croce's Pilgrimage Writing*, in: *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 51,1 (2021), pp. 49–78.

⁸⁸ Cf. the discussion on the connection of the short and long version in BARTLETT (note 2), pp. xliii–lviii.

⁸⁹ See also RUBIN in this volume, p. 27.

Rotenburch, on account of the great quantity of blood shed there; for it is a fearsome and very dangerous place.⁹⁰

Not only does this philological explanation demonstrate the careful methodology used by Burchard in presenting the topography of the Holy Land, but it is also very telling when compared to the corresponding passage in the long version. Most manuscript families either omit this passage or omit the important information about the German name of the castle Rodeburg, making the explanation useless and thereby committing a very telling copying mistake. This error can already be found in manuscripts of the **b** family, suggesting a mistake made early in the text's transmission history. For example, in London, British Library, Add. 18929, fol. 22r, we can read:

*De Iericho 4 leucis contra occidentem via que ducit in Iherusalem ad sinistram Quarentone [sic] est castrum Adunim ubi ille qui descendit ab Ierusalem in Jericho incidit in latrones quod modernis temporibus multis contingit ibidem et **ab** effusione frequenti sanguinis locus ille nomen accepit.*

It is only in the **a** family that this passage seems to have been copied correctly. In Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, Ms. I, XII, 5, fol. 128v, for instance, one reads:

Item de Iericho 4 leucis contra occidentem via que ducit in Ierusalem ad sinistram deserti Quarentene est Casale Adonyum ubi ille qui descendit ab Ierusalem in Iericho incidit in latrones quod et modernis diebus multis contingit ibidem et effusione frequenti sanguinis locus idem Rodeburg appellatur.

If we assume that this extra information was not added by a later redactor or interpolator, we can also assume that the Rodeburg information was included in the original Ω text, and by extension that this archetype or the sub-archetype α served as the source for the short version of the 'Descriptio'.

Moreover, a very small but peculiar passage can help to address this issue further. The previously mentioned passage on the giraffe (for the Latin text see note 81) poses a problem regarding the textual development of Burchard's 'Descriptio', since it suggests that not only the short version, but also the long version could have been, in some way, addressed to an audience in Magdeburg.⁹¹ However, whereas the short version clearly addresses the Dominican *lector* Burchard of Magdeburg in the opening letter, the long version lacks any other reference to the city or to any particular audience. On the contrary, the long version's prologue is clearly intended for a general Christian public:

⁹⁰ Burchard of Mount Zion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 2), pp. 257–258.

⁹¹ See RUBIN, Burchard of Mount Zion's *Descriptio* (note 2), p. 178.

Verum uidens quosdam affici desiderio ea saltem aliquantulum imaginari, que non possunt presentialiter intueri, et cupiens eorum desiderio satisfacere, quantum possum, terram ipsam, quam pedibus meis pluries pertransiui, quantum potui, consideraui, et notaui diligenter, et studiose descripsi hoc lectorem scire uolens, quod nihil in hac descriptione posui, nisi quod uel presentialiter in locis illis existens uidi, uel stans in montibus aliquibus uel locis aliis oportunitis, ubi accessum habere non potui, a Syrianiis uel a Saracenis aut aliis terre ipsius habitatoribus diligentissime, quod querebam, interrogans annotaui.

However, seeing some affected by the desire to have at least some mental picture of what they cannot see in reality, and wishing to satisfy their desire as far as I can, I have thought to the best of my ability about that land which my feet have often travelled, and I have diligently noted and assiduously described it, wanting the reader to know this: that I have set down nothing in this description but what I have either seen for myself when present in those places, or what I noted down from my most careful questioning of Syrians or Saracens or other inhabitants of the land when standing on some mountains or other convenient places, when I could have no direct access.⁹²

If the long version had been intended for Burchard's brothers in Magdeburg, one would expect the author to address them in the same way as he did in the short version. Since no other passage in the long version shows any reference to Magdeburg, the phrase "your church in Magdeburg", found in the giraffe passage, seems quite out of place. An explanation for this can be found if we consider that the passage in question is not really part of the core of the 'Descriptio' itself, but belongs to the addenda found in British Library, Add. 18929 and Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, Ms. I, XII, 5.⁹³

This might suggest that, after his return to Europe, Burchard himself (or other scribes/redactors) created and dedicated versions of the 'Descriptio' which were intended for local readers in different regional and institutional contexts. Thus, the reference to Magdeburg in Burchard's continuation of the long version could indicate that he was not only writing a shorter version for his Dominican colleagues, but that Burchard held, in his notes or memory, other interesting observations which never made it into one of the extant textual archetypes. These additions were for some reasons not included in the later transmission of the short version. The absence of these additions in later versions of the short text could be explained by their limited didactical value outside a Dominican context.

⁹² Burchard of Mount Zion, 'Descriptio', ed. BARTLETT (note 2), pp. 6–7.

⁹³ RUBIN, Burchard of Mount Zion's *Descriptio* (note 2), p. 175.

Hence, this suggests that some additional passages were not created in the context of his reworking of Ω into α (and further development into β), but in the context of the development of the shorter version, in which the reference to Magdeburg made sense. These passages were then also added to α and β , possibly unintentionally. Although it is not conclusive, this chain of evidence suggests that the short version is not only older than β , but even precedes the sub-archetype α . It seems that, encouraged by the *lector* Burchard of Magdeburg or some other person probably based in Magdeburg, Burchard of Mount Sion, or perhaps a scribe or redactor involved in the revision process, re-engaged with Ω and the notes Burchard had made along the way. This preparation of a short version for another audience, and the change of perspective that came along with such a process, might explain the need for a further engagement with the long version of the 'Descriptio', finally leading to Burchard's sub-archetypes α and β .

5 Conclusion

To conclude, the analysis of textual development and manuscript transmission allows some insights into the historical contexts in which Burchard's 'Descriptio' developed and also helps establish Burchard's late-career biography. Concerning the distribution, the manuscripts of the long version show two distinct stages of transmission: an earlier one, with a small number of manuscripts of the *a* and *b* family, close to the authorial versions Ω and its derivation α and β , experiencing isolated transmission in the northern part of Central Europe; and a later one with a large bulk of manuscripts divided into three families belonging to the slightly later versions γ and δ , respectively families *c*, *d*, and *e*, mainly transmitted in Austria and Italy, most likely in the context of pilgrimage.

A closer examination of manuscripts of the *a* and *b* families was undertaken to shed light on the *Mitüberlieferung* and on the early historical contexts of the 'Descriptio's' longer version which could be traced back to the Dominican house at Erfurt. Combined with a preliminary analysis of the textual evidence, this examination leads to a scenario in which the archetype Ω might have already been created before 1284 in the Holy Land. However, Burchard's travels, which he carefully described, did not end the way he thought they would. In Italy, Burchard was sent back to the Mediterranean by the master of his order, to conclude some diplomatic business that he also noted in his itinerary. Having completed his task as an envoy in 1285, he seems to have returned to the area of Saxony and Thuringia, where he settled down, maybe at a Dominican institution in or around Erfurt. Here, the 'Descriptio' was reworked several times before 1291. First, a short version based on the archetype Ω , as well as some additional paragraphs, was compiled on the request of the *lector* Burchard of Magdeburg, probably to provide a version suited for educational purposes. In a next step, marginal notes were incorporated into the text during the creation of archetypes α and β . Interestingly, of these many

early versions only the short version became successful, leading to 31 known manuscripts, a high number compared to the seven witnesses of the *a* and *b* family.⁹⁴ In our opinion, this development could be connected with the social context of a Dominican house, where shorter texts with a clear educational purpose were more often needed and thus copied. Only after the emergence of families *c*, *d*, and *e* did Burchard's long version develop very quickly into a widely transmitted and much-appreciated text that was used, until early modern times, by travellers, pilgrims, and scholars alike.

94 BARTLETT (note 2), pp. xl–xli.