

**After antiquity: Joseph and Aseneth in
manuscript transmission. A case study for
engaging with what came after the original
version of Jewish Pseudepigrapha.**

**The Rev'd Jonathon Stuart Wright
Saint Stephen's House**

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Abstract

The story of *Joseph and Aseneth* expands a few verses from the book of Genesis into a novella-length work. In recent years, the story has attracted considerable scholarly attention. Interest has focused on questions of provenance: whether the 'longer' or 'shorter' version of the text has priority, and what this means for its interpretation. Like other works of the so-called 'Jewish Pseudepigrapha', it is increasingly used as a source for Judaism and Christianity at the turn of the Common Era. But few have engaged with the story's manuscript witness and transmission.

This thesis returns to the sources. It considers how the redaction and translation of *Joseph and Aseneth* affected its interpretation, and looks at the interests of the redactors and copyists. It warns against placing too much weight on details that lack such an importance in the manuscript tradition.

The introduction surveys modern secondary literature on the story. Section 1 investigates the translation and transmission context of the two earliest preserved versions, the Syriac and Armenian translations. Despite their text-critical importance, they have received little attention. Section 2 focuses on the Greek manuscripts of the three longest families (*f*, *Mc*, *a*). It argues that these redactions, and the variety within their witnesses, need to be understood within a Byzantine context, in particular, within hagiographic trends for works produced in monastic environment. Section 3 looks at how the story could be abridged and edited. It identifies the key elements of the story shared by redactors. Four versions are compared: family *d*, E, Latin 1 and so-called "early modern Greek". The appendices contain a synoptic presentation of Greek versions of the story, an edition and translation of the story from manuscript E, and a translation of the Greek text from manuscript 661.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Setting the Scene

The scholar interested in Second Temple Judaism or Christian origins has a wealth of literary sources available.¹ Among them are texts described as 'Jewish' or 'Old Testament' Pseudepigrapha. Collections of such works, for example Charlesworth (1983) or Sparks (1984), can give the impression that scholarship has made the 'original' text available, from an approximate date and known provenance.² Too often, the suspicions of specialists are turned into hypotheses, that are then referenced as 'assured results'.³

The real situation is more complicated as four observations show.⁴ First, there was no defined corpus of 'Jewish Pseudepigrapha' in antiquity. The modern use of the term only stems from Johann Fabricius in the eighteenth century,⁵ and the 'canon' is determined by the interests of the editors.⁶ Often it is a result of a work not being classified in another category: canonical Scripture, Apocrypha, or part of a collection such as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Placing texts together gives a false sense of unity or proximity that was never seen in the manuscript tradition.⁷ Also the term itself is misleading— many of the works make no claim regarding their authorship.

Secondly, without external evidence the religious provenance and approximate date of composition are based on a mesh of assumptions. Usually religious provenance of a text is not known for

1. For an overview see Nicklesberg (2005).

2. Wilson 2011:11 notes that within ancient Greek and Latin literature there are only a few "mediocre verse compositions" of 550-70 CE and two anonymous papyri that are author's autograph copies, that is, 'the original'.

3. Kraft 2009:11

4. For overviews of the complexity, see Davila (2005); Stone (2006d); Kraft (2009); the introduction to Bauckham, Davila and Panayatov (2013).

5. See Reed (2009).

6. Compare the choices of Charles' two 1913 volumes, Charlesworth's *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* and Bauckham, Davila and Panayatov (2013). Charles did not include *Jos. Asen.*, but placed it among the "lost apocrypha" (1913:viii).

7. Lincicum 2015:147-8 notes a comparable position with the term and 'corpus' of *Apostolic Fathers*.

certain, internal arguments are inconclusive, and whatever the origin of a tradition its entire transmission is Christian. As Bauckham and Davila note, too often scholars have tended "to be optimistic in their arguments for an early date and Jewish provenance, whether of the works themselves or of their sources, and insufficiently attentive to aspects of the texts that might suggest a later date and/or Christian provenance."⁸ In any case, the descriptive terms 'Jewish' and 'Christian' hide great variety.⁹

Thirdly, it can be easy to ignore considerable manuscript diversity and unresolved issues around textual development. Even a small manuscript tradition like *3 Baruch* lacks an edition combining the divergent Greek and Slavonic witnesses.¹⁰ Added to this, scholars are used to ignoring well-known textual problems, for example with *Acts of the Apostles*¹¹ or *Tobit*,¹² so the real nature of an edition is missed.¹³

Fourthly, the comparison of texts often overlooks the distance between the postulated 'earliest form' and the present day. The works involved have been read, enjoyed, copied, reworked and interpreted through many contexts. Scholarship is largely ignorant of the original context of composition and most of the stages of the textual development of the work. Gaps in known transmission for whole groups of texts are a mystery.¹⁴ Textual transmission has had a great influence on what and how texts have reached the present from antiquity and this is rarely taken into account.¹⁵

The real problem is that each of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha presents a complex, multi-disciplinary quagmire. The researcher needs training in ancient languages, palaeographic skills to deal with manuscripts as many works lack critical editions, and the leisure to get to grips with the complexity of what is found. But the appetite for comparative sources means that there is a pressing de-

8. Bauckham, Davila and Panayotov 2013:xxxii

9. Kraft 2009:40, 49

10. Harlow 1996:10

11. Strange (1992); Wilson 2011:20-1

12. See Weeks (2013). Weeks, Gathercole and Stuckenbruch (2004) presents 24 witnesses synoptically.

13. See e.g., de Jonge and Tromp (1997) and Tromp (2005) *Greek Life of Adam and Eve*, Bergren (1996) on 2 *Esdras*, and Schwartz (2007) on the extreme case of *Testament of Solomon*.

14. Reeves 1999:154-63

15. See especially Reynolds and Wilson (1991). On the development of the Greek language see Browning 1983:1-88 and Horrocks (2010).

mand for a more sophisticated approach to such works. *Joseph and Aseneth* (*Jos. Asen.*) is an good example of these issues and opportunities.

This introduction will set out why *Jos. Asen.* was chosen for this study then give a summary of scholarship on its origins, development and modern interpretation. It then presents an overview of the thesis, the methodology used and appendices presented.

1.1.1 Why *Jos. Asen.*?

Jos. Asen. is a popular and accessible work among 'Jewish Pseudepigrapha'. It has generated its own field of literature and in recent decades students of religion and classics have regularly cited the story. However, despite the work of Christoph Burchard and a few others, considerable investigation is still needed for a nuanced understanding of its origins and transmission. Perusal of Standhartinger (2014), an overview of recent literature, reveals the relative lack of interest in text and transmission. For example, not a single study has been devoted to the oldest extant witness, the Syriac version. Burchard (1987a) remains the only wide-ranging and detailed investigation of the afterlife of the work.¹⁶ From a text-critical perspective the Greek witness to *Jos. Asen.* has a relatively straight-forward tradition in manuscripts. Yet many of the interesting manuscripts are unpublished and the principles of the minor critical edition, Burchard (2003a), mean that reconstruction of key manuscripts cannot be achieved using the edition alone. More broadly, whilst the ancient translations of *Jos. Asen.* have been edited into at least minor editions, the potential contribution they make to understanding the work's history have not been exploited. Consequently, *Jos. Asen.* provides fertile ground for addressing issues of transmission and its impact on understanding the work.

1.1.2 What is *Jos. Asen.*?

Jane Baun remarks that:

any critical text... is useful only for the most general identification and study of the work, since it creates (and privileges) an artificial version that never actually existed, while obscuring the particularity of actual, historical versions— created and used by actual, historical communities— preserved in the surviving manuscripts.¹⁷

16. Standhartinger (2009) and Tinca (2015) are restricted and add little.

17. Baun 2007:34

This is the case with *Jos. Asen.*. The manuscripts date from the sixth to nineteenth centuries, in a variety of languages. In the recent editions of the work in Greek, the text uses grammatical practices of the fourth century and contemporary scholarly conventions. Chapter divisions stem from Batiffol (1889) and versification from the early and mid-twentieth century for Burchard and Philonenko's editions respectively. The title it is known by today stems from the early-twentieth century.¹⁸

Different versions of the story survive in different contexts. Whilst the story is recognisably the same overall, the contents can be quite different from what is in a modern edition. For example, in the West for much of the last 750 years the story was most likely to be encountered in the condensed Latin version by Vincent of Beauvais, or its daughter translations.¹⁹ A monk at St Catherine's Convent, Mount Sinai, could have come across two different forms of the story. And within the Armenian Apostolic Church, the story is both found in Bibles, theological miscellanies, and provides a passage for the liturgy of Holy Matrimony.

Today, the most widely cited Greek editions of *Jos. Asen.* are: Burchard (2003a), based on the text found in three closely related ancient translations, whose closest Greek witness is in the Greek manuscripts of family *f*; and Philonenko (1968), based on a short recension of the Greek text and the related Slavonic translation (family *d*), which uses a different versification system. Both are available in English translations: for example, Burchard (1985a) and Cook (1984) respectively. Claims of a Semitic original (e.g., Aptowitz 1924:255) are now rejected.²⁰

1.1.3 The Story

The narrative, for chapters 1-22 at least, takes its cue from the brief mentions to Joseph's marriage to Aseneth and their offspring in Genesis 41.45, 50; 46.20, and the Joseph narrative more broadly. An outline using Burchard (2003a)'s text is given below.

Joseph is sent out by Pharaoh to collect grain at the start of the seven years of plenty. He comes to the territory of Heliopolis where Pharaoh's wisest satrap, Pentephres the priest resides. Pentephres

18. Who coined the title *Joseph and Aseneth* is unclear but the short-hand title adopted by the series editors of Brooks (1918) probably popularised it.

19. Burchard 1987a:370-8 gives an edition of Vincent's text and an introduction to his work.

20. Davila 2005:191

has a beautiful daughter called Aseneth who lives with seven maidens in a luxuriously decorated tower. Daily she engages in idol worship. Word of her beauty has spread even to Pharaoh's son and many desire to marry her, yet Aseneth despises all men.

Pentephres suggests to his daughter that Joseph would be a good husband, but Aseneth has only contempt. She flees to her tower when Joseph announces he will visit the palace to take refreshment. However, on seeing Joseph, Aseneth is deeply troubled and identifies Joseph as the sun come in his chariot. Joseph enters and sits down separately for dinner, but sees Aseneth peering down from her tower. Worried that she will harass him like the other women of Egypt, Joseph demands her eviction. Pentephres reassures Joseph that Aseneth is a virgin despising all men and also his daughter, and Joseph accepts Pentephres' invitation to call her. On her arrival, Pentephres encourages Aseneth to kiss Joseph, but Joseph rejects her, making a distinction between the God-fearers and 'strangers'. Seeing Aseneth's distress, Joseph blesses her. Aseneth departs to her tower, whilst Joseph and Pentephres finish their meal and depart: Joseph to his grain gathering, Pentephres and his wife and household to their estate.

Aseneth shuts herself off from her companions and begins 7 days and nights of repentance from her idolatry with fasting, mourning, soliloquies and prayer. She changes her 'royal' clothes for sackcloth and mourning black, destroys her idols and throws away her idol-associated food and drink. On the eighth day a man appears from the open heavens and greets her. This visitor, who is a heavenly version of Joseph and an important figure in the divine retinue, instructs Aseneth to change into wedding attire. He then tells her that he has been sent by God to confirm her acceptance and tell her that she will marry Joseph. He gives her a new name, 'City of Refuge'. Aseneth invites the visitor to take refreshment and he requests honeycomb. There follows a strange scene where Aseneth brings miraculously appearing honeycomb from her storeroom, followed by a series of apparently symbolic actions where Aseneth is fed from the honeycomb. Then the visitor marks a cross in the honeycomb which turns to blood, followed by miraculously appearing bees dressed in various colours who produce honeycomb on Aseneth, who are then ordered away to heaven. Some chose to harm Aseneth but fall down dead, only to be raised by the visitor. The man departs into heaven on a fiery chariot when Aseneth's back is turned, which leads Aseneth to question how she spoke with him and to recognise his identity.

A servant rushes in to say that Joseph's forerunners have arrived and Aseneth orders the steward to prepare the house and a feast. The steward is upset by Aseneth's appearance but when Aseneth comes to wash she finds her appearance transformed. The steward reappears and is overawed by her transformation. When Joseph arrives, Aseneth and her maidens greet him. After Joseph learns who she is and about her transformation they kiss and Aseneth receives spiritual gifts. Pentephres and his household return to find the couple sitting together. Pharaoh conducts the wedding ceremony and there is a report of the birth of Manasseh and Ephraim. Aseneth sings God's praises and recounts her conversion and transformation in a psalmic prayer.

Joseph's father Jacob and his brothers then come to Egypt. Aseneth persuades Joseph to go with her and her two sons to meet Jacob. The sons of Jacob's wives, Leah and Rachel, welcome Joseph and Aseneth, but the sons of the maidservants Bilhah and Zilpah, do not. Jacob accepts Aseneth and they return home with Levi and Simeon. However, Pharaoh's son sees Aseneth and burns with jealousy. He decides to kidnap Aseneth to make her his wife and kill Joseph. His attempt to enlist the support of Levi and Simeon fails. Levi proclaims that it does not befit one who worships God to injure another. Pharaoh's son succeeds in gaining the support of Jacob's maidservants' sons through deception. These brothers plot to ambush Aseneth and kill Joseph and his sons, and Pharaoh's son plans to kill Pharaoh. These plots fail and Aseneth is saved through a miracle in response to her prayer. Pharaoh's son is mortally wounded by Benjamin who was with Aseneth. Aseneth and Levi proclaim ethical lessons in the aftermath. Levi conveys Pharaoh's son to his father, who recognises Levi's righteousness. Pharaoh's son dies, then Pharaoh. Joseph rules the kingdom for forty-eight years until Pharaoh's grandson is crowned.

The reader/hearer is assumed to have a good knowledge of Genesis, not least to grasp the constraints of the narrative, e.g., that Pharaoh makes the marriage. A wealth of biblical allusion is present and *Jos. Asen.* preserves some unusual interpretive traditions known from elsewhere as well as some unique traditions.²¹ A central purpose for writing appears to be to explain a difficult corner of Scripture—how the daughter of an idol-worshipping priest could become the wife of one

21. See especially Kugel (1990).

of the patriarchs and the mother of the two half-tribes.²² In this respect, *Jos. Asen.* is an expansion supporting Scripture rather than setting up a rival account.²³

Secondary literature often refers to the Greek of the original composition and manuscripts as 'Koine'.²⁴ This is an imprecise description. The story is written in style that shares much in common with the Old Greek translation of the Old Testament. This starts from the opening words (καὶ ἐγένετο, "and it happened") which mirror the opening of the Greek version of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 2 Samuel and 1 Maccabees. Further, many phrases feel like they could be direct quotations from Scripture, yet none have been identified.

Overall, *Jos. Asen.* might be best described, following Horrocks' description of the Greek of the Septuagint: it reflects the ordinary written Greek of the Hellenistic and Roman period, a style that does not reflect the "Greek literary tradition nor the preoccupations of the rhetoricians,..".²⁵ In essence, from what can be gathered of the earliest achievable form of the text, *Jos. Asen.* was written in the non-classicising Koine of the Roman period. The choice this style was deliberate and probably shows nothing more than a desire by the author to communicate widely.²⁶

1.1.4 The Witnesses

Jos. Asen. is extant in more than 90 manuscripts, the majority of which are in Armenian. There are 16 Greek manuscripts preserving a broadly similar text, including one palimpsest, and two manuscripts with revisions of the story in what Burchard terms "early modern Greek" (Ngr).²⁷ Seven ancient 'translations' directly from Greek are also preserved: Syriac (Syr), Armenian (Arm), two Latin versions (Latin 1 (L1) and Latin 2 (L2)), Serbian Slavonic (Slav), Rumanian (Rum) and evidence of an Ethiopic translation.²⁸ The story also spread in a number of secondary translations, particularly

22. As Kugel 1997:21 notes "The ancient interpreter *always* had an axe to grind,.." That Joseph's marriage became an interpretive problem to be solved for is shown in the different solutions proposed by rabbinic writers— see Aptowitz (1924), abridged in Bittenwieser (1939).

23. Charlesworth 1987:139

24. E.g., Burchard 2005c:72 "Es ist heute unbestritten, dass JosAs original Koinegriechisch ist."

25. Horrocks 2010:106

26. Horrocks 2010:225-6

27. The use and applicability of this term is discussed in section 3. Secondary literature has used this term and it is left here in speech marks for ease of following previous textual arguments.

28. On the Ethiopic see Burchard 2003a:30 which cites a few quotations and mentions in Canon lists. Piovanelli (1993) suggests another allusion, but it is unconvincing.

through Vincent of Beauvais work (c. 1190-1264), even being translated into Icelandic.²⁹ The relationship of the primary witnesses is discussed below.

Following Burchard 2003a:16-26, the main Greek manuscripts are given in families with their siglum and manuscript name.

Affiliation	Siglum	Century	Manuscript
Related to the ancestor of family <i>f</i>	E	15	Mount Athos, Vatopedi 600
Family <i>f</i>	G	16	Greeley Collection, Virginia Beach, MS McKell
	F	17	Bucharest, Rumanian Academy Library Greek 966
	W	17	St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Greek 1976
Family <i>Mc</i>	M	11	Wrocław (Breslau), University Library, Rehdiger 26
	H	17	Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Panhagios Taphos 73
	J	17	Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Saba 389
	K	17	Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Saba 593
Family <i>a</i>	O	10	St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Greek 504
	A	11/12	Vatican Library, Vatican City, Vaticanus Graecus 803
	P	15	Mount Athos, Konstamonitou 14
	Q	15	Vatican Library, Vatican City, Palatinus Graecus 364
	C	15	Oxford, Bodleian Library, Baroccio Greek 148
	R	15/16	St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Greek 530
Family <i>d</i>	B	11	Vatican Library, Vatican City, Palatinus Graecus 17
	D	15	Oxford, Bodleian Library, Baroccio Greek 148

In the Greek tradition the title is often followed by the formula used by a deacon or lector to request a blessing from a priest before reading.³⁰ This suggests *Jos. Asen.* was read aloud in a liturgical setting, at least at an early period. It is unknown if this was still the practice when the youngest

29. Burchard 1985a:196-9. On the Icelandic versions see Cole (2017).

30. The abbreviation (εὐλόγησον πάτερ) or variants of it are found in manuscripts CPQR FW HJK BD. The situation with M is unknown. Burchard (2003a) does not include it in his survey of titles.

manuscripts were copied or, in this respect at least, evidence of the conservative nature of copyists. There is insufficient evidence to assert how *Jos. Asen.* was received in translation, but the manuscript context often suggests it was read devotionally.

No papyri containing the story have been identified, but it is difficult to judge the significance of this.³¹ There are no known citations of the story in ancient literature. From the extant witnesses, *Jos. Asen.* appears to have been a widely copied. The lack of reference to it in literary Christian writings from antiquity may reflect a disparaging attitude towards its colloquial style.³² Proposed ancient allusions, such as in Egeria's writing about her travels in the East in the fourth-century³³ or early Christian hagiography³⁴ do not demonstrate direct knowledge of the story.

1.1.5 Modern editions and theories of development

For much of the nineteenth-century *Jos. Asen.* was only known in the West through Vincent of Beauvais' abridgement. Printed editions of the Syriac, Serbian Slavonic and Armenian were known to specialists. Batiffol (1889)'s *Editio Princeps* of the Greek text made the story more widely accessible. It was based on manuscript A with an inconsistent apparatus from B, C and D, as well as occasional reference to Oppenheim's Latin translation of the Syriac. A Latin text (L1) prepared by Montague Rhodes James was published as well, though not integrated into the Greek apparatus. Scholars of Judaism and early Christianity initially took little interest as Batiffol dated the work to the fifth-century,³⁵ although some soon argued for a Jewish provenance.³⁶

31. On the preservation of papyri see Bagnall (2012). Blumell 2012:166-9, 318-25 notes the pattern of attestation of apocryphal and extra-biblical works at Oxyrhynchus, especially the relative absence of 'Jewish Pseudepigrapha' found. On the dubious reliability of papyri for the textual record see Hägg 1983:230; Royse 2013:473.

32. This may be compared to the small number of (disparaging) comments about the Greek novels written in the same era that most scholars believe *Jos. Asen.* to have been written in. See Reardon 1989:12.

33. Burchard 1987a:554-6. The passage is included in Peter the Deacon's *On the Holy Places*, written around 1137. Unfortunately this is not part of the extant section of Egeria's writings that are preserved, and Peter inserted material into Egeria's account. See Wilkinson 1981:179-80 on Peter the Deacon, p. 204 for the passage itself.

34. See Burchard 1987a:559, Schwartz (1984); Kraemer 1998:235-6

35. Batiffol 1889:35. Batiffol 1898:303 noted the conclusions of Duchesne and Massebieau that *Jos. Asen.* was a purely Jewish work but felt that whilst they were seducing, he would not subscribe to them without reserving the possibility of strong Christian alteration, especially in the traits of the Eucharist.

36. e.g., Kohler 1902:172 "A Greek Apocrypha of pronounced Jewish character, with only one small Christian interpolation."

Despite a few dissenting voices,³⁷ scholars have been optimistic that the extant witnesses allow an early form of the story to be recovered. The early text-critical investigations have been well documented elsewhere.³⁸ Text-critical work of value today starts with Burchard (1965). This greatly increased the number of known manuscripts and identified the textual families accepted today. Among many contributions, Burchard showed that Batiffol had based his edition on a developed version of the text. He stated that a new edition was needed which should be based on what he then called family *b* (FW G E and all the translated versions except Slavonic), emended from the other texts as text-critical investigation showed necessary. However, Burchard did not publish an edition of the text, only some sample passages.

Philonenko (1968) took a different approach. He consulted the microfilm of seven of the Greek manuscripts (A, B, D, E, F, G, H) as well as using a Latin translation of the Slavonic, Syriac, the editions then available of the Armenian and Latin 1, and a manuscript from Latin 2.³⁹ From these he envisaged a four-stage theory of textual development: the short text (family *d*, BD and Slavonic), expanded into the first long recension (Burchard's family *b* containing the other ancient translations), expanded and hellenised into the second long recension (family *c*), which was finally expanded into the third long recension (family *a*).⁴⁰ Philonenko considered he was only reconstructing the archetype of family *d*, seeing the textual tradition as so hopelessly confused that the 'original' was beyond recovery.⁴¹ He recognised that there were lacunae in his base text and eclectically corrected them from the other families.⁴² However, Philonenko's apparatus was sporadic.

Burchard's first edition was published in an obscure journal in 1979 without an apparatus,⁴³ which he later described as a 'stab at it, not too wholeheartedly'.⁴⁴ A corrected version with accents and aspiration was published in Burchard 1996:161-209, known as *VorIT* (*Ein Vorläufiger Griechischer Text*) and constructed on the principles he had previously set out. Burchard's full reappraisal came

37. e.g., Schwartz (1984); Kraemer (1998); Elder 2016:135. Tinca 2015:185 cites Nicolae Cartoian's opinion that the text was modified "with a view to the model of the post-Constantinian hagiographies of the second century AD."

38. Burchard 1970:8-10; 2003a:34-9; Philonenko 1968:16-21

39. Philonenko 1968:23

40. Philonenko 1968:10-21

41. Philonenko 1968:22-3

42. Philonenko 1968:25-6

43. *Dielheimer Blätter zum Alten Testament* 14 (1979): 2-53. Corrections published in *DBAT* 16 (1982):37-9.

44. Burchard 1987a:34

in his minor critical edition, Burchard (2003a), with further argumentation in (2003b) and (2005a). This revised text is known as *KritHer* (*Kritisch Herausgegeben*).

The key elements of the new hypothesis (Burchard 2003a:11-34; (2003b); 2005a:94-5) are: first, Burchard's original *b* family disintegrated into: (i) Syriac, Armenian and Latin 2; (ii) new family *f* (the common ancestor behind FW and Rumanian, G and "early Modern Greek", and L1);⁴⁵ (iii) manuscript E. Secondly, that families *a* and *d* shared a common ancestor and might be better referred to as sub-families of ancestor *ad*. Thirdly, that the previously unexplored palimpsest M was closely affiliated to family *c*, hitherto believed to have finished at 16.17y, and covered the whole work.⁴⁶ M is old and preserves readings only otherwise attested in Syriac, Armenian and Latin 2. Consequently, the significance of family Mc was increased and its readings needed greater consideration. Fourthly, the significance of the transliteration of Greek majuscule into minuscule had not previously received sufficient attention. Analysis shows that only the Syriac version (dated to the sixth century) can be said with certainty to originate directly from a majuscule *Vorlage*. It is difficult to tell how many transliterations were made, but Burchard suggested two on textual evidence.⁴⁷ Family *f* texts share a common reading at 10.2 (πυλωρὸν)⁴⁸, and Syriac, Armenian and L2 suppose (ῥ μλωρὸς, miller), coming from a misreading of the majuscule Π and Μ. This solution made it easier to understand why Syriac shares so many readings with Armenian and Latin 2 against the rest of the tradition, and why many of these readings are superior. The place of E was not immediately clear, but Burchard saw it as the descendent of the transliteration behind the extant Greek texts. Fifthly, reassessment of the tradition suggested that *Life of Joseph* (*LJos*) was coupled with *Jos. Asen.* at an early stage, and that it was transliterated with *Jos. Asen.* on both occasions. These conclusions led Burchard to think that what can be reconstructed is how the text of *Jos. Asen.* looked around 500 CE, although there are some areas of uncertainty.⁴⁹ Investigation be-

45. Although Burchard 2003b:243 was skeptical as to whether they were close enough to be called a 'family'.

46. This discovery was announced in Burfeind (2001).

47. Previously Burchard had suggested that there were three: Burchard 1999:88 in commenting on the Armenian and L2 witness in relation to the Greek; Burchard 2003b:244 suggests that Mc *ad* and *f* E came through separate transliterations.

48. Families *a* and *d* have the derivative reading θυρωρὸν.

49. Burchard 2003a:33 lists e.g., 15.7, 12x; 16.17; 18.9; 21.10-21; 22.13.

fore this point is impossible, but Burchard suspects the difference between the original and this version was probably not large.

Fink (2008) set out detailed arguments for the relationships of the different versions of the text with a plethora of examples. This enabled Fink to produce a stem diagram of the Greek texts and archetypes of the translated versions.⁵⁰ Fink's biggest departure from Burchard's work is arguing for four occasions of "contamination" within the textual tradition,⁵¹ a suggestion to which scholarship has yet to react. On the basis of her findings, Fink produced a lightly revised version of Burchard's Greek text, mainly removing material only supported by families *a* and *d*, though without apparatus. She also provided an edition of the legible text of M for 16.13-29.9, and an introduction to and edition of both sides of the Latin 2 tradition. Fink (2009) provides a condensed overview of her textual argument, stemma and an introduction to her revised text.

The only sustained criticism of the Burchard-Fink hypothesis has come from Standhartinger. Reviewing Burchard (2003a), Standhartinger 2006:152-4 made a number of criticisms. She was skeptical of the low number of transliterations proposed from majuscule to minuscule and dismissed the key reading Burchard adduces as evidence for two transliterations. Standhartinger argued that Burchard's reconstructed reading of ἡ μὺλωρός is impossible— it should be ἡ μὺλωθίς. Also, Standhartinger is curious as to what the link between *Jos. Aсен.* and *LJos* amounts to in Burchard's theory. Standhartinger thinks the relationship between families *a* and *d* remain unclear and criticises Burchard for his concept of how *d*'s shortening took place.⁵² Addressing the Burchard-Fink hypothesis, Standhartinger 2014:360 adds that the textual examples provided by Fink could be reversed, that they do not rule out the possibility of a *d* family manuscript having been transliterated, and that Burchard-Fink are tied too much to forcing "multiform textual traditions into a single line."

Standhartinger's criticisms appear excessively sceptical and stem, perhaps, from not understanding the text-critical basis of *KritHer*. It is simply incorrect to state that Burchard's edition is made "from the Syrian, Armenian and Latin versions retranslated into Greek with the help of four quite

50. Fink 2008:17

51. Fink 2008:48-71

52. See also Standhartinger 2015:243-4.

young Greek manuscripts."⁵³ There are good parallels for a low rate of transliteration. For example, study of the textual tradition *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* also found evidence for only two transliterations.⁵⁴ *μλωρός* is a plausible reading on the evidence available and scholarship's (limited) knowledge of early and mid-Byzantine Greek. On the connection between families *a* and *d* Standhartinger needs to address the specific examples of Burchard (1999b) and Fink 2008:45-7. Regarding abridgement, the redaction of family *d* is hardly unusual in the context of Byzantine reworking of texts. Finally *Jos. Asen.* has nothing like the multiform textual tradition of works probably redacted around the same time.⁵⁵ Indeed, *Jos. Asen.* has a remarkably tight tradition that makes Fink's proposed stemma the best hypothesis for the work's development to date.

1.1.6 Aim of the thesis

The aim of this thesis is to understand how the retelling of *Jos. Asen.* in different contexts affected its interpretation and what that suggests about the interests of the redactors. It considers how a work came to be used and reused as part of a swath of literature between canonical Scripture and the profane, which Bovon describes as 'useful to the soul'.⁵⁶

As David Parker notes: "To understand the work we have to understand the texts and the documents."⁵⁷ To fulfil the aim, this thesis returns to manuscript witnesses wherever possible to focus on transmission and transformation. The appendices are provided to give an accessible resource for interested readers. It is the author's hope that these will move scholarship away from a fixation over *Jos. Asen.* in its so-called 'long' and 'short' forms and focus more on how transmission has shaped its telling.

53. Standhartinger 2015:243-4.

54. de Jonge 1993:8

55. For comparison see Baun 2007:35-9, or Beaton 1996:35 on *Digenes Akrites*.

56. This tripartite description follows Bovon (2012) and (2015) as a categorisation for works found in manuscripts that were read for learning and devotion alongside the Bible. Whilst Bovon explicitly relates it to 'Christian apocrypha', the present author regards it as justified for Christian use of 'Jewish Pseudepigrapha' as well.

57. Parker 2012:13

1.2 *Jos. Asen.* in modern research

Chesnutt (1995) provides a survey of secondary literature to 1990; Standhartinger (2014) covers 1987-2014. This section focuses on major contributions in the field, themes in research since 2003, and *Jos. Asen.* and the novel.

1.2.1 Works shaping the field from before 2003

Seven publications from before 2003 are still influential in modern research.

Philonenko (1968). This work has arguably had the most disproportionate effect on the study of *Jos. Asen.* Philonenko argued that Burchard's 1965 thesis of *Jos. Asen.*'s textual development was wrong, instead championing a shorter form found in two Greek manuscripts and the Slavonic. He provided a long introduction together with his Greek text and French translation. Philonenko argued for reading the story as a Hellenistic romance and identified three types within it: a missionary novel, a *roman à clef*, and mystery novel. He identified numerous parallels with non-Jewish or Christian religious texts. Readers need to decide whether Philonenko's textual findings as well as these parallels hold the weight placed on them, or whether they are "largely speculative".⁵⁸

Burchard (1985a). Burchard's introduction and English translation of *VorlT* with copious notes is still the most commonly used English-language introduction to the work. It helped make *Jos. Asen.* accessible to a wider audience and set the course for what came to be near consensus views in the early 1990s concerning date, provenance, origin and purpose. Whilst this introduction is a useful starting point, it is now outdated. The copious parallels to the Greek romantic novels provided in notes to the translation gives the impression of far greater similarity than is the case. Also, whilst some reference is made to the omissions or additions of versions of the story, it is not done with sufficient consistency to allow an appreciation of the different traditions. Burchard's notes state that *Jos. Asen.* several times provides the earliest attestation of a Greek word alongside the Septuagint or New Testament. This can create a false sense of antiquity for the story where much uncertainty surrounds lexicographical dating.

58. Brock 1969:588

Chesnutt (1995) is an expansion of his 1986 doctoral thesis, updated to 1990, which aimed "to investigate Aseneth's conversion and clarify its nature, *religionsgeschichtliche* affinities, and function within the larger purposes of the work."⁵⁹ He set out to highlight the methodological problems in previous literature and provide an analysis the central event: Aseneth's conversion. This involved both a descriptive analysis of conversion and a comparative analysis of *Jos. Asen.* in relation to models of conversion and initiation in the Hellenistic era. The merits of Chesnutt's work are in encouraging *Jos. Asen.* to be read on its own terms, and developing a reading related to the whole work.⁶⁰ Four considerations apply to this book and his other publications. First, he makes specific assumptions about provenance, authorship and date. These are not unquestionable and his method of interpretation tends toward mirror-reading on their foundation.⁶¹ Secondly, Chesnutt refuses to consider any possibility of a Christian background, nor how this 'Jewish story' appealed to the Christians who transmitted it, which can lead to absurdity.⁶² Thirdly, Chesnutt makes no attempt to engage with text-critical issues and takes the editions he works from as equivalent to the original text.⁶³ Fourthly, Longnecker criticised Chesnutt's definition of conversion ("the reorientation of a person's life"⁶⁴) as too vague and placing undue weight on chapters 10-13.⁶⁵

Bohak (1996a) is a revision of his 1994 doctoral thesis. Bohak's main conclusion is that *Jos. Asen.* is "a fictional history which 'foretells,' and justifies, the establishment of the Jewish temple in Heliopolis."⁶⁶ He argues that the author was a Heliopolitan Jew connected with Onias' temple who wrote in the middle of the second century BCE, although he does not rule out a later period. He argues that the work was part of a wider Oniad legitimisation programme which included textual altera-

59. Chesnutt 1995:15

60. These arguments are recycled in Chesnutt (1988) and (1996)

61. This is taken to the extreme in Chesnutt (1991) where he makes broad statements about the status of women in Judaism of the period from Rebekah's portrayal in *Jubilees*, Aseneth in *Jos. Asen.*, and Job's wife and daughters in *Testament of Job*.

62. For example, Chesnutt 2005:131 takes a parallel from the Babylonian Talmud as significant in understanding the Jewish background of bread, cup and oil, where parallels from (earlier) Christian sources are not considered. See also Chesnutt (2006) where *Jos. Asen.* is presented as typifying Jewish views on food purity and as a useful comparison to New Testament examples, without considering them in the context of these traditions.

63. Especially Chesnutt (1997) where he does not mention the textual problems associated with the prayers of chapter 12-13.

64. Chesnutt 1995:16

65. Longnecker 1997:282

66. Bohak 1996a:102

tion of biblical passages. The main criticisms of Bohak's argument are whether the Septuagint was available for the purposes Bohak uses it for, and that it reduces the story to a single purpose, an *apologia* for an alternative temple, that is neither clear from the narrative nor had any bearing on its transmission.⁶⁷ The starting point for his analysis is the 'enigmatic' honeybees scene. Bohak makes a lot of interpretive leaps on the basis of it to produce specific and detailed conclusions. Bohak (1996b) is more reticent. This thesis still finds adherents today.⁶⁸

Standhartinger (1995) challenged the previous consensus. Standhartinger assumes that both the reconstructions of Burchard's longer text and Philoneko's shorter text came into being in antiquity. Through literary analysis, these are shown to contain differing views of women. Standhartinger suggests that the shorter text is earlier and the longer text was expanded to fit a more conservative view of women. The two versions existed side-by-side addressing different functions.⁶⁹

Standhartinger brings an insightful literary reading of both versions, but her argument rests on dubious assumptions. The transmission of Greek literature from antiquity means it is highly unlikely that both versions were transliterated from majuscule to minuscule, and there is no textual evidence to support the short version prior to transliteration.⁷⁰ Standhartinger's assumed process for the development of the longer text from the shorter text does not withstand scrutiny.⁷¹ Not all of Standhartinger's readings are accepted. Humphrey 2000:71-4 notes a series of alternative interpretations that challenge Standhartinger's conclusions. Also the assumed dating between approximately 100 BCE and 100 CE is important to Standhartinger's social setting, yet the significance of this assumption is not highlighted.

Kraemer (1998) also challenged the supposed consensus, independently to Standhartinger, in a major shift from her earlier work.⁷² Kraemer argued for several points, including that: the scholarly consensus on the background of the story is made up of assumptions that are interlocking, without

67. Humphrey 2000:35-7

68. E.g., Hacham (2012)

69. Standhartinger (1996) summarises the thesis and applies it to chapters 14-17.

70. Reynolds and Wilson 1991:60

71. Burchard 2005a:92 fn.34. See also Burchard's arguments on the secondary nature of the *d* family in Burchard (1970), bolstered in Burchard (1999b) and including detailed engagement with Standhartinger's arguments.

72. Kraemer (1988)

foundation and untenable, and that a more reasonable, 'agnostic' range of proposals can be made; the shorter text is earlier than the longer text, though the original of both is no longer recoverable, and both were known at a very early period; the redaction to create the longer version reflects the concerns of the redactor(s); both versions show the adjuration of an angel by Aseneth; and Aseneth's gender is a significant factor in the story. This work should be read in conjunction with Kraemer (1999) which gives a (strained) case for possible Samaritan authorship, and Kraemer (2000), which replies to specific criticism of her book in private correspondence by George Nickelsburg.

Kraemer's greatest contribution has been highlighting the many assumptions that had become accepted fact about *Jos. Asen.*. The most influential of her arguments has been the preference for the earlier dating of the shorter text. Kraemer's thesis has several problems, of which three have particular significance. First, Kraemer's textual suggestions are wholly inductive, lack text-critical rebuttal of Burchard's theory,⁷³ and do not address transmission evidence. Secondly, at no point does Aseneth actually adjure an angel as Kraemer's parallels envisage.⁷⁴ Thirdly, the parallels that Kraemer proposes are sometimes superficial,⁷⁵ and are not necessarily as late as Kramer states.⁷⁶

Humphrey (2000) is a study guide which provides a useful survey of literature in thematic categories as well as a Humphrey's own literary analysis of the story. The book is a good introduction to the field with useful critiques of the literature, often with a balanced description of opposing views. However, this is now dated, especially on textual matters.⁷⁷

1.2.2 The contribution of Christoph Burchard

Christoph Burchard is the most significant contributor to the study of *Jos. Asen.*. He first published on the story in 1961⁷⁸ and articles on the Armenian version are still forthcoming. History will probably celebrate Burchard's legacy for *Jos. Asen.* as that of a philologist: tracking down and collating

73. Humphrey 2000:19-21

74. Collins 2005: 110. Brooke 2005:173-5 argues that Kraemer's argument for an adjuration is flawed. Instead, better parallels for angelomorphic characteristics can be seen in Qumran materials which Kraemer does not consider. But whether Brooke's interpretation is any more plausible is questionable.

75. Chesnutt 2000:761

76. Chesnutt 2000:762; Humphrey 2000:36. Standhartinger (2000) provides alternative examples not considered by Kraemer.

77. Humphrey (1999) is also a survey of key issues, much abbreviated, but amusingly written in the first person of Aseneth.

78. "Ei nach einem Ausdruck des Wissens oder Nichtwissens: John 9.25, Act 19.2, 1Cor 1.16, 7.16." *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 52 (1961): 73-82

manuscripts, producing the (now standard) critical edition of the Greek, Slavonic, and Armenian versions. Nevertheless his work has ranged far and wide and provided the foundation for much of modern scholarship.

Any scholarship on *Jos. Asen.* has to engage with Burchard's work to be of value. However, becoming acquainted with Burchard's careful and nuanced thinking can be a challenge. There are more than 25 monographs or articles that deal specifically with *Jos. Asen.*⁷⁹ Even Standhartinger (2014)'s survey did not manage to track down all his publications,⁸⁰ although it was not her purpose to summarise Burchard's contribution. This survey provides a brief thematic overview of Burchard's work and references for arguments. Publications on specific versions are covered in the relevant chapter.

Sources. Burchard is responsible for tracking down most of the known manuscripts of *Jos. Asen.* Burchard 2003a:2-8 gives an overview that should be supplemented, where not superseded, by (1987a), (2000) for L2, (2008) for family *f*,⁸¹ and (2010) for the Armenian.

Textual history. A sketch of Burchard's revised position was given above. Burchard has devoted considerable ink to defending why his proposals are more likely than those of the three challengers who have sought to show the priority of family *d*: Philonenko, Standhartinger and Kraemer.

The first opposition to Burchard's reconstruction of the textual tradition came in Philonenko (1968). Burchard criticises Philonenko's edition and theory in 5 ways.⁸² First, Philonenko does not make full use of the Slavonic to amend his Greek text and thus it is needlessly deficient in places. Secondly, Philonenko's apparatus is eclectic in referencing other manuscripts. Consequently it is not possible to scrutinise Philonenko's editorial decisions. Thirdly, family *d* preserves several secondary readings compared to other branches of the tradition. This would not be expected of the family preserving the earliest version of the text if all others stemmed from it. Fourthly, family *d* shows a closer connection to family *a* (Philonenko's latest stage in the text's development) where

79. In addition to the cited bibliography, see also: *Der dreizehnte Zeuge* (FRLANT 103; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970); and *Joseph und Aseneth* (JSHRZ II.4; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus G. Mohn, 1983).

80. Omitting Burchard (1990).

81. See also Fink 2008:198-225

82. See especially Burchard (1970) expanded with (1999b); 1974:80-3, 95-6, 98ff.; (1980), 1987b:33-4

they overlap, rather than family *b*, his the first long recension and supposedly the closest stage in the development from the short version. Further, a number of the joint readings of family *a* and *d* appear to be secondary compared to the rest of the tradition. This suggests Philonenko's model of development is flawed. Fifthly, the longer gaps in family *d* compared to the rest of the tradition appear to be the result of abridgement by the redactor of family *d*, rather than expansion in the rest of the tradition.

Standhartinger (1995) provided the next challenge. Burchard (1999b) explicitly deals with the textual difficulties of Standhartinger's arguments. First, Standhartinger worked from Philonenko's edition without sufficient criticism of Philonenko's textual choices, which occasionally leads her astray. This included not investigating the textual background of some observations she made, in particular the possible reasons for why B occasionally agrees with other witnesses against D and Slavonic. Secondly, some differences between her shorter text and longer text are over-interpreted. Thirdly, Standhartinger's attempt to show that all the longer passages missing from the shorter text are all expansions on a common theme in the longer text is unconvincing and much evidence is disputable. Related to this, her attempt to show contradictions as a result of expansion in the longer text are not always persuasive. Finally, the picture of textual development described by Standhartinger is unlikely.

The challenge that continues to find adherents is Kraemer (1998).⁸³ Burchard observes four particular weaknesses. First, he notes that texts were shortened by redactors as well as expanded, particularly where they were unprotected by its status or an external means. When comparing the 'shorter' and 'longer' versions, there is little shortening towards the beginning of the story, but it increases towards the end. This is a pattern found in other traditions. Further, if the longer text was an expansion, it would be expected that in expanding the shorter text some material would have been lost along the way. Yet nearly all of the shorter text is found in the longer text. Secondly, Kraemer's arguments for biblical touches being used to expand the short version are reversible, at least in some cases. From the other perspective, removal of what modern scholars might identify as biblical allusions could be the result of unrelated redactional decisions. Thirdly, Kraemer's array

83. Burchard 2003a:41-46 gives an overview critique found in various publications.

of parallel materials cited may apply to a period prior to that which Kraemer allows, providing for an earlier dating. And finally, Kraemer did not offer any investigation of the textual development and thus did not take account of the proximity of the text of families *d* and *a*.

Critical edition. Burchard (2003a), *KritHer*, was a considerable step towards the earliest achievable form of the text of *Jos. Asen.*. However, due to funding constraints it is only an amended reprint of *VorlT*, with a critical apparatus, introduction to the textual history and some supplementary notes and indexes to facilitate further research.⁸⁴ At that time, no edition of Armenian or Latin 2 had been published.⁸⁵ The findings from this work need to be integrated into the critical edition.

Transmission history. Today scholars of the Apocrypha and Jewish Pseudepigrapha are increasingly aware of the importance of the transmission of a work for their interpretation. Burchard (1987a) investigated the material witness to *Jos. Asen.* and possible traces of influence of the story on ancient and early modern literature. It highlighted the importance of the material circumstances and context of transmission, which is often overlooked. The extant ancient witness to *Jos. Asen.* is entirely Christian.⁸⁶ Burchard and Burfeind (1998) and Burchard (2008) are extensions of this work.

Relationship to LJos. *LJos* is homiletic work written in the basic written Koine of the Roman and early Byzantine period. It has two parts: a typology of Joseph with Jesus, and exegesis of the Joseph story from Genesis. Today, scholars consider it part of the Greek Ephrem Pseudepigrapha. Translations into a range of ancient languages demonstrate its popularity.⁸⁷ Burchard 1987a:560-1 made an argument for the significance of the link between *Jos. Asen.* and *LJos*. He proposed that the two works were coupled together at an early stage in the transmission process with the apparent intention of forming a complete picture of Joseph. This coupling may have been a decisive moment in the history of *Jos. Asen.* because the two works are transmitted together in much of the tradition. At that time, Burchard conceived *LJos* coming from Ephrem the Syrian (306-77 CE) and supposed

84. Burchard 2005a:96. Fink (2008) is a further step, though it has to be read with Burchard (2003a) for an apparatus.

85. Addressed by Burchard (2010) and Fink (2008) respectively.

86. Burchard 1987a:551

87. See Poirier 1989:107-11

the Armenian version was translated in the sixth or seventh century. Thus he thought it likely that *LJos* and *Jos. Asen.* were brought together before this point.⁸⁸

In Burchard's revised theory, *LJos* received more attention. With the discovery that manuscript M was affiliated to family *c*, *LJos* is found with *Jos. Asen.* in all Greek families. Burchard 2003a:27-32 proposed the coupling of the two works in the order *LJos-Jos. Asen.* at an early stage in majuscule manuscripts. The pairing may have been the cause for the transliteration. *LJos* was probably composed in the fifth or sixth century. The joint *Urexemplar* may be older than the seventh century, but the Syriac witness, which does not contain *LJos*, prevents further speculation. The biggest difficulty for this theory is the lack of text-critical investigation into *LJos*. Research is needed to see whether the proposal of a joint transliteration is supported by the witness to *LJos*.

Relationship to Christian Origins. Burchard noted that it was New Testament scholars interested in the origins of Christianity that brought about the flowering of interest in *Jos. Asen.*, starting in the 1950s.⁸⁹ His concern has been that *Jos. Asen.* "has too often been used as a quarry, without first giving it the benefit of that good old fashioned exegesis..."⁹⁰ An article such as Burchard (1985b) seeks to show how *Jos. Asen.* may properly be used as a parallel to the New Testament for interpretation. Burchard's longest treatment of the relationship, (1987c), provides an overview of what scholars can and cannot expect from *Jos. Asen.* before moving to look at contemporary usage of the story. Burchard then offers suggestions about how *Jos. Asen.* could be a useful parallel for scholars through particular pericope. Burchard's plea for investigation of ethics in *Jos. Asen.* was answered by Zerbe 1993:72-97.⁹¹

Scholarship needs to be aware of the assumptions that underlie Burchard's position and apply caution. *Jos. Asen.*, and other literature often assumed to have a similar origin, are of questionable worth as parallels because so much uncertainty remains about their origin and text.⁹²

88. See also Burchard 1985:196; 1987b:34-5

89. E.g., Burchard 1974:78

90. Burchard 1987b:42

91. Burchard 1985b:109. Bolyki (2003) has not read Zerbe (1993), adds little and contains several mistakes.

92. E.g., see de Jonge (1993) and (2000).

1.2.3 Themes since 2003

There has been an avalanche of publications related to *Jos. Asen.* since 2003. This section is not an exhaustive overview but considers different themes before making observations. Research around *Jos. Asen.* and the novel is covered later.

Provenance. The impact of Kraemer (1998) took time to appear. Docherty (2004) commenced investigation of the genre by merely stating the story is Jewish. Hacham (2012) took Bohak (1996) as a given and used it to explore a historical setting for chapters 23-29.⁹³ Bolyki (2005) sought to demonstrate an Egyptian setting but only managed to conclude that a network of allusions is the most cogent argument available.⁹⁴ Collins (2005) sought to provide a firmer argument for Jewish provenance on the balance of probability, whilst Davila (2005) was more cautious. He concluded that describing *Jos. Asen.* as a Christian work from late antiquity requires "the least extrapolation from the earliest physical evidence... and perhaps should be our working hypothesis for the present, but none of the other possibilities should be dismissed."⁹⁵ Some proposals are more radical. Putthoff (2014) argued the story is really a message for an "elite [Jewish] cell who possess an elevated state of existence and who channel the re-creating Spirit of God to other humans." Conversely Nir (2012) argues that *Jos. Asen.* was composed for Christian purposes to persuade polytheists to join the Church and accept Christian religion.⁹⁶

Text. Several important contributions have been made from a text-critical perspective. Aside from Burchard's contribution, noted above, two new editions of the Greek text have been published. Tragan (2005) makes minor adjustments to *VorlT*⁹⁷ and provides an incomplete apparatus, translation into Catalan and out-dated introduction.⁹⁸ Fink (2008) give a lightly revised text of *KritHer*, principally removing passages supported by families *a* and *d* only, and copious textual notes. The text is reprinted in Fink (2009). Three new editions of translated versions have appeared: Fink

93. Mitchell 2009:203-5 places *Jos. Asen.* in the second century BCE apparently for the same reason.

94. Bolyki would have benefited from engaging with Kraemer (1998).

95. Davila 2005:195

96. Nir (2013) is chapter 5 and parts of chapter 2 of Nir (2012). On some problems with Nir's allegorical arguments see Wright (2015).

97. See Standhartinger 2014:361.

98. e.g., Tragan was unaware of Burfeind (2001) and the identification of M.

(2008) published an edition of Latin 2; Burchard (2010) is a minor critical edition of the Armenian; and Biosca i Bas (2012) is a revised edition of Latin 1.

Whilst Holtz (1968) championed the identification of Christian interpolations in *Jos. Asen.*, few scholars accepted his position. However, Collins 2005:107, 111 has suggested that chapter 12 and the solar imagery in chapter 5 stem from later redaction and Heijne 2010:155 suggests that there are Christian interpolations, although without specifying what they are. Without detailed supporting argument these are only speculations. Jovanović (2011), who assumed the priority of family *d*, argued that the Slavonic 'interpolation' in 27.8 of Philonenko's edition represents an expansion that fits with Eastern Christian liturgical tradition. This argument is seriously flawed: a similar prayer is found across the textual tradition. The absence of the prayer in manuscripts B and D appears to be one of many minor omissions, rather than an interpolation by Slavonic given the witness outside the Slavonic. Indeed, it is questionable whether Jovanović really understood Burchard's position.⁹⁹

Five themes in *Jos. Asen.* have attracted particular attention: honeycomb, new creation, eating, angels, and kissing. Explaining the wondrously appearing *honeycomb* and the events of chapter 16 continues to attract attention. Hubbard (1997) has been a stimulus for recent research, arguing against an identification with the manna of Exodus. Instead, Aseneth being fed honey symbolises new birth. Portier-Young (2005) sees Aseneth's feeding as manifesting the divine mercy to Aseneth, and how Aseneth understands God's capacity for mercy. This allows Aseneth to model an ethic of mercy and to practice forgiveness.¹⁰⁰ Deutsch (2011) takes up the symbolism of honey and wisdom, and speculates that this honey symbolises Torah.¹⁰¹ Putthoff (2014) returns to seeing a manna allusion as the best explanation and thinks its esoteric nature is for those "in the know".

Often related to the honeycomb is the theme of *new creation*. This is the meaning of the story according to Deutsch 2011:328. Putthoff 2014:107 sees the story as a "*message crypté*", a model for initiates for their own recreation. Charles (2011) takes this theme more broadly and provides an in-

99. The argument is repeated in Jovanović (2013), which states (p.224 fn. 64): "Burchard still opts for the longer version in his latest critical edition of the [*sic*] *Joseph and Aseneth*, although it is not the *b* version that he favors any longer. It is dispersed into three other versions according to him, which he identifies now as *a*, *Mc*, and *d*."

100. Consideration of Portier-Young's analysis of the biblical use of honey should be balanced with Forti (2006)'s broader survey.

101. Deutsch 2011:338, 341

sightful literary reading of Philonenko's version.¹⁰² Thiessen (2014) argued that Aseneth's 8-day period of repentance represents a biblical model for transformation.¹⁰³ He cites (questionable) biblical parallels of circumcision and transformation of Levites for service at the altar.

Eating plays an important role in the story. Lieber (2004) argues that Aseneth's transformation is affected by her meal with the angel and this meal has an eschatological dimension. Through eating, Aseneth is ontologically transformed into an angelic object of vision and "perhaps eternal nourishment."¹⁰⁴ Chesnutt (2005) and (2006) focus on how meals develop self-identity and argues that *Jos. Asen.*'s repeated reference to a triad of eating, drinking and anointing are tied to avoidance of impurity. Bons (2013) focuses on whether Jews could eat with Gentiles through a survey of similarities and divergencies between Genesis 43 and *Jos. Asen.*¹⁰⁵

The presence of the heavenly man in chapters 14-17 has focused attention on *angels*. Brooke (2005) sees itself disposing of the interpretations of Bohak and Kraemer. Through reading *Jos. Asen.* with the angelological material from Qumran, Brooke suggests that:

it can be convincingly argued that the role of angelomorphism in *Joseph and Aseneth* could have been appreciated by many Jewish readers and hearers at any time in the late Second Temple period and beyond.¹⁰⁶

Readers may find Brooke's discussion of Kraemer insightful but his use of Qumran sources seems a forced context. Brooke (2005), Deutsch 2011:335 and Thiessen 2014:244 think Aseneth becomes an angel, a reading that seems to ignore Aseneth's character in chapters 22-29 at the very least. Hirschberger (2010) develops a narrative reading based on Aseneth's many changes of clothing. She sees Aseneth's heavenly visitor showing that the Israelite God had taken what was reserved for the Egyptian gods. Heijne (2010) only deals with the angel-similarities of Jacob and ignores the heavenly visitor.

102. Readers have to check verse references to discover this. However, Charles (2009) is based on Burchard's edition.

103. Thiessen takes Douglas (1988)'s anthropological study of liminality and conversion to its logical biblical conclusion.

104. Lieber 2004:77

105. Smit 2014:370 uses *Jos. Asen.* as an example of fasting for intense dedication within Judaism. His observations on the role of fasting, food and drink in 4 Ezra also suggests that *Jos. Asen.* could be interpreted through a similar reading strategy.

106. Brooke 2005:76

Finally, *kissing*. Penn (2002) argued that kissing establishes and transforms identity in the story. He seeks to show that *Jos. Asen.*'s depiction of kissing is closer to Christian parallels than Greco-Roman examples. Burchard (2005b) also holds that kissing is not erotic in *Jos. Asen.*, but marks dividing lines. Through analysis of kissing over the whole work Burchard also shows the limitations of Penn's argument.

Scholars have also attempted to shed light on *Jos. Asen.* using different reading strategies. Charles (2009) gives a post-colonial reading of the story. Zoran (forthcoming) looks at the use of folkloric motifs to understand why Aseneth's tower and the family's field of inheritance seem enigmatic through their lack of narrative function. Pervo (2006) uses *Jos. Asen.* as a comparison to helping grasp how ancient readers understood the literary genre of the Acts of the Apostles.¹⁰⁷ Scialabba (2014) also compares *Jos. Asen.* with Acts of the Apostles and notes shared linguistic and theological features in conversion language. On the same lines, Bons (2014) shows the importance of the Septuagint Psalter in the prayer vocabulary and allusions of *Jos. Asen.*. Mirguet (2011) used *Jos. Asen.* as a comparison for embodiment in Hellenistic Judaism but her conclusion that there was profound association between the body and identity in Judeo-Hellenistic narratives is hardly surprising. Lipsett (2011) read *Jos. Asen.* alongside the ancient Greek literary critic referred to as Longinus to consider Aseneth's desires.

A few observations are useful in the light of recent research. First, many publications rely on a string of assumptions about provenance, authorship and dating. This should lead to reticence in making conclusions, but this is rarely the case. Secondly, too often scholars postulate elite or special groups, or attribute angelic or immortal powers to Aseneth. This is done without making a solid case for their claims taking into account the whole story. Thirdly, the use of anachronistic methodologies, such as post-colonial reading techniques, adds little insight to the field. Fourthly, scholars need to be clear that parallels cited do function as parallels. 'Parallelomania'¹⁰⁸ is rarely far from references. Finally, it does not appear that Burchard and Fink's recent contributions on textu-

107. However Pervo's 'statistics' do not bear scientific scrutiny, not least because of differences in versification style between the works compared.

108. See Sandmel (1962)

al development have been digested. Contributions that will have long-lasting significance to the field need to engage with the situation of the text.

1.2.4 *Jos. Asen.* and the novel

The literary context that *Jos. Asen.* is best read within has long interested scholars.¹⁰⁹ After Philonenko (1968) drew attention to the connection with the Greek romance there was a surge of interest. West (1974) proposed a common background. Burchard (1974) similarly traced parallels, including a synopsis of the plot of *Jos. Asen.* with ancient romances. Pervo (1976) proposed sub-genres within the novel, classifying *Jos. Asen.* as an important witness to the sapiental novel. Burchard (1985a)'s commentary regularly noted parallels with the Greek romances. Kee (1983) argued the story was a novel addressed to "an esoteric group of upper-middle class Jews and converts".¹¹⁰ Szepessy (1974) was a lone voice finding *Jos. Asen.* too different for comparison.

Literary finds among the Egyptian papyri helped develop a broader view of the background to the ancient novel.¹¹¹ But the reinvigoration of study in relation to *Jos. Asen.* came in Hezser (1997)'s rather conservative study comparing it with the 'Greek erotic novels'. Braginskaya (2012) largely ignored this wider context and argued for an early dating of *Jos. Asen.*, meaning the story should be seen as pre-dating the Greek novels and thus investigated as a source for them. However Whitmarsh (2013) was more cautious, seeing *Jos. Asen.* as self-consciously positioning itself as an intercultural text. The hybridisation of biblical and Hellenistic influences seen in *Jos. Asen.* matters more than the lines of influence that can be detected.¹¹² This interaction is the subject of Mirguet (2012), which considers Aseneth's bodily language and emotions on seeing Joseph, and Montiglio (2013), which looks at how *Jos. Asen.* inverts expectations of recognition. Ahearne-Kroll (2010) focuses on how *Jos. Asen.* constructs identity in the context of the Greek novel. Standhartinger (2015) draws out the humouristic possibilities of *Jos. Asen.* in relation to the Bible and in the light of the ancient novel and Greek New Comedy.

109. On the Greek novel see especially Hägg (1983).

110. Kee 1983:410

111. See Reardon (1989) and Stephens and Winkler (1995).

112. Whitmarsh 2013:16. See also Whitmarsh (2011) for *Jos. Asen.* in relation to broader themes of identity.

Scholars have also considered *Jos. Asen.* in the context of Jewish works. For example Pervo (1991) concentrates on the use of central female characters. Wills (2002) and (2011) looks at *Jos. Asen.* in the context of the Jewish novella. Whilst they share many features with ancient novels, Wills argues that they evolved in a parallel way to the Greek novel and at an earlier point.¹¹³ Johnson (2004) focuses on the creation and maintenance of identity.¹¹⁴

Modern research provides stimulating material for considering *Jos. Asen.* in its literary setting. But it needs to be recognised that most scholars start from assumptions about dating (second century BCE to first century CE) and provenance (Jewish— often relegated to a footnote¹¹⁵), as well as the antiquity of the 'long' and 'short' version. Also there is the assumption of access to the original text.¹¹⁶ Perhaps the greatest challenge to reading *Jos. Asen.* within the literary context of the ancient novel is its transmission pathway. If the ancient novel did have a formative influence on *Jos. Asen.* it soon lost contact with it. But modern research on the ancient novel has much to offer to the understanding of *Jos. Asen.* more broadly. The comparative perspective and concerns of modern literary study still dominate writing on *Jos. Asen.* whilst study of the Greek novel has pursued wider lines of inquiry, for example the role of allusion and intertextuality,¹¹⁷ or what can be determined of the authors' education.¹¹⁸ And whilst New Testament scholars frequently consider the importance of a multicultural background for authors,¹¹⁹ outside of the work of Whitmarsh and Wills this factor rarely seems of interest for *Jos. Asen.*.

In Greek, *Jos. Asen.* can be productively situated in an alternative literary setting: Christian hagiography. First, whilst *Jos. Asen.* shows parallels with the ancient novel, the most important reference for allusion or intertextuality is the Greek Bible. This feature is shared with various early Christian narrative works, such as the Apocryphal Acts.¹²⁰ The story consciously imitates Old Testament narratives and prayers,¹²¹ rather than the classicising and literary style of the novels.

113. Wills 2011:142

114. See also Ahearne-Kroll 2010:48-55

115. e.g., Johnson 2004:108 fn. 50; Ahearne-Kroll 2010:40 fn. 8; Braginskaya 2012:79 fn. 1.

116. On the problems of fluidity in the range of texts *Jos. Asen.* is compared to see Thomas (1998).

117. e.g., Morgan and Harrison (2008)

118. e.g., Hock (2005)

119. e.g., Sanders (2008)

120. See Thomas (1998)

121. Elder 2016:131 denies this and claims shared characteristics result from 'residual orality', which is absurd.

Secondly, whilst almost nothing is known of *Jos. Asen.*'s life as a majuscule text, inferences can be made about its transmission to minuscule. In particular, that *Jos. Asen.* had become situated among the saints' lives, or at least as spiritually beneficial reading. Mango 1971:43 noted that between 750-850 CE books were scarce and available only to the wealthy. Wilson (1967) points out that little is known about libraries before the ninth-century and what is known suggests that books were not readily accessible for consultation. From this unpromising position, a flowering of activity took place in a monastic revival of literature that coincided with the second Iconoclast period (815-43 CE).¹²² During the ninth-century many texts were transliterated, that is, majuscule texts were copied into minuscule.¹²³ At the same time efforts were underway to collect hagiographic works together, for example in *menologia* or *synaxaria*, and rewrite them in a more appropriate style.¹²⁴ This is precisely the point where *Jos. Asen.* first becomes visible in Greek, within collections of homilies or saints' lives.

Thirdly, *Jos. Asen.*'s continued transmission can be understood in the context of hagiography's readership, reflecting the values of the society that transmitted it.¹²⁵ The morals that it portrays, especially its emphasis on chastity, and that a female character is so prominent, are traits of tenth-century hagiography.¹²⁶ Further, what can be gleaned of *Jos. Asen.*'s ninth to eleventh-century transmission points to a monastic setting. This provided an audience who could read the text; a good education was required to read texts like *Jos. Asen.*, let alone the ancient novels.¹²⁷ Further, there is good evidence for the liturgical use of *menologia* in this period¹²⁸ and *Jos. Asen.*'s themes of ascetic penitence and prayer fitted well with monastic ideals.

Another literary setting also complements the hagiographical context: the early medieval Greek novels.¹²⁹ The composition of the erotic novel appears again in the twelfth-century, over 700 years after the last of the classical novels: Heliodoros' *Ethiopica*. These new novels show a high level of

122. Hunger 1986:505; Treadgold (1979), (1984)

123. Reynolds and Wilson 1991:59-61

124. Rapp 1995:32-5

125. Louth 2007:361

126. Kazhdan 1985:474-5; Kazhdan 1999:395

127. Beaton 1996:10. McGuckin 2008:612 estimates that half the literate class of the Middle Byzantine empire were monks.

128. Paschalidis 2011:144

129. See Beaton (1996). The four twelfth-century Greek novels are translated with introductions in Jeffries (2012).

intertextuality with their predecessors and expect their audience to be familiar with them as well to appreciate their allusions.¹³⁰ Their composition indicates that the ancient novels were still read, at least among the educated and wealthy elite.¹³¹ Access to the ancient novels was no doubt helped by their authors' having been Christianised and their narratives allegorised to make them acceptable.¹³² Although the twelfth-century novels are written in a very different style and register to *Jos. Asen.*,¹³³ they make a useful comparison for two reasons. First they show the continued interest in using the imagined non-Christian past to reshape identity in the present. In construction, they consciously imitate the artifice of the past.¹³⁴ In doing so they show how a text that plays with the boundaries of what was religiously permissible could be accepted and useful. This is seen in *Jos. Asen.* as well. For example, in 12.2, the cosmology reflects pre-Socratic philosophy rather than Judeo-Christian ideas. Secondly, they show how readers could combine an interest in the erotic whilst maintaining the stricter morality of the contemporary society.¹³⁵ But as Beck notes, the morality could also be a cover: "The Byzantine doctors suggesting these love stories as an erotic stimulant were hardly thinking about allegory."¹³⁶ Perhaps this also assisted some parts of *Jos. Asen.*'s transmission.

1.2.5 Conclusion

The literature survey shows that there has been considerable interest in interpreting *Jos. Asen.*. Whilst there have been some important steps forward in investigating particular aspects of the tradition, the insights of these have not been drawn together and several areas have received insufficient attention. This thesis will address an important weakness in the secondary literature.

130. Burton 2008:280

131. Burton 2008:273 notes that Photios provides entries on Achilles Tatios' *Lucippe and Cliophon* and Heliodoros' *Ethiopica* in his *Bibliotheca*.

132. Garland 1990:65

133. Whilst Eustathios Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Mysminias* is written in prose, two novels are written in 12-syllable metre (Theodore Prodromos' *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, and Niketas Eugenianos' *Drosilla and Charikles*) and one is in 15-syllable metre (Konstantinos Manasses' *Aristandros and Kallithea*).

134. Beaton 1996:54-69

135. Garland 1990:64, 77

136. Beck 1977:59

1.3 The thesis

1.3.1 Overview

This thesis is structured in three sections. The first section considers the two most ancient translations of the story. Despite the Syriac version including the oldest extant witness to the story (c. 600 CE), it has received almost no attention. Chapter 2 is a detailed study of the manuscript context and the relationship of the Syriac to Burchard's reconstruction of the earliest achievable Greek version, with a particular focus on translation technique. A similar study of the Armenian version follows in chapter 3. Chapter 4 is a comparison of the Syriac and Armenian versions.

The second section focuses on the three longest Greek versions: families *f* (chapter 5), *Mc* (chapter 6) and *a* (chapter 7). It argues that these three redactions (and the variety within them) need to be read in a Byzantine context. In particular, they can be understood in terms of redactional trends in Byzantine hagiography produced within a monastic setting. The Greek manuscripts of family *f* provide an exhortatory text which includes paraenetic insertions in two manuscripts (F and W), and the reworking of the story for an illuminated book of wisdom centred on Joseph in the third (G). Family *Mc* is located as a light revision of the story, mainly affecting parataxis and vocabulary. This revision is placed within the context of middle-Byzantine metaphrastic rewriting of hagiographical texts. Consideration given to the revised ending found in H and K. Family *a* is set in the context of a redaction of the story for use on Aseneth's festival day within the Greek menologion tradition.

The third section, chapter 8, looks at how *Jos. Asen.* was abridged and retold in four different contexts. In each case the text was not just abridged in extent, it also redacted. This produced new versions of the story, sometimes with quite surprising reinterpretations. For convenience, these versions are called 'abridgements' in this thesis. Abridged versions of stories are often ignored by scholars as text-critically of little use. But these texts provide an insight into what redactors considered the key elements and the focus of the story. Four different abridgements are considered in their own right: family *d*; the Latin 1 version; Greek manuscript E; and the so-called "early modern

Greek" version, with a particular focus on the shorter manuscript, 661. The conclusions warn scholars against placing too much emphasis on particular narrative details.

Chapter 9 draws together the conclusions of this thesis and suggests avenues for further research.

Three appendices are included: first, a synoptic presentation of the author's edited versions of FW, G, family *a*, and family *c*, together with an emended version of Philonenko's text of family *d*; secondly an edition and translation of the unpublished text of E; thirdly, a translation of *Jos. Asen.* from manuscript 661 (MS Athos, Koutloumousiou 100).

1.3.2 Methodology

Different approaches were taken in studying the manuscripts and versions of *Jos. Asen.* based on the resources available and the scale of the tradition. The practices of textual-criticism and editing were used both in the production of editions of different families of texts, and in the assessment of extant editions. For this, the author followed the principles and approach detailed in West (1973), supplemented by more recent publications.¹³⁷ However, even in presenting different families of a story the editor can become "the scholarly world's exorcist" for manuscript variance as the apparatus is easily ignored.¹³⁸ Also, little scholarship has been devoted to the manuscripts themselves. Consequently, the author attempts to balance textual criticism with a focus on the manuscripts as artefacts, particularly under the influence of 'New Philology'.

New Philology is founded on a return to manuscript culture and an understanding of medieval writing possessing instability as a fundamental feature of handwritten literature.¹³⁹ Driscoll 2010:90-5 summarises the key principles of New Philology. First, practitioners differentiate the *work*, *text* and *artefact*. The *work* is an abstraction, the sum of all versions, in this case: *Joseph and Aseneth*. The *text* is "a series of words in a particular order", and an *artefact* is any text-bearing object. Artefacts are unique with no two being identical. Secondly, a literary work only exists as part of its material embodiment and consequently the physical form is central to its meaning. This

137. Metzger (1994) and Wegner (2006) provided more recent general introductions to text-criticism. Royse (2013) was useful for considering early scribal transmission tendencies from the time many scholars date *Jos. Asen.*. The author was wary of some of the pitfalls as well, for example as listed by Tov (1982) and Parker (2012).

138. Parker 2012:104

139. Driscoll 2010:90. See especially the 'call to arms' of *Speculum* 65 (1990).

means looking at the relationship between the text and the features of its layout and relationship to other works in a manuscript. Thirdly, manuscripts, as physical objects, are produced by processes potentially involving several people in particular places and times. They also are produced for purposes under the control of social, economic and intellectual conditions. These conditions influence the text and thus also part of its meaning. Fourthly, the manuscript is consumed over time by the same conditions and these may leave their mark upon it. New Philology is not a rejection of classical textual-criticism but maintains a different focus.

The practices of 'New Philology' provide a useful complementary approach. They help to return thinking about the transmission of *Jos. Azen.* to particular times and places and ask the student to step away from editions, where possible. In the analysis presented, an important consideration is the difficulty of finding appropriate terminology. In an investigation that applies different methodologies, this is especially challenging. The author has tried to avoid the vocabulary of modern text-criticism (e.g., 'omit', 'addition', 'contamination') and instead use more neutral terms.¹⁴⁰

1.3.3 The Thesis

The first section uses available editions. For the Syriac, the edition of Brooks (1919) is a good text for the two very similar manuscripts, which were individually examined. For the Armenian, the edition of Burchard (2010) was the only practical way into a tradition of such scale and in view of the author's limitations in Armenian palaeography. Further, the author decided to concentrate more on the earliest achievable form of the Armenian translation to enable the comparison in chapter 4.¹⁴¹

In the second section, the manuscripts of each family were transcribed then edited together, with the exception of palimpsest M. Each edition is supported by an apparatus. The exception was family *f* where the divergence between FW and G was so great that it was decided to present them in parallel columns. An approach drawing on ideas within New Philology is then taken to consider

140. It should be noted that the vocabulary used what redactors and copyists conceived of themselves doing at the time these manuscripts were produced is still not fully understood, which adds another level of complexity. See Codoñer (2014).

141. The presentation of the author's investigation into these translations benefited from the structure used in Taylor (1999).

Jos. Asen. within its manuscript context. The third section uses a variety of methods to allow for comparison.

This thesis developed over time and is, to an extent, only as good as the worst decisions made along the way. Early on the decision was taken to use *KritHer* for comparison with each version of *Jos. Asen.*. The aim was to provide a reference point for comparing the way versions were adapted. In hindsight, Fink's *Revidierter griechischer Text*, complemented by the apparatus of Burchard (2003a), would have provided a better comparison because of its attention to removing the influences of readings only included on the basis of families *a* and *d*. However, much of the comparative work had already been completed by the time this was realised, and in practice these points were identified during research and taken into account.

1.3.4 The Synoptic Edition

Different approaches have been used in editing texts with variant traditions. For example Tromp (2005) normalises orthography in both the text and apparatus. In contrast Weeks *et al.* (2004) retain all possible variation in their synoptic edition. A middle way was chosen for this edition. The author aimed to enable readers to read the individual editions diachronically, and compare as they wish.¹⁴² Orthography was preserved where possible. This was most successful in the edition of *G*, which was edited individually. In practice, with the families, this led to the danger of producing diplomatic editions. Where a variant, such as alternative spelling, in a manuscript could lead to alternative readings this was recorded in the apparatus.

The study and collation of the Greek manuscripts of *Jos. Asen.* took place over a four year period, along with the growth in the author's skills and thinking. There is more editorial intervention in family *c* as this was edited earlier in the research. *FW* was relatively straight forward as *F* generally preserves the better readings, though not always. The major exception to this procedure was family *d*. For reasons of exigency the author used the text of Philonenko (1968) amended using Burchard's suggested improvements. This follows normalised orthography and no apparatus is provided.

142. The author was concerned not to avoid imply dependence or development of the text through the layout. On the ways the layout of an edition can affect perception by modern readers, see Hinterberger (2014).

1.3.5 The significant contributions of this thesis to the field of research

This thesis makes a number of significant contributions to the present state of research. First, it expands the understanding of the two most ancient and under-researched versions of the story, the Syriac and Armenian. They are significant for establishing the earliest achievable form of the text and give the earliest indications of how the story was read and the context of its transmission. The author was also able to confirm the family affiliation of three Armenian manuscripts that Burchard was unable to consult. Chapter 3 is a first step towards addressing a significant lacuna in research: a comparison of Syriac, Armenian and Latin 2, the fullest and oldest translations of the story.

Secondly, the author has returned to the manuscripts of the three longest Greek versions as well as manuscript E and provided fresh descriptions, transcriptions and editions. Several of these texts have never been published and the author travelled widely to consult the manuscripts in person where possible. The editions allow scholars to easily access the different text forms of *Jos. Asen.* in Greek.

Thirdly, the layout of the synoptic edition will enable scholars to more easily compare the different approaches taken by redactors. Time did not allow for either the re-examination of the unpublished first 16 chapters in palimpsest M for comparison with HJK, or the integration of Fink's edition of 16.13-29.9 into the edition of family *c*. However Fink's edition can be read alongside the synoptic edition and an assessment of the relationship of M to *c* is found in chapter 6.

Finally, little scholarship in the field of Jewish Pseudepigrapha has been focused on abridged versions. Section 3 makes an important contribution to the field through raising their profile and showing the resource they can be for understanding the influences redactors make on transmission. To this end, a translation of manuscript 661 is provided to make it more accessible to scholars.

The scope of this thesis has required learning several new languages and skills. It will be for scholars of greater experience and proficiency to judge the impact of the author's contribution.

Section 1

The Syriac and Armenian Versions

Chapter 2

The Syriac Version

2.1 Introduction

The oldest extant witness to *Jos. Asen.* is preserved in a Syriac manuscript from c.600CE. Syriac is one of several dialects of Aramaic. Its literary form developed as the language of government in pre-Christian Edessa (modern Urfa in south-east Turkey) and is first attested in inscriptions from the first century CE.¹ Syriac was adopted by early Christians who used it in their liturgies, Bible translations and literature.² Missionaries taught Syriac to converts and used it in religious contexts, although Christians continued to use their own languages in non-religious settings.³ With the rapid spread of Christianity in the Eastern provinces of the Roman empire and the Persian empire, Syriac came to be used by Christians over a wide area. Syriac continued to be the dominant language of religious expression in this region until the eighth century. Then, under the influence of Muslim control of the Syriac churches' heartlands, Christian scholars started to use Arabic.

Syriac literature was produced, copied and preserved almost entirely within the structures of the Christian church and outside state control.⁴ A considerable amount of Greek writing was translated into Syriac to meet the needs of Syriac Christians. The translations are valuable for several reasons, including: preserving part or all of works now lost in Greek; providing the earliest witness to a work; and illustrating how the interests and concerns of Syriac-speaking Christians changed over time.⁵ Also, the Syriac churches spread to several areas where Jewish communities were active. Syriac literature transmitted, cited or reshaped many Jewish traditions,⁶ including works Christians have come to term 'deutero-canonical' or 'Apocryphal', apparently all translated from Greek

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1. See especially Brock (2009). Classic studies on Syriac literature include: Wright (1894); Duval (1899); Baumstark (1921).
 2. On the Bible in Syriac tradition see Brock (2006).
 3. Debié and Taylor 2012:155
 4. Debié and Taylor 2012:156
 5. Taylor 2004:1190
 6. See Brock (1979b); Taylor (2005).

with the exception of *Ben Sira*,⁷ and many works that develop Old Testament characters or themes.⁸

The Syriac version is important for the study of *Jos. Asen.* for several reasons: first, it includes the earliest extant witness to the work in any language by about 400 years; secondly, it preserves a fuller text that is similar to the Armenian and Latin 2 versions. Taken together they offer the possibility of text-critically reconstructing an earlier form of *Jos. Asen.* than is preserved in the extant Greek manuscripts; thirdly, the context of the transmission of the Syriac version provides an opportunity for understanding how the story was read and the reasons for its transmission. Yet the Syriac version has received little scholarly attention and no specific study has been published on it.⁹

When considering a translated version like the Syriac, one challenge is to determine how a translated version of a story should be regarded in relation to other versions. This chapter will start to address that question. Through analysis of the text, translation technique, and the manuscript context of the story, three positions will be argued for: first, that the text of the Syriac version needs to be read and analysed primarily within the context of its translation and transmission; secondly, that the Syriac version shows that *Jos. Asen.* could be read in a specifically Christian framework without any apparent alteration to what could be an originally Jewish story; and thirdly, that the story's transmission was the result of it both filling an interpretive need and being an engaging read.

The chapter will begin by introducing the sources for the study of the Syriac version, then consider the text itself and the translation technique employed, before discussing the context of the story in the Syriac manuscripts.

7. Brock 2006:17

8. See Bundy (1991); Adler (1994).

9. The sensationalist Jacobovici and Wilson (2014) claimed that the oldest Syriac manuscript preserved a lost Gospel (= *Jos. Asen.*) narrating Jesus' marriage to Mary Magdalene, a plot to assassinate Jesus and his children and kidnap Mary Magdalene, and the true nature of pre-Pauline Christianity. Most of the book is wildly speculative. Few scholars would go so far as this to deny any Jewish exegetical background to the story.

2.2 The text of the Syriac version

2.2.1 Manuscripts and editions

The Syriac version is extant in two manuscripts:¹⁰ the first is British Library, Additional MS 17,202 (f.8r-25v) copied around 600CE in Estrangela script.¹¹ It is the only extant version of so-called Pseudo-Zachariah (PZ) Rhetor's *Ecclesiastical History* (*Eccl. Hist.*). *Jos. Asen.* is found near the beginning of book one of this now incomplete twelve book work. It has two prefatory letters: one requesting a translation of the work; the other, a sadly incomplete reply from the translator. The second is British Library, Additional MS 7,190 (f.319r-329r), copied around 1200CE.¹² *Jos. Asen.* was copied from 17,202, without the prefatory letters, and transcribed into Serto script. 7,190 is a 'miscellany of theological works'.¹³

17,202 is missing the leaf containing the end of the second prefatory letter and 1.1-2.1a, and two leaves containing 13.15-16.7. 7,190 lacks 13.15-16.7, but contains 1.1-2.1a, indicating that this leaf in 17,202 was lost after the copy was made. Indeed, at the point where 17,202 breaks off (f.16v), 7,190 reads: "from here leaves are cut out. Forgive me."¹⁴ Secondary literature incorrectly states that 7,190 is lost after 26.6a (f.328v). After consulting the manuscript, the present writer observed that a blank unpaginated leaf has been inserted after f.328 to indicate that the modern restorer believed a leaf to be missing. F.329r preserves 29.8-9, which indicates 7,190 continued to the story's end. Interestingly, 7,190 does not transmit a statement that *Jos. Asen.* was a translation from Greek.

The first edition of the Syriac text, Land (1870), contained many mistakes.¹⁵ Brooks (1919) is a revised edition of 17,202, supported by the portions extant in other manuscripts. It remains the standard Syriac edition of *Eccl. Hist.*. Brooks' text of *Jos. Asen.* does contain a few mistakes, and a few readings are now visible which were illegible before. However, none are of significance.

10. Contra Standhartinger 2014:356 who says there are four manuscripts (see below). The present writer was able to consult both manuscripts at the British Library and compare samples of text with Brooks' edition.

11. Wright 1872:1046-61. Folio reference includes the preceding letters.

12. Forshall 1838:77-83. Contra Kraemer 1998:225 and Nir 2012:3 fn.6 who state that both manuscripts are sixth or seventh century.

13. Contra Standhartinger 2014:356. Wright 1872:1222 describes the manuscript only as "Miscell. Theology". No colophon is preserved and the opening and closing leaves are damaged.

14. F.324r lines 11-12: ✠✠ ܘܢܘܢ ܩܘܠܘ ܩܘܠܘ ܩܘܠܘ ܩܘܠܘ ✠✠

15. Hamilton and Brooks 1899:9 describes it as "far from accurate", though it also notes that the manuscript itself is often corrupt.

Whilst the sections of *Eccl. Hist.* considered of value to historians were first translated in the late nineteenth century, the works in the opening chapters were left untranslated.¹⁶ As Debié and Taylor note:

Western historians, who have their own clear ideas about what constitutes, or should constitute, history, have not always been at ease with [Syriac historiographical models]. Thus every translation of the chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah into a modern European language has omitted, or summarized, the beginning of the text that is largely based on such apocryphal and pseudepigraphical sources.¹⁷

Even the most recent introduction and English translation, Greatrex (2011), did not translate the majority of the contents in books one and two.¹⁸

It has been suggested that another version of *Jos. Asen.* survives in two nineteenth century Syriac manuscripts in a reduced form.¹⁹ These manuscripts preserve a very different narrative, more in common with distinct Jewish traditions, particularly the identification of Aseneth as Dinah's daughter.²⁰ They are not considered here.

2.2.2 Methodology

To analyse the translation and redaction employed in the Syriac version of *Jos. Asen.*, a comparative reading was made of the Syriac text of Brooks (1919) with *KritHer*. There are methodological limitations inherent in this approach. First, the optimal way to assess the translation technique of the Syriac version would be to compare it with its Greek *Vorlage*. However, this Greek *Vorlage* is no longer extant. All of the extant Greek versions represent at least a step in development away from their shared ancestor. Making a comparison with one of them would introduce additional variance into the comparison. The best alternative for comparison is a Greek text that aims to represent the shared ancestor of the extant tradition. Burchard's *KritHer* was used on this basis.

Secondly, Burchard's edition relies heavily on emending the text on the basis of the three fullest versions: Syriac, Armenian and Latin 2. This means that Burchard's edition may have a tendency to

16. E.g., Hamilton and Brooks 1899:9: "The legendary matter at the beginning, though of great value for comparison with other versions of the same legends, stands quite apart from the rest of the work;.. and is therefore omitted."

17. Debié and Taylor 2012:163 fn.22

18. Tony Burke (Jacobovici and Wilson 2014:315-384) published an English translation of *Jos. Asen.* but it does not follow the conventional versification and the translation is rather free, occasionally skipping passages.

19. E.g., Taylor 2005:35 and Phenix 2008:107. See also the appendix to Kraemer (1998).

20. Burchard 1987a:356-7 prints the Syriac text. On traditions about Aseneth, see Aptowitz (1924).

mirror the Syriac. But Burchard's text is solely reliant on the Syriac on very few occasions, making this risk low.

Thirdly, 17,202 is not the translator's original manuscript. PZ inserted the story into *Eccl. Hist.*, which was then copied to produce 17,202. PZ could have edited the translation for his own ends, as he seems to have done with other documents in *Eccl. Hist.* (see §2.3.2). However, *Jos. Asen.* is of a different genre to the doctrinally significant documents surveyed in Allen (1980) and van Rompay (1985), which had great importance for the anti-Chalcedonian cause. Further, there is nothing in the story that would need doctrinal emendation, and arguably it serves a different purpose within PZ's work. The impact of the copyist of 17,202 cannot be accounted for as there is only one full extant manuscript of *Eccl. Hist.*. But there is no evidence of expansions or digressions being introduced when it is compared to the rest of the tradition. The present writer considers that there were probably no more than the usual run of scribal errors affecting the text during the first two transmission stages.

Fourthly, on one occasion Brooks adds to his Syriac text where he felt it was defective, by translating from Batiffol's Greek text into Syriac.²¹ This emendation is ignored in the analysis. Other emendations by Brooks are followed as they are such that Syriac readers would probably have recognised the occasionally defective nature of the text and done likewise.²²

The limitations noted are important but do not invalidate the approach. Rather, they show that caution should be taken in drawing specific or wide ranging conclusions. Further, analysis of the Syriac version needs to take into account not just its relationship to the Greek, but also the translation context. The translation context has an important influence on method and aims of the translator. Ignoring this context means that important features may be missed, or relatively trivial matters may be overemphasised. That the translation context of the Syriac version has not been thoroughly investigated is a significant lacuna in research.

21. Brooks 1919:55 l.10 = 29.3

22. E.g., Brooks 1919:30 l.6 the manuscripts read ܐܘܢܝܢܐ ܐܘܠܡܝܢܐ ܐܘܠܡܝܢܐ ('and trembling and knowledge all the time') which is clearly defective. The Greek reads *καὶ τρόμος καὶ ἰδρῶς συνεχῆς* ('and trembling and sweating continuously'), and consequently Brooks emends ܐܘܠܡܝܢܐ ('and knowledge') to ܐܘܠܡܝܢܐ ('and sweat').

2.2.3 General style overview

The Syriac of *Jos. Asen.* is rendered in a fluid prose to produce a highly readable Syriac version of the story. In general, the translator followed the narrative closely, but without utilising 'mirror' traits such as following the Greek word order, or seeking formal or lexical correspondence.²³ Comparison with *KritHer* suggests that the translator skipped over several small detail, often summarised lists and removed repetitions.

Some features are particularly evident when the translation of *Jos. Asen.* is compared to other works in *Eccl. Hist.* books 1-2. Few Greek words have been transliterated into Syriac, in contrast to other works.²⁴ The translator chose to render the Syriac in an uncomplicated written way. For example, Greek infinitive and subjunctive verbs are usually rendered with alternative forms in Syriac.

There are very few instances where a scribal mistake can be reasonably postulated for the lack of text that is assumed to have been present in his exemplar. Whilst there are a few longer sections of text apparently skipped over, there are many minor details that are not found in the Syriac, sometimes related to a theme. For instance, the translator appears to have had little interest in the details of preparing for or waging battle. Conversely, the translator often sought to ensure the sense of a Greek noun or verb would be conveyed to the Syriac reader through using a double translation or expanding the text with an explanation. No sustained attempt to make biblical allusions more apparent was made.

2.2.4 Focus of translation

Comparison of the Greek and Syriac of *Jos. Asen* suggests that the translator sought to produce a readable Syriac version of the story that did not require access to the Greek to be understood. The translator sought to convey the sense of the story rather than slavishly reproduce his Greek *Vorlage*.²⁵ These observations need to be understood in the context of changes to the translation of Greek into Syriac in late antiquity.

23. See Brock 1979a:81-6

24. The author compared the Syriac texts of *Jos. Asen.* with *Seven Sleepers of Ephesus* and discovered a greater number of transliterated Greek words in the latter work.

25. Taylor 2005:35 describes the translation as "assez libre". This comment should be interpreted in the light of the translator's adherence to the narrative.

Sebastian Brock analysed Syriac translations of Greek texts, particularly those from the fourth to eighth century.²⁶ He identified a change in the style of translation that moves from an 'exposition' translation, one that often reworks the Greek text, to a 'mirror' type. Brock (1979a) considered the features that led to the decision to use a more literal style of translation and the factors that characterise different degrees of literal translation. A more literal style, Brock suggested, drew on the example of the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek and its revisions.²⁷ Applying these features to datable texts, Brock (1983) proposed that by using two criteria a typology of translation can be developed to date undated translations. First, the aim of the translator. What the translator aimed to produce depended upon his attitude to the source text (Greek) in comparison to the receptor language (Syriac), as well as the role the translator thought he played in its dissemination.²⁸ Secondly, the practice of the translator. Brock described the practice as representing options on a continuum between a literal translation and a sense-for-sense translation with three factors: a) the length of the unit translated; b) whether the word employed (*signifiant*) or the meaning it conveyed (*signifié*) was more important— emphasis on formal equivalence led translators to adopt non-native forms and structures; and c) the general flow of the sentence (*demarche*).²⁹

Using these criteria, Brock developed three broad periods for Greek into Syriac translation: the fourth and fifth centuries; the sixth century; and the seventh century. The fourth and fifth century translations are characterised by a free rendering of the Greek that is focused on conveying the sense of the text to the reader. The translations are expositional or tendential in character, have translation units as large as a paragraph and employ dynamic equivalence in translation. There are few, if any, calques either lexically or syntactically, and adjectival forms are rare. Sentences are often reconstructed and there is no attempt to give formal equivalence.³⁰ In the seventh century, the situation is reversed as the translators sought to render the Greek as closely as possible. Whereas the translator had been the expositor in the earlier period, he now no longer presumes to have any interpretive role. Formal equivalence became the key aim, meaning texts became almost unreadable without a knowledge of the Greek.³¹ The sixth century was a period of transition. Brock (1982)

26. E.g., Brock (1975), (1977), (1979a), (1982), (1983) and (1994). For a brief introduction see Taylor (2004).

27. Brock 1979a:73-4

28. Brock 1983:4-5

29. Brock 1983:5-7

30. Brock 1983:10

31. Brock 1983:12-3

noted that over the same period a comparable change was happening in attitude towards Greek 'wisdom', such as philosophy. This he described as a move from antagonism to assimilation, and broadly follows the same three periods.³²

Brock's reconstruction is not without criticism. For example, King has argued that that model of revision of the Septuagint is irrelevant.³³ Rather, the motivations for a mirror style need to take into account the religious context of polemical need, the nature of the controversy, and the historical particularity that mirror translation developed in among West Syrians.³⁴ However, the general periodisation and characterisation by Brock remains accepted.

Jos. Asen. is firmly datable within the sixth century transition group in Brock's model of the development of translation technique. The genre of *Jos. Asen.* and the lack of obvious doctrinal reasons for the person requesting the translation to require a 'word for word' translation mean there are no obvious reasons why the translator might have sought a different method to the mood of the age.³⁵

Two features of the context of *Jos. Asen.* and their relationship to translation are of particular interest here: first, another translation work is extant from the translator of *Jos. Asen.* and can be compared; and secondly, whilst the person commissioning the translation of *Jos. Asen.* writes in his letter that he can read the Greek, he requests a translation because he does not understand the *theoria*.

2.2.4.1 Comparison of the focus of translation in *Jos. Asen.* and *Glaphyra*

Moshe of Aggel³⁶ is identified in the first prefatory letter to *Jos. Asen.* in 17,202 as the translator. He is also identified by prefatory letters as the translator of Cyril of Alexandria's *Glaphyra*.³⁷ The *Glaphyra*, or 'Elegant words', is a work of commentary on chosen passages from the Pentateuch in 13 books. The literal sense of the passage is expounded first, though often by little more than quot-

32. Brock (1982)

33. King 2008:372

34. King 2008:370-1

35. As compared with, for example, the translations commissioned by Philoxenos of Mabbug. See Michaelson (2012).

36. For introductions to Moshe of Aggel see Wright 1894:112; Duval 1899:336-7; Baumstark 1922:161; Brock 2011:300. Barsaüm 2012:229 notes that Chabot says Moshe was a bishop, but there is no evidence for this assertion. Nothing is known about Moshe's life, when he was born or died. Wright suggests he flourished 550-70, though as King 2008:28 notes, the only firm dates available are Moshe's reference to the Philoxenian New Testament completed 507/8 and the assumption that PZ's *Eccl. Hist.* was completed in 568/9.

37. On Cyril of Alexandria see Kerrigan (1952); Wilken (1966); Russell (2000); King (2008). King 2008:21 somewhat speculatively suggests Moshe translated *Jos. Asen.* because most of Cyril of Alexandria's works had been translated.

understood by these four other 'dialects' and their relation to the 'common language' (ܠܘܟܠ ܠܘܟܠ) is unclear.

The lack of research into the Greek text makes it difficult to know how well the text Migne published relates to the Syriac version's *Vorlage*. Further, *Jos. Asen.* and *Glaphyra* are very different sorts of text; hagiography and Patristic exegesis respectively. Their translation may have been affected by different priorities in the mind of Moshe of Aggel.

Aware of these constraints, an investigation was conducted into the translation technique used for the opening section of book 1, *Concerning Adam*, using the criteria of Brock (1983). The analysis found that Moshe's unit of translation was a clause rather than a sentence. Even with particularly complex Greek sections, there is no indication that the translation unit was reduced, though Moshe apparently skipped some short and complex phrases. Moshe appears to have placed greater stress on portraying the sense of what he translated and prefers a dynamic equivalent to a formal one. With regard to sentence flow, Moshe prioritises making sentence units comprehensible in Syriac. There is no evidence that Moshe tried to represent the range of particles that Cyril uses, which later translators sought to replicate. Overall, Moshe shows considerable ability as a translator. Even rare verbs he takes in his stride and he has ability to take Cyril's often tortuous structure and produce a translation that (roughly) reflects Cyril's argument.

The significance of this analysis is its demonstration that Moshe handles both *Jos. Asen.* and *Glaphyra* in a similar way, although the translation unit is longer in *Jos. Asen.* Despite *Glaphyra* being a complex theological and exegetical work, the level of precision only differs in Moshe's apparent willingness to summarise details more frequently in *Jos. Asen.*. Moshe's skill level as a translator indicates that his translational decisions were intentional, and consequently where Moshe expanded or condensed the text in comparison to his *Vorlage* in *Jos. Asen.*, it was a deliberate decision. Additionally, where theological differences can be discerned, these are likely the result of Moshe's influence.

2.2.4.2 The nature of *Jos. Asen.*

Two passages have been suggested to show that the anonymous correspondent considered *Jos. Asen.* to contain hidden Christian revelation. First, in describing the work that came to him from a

This is precisely what can be seen in the slight changes of emphasis in the story. *Jos. Asen.* is translated into Syriac, but also undergoes some cultural translation as well.

2.2.5 Unit of translation

In general the unit of translation is a sentence, although it can also occasionally be longer. Unit of translation appears related to the type of material being dealt with. The longest units appear to come in the psalmic or prayer material. Chapters 11-13 and 21, which are also the most textually uncertain units of the story, witness to the translator taking material from the Greek but then apparently reordering it and skipping what was felt unnecessary. For example, 13.4-6 becomes a single unit in Syriac. Speech was also likely to be translated in as one unit, whether it was a short statement or a longer passage like Pharaoh's son's speech to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah in 24.8-9. The translator did not feel it necessary to translate the whole of the many lists in the story. Indeed, in the case of the produce brought from the field at 4.2 the Syriac summarises the Greek list to simply "all sorts of good things".⁵¹ In contrast, the translation unit of narrative seems to have been shorter.

The translation gives the impression that the translator had read the whole Greek text prior to commencing translation. This is seen through the preservation of the narrative arc of the story across the whole work, as well as in a few alterations to the text. For example, at 6.8 the translator apparently changed the Greek "let my father give me to Joseph for a maidservant and slave" to "...for a wife". This points forward to Aseneth's destiny. It could also be seen as avoiding the uncomfortable implications of the relationship between them if Aseneth is seen as a slave. In which case, her offspring would be unable to inherit Jacob's blessings.

2.2.6 Translator limitations

There are very few places in the text where the translator did not appear to understand the Greek. When *Jos. Asen.* is compared to a complex theological treatise such as the *Glaphyra*, this is not surprising. Only two Greek words appear to have troubled the translator: ἀναξυρίδες (3.6)⁵² and αἶδομαι (28.7).

51. The presence of a list of similar items in a number of versions coupled with the tendency of the Syriac to summarise lists elsewhere suggests that a list of items was in the *Vorlage*, rather than being a later expansion.

52. In *KritHer* it is also found in 18.6, but its presence is only attested in two later Greek versions, suggesting the later list was harmonised with the list in chapter 3.

rative. For example, in 7.2 Joseph's question to Pentephres about the identity of the woman he sees at the window (Aseneth) is lost. The thrust of the narrative is kept, although the dialogue is shortened. However, some have a greater impact. For example, in 6.3 Aseneth's assertion that Joseph is God's son is not found in the Syriac.

One of the traits of the Greek text is the use of repetition, often for rhetorical effect. The Syriac translation tends to witness only one part of the repetition. For example, at 5.6 with the description of who is shut out of the courtyard. A plethora of small details are skipped over throughout the story. This stretches from the young women with Aseneth not being described as 'serving' Aseneth in 17.4,⁵⁶ to there not being a description of the fifty men with Pharaoh's son as 'mounted' in 24.19 and 25.4. This is an indication that the translator was more interested in the story than precise details.

Where the context makes the subject of the verb clear, the Syriac often leaves it implicit. For example at 4.7 'Pentephres her father' or 12.10 'the lion'. This is also the case with indirect objects which are clear from the context, for example 'to Aseneth' in 8.4. The translator was often content to not translate adjectives and adverbs. For example, that Aseneth's room is 'large' in 2.7, or that she struck her breast 'frequently' in 10.1, 15. The partial removal of adverbs sometimes affects the narrative speed, but generally has little effect on the overall story.

There are a couple of instances where it appears that a detail may have been left out for a reason. There is no reference to Aseneth spitting at men in 2.1, probably as part of a general move to improve her character. And Aseneth makes no suggestion in 4.9 that marriage to Joseph would be a form of slavery.

It is challenging to find examples where the Greek text was not translated as a result of a scribal mistake. Three possibilities have been identified. First, the Syriac of 7.7 appears corrupted through having lost some text. Secondly, the Syriac text of 27.10 is missing a whole line when compared to the Greek: 'and rescued me from the idols and the corruption of death.' The contents of this passage could have been condensed, but the context suggests Moshes accidentally skipped the text. Thirdly, at 28.8 the name Gad appears to have dropped out. The Greek (and Syriac on every other

56. Perhaps this was due to the translator considering Aseneth having servants as too luxurious in her now ascetic setting. However, the translator does not consistently remove details like this, so the point should not be pressed.

occasion) always pairs Dan and Gad together. Here, the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah are referred to as "Dan and the brothers". There is no obvious reason for Gad's disappearance.

2.2.7.2 Expansions

On 47 occasions the Syriac translator gives a double translation where there was only a single verb in Greek. For example at 5.1, the Greek ἔστηκεν ('he stood') is translated as ܘܘܨܘܚ ܘܘܨܘܚ ('he came and arrived'). However, the Syriac occasionally has only a single verb where the Greek uses a pair. Less frequently, the Syriac has a double translation of a word that is not a verb, often giving some clarification about its meaning. For example, in describing the cup that the God-fearer drinks from in 8.5, the Greek describes it as ἀθανασία ('of immortality'), which the Syriac renders as ܠܘܚܘܬܐ ܘܠܘܚܘܬܐ ('of immortality and incorruptibility').

From time to time the Syriac has verbs with no equivalent in the Greek. Sometimes these are part of explanatory clauses as at 4.7. Elsewhere they provide detail in the narrative, as at 23.16 where Levi tells Pharaoh's son to 'repent and turn' from his wicked ways. Similarly, the Syriac occasionally gives an adverb not found in the Greek, probably to heighten the narrative. The most common of these is variations on 'quickly'.⁵⁷

Less frequently than the Syriac lacks a detail in comparison to the Greek, it also expands a description. For example, the reader learns in 2.8 that Aseneth's sheets are 'Egyptian', and in 6.2 that Aseneth was led astray in thinking Joseph was not worthy of her by 'strange counsellors'. There are also plenty of glosses on nouns and some of these seem obscure. At 16.8 the reader is told that the dew is from the 'third' heaven.⁵⁸ This could be a reference to 2 Corinthians 12.2, the only biblical reference to a 'third heaven', but it is more likely to refer to contemporary cosmological ideas.⁵⁹

The voice of the narrator is only occasionally expanded in the Syriac version. Sometimes it presents further details in character descriptions, such as Pentephres being 'long-suffering' in dealing with Aseneth (4.12). At other times, the expansions help to shape the story. For example, at 11.1

57. 9.3; 10.7; 18.5; 23.7; 26.2

58. However, this reading is also found within the Armenian and L2 traditions, suggesting it could have been a part of their common ancestor.

59. e.g., in the Greek version of *Life of Adam and Eve*, Adam is assumed into paradise in the third heaven. See de Jonge and Tromp 1997:11. But an element of apparently pre-Socratic cosmology (see Wright (2008)) was translated in *Jos. Asen.* 12.2-3, suggesting that Moshe of Aggel was not trying to impose a cosmology into the text.

the reasoning for Aseneth being unable to get up is extended to include repentance, fasting and remorse.

2.2.7.3 Changes

Greek syntax and mode of expression does not always translate naturally into Syriac and there are many places where a dynamic equivalent is used. Often this relates to a small unit, such as a description. For example, at 2.11 the Greek explanatory clause 'there was lots of fruit because it was the time of summer' is rendered 'with the ripe fruit of summer'. However, sometimes there is simplification of the narrative. For example, at 4.4 Pentephres' order to Aseneth to come and sit between him and his wife is condensed. Or in 10.5 the Greek virgins ask Aseneth three questions, whereas there is only one in Syriac. Lists are often condensed. For example, at 10.13 the list of foods that Aseneth throws out of the window is paraphrased to 'prepared foods'.

There are many places where a change in emphasis is seen in the translation. A good example comes at 4.9. The narrator describes Aseneth's response to her father's suggestion that she marry Joseph. In Greek the narrator says that "plenty of red sweat poured over her face, and she became furious with great anger, and looked out of the corner of her eyes at her father..." In Syriac this becomes "she fell on her face in modesty, and in rage and anger she looked at her father". Sometimes, the Syriac uses what may just be an alternative description. In the description of Aseneth's lips in 18.9 as like a rose, the Greek describes them as "coming out of its bud", whereas the Syriac describes them "gathered from the bush". However, this could be interpreted as a modification to focus on colour rather than potentially erotic allusion.

The Syriac translator did not always look for verbs in the same semantic range as the Greek. Sometimes he chose to describe actions from the opposite perspective. For example, in 11.1 in Greek the birds are singing, but in Syriac they 'were heard'. Or at 11.3, Aseneth's mouth is 'not open' in Greek, but 'shut' in Syriac. Sometimes the choice of word seems to reflect a narrative heightening. For example, at 5.4, Joseph just 'enters' in Greek, but the Syriac says he is 'led in pomp'.

The Syriac translator was content to condense passages. Sometimes the details of narration are included in speech. For example, at 7.2 the description of Aseneth standing at the window is only found in Joseph's shortened dialogue. And sometimes the reverse is found. For example, at 7.8, Pentephres' conversation with Joseph about Aseneth is presented to the reader through a narrator's

comment. Both tendencies reflect a translator who is comfortable rendering the story in a way that he thinks will appeal to his audience.

On a regular basis, the Syriac apparently inverts the Greek word order in a description. Mostly this happens with pairs of words, for example at 10.5 where Greek 'groaning and weeping' is reversed. This is a tendency that is observed in the Peshitta.⁶⁰ It also happens with pairs of verbs, for example at 24.2.

There are some sentences that appear to have been unclear in the *Vorlage* or to the translator, or perhaps copyist. In addition to 16.17, a few other examples can be marshalled: 8.6 gives a list of whom the God-fearer can kiss that appears corrupt; in 11.4 the reasoning for why Aseneth kept her mouth closed does not make sense; and in 16.19 all the bees are described as like queens in Syriac, but only the second group in the Greek.

2.2.7.4 Transliteration from Greek

A number of transliterated Greek words are found in the Syriac text. Several are loan words that probably entered Syriac vocabulary and were no longer considered translations. Some of these reflect the Greek word in the *Vorlage*, for example ܩܘܨܘܨ = βύσσοϛ in 2.8; 3.6; and 16.18.⁶¹ Others presuppose a different word with similar meaning. For example, ܐܝܟܘܢ (εἰκόν) is used in 3.6 for εἰδῶλων.⁶²

However, two words raise more interesting questions. First, in 13.14 Moshe apparently transliterates the Greek word ἀρετή (ܐܪܝܬܐ). ἀρετή means 'moral virtue' or 'goodness of character'.⁶³ He uses the same term in 18.11 where *KritHer* reads καλλονή (beauty), reflecting his greater interest in Aseneth's moral character than appearance. Secondly, in 18.1; 24.15; 26.5 *KritHer* refers to a πρόδρομος (forerunner) in different contexts. Moshe translated this with ܩܘܘܕܪܘܡܘܨ/ܩܘܘܕܪܘܡܘܨ, which transliterates δεκανός, itself a late antique loan word from Latin which in this context means 'a chief over ten', 'a kind of officer at the imperial court'.⁶⁴ It came to take on new meanings in late an-

60. Williams 2004:204

61. E.g., ܩܘܨܘܨ for ὑάκινθος (3.6; 16.18; 18.6); ܩܘܨܘܨ for χιτών (5.5); ܩܘܨܘܨ for θρόνος (20.2); ܩܘܨܘܨ for ἡνίοχος (27.4); ܩܘܨܘܨ for κιβωτός (10.8). ܩܘܨܘܨ, ܩܘܨܘܨ and ܩܘܨܘܨ are found in Peshitta Old Testament and so are perhaps unsurprising.

62. See also: ܩܘܨܘܨ = κοιτών (*KritHer* θαλάμου: 2.2, 4, 7; 4.1; 10.2, 7, 8; 13.4; 16.10; 17.9; 18.5); ܩܘܨܘܨ = ἀργύρεια (*KritHer* πορφυρά: 2.8; 5.5; 16.18).

63. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p.224-5

64. Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, p.516

tiquity, such as 'a runner'⁶⁵ or 'messenger, vanguard'⁶⁶. In both cases the translator could have chosen more natural Syriac alternatives. The choice of words suggests Moshe wanted the particular meanings associated with them: whether the moral quality of ἀρετή or the potentially regal note to δεκανός.

The Syriac translator regularly represented Greek particles such as δέ (ܕܗ) and γάρ (ܕܡܢ). It is a reasonable assumption that these were often in his *Vorlage*. Particles such as δέ and γάρ are found more frequently in here than in, for example, Greek manuscripts F and W, or as witnessed in the Armenian version. This gives a rough indication that the Greek *Vorlage* to the Syriac version had already undergone some stylistic alteration, although the extent cannot be known.

2.2.8 Text-critical importance

The Syriac version is important for reconstructing the earliest achievable version of *Jos. Asen.* for four reasons. First, it is the oldest witness to the story and preserves a form remarkably similar to that preserved in other versions. It provides both a *terminus ante quem* that could not be assumed on the basis of other parts of the tradition, and shows that, in general, *Jos. Asen.* has been transmitted in a remarkably conservative manner across the tradition.⁶⁷ Secondly, because of the date of translation, the Syriac version must have been translated from a majuscule text of the story. It is the only translation for which this can be said with certainty. Thus, it provides a reference point for analysing what the effects of majuscule to minuscule translation of Greek versions might be. This is fundamental to Burchard's theory that there was a restricted number of transliterations, from which flows the rest of the tradition.⁶⁸ Thirdly, because of the considerable overlap between the Syriac, Armenian and Latin 2 versions, there is the reasonable possibility of reconstructing an earlier form of text than is now extant, when used in conjunction with the Greek witness. However, the focus of translation and technique used means that Syriac must be utilised with caution for reconstructing the specific wording of its *Vorlage*.⁶⁹ Fourthly, the Syriac version witnesses to the

65. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*. p.96

66. Sokoloff 2009:318

67. E.g., in comparison to *Life of Adam and Eve*. De Jonge and Tromp 1997:11 note that each translated version has its own mix of traditional material and its own purpose in retelling the story. *Testament of Solomon* shows even greater variation between versions, e.g., see Schwarz (2007).

68. Burchard 2003:10, 26-8

69. For example, in Greek in 9.3 Joseph orders his servants to 'yoke the horses to the chariot', whilst in Syriac the order is to 'prepare the chariot and yoke the horses.' In contrast, the change to Pharaoh's description of the daughter of the king of Moab could be taken to represent the translator's attitude to the qualities of a good wife. In Greek, Pharaoh

story being read in an explicitly Christian context without obvious Christian changes or expansions, as occur in other parts of the tradition. Christians regularly transmitted relatively similar works, certainly written by Jews, without intervention (such as Judith), and this highlights the danger of trying to categorise a work like *Jos. Asen.* as Christian or Jewish without further information.

2.2.9 Influence of biblical texts

Jos. Asen. can be described as 'rewritten Bible' because it starts from, utilises and is constrained by elements from the book of Genesis, e.g., 41.45, 50; 46.20; 48; 50.15. Scholars have noted many biblical allusions in the Greek text, some clearer than others. Looking at the Syriac translation, it is difficult to ascertain how many of these allusions were translated so as to retain the allusion.

Moshe of Aggel certainly possessed a high level of bilingualism, as is seen from his translations. Further, he discusses the problems of dealing with Greek Bible references in his prefatory letters to *Glaphyra*. These references would almost certainly not have been marked in his exemplars, which indicates that he could identify them himself. Also, in his prefatory letters to both *Jos. Asen.* and *Glaphyra*, Moshe of Aggel shows he had an excellent biblical literacy in Syriac.⁷⁰ Thus, it is reasonable to assume that he could recognise Septuagintal Greek allusions in *Jos. Asen.*. However, with no direct quotations of Scripture in *Jos. Asen.* itself to compare, how would Moshe indicate an allusion if he considered the text to make one?

In 17,202, the only instances of marginal annotations being used to identify biblical quotations come in Moshe's introductory letter, and they do not assist in clarifying the situation.⁷¹ If Moshe did make any annotations in his manuscript, they have not been copied into 17,202.⁷² Another factor to consider is Moshe's attitude to dealing with biblical quotations. In the preface to his *Glaphyra* translation, Moshe argues for the then new method of making a translation into Syriac

recommends her as 'a queen and very beautiful', whereas in Syriac she is 'good and suitable for you.'

70. King 2008:308 concludes that Moshe quotes from the Peshitta by choice in his letters, and even once from the Old Syriac. "The fact that the Peshitta is Moses' Bible is itself instructive, since he is clearly so steeped in the 'modern' schools of translation."

71. The sign is approximately: <· (Add. 17,202 f. 9r b - 9v b). In Brooks (1919) the usage covers p.20 line 2 (before ܐܘܪܝܢܐ) to p.21 line 3 (before ܥܠܡܐ ܕܝܗܘܐ). The section covered includes biblical quotation, explicit quotation from Evagrius Pontius, and Moshe's own comments.

72. Guidi (1886) records marginal marks and this shows that the use of quotations symbols for indicating biblical quotations was not consistent.

that reflected the Greek in the text, rather than replacing it with the appropriate Peshitta translation. If Moshe's thinking was similarly developed at the time he translated *Jos. Asen.*, it is not surprising that there are no apparent attempts to insert the appropriate Peshitta text for any Septuagintal allusions he recognised. In any case, the context of the genre of *Jos. Asen.* does not make it a likely candidate for biblical allusions being harmonised.

There are a few points where the translator seems to have sought to make a biblical allusion clearer. These are all short, relate to vocabulary and may be incidental. For example, at 17.3 the Greek says that the heavenly man stretches out his hand over the damaged part of the honeycomb, "and at once fire went up from the table and consumed the comb, but it did not damage the table ." The Syriac adds: 'because it did not have authority over it' (ܕܠܗܘܢ ܘܠܗܘܢ ܘܠܗܘܢ). This is the same verb used in the Peshitta of Daniel 3.27 to describe why the bodies of the three in the fiery furnace were not harmed. The addition provides a reasoning for why the miracle takes place, but does not provide an obvious allusion. No firm evidence has yet been seen of attraction to deuterocanonical texts, though there are possible candidates for investigation.⁷³

2.2.10 Theological differences

The Syriac version displays three theological differences in comparison to *KritHer*. First, an increased focus on repentance. The Syriac version makes more of Aseneth's personal repentance through highlighting repentance in summary passages. At 10.17, the Syriac version reworks the 'seven days of her humiliation' to 'with repentance and suffering of soul and in her subjection'. This reasoning is again picked up in 11.1. In 13.4-6, the reasoning for Aseneth's abstinence is given. Whilst the specific connection is not made with repentance, the mention of being 'ascetic' (ܐܫܬܘܩܝܘܬܐ) in these practices implies penitential practices. Finally in 18.3, whereas *KritHer* has Aseneth explain her change in appearance to be from 'distress and weeping', the Syriac says that it is from 'sadness and repentance'.

Secondly, the role of God in the narrative. The only specific 'act of God' in the Greek narrative comes in 27.11 where the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah draw near intending to kill Aseneth and Benjamin. The Lord God hears Aseneth's prayer for rescue and the maidservants' sons' swords fall to

73. e.g., 18.9 changes the description of Aseneth's neck to 'like an island resting place of angels'. The present writer has not identified the source for this.

the ground and are reduced to dust. Strangely, in the Syriac it is the *brothers* who hear Aseneth's prayer, not God. The miracle occurs but God's action is not invoked outside the prayer. Perhaps the translator wanted to avoid the inclusion of a hagiographical element.

Thirdly, the description of the characters. Aseneth, Joseph and the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah all benefit from the translator's intervention in the narrative to pass over negative actions. In the case of Aseneth's spitting at her suitors in 2.1, the Syriac version tones down the excess of her behaviour.⁷⁴ Concerning Joseph, among other changes, the narrator softens his reaction to the women who trouble him in 7.4. In Syriac they are sent away 'angrily', whilst in Greek it is with 'threats and insults'. There is no negative reasoning for the maidservants' sons not accompanying Joseph and Aseneth in 22.11, and the reader does not find some of the negative description in chapter 24, although their plan to kill Joseph and his children is still included. The underlying motivation of the translator seems to be to protect the character of these biblical figures without interfering in the constraints of the story's narrative.

In considering the theological differences in the Syriac version, Taylor makes an important point:

When minutely examining a work of translation for clues to the ideas and beliefs of the translator, it is easy to forget that the most fundamental theological statement is made in the identity of the work itself.⁷⁵

These theological observations need to be considered in the light of the Syriac manuscript contexts and what these indicate about the identity of the work.

2.3 The context of the Syriac version

2.3.1 The particularity of the extant witness

The manuscripts of the Syriac version survived for particular reasons. Today, both manuscripts are found in the British Library. At least one, and probably both, was previously in the monastery at Deir al-Surian, in the Wadi Natrun, Egypt.⁷⁶ This monastery was founded in the early sixth century and Syriac monks arrived in the early ninth century.⁷⁷ The monastery remained jointly Coptic Or-

74. Syriac does not transmit the second reference to spitting in 21.18, but this is textually uncertain.

75. Taylor 1999:xx

76. See Brock and van Rompay (2014) for a history of the monastery and its manuscripts.

77. Brock and van Rompay 2014:xiii

thodox and Syriac Orthodox until 1636 when it became entirely Coptic Orthodox.⁷⁸ The monastery preserved a unique collection of manuscripts due to the dry climate and relative political stability.⁷⁹ The monastery received several donations of manuscripts early in its history. However, the collection that arrived under Abbot Mushe of Nisibis was the largest and contained the oldest manuscripts.⁸⁰ In 925CE, the new Vizier of Egypt imposed the poll tax on monks. The only way to have the decision rescinded was to appeal to the Caliph in Baghdad. Mushe was elected to represent the monasteries of the area and set off in 927. He finally returned in 932 having successfully reversed the decision, and bringing with him around 250 manuscripts. These manuscripts were either received as donations or purchased by Mushe, and most were already of great age.⁸¹ Mushe seems to have added his own colophons to the manuscripts he brought back and over sixty of these survive today.⁸² Unfortunately he rarely gives any indication of where he acquired the manuscript.⁸³ Because of its age, 17,202 is likely to have arrived among these manuscripts, but no colophon providing definitive evidence survives.

Alongside St. Catherine's Convent, Mount Sinai, the manuscripts of Deir al-Surian provide a unique window into the world of early Syriac literature. Brock estimates that only 17 of 136 manuscripts from before 1000CE do not come from these two monasteries.⁸⁴ As the manuscripts preserved there probably reflect the interests of these monastic communities, it is likely that only works of interest to the monks survive.⁸⁵ Furthermore, as copying habits appear to have changed in the ninth-century, many works preserved in full in these older manuscripts would not otherwise be known.⁸⁶

From 1636, the now Coptic monastic community could no longer read the Syriac manuscripts, but kept them in the monastery. Gradually they sold manuscripts, the first items being sold to the Vat-

78. Brock 2004:15

79. Brock 2004:18

80. See Brock (2004) and (2012) on Mushe's importance.

81. Brock 2012:29 suggests that the willingness of manuscript owners to allow Mushe to purchase them may be due to a major shift in the script used by the Syriac Orthodox in the eighth and ninth centuries, from Estrangelo to Serto. Owners were content to use copies in the newer script.

82. Brock 2004:17; Brock 2012:23

83. van Rompay 2011:302; Brock 2012:28-9

84. Brock 2004:18

85. Brock 2004:21

86. Brock 2004:18-9

2.3.2 17,202 and Pseudo-Zachariah's *Ecclesiastical History*

17,202, is the only extant copy of so-called Pseudo-Zachariah's *Ecclesiastical History*.⁹⁴ The work originally contained 12 books, but part of book 10, all of book 11 and the latter part of book 12 are now missing,⁹⁵ and some leaves are stained and torn. The latest date mentioned is 568/9CE, suggesting it was completed then or soon after.⁹⁶ 17,202 is a copy of this work, possibly from within a generation of its completion, based on palaeographic features.⁹⁷ Excerpts from *Eccl. Hist.* are also found in other manuscripts,⁹⁸ and it was mined for sources by later Syriac authors.⁹⁹ On occasion, these authors appear to have a fuller text than 17,202 preserves.¹⁰⁰

Eccl. Hist. is inelegantly ascribed to 'Pseudo-Zachariah' because from an early date the largest source, the *Ecclesiastical History* of Zachariah Rhetor,¹⁰¹ came to be associated with the whole of the work. This is shown in citations by later Syriac authors, as well as in the running headings that have been intermittently added to the manuscript.¹⁰² The work itself can be broadly broken down into five sections:¹⁰³

Book(s)	Contents
1	Preface followed by "miscellaneous episodes" ¹⁰⁴ including <i>Jos. Asen.</i> and the <i>Baptism of Constantine</i> .

94. For a survey of PZ's *Eccl. Hist.* see esp. Greatrex (2011), as well as Greatrex (2006), (2009), (forthcoming). Greatrex (2011) is cited unless more detail is found in other publications.

95. Wright 1872:1041 notes six other places where leaves are missing.

96. Greatrex 2011:32. 880 of the Seleucid Era (568/9 CE) is mentioned in i.1, 3. Dating by the Seleucid Era began on 1 October 311 BCE, with Seleucus I Nicator's entry into Babylon. Debié 2009:99 argues that the use of this dating system, in contrast to the Byzantine or Antiochene systems, was part of the creation of a distinctly Syrian Orthodox identity.

97. Wright 1872:1041

98. Greatrex 2011:62. Vatican Library, Syriac 145 (after extracts from Theodoret and Socrates); British Library, Add. 12,154 (ca 800CE); Add. 14,620 (ninth century); Add. 7,190 (twelfth century).

99. See Greatrex 2009:40-2; 2011:57-60. None of these authors refer to *Jos. Asen.*, though Michael the Syrian did utilise the *Seven Sleepers of Ephesus* from PZ.

100. Greatrex 2011:58-9 "There are a handful of occasions on which it seems as though Michael [the Syrian in his *Chronicle*] had access to a fuller version of PZ than the one to which we have access..." Greatrex continues: "There is nothing implausible in this, since chronicles — and, no doubt, compilations of miscellaneous history — tended to evolve as soon as they were set down, with subsequent compilers (or scribes) making adjustments to suit their own interests..."

101. On Zachariah Rhetor, the complexities of his identification with historical figures and the works ascribed to him, see especially Brock and Fitzgerald 2013:15-19 and Greatrex 2011:3-31.

102. Greatrex 2011:33-4.

103. Greatrex 2006:41-3. Greatrex 2011:2 provides a detailed contents and source list.

104. Greatrex 2006:42

2	Preface followed by various sources about ecclesiastical events from the 440s setting the stage for Zachariah Rhetor's <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> . Includes the <i>Seven Sleepers of Ephesus</i> .
3-6	An abridged Syriac translation of Zachariah Rhetor's Greek <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> covering the period between the Council of Chalcedon in 451 and the rise of Anastasias in 491.
7-10	The reigns of further emperors with a concentration on events in the Eastern provinces.
10.16; 12.4-7q	Various sources, including an epitome of Ptolemy's <i>Geography</i> .

Greatrex notes that PZ's work is made up of so many sources that PZ's contribution appears eclipsed behind them.¹⁰⁵ In comparison with Zachariah Rhetor, PZ is only known through this manuscript. It is assumed that he was an anti-Chalcedonian because of the work's miaphysite sympathies, although his views are moderate in comparison to other miaphysite writers, for example John of Ephesus.¹⁰⁶ The nature of Syriac historiography is that it was produced, copied and preserved within the structures of the Church, suggesting that he was a monk.¹⁰⁷ From the sources he cites and the cultivated style of his prefaces, PZ appears well educated and was probably able to read in Greek, even if he did not translate the documents himself.¹⁰⁸ The repeated focus on Amida suggests that he probably lived there and the wide range of documents that PZ cites suggests that he had access to a good library as well as first hand accounts. Additionally, Greatrex adds that the work suggests PZ was writing at a time when there was optimism that the miaphysite cause would eventually triumph and the King of Persia would be converted to Christianity.¹⁰⁹

Attitudes towards PZ and what he produced have varied. For example, it has been suggested that PZ should be seen primarily as either a bibliophile copyist,¹¹⁰ an author,¹¹¹ or a compiler making only slight editing decisions.¹¹² Hamilton described the materials outside books 3-6 as:

105. Greatrex 2009:43-49 and 2011:39-57 list: Zachariah Rhetor's *Ecclesiastical History*; a chronicle which is invoked at 2.1 and 4.0d; bishop lists; Ecclesiastical historians, especially Socrates and Theodoret of Cyrillus; the Acts of councils; dossiers of correspondence; independent stories, such as *Jos. Azen.*; a history of the reign of Anastasias concentrating on Amida; a source for the reign of Justinian; an apocalyptic source.

106. See especially Greatrex 2006:45

107. Debié and Taylor 2012:156

108. It is not clear whether PZ is responsible for translating any of his sources. Greatrex 2011:39 thinks that PZ used an already extant Syriac translation of Zachariah Rhetor's work, although others have suggested the opposite.

109. Greatrex 2006:39; 2009:34-5.

110. Hamilton 1892:iv

111. Hamilton and Brooks (1899); Greatrex (2006), particularly p.45.

112. Greatrex 2011:65

...merely a conglomeration of disconnected and heterogeneous matter, which Land rightly terms 'farrago'... All perhaps possessing some interest in their way, but evidently falling outside the scope of this or any other serious history.¹¹³

Today, a more positive view of PZ's involvement is held, seeing him as a careful compiler, a view helped by a growing understanding of what might be termed 'composite histories'.¹¹⁴ It recognises the polyvalent nature of the works produced, rather than seeking them to understand them in genre categories such as 'ecclesiastical' or 'miscellaneous' history.¹¹⁵

But why was *Jos. Asen.* included in *Eccl. Hist.* and what does PZ's context suggest about the way in which *Jos. Asen.* was read? The prefaces and the prefatory letters to *Jos. Asen.* provide possible clues.

Eccl. Hist. opens with the title 'Volume of narratives of events that have occurred in the world'.¹¹⁶ After a contents list for book 1, there is a preface. The preface is important because, whilst a reader is able to read the work without it, the preface may predispose readers to understand the text in a different manner.¹¹⁷ The preface opens with a list of 6 negative images of memorials (5 are biblical, one is from the fifth century) referring to events that led people astray. PZ contrasts these to what he will provide:

How right and fitting it is for eager and discerning readers that, following on from the three ecclesiastical histories of Eusebius, Socrates and Theodoret, the succeeding events that took place at different times, that are scattered about and not collected together in a single volume, should be assembled and set down, based on documents, or letters, or reliable oral sources. This will be for the benefit of the faithful and those who have a concern for excellence and beauty of soul. May the recording in writing of these things proceed with the assistance of Christ our God! We pray that he may give us the wisdom and eloquence to describe in an unconfusing way the truth of what has happened.¹¹⁸

The preface goes on to explain the reason for the inclusion for the genealogical tables ("because there is a certain confusion, involving differences in the Syriac manuscripts from the Greek in the table of the generations in Genesis...") and Silvester's instruction and baptism of Constantine ("of

113. Hamilton 1892:iv

114. See esp. Greatrex (forthcoming) for a comparison of PZ's use of Zachariach Rhetor with the way an anonymous compiler used the *History* of Theodore Lector.

115. Greatrex (forthcoming):16

116. ܩܘܠܘܡܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ (Trans. Greatrex 2011:75)

117. Riad 1988:186

118. Greatrex 2011:78.

which Eusebius and Socrates gave a less than truthful account:.."). PZ is telling his readers to situate his work within the context of the earlier ecclesiastical histories. Like them, he places a great weight of emphasis on being able to have verifiable sources for what he tells readers. Additionally, by noting that his predecessors left out important works or gave incorrect accounts, PZ is making a claim to have conducted greater research. This and further elements of his preface sit well within the mould of prefaces to ecclesiastical histories and makes a claim to be read as such.¹¹⁹

The preface to book 2 gives further details about PZ's intent. Here he sets out that, after recounting the *Seven Sleepers of Ephesus*, he will cover the ten years of the reign of Theodosius, following what had already been narrated by Socrates.¹²⁰ He also gives a dedication to the 'brother' who requested the work "for the instruction of the brethren, the pleasure of lovers of learning, and the edification of the faithful."¹²¹

In summary, what these two prefaces suggest is that PZ was pursuing a deliberate scheme where he presented material that he thought would be instructional, edifying and of interest to his readers. The materials are presented as factual, with no indication that *Jos. Asen.* is to be considered any differently to the *Baptism of Constantine* or the history of the latter years of Theodosius.¹²² As *Jos. Asen.* is based on a biblical event, this suggests that PZ also saw it as sound exegesis.¹²³

Immediately before the translation of *Jos. Asen.* there are two prefatory letters. The first is a letter by an anonymous individual, generally assumed to be PZ, requesting Moshe of Aggel to translate the story he encloses. The second is Moshe of Aggel's reply, which is incomplete. These letters provided an immediate prism through which to read the story. In the first letter (book 1, chapter 4), the anonymous correspondent begins with a series of sayings that emphasise the importance of the wise person imparting knowledge, before moving to implore a particular wise person (Moshe of Aggel) to undertake a task. The author presents his own shortcomings in reading Greek, saying:

119. Cp Socrates Scholasticus' practice— Urbainczyk 1997:41ff.

120. Witakowski (unpublished)

121. Greatrex 2011:82

122. On the dangers of suggesting coded reading see Barclay (2011).

123. Also, the titles used to refer to *Jos. Asen.* support this. It is referred to as a 'narration/story' (ἱστορία καὶ διήγησις) in the title to the letter from the anonymous writer (chapter 4) and the title to the story (chapter 6); 'history/story' (ἱστορία καὶ διήγησις) in the table of contents; 'book' (βιβλίον καὶ ἱστορία) in the preface to book 1 and in the anonymous writer's letter where he describes the work. The titles used seem interchangeable and when compared to the use of διήγησις (e.g., in the title of the whole of PZ's work) and ἱστορία (e.g., in the title for the *Baptism of Constantine*), there is nothing to indicate that PZ wanted to show *Jos. Asen.* should be considered differently to the works surrounding it.

"For a wise man does not leave wisdom that is hidden, but shall search carefully,.." His appeal is backed up with a quotation attributed to Paul (2 Timothy 3.16): "...every writing that is written in the spirit is useful for teaching and correction and direction and instruction that is in righteousness."

Next, the writer moves to the meat of his letter— a request for the document he encloses to be translated and its meaning interpreted. He tells Moshe that the work came from an episcopal library from Reshaina through a near relation, that it is very old, called "Of 'Asyāth", and written in Greek. The problem is that he has read the *historia* (ܚܝܫܬܘܪܝܐ), but he does not understand the *theoria* (ܬܝܘܪܝܐ) because he does not understand the language sufficiently. The writer finishes by appealing to the support of the Holy Spirit¹²⁴ for Moshe's work and a request for haste in completing the translation and interpretation. The letter ends abruptly without concluding remarks, suggesting it was truncated to remove material irrelevant to copyist's purposes.

The reply from Moshe of Aggel opens with a long section of comparisons. The first set favourably compares the anonymous correspondent ('your discretion') with others who fall short in various ways: "not like the rest of them who forsook the virtues and instructions,..". Moshe then moves to a series of biblical citations which move the emphasis to a positive comparison of 'your discretion' with those who are less wise. Moshe frames what the anonymous author requests in ascetic language, making explicit reference to Evagrius the Ascete and quoting his writings.

Next, Moshe takes up the theme of what he has been asked to do. First, though, he notes his unsuitability for the task, but is heartened through scriptural quotations that give him courage to undertake the translation. A second set of quotations from Evagrius are used to confirm the point that he has so far argued from Scripture. These Evagrian quotations provide a shift from justifying Moshe making the translation, to what the outcome will be for both the reader and the translator: the reader will examine it and benefit from the contents, and the translator as 'instructor' will be purified by it.

Finally Moshe moves towards interpreting the text. He too has read the *historia*, and he notes that there is *theoria* in it. He starts his description with what could be regarded by any Christian reader

124. Which is notably still feminine. Brock 1979a:87 notes that in early Syriac literature the Holy Spirit is always treated grammatically as feminine. From the fifth century onwards, the influence of the Greek neuter led to the general adoption of a masculine grammatical gender in Syriac, which has no neuter.

Moshe's quotation of Evagrius suggests two things. First, it shows that Moshe held Evagrius' sayings in sufficiently high regard to be quoted alongside Scripture in making an interpretive point. Secondly, the fact that such an ascetically focused writer as Evagrius is quoted suggests that Aseneth's ordeal of repentance was read as good ascetic practice.

2.3.2.2 *Theoria*

In the letters preceding *Jos. Asen.*, the anonymous writer tells Moshe that he understands the *historia* but not the *theoria*. Nir argued that this *theoria* meant allegory, and the correspondent sent the story to Moshe of Aggel "who apparently was experienced in reading allegorical works, requesting him to translate it into Syriac and interpret the allegory."¹³⁵ For Nir, that Moshe of Aggel agreed there was *theoria* (=allegory) shows modern readers that the story included a large amount of hidden and explicit allegory and symbol.¹³⁶ Thus, the "...debate can only be on how to interpret these allegories and symbols."¹³⁷ But the assumption that *theoria* means allegory is problematic.

It is easier to define what *theoria* is not: *ἱστορία* (*historia*). *Historia* was a term used by patristic exegetes to designate the historical, narrative or literal sense of a passage.¹³⁸ Exegetes of both the so-called 'Alexandrian' and 'Antiochene' schools used this term as the opposite of *theoria*. The term *θεωρία* (*theoria*) has a long history in patristic exegesis.¹³⁹ Lampe's *Lexicon* shows a wide range of meanings: a literal or metaphorical term, as spiritual contemplation, or as an exegetical process.¹⁴⁰

It has been widely held that for writers in the Alexandrian school *theoria* meant an allegorical interpretation— treating the sacred text as a mere symbol of spiritual truths. In this view, the literal, historical sense plays a minor role, if any at all. The aim of the exegete is to draw out the moral, theological or mystical meaning of the pericope in view, whether this is a passage or each word of a passage.¹⁴¹ This is contrasted with an Antiochene interpretation of *theoria*, that allegory was unreliable, indeed illegitimate, for interpreting Scripture. Where the deeper spiritual message was not already fully explicit, the key was to use *theoria*. This was the power of perceiving a spiritual reality

135. Nir 2012:12. Brooks 1918:viii states it means allegory without comment.

136. Nir 2012:13

137. Nir 2012:12

138. See especially Kerrigan 1952:35-40 who discusses the use of *historia* among a wide range of Patristic authors, and Russell 2000:16.

139. See overviews in Solignac (1991); Schröer (2002); Kerrigan 1952:111-18

140. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Ed. G W H Lampe. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961. pp. 648-9.

141. Kelly 1977:70

in addition to the historical facts of the text. A preservation of the literal sense was vital and there had to be a real correspondence between the two.¹⁴² But this dichotomy of views is not justified as a useful generalisation. As Kerrigan (1952) argued at length, so-called Alexandrian exegetes did take the literal meaning of the text seriously and so-called 'Antiochenes' strayed into allegory in their interpretations.¹⁴³

In the prefatory letters to *Jos. Asen.*, *historia* and *theoria* are being used in a Syriac context. The contrast of a historical or literal reading with a 'spiritual' meaning is found in native Syriac literature in the fourth century with Ephrem in biblical interpretation.¹⁴⁴ The first use of *theoria* as a concept appears to come in the writings of Philoxenos in the early sixth century.¹⁴⁵ It came to be used widely, largely through the popularity of Evagrius' works.¹⁴⁶ However, Evagrius was not the only influence on the use of *theoria* as a term and, as Molenberg points out, the use of the concept was ambiguous even among ascetical writers.¹⁴⁷ As a result, the use of the term *theoria* needs to be carefully considered in the context in which it appears before a judgement is made about its meaning.

The issue of *theoria* also appears in the prefatory letters to Moshe's other extant translation, Cyril of Alexandria's *Glaphyra*. Here a certain Paphnutios, the person requesting the translation, says of the wise: "And they in their *theoria* become clever in wisdom."¹⁴⁸ Paphnutios says that he has already read Cyril's *Adoration of the Spirit* in Syriac translation, a work in which Cyril uses *theoria*, and now seeks a translation of *Glaphyra*. Paphnutios seems to be referring to a Cyrilline *theoria* here. Moshe does not deal directly with this *theoria*, but he does discuss some of the challenges of reading Cyril, particularly the register of Cyril's language as he carries out his exegesis. It is plausible that Moshe's understanding of *theoria* was influenced by Cyril's use of the term.

So far there are four major possibilities for how *theoria* should be interpreted: (a) as allegory; (b) in line with Antiochene exegetes; (c) in line with the Evagrian corpus; (d) along the lines of Cyril of Alexandria.

142. Kelly 1977:76

143. See also Nassif 2009:51, 53.

144. Brock 2006:63

145. Brock 1995:407

146. Brock 1995:407; Becker 2006:176

147. Molenberg 1990:380. See e.g., Brock 1995 on the influences in Isaac of Nineveh's writings.

148. Guidi p. 400, lines 8-9: ܐܘܢ ܕܢܘܨܝܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ ܕܘܨܝܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ ܕܘܨܝܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ ܕܘܨܝܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ

Allegory (a) is unlikely because the *historia*, the literal reading of the text, is the starting point for both letter writers. The story deals with an event from Scripture and was sufficiently attractive to the writer to read and then go to the trouble of having it translated. As *Jos. Asen.* is not a difficult Greek text, if the *theoria* was allegory, a scripturally literate reader should not have had difficulty assigning an allegory. Further, the explanation that Moshe gives in a constrained space cannot be long and detailed, explaining its many facets.

An Evagrian meaning (c) is also unlikely. Whilst Moshe makes two extended sets of quotations from Evagrius, in the context of the letter it appears that these are related to the importance of asceticism in the story. Nothing in the quotations of Evagrius indicates there is anything to do with his exegetical method.

Turning to Cyril of Alexandria's use of *theoria* (d), a problem is that Cyril rarely defined what he meant by his exegetical terms. In his prologue to his Commentary on Isaiah, Cyril says:

Hence those who wish to explain the thoughts which are thus subtle and enigmatic and broad of meaning should inspect them carefully with the eye of the mind and expound both the accurate literal signification (τῆς ἱστορίας τὸ ἀκριβές) and the spiritual sense (τῆς πνευματικῆς θεωρίας ἢ ἀπόδοσις), so that the readers may acquire knowledge of what is really useful and the explanation of the meaning of the text be lacking in nothing.¹⁴⁹

This presents a contrast in the meaning of the two terms. Kerrigan concludes his analysis of Cyril's various usages: "We do not travesty St. Cyril's thought by claiming that a signification of Scripture which does not deal in some way or other with Christ's mystery, is not a spiritual sense."¹⁵⁰ In the context of Cyril's arguments at Alexandria with Jews over Christians' legitimate use of the Old Testament, and arguments with Gnostics over whether there was agreement between the Law and the Gospel, his response was to place considerable weight on the two Testaments being one single saving Testament. *Theoria* was Cyril's favourite expression for this exegesis and whilst ἀλληγορία (allegory) was well known in the tradition, Cyril barely uses it.¹⁵¹

The problem with proposing Cyril of Alexandria's usage of *theoria* is that there is nothing to connect the translation of *Jos. Asen.* with Moshe's other translation. Which work was translated first and the gap between the translations is unknown. That Moshe starts his explanation with a refer-

149. Translated in Kerrigan 1952:34 fn. 2.

150. Kerrigan 1952:131

151. Kerrigan 1952:114-5

ence to the incarnation is hardly unexpected in an explanation by someone who was almost certainly a monk.

This leaves an Antiochene interpretation (b). However this is not satisfactory either. Moshe makes very little of the *historia*, other than to say that he has read it. With the Antiochene method we would reasonably expect more of an emphasis on the *historia* as a building block from which the *theoria* is visible. Instead, Moshe seems to be building up to unwrap the tale.

As none of the four suggestions are appealing, an alternative is proposed. The anonymous correspondent may be asking Moshe something like: what is the moral of this story? In the initial letter there is no emphasis on particular details in the story, nor is there reference to a mystical concern with any part of it, and the writer can understand the contents. Further, as the copyist of 7,190 did not include the introductory letters, the answer Moshe gave is likely to be fairly obvious in the context of Syriac literature. The present writer suspects that the rest of the letter set out a typology of Joseph as Christ, and Aseneth as the true convert and a good example of penitence.

Different reasons have been proposed for the inclusion of *Jos. Asen.* Witakowski suggested that PZ's interest in biblical chronology indicates that he knew Eusebius' *Chronicle*.¹⁵² *Jos. Asen.* can be seen as filling a gap in Eusebius' presentation of Joseph, and implies that PZ was thinking of his work in terms of universal history.¹⁵³ Greatrex (2009) suggests that PZ included *Jos. Asen.* to provide works that were little known and which would edify his readers, as well as gain their interest.¹⁵⁴ Greatrex (2011) suggests that PZ included *Jos. Asen.* to demonstrate the depth of his research, alongside the novelty value it possessed.¹⁵⁵ The three proposals are not mutually exclusive and each probably contains a measure of the truth. Also, *Jos. Asen.* shows how PZ considered the Old Testament as authoritative and suggested how it should be read, prefiguring the Christian era.

2.3.3 7,190 and the Miscellaneous Collection

7,190 was copied around 1200CE.¹⁵⁶ It was purchased in unknown circumstances early in the nineteenth century by the linguistically gifted East India Company official Claudius Rich.¹⁵⁷ The manu-

152. On Eusebius' *Chronicle* in Syriac historiography see Debié (2006) and Adler (2008).

153. Witakowski (unpublished)

154. Greatrex 2009:49

155. Greatrex 2011:54

156. Wright 1872:1206.

157. On Rich's life and the eventual purchase of a portion of his collection by the British Government, see "Rich,

script was one of 59 Syriac manuscripts amongst the 805 manuscripts in various oriental languages purchased by the British Government after his death (Add. 7,145-7,203). Rich acquired his manuscripts during his many travels in the Middle East and India¹⁵⁸ and unfortunately neither Rieu¹⁵⁹ or Forshall,¹⁶⁰ catalogers of Rich's Syriac manuscripts, indicate where Rich purchased 7,190. There is no internal evidence in the manuscript indicating where it was copied or who previously owned it, and the opening and closing folios are lost or damaged so no colophon is preserved. However, it is highly likely that the manuscript came from Deir al-Surian for three reasons. First, the text of *Jos. Asen.* is virtually identical to 17,202 and even notes missing folios. Secondly, the thirteenth century appears to have been a time of considerable activity in the Monastery,¹⁶¹ which gives a good setting for a monk compiling such a collection of excerpts and works. Thirdly, Rich served in Egypt and it is possible that he, or his agent, either ventured to the Wadi Natrun in search of ancient manuscripts, or purchased 7,190 (and probably several others) through a dealer or even a monk.

The text itself is written in Serto script, indicating that a monk transcribed *Jos. Asen.* from the Estrangela of 17,202. 7,190, like 17,202, is not in its original binding and there would have been plenty of opportunities over the centuries for the missing leaf to be lost— not least on Rich's various relocations.¹⁶²

7,190 is a fascinating collection of works that appear to have been copied by the same hand, although several other hands added marginalia. It starts with a large collection of Evagriana and is followed by works from a number of Patristic authors. *Jos. Asen.* follows a series of sermons by various important Syriac authors and seems to start a new section of historically based narratives. The work following it is a text entitled "A *mimra* concerning the translation of the bones of Joseph to

Claudius James" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (last accessed 27 April 2015) and Thompson (1963). The Syriac and Garshuni manuscripts are catalogued in Forshall (1838), with additional information in Wright (1872) Appendix A. Wright (1872) does not include reference to Rich in his account of visitors in search of manuscripts to the Wadi Natrun.

158. Thompson 1963:19

159. Rich (1836) Appendix III gives a description of the 59 Syriac manuscripts in the British Museum by Charles Rieu, then Keeper of the Department of Oriental Manuscripts. Rich 1836:310 describes MS 46 as only: "A collection of theological tracts by various authors, written probably in the thirteenth century. Three hundred and seventy-five leaves, in quarto, vellum."

160. Forshall 1838:77

161. Brock and van Rompay 2014:xv

162. And leaves could be added. For example, f.205 is a bifolio from an Arabic manuscript inserted into the middle of a dialogue between Paul the Priest and Satan.

Constantinople by Mor Ephrem.¹⁶³ The link is possibly the title of Joseph as 'the Just' in both texts, or simply an interest in Joseph.¹⁶⁴ Both appear relatively light-hearted after the heavy-going patristic texts that precede them. It is conceivable that the manuscript collator included *Jos. Asen.* as an interesting piece of exegesis, or because he was interested in Joseph and gathered a few works about him.

2.4 Conclusions

This chapter argued that the translation and manuscript context of the Syriac version of *Jos. Asen.* is important for understanding its witness within the textual tradition. This helps explain the increased focus on the theme of repentance. Without awareness of translation technique and literary context, scholarship will miss how the story was read and functioned.

The Syriac version shows that the story could be read in a specifically Christian framework without any apparent changes. Even if the translator considered *Jos. Asen.* to be originally a Jewish story, he saw no need to make Christian allusions clearer. This is particularly apparent in the transmission of what modern commentators have pointed to as explicitly Christian motifs. In the context of 7,190, the compiler felt that the meaning of the story was sufficiently clear to copy the story without explanation or preface.

Within the manuscript context, *Jos. Asen.*'s expansion of the biblical text dealing with the popular figure Joseph will have been edifying as well as appealing to readers. The very different context of 7,190 suggests that its subject matter and literary qualities were a sufficient reason for it to be copied. Undoubtedly, PZ and the compiler of 7,190 considered the story to have an edifying message, but in both cases its engaging narrative was probably of equal interest to the monks who read it. The compiler of 7,190 had the choice of a great many stories to add to his manuscript, but chose to include *Jos. Asen.* despite it being incomplete.

Jos. Asen. should not be viewed in isolation. It can also be read within wider hagiographic literature. As Brock and Harvey have noted: "For Christendom of Late Antiquity it was holy lives that

163. 'Mor Ephrem' is squeezed in as if an after-thought of the copyist.

164. Bednarowicz (2008) claims that the author of the twelve poems (and presumably the appendix) published in Bedjan 1891 knew *Jos. Asen.*. This is of interest as a version of 'the translation of the bones of Joseph' is found in both 7,190 and Bedjan's edition. However, the two versions are quite different. The similarities Bednarowicz sees are more likely to reflect the agglomeration of any Joseph material. 7,190 suggests the compiler was interested in good historically based homiletic material rather than any other connection.

most often transcended differences of language, culture and time.¹⁶⁵ *Jos. Asen.* could also be read within a wider Syriac literature of holy women and their journey of faith.¹⁶⁶

165. Brock and Harvey 1987:38

166. See the narratives in Brock and Harvey (1987). *Jos. Asen.* not only shares literary traits with some of these, but also motifs in her ascetic conversion.

Chapter 3

The Armenian Version

3.1 Introduction

Armenia is an ancient nation which regards itself as the first kingdom to have accepted Christianity as its official religion. The influences on Armenian Christianity came through different cultural bridges, notably Hellenistic and Syriac culture through Greek and Syriac Christians respectively. The formation of a national literature in Armenian, as well as the first translation of the Bible, stems from the early fifth century following the invention of the Armenian alphabet.¹ The turbulent history of the region, often split between competing empires, meant that Armenian Christianity evolved in a particular way.² Whilst Armenian Christianity always maintained contacts with the wider world, its individual and non-Chalcedonian tradition meant that it developed and preserved a distinct tradition. The translation of works of interest to Christians from the neighbouring Christian traditions was important in different periods. Today, many works originally written in Greek or Syriac are only preserved in Armenian translation.³

The Armenian version of *Jos. Azen.* (Arm) has received little attention in scholarship. Yet Arm is an important witness as it probably reflects an earlier stage in the text's development than many other versions. Further, it has more manuscripts than all the other versions together, the greatest geographical diversity of manuscripts, and the only version where the story was regularly transmitted as part of the Bible. Consequently, it provides a good case study of the factors affecting translation and transmission.

1. Metzger 1977:153-7

2. See Bournoutian (2006) chapter 7.

3. For example, Runia 2016:266 notes that 9 treatises of Philo are only preserved in Armenian.

Modern scholarship on Arm has been driven by Christoph Burchard.⁴ His work has provided a firm foundation for further scholarship through the investigation of Arm's transmission history, the range of possible dates for translation; and the relationship of *Jos. Asen.* to similar literature in Armenian. However, Burchard's most significant contribution was his minor critical edition, Burchard (2010). This edition gives scholars an accessible resource to study Arm and its textual tradition. This chapter will first consider the translation technique employed in Arm before noting the translator's influence and the theological differences when compared to other versions. From there it turns to issues of the context, particularly its transmission tradition.

3.2 The text of the Armenian version

3.2.1 Manuscripts and editions

Burchard (2010) lists 49 manuscript witnesses to Arm, all of which are believed to descend from a single ancestor that was translated from Greek. These are arranged into 6 families (Arm^{a-e, h}) and two outlying manuscripts (Arm^f and Arm^g) on the basis of sampling.⁵ However, Burchard had to make assumptions about the affiliation of some manuscripts as four are believed to be lost and six he was unable to see.⁶

The present writer has viewed three of the latter at the Armenian Patriarchate, Jerusalem. Initial analysis shows that the suppositions in Burchard 2010:6-7 were correct: J1929 is Arm^b but finishes at 21.9; J2558 is Arm^c, finishing at 22.10 with similar wording to 342;⁷ J3043 is Arm^b and finishes at 29.7.⁸ In J3043, f.352v contains page-height miniatures of Joseph and Aseneth.⁹

4. Burchard (1965), (1979), (1983), (1987), (1990), (1999a), (2003a), (2010). Two articles are forthcoming and unseen: "A Plea for a Minor Edition of the Armenian Version of *Joseph and Aseneth*", to be published in the Festschrift for Jos. J. S. Weitenberg's sixtieth birthday; and "Further notes on the text of *Joseph and Aseneth* in Matenadaran 1500", publication unknown.

5. Burchard 2010:5-8. Additional information is also in Burchard 1983:215.

6. Burchard 2010:8

7. Burchard 2010:127 fn.74.

8. Catalogue entries respectively: Bogharian 1972:431-3 (432); 1977:251-62 (253); 1990:235-43 (237). A useful description of J3043 is given in Cox 1981:23, 45, 47.

9. As part of his research, the present writer was consulted these Armenian manuscript, as well as J1925 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arm.e.30. All further manuscript information is taken from the sources cited.

There are probably more manuscript witnesses to *Jos. Asen.* still to be discovered. Many manuscript libraries remain to be catalogued and until recently scholars were not sensitive to identifying pseudepigrapha.¹⁰

The oldest dated manuscript of *Jos. Asen.* in Armenian is J1925, an illustrated manuscript dating from 1269CE about which a great deal is known.¹¹ The majority of manuscripts were copied in the seventeenth century or later. The date of the witness to *Jos. Asen.* appears late, but it needs to be placed in perspective. Apart from a few leaves of disputed age used in the binding and repair of later codices, the most ancient Armenian manuscript of the Gospels only dates from the ninth century. Other than a handful of ninth or tenth century manuscripts, all others are from the twelfth century or later.¹² Moreover, the first full recension of the Armenian Bible only dates from the end of the twelfth century in Cilicia.¹³ Thus, the earliest witnesses to *Jos. Asen.* are of an early period among extant Armenian manuscripts. Further, a young manuscript can preserve an ancient text.

In the Armenian tradition, *Jos. Asen.* was transmitted within Bibles (Arm^{b, c, e, f}) and in different types of miscellanies. Today, the largest collections of these manuscripts are held at the Matenadaran at Erevan (19), the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem (9), at San Lazzaro, Venice (6) and the Mechitarist Monastery, Vienna (4). This distribution is unsurprising because manuscripts became concentrated in particular libraries as a result of the turbulent history of the Armenians. Manuscripts arrived through various means: through centralisation of church libraries, bequests from monks and clergy, or gifts from pilgrims or pious supporters.¹⁴

The first printed edition of *Jos. Asen.* in Armenian was prepared from a single manuscript by the editor of the Armenian Bible, J. Zohrab, in 1806 but never published.¹⁵ The full text was first published anonymously in 1884-5, and republished by Yovsēp'eanc' (1896) based on a Venetian manuscript with an occasional and unspecific apparatus. Burchard describes this as 'almost useless'.¹⁶

10. Stone 1999:140

11. On the provenance and significance of J1925 see der Nersessian (1973). For detailed information see: Stone 2002:76; Cox 2006:31-2 Cox 2006:41-2 provides an analysis of scribal anomalies. For plates of miniatures in J1925 see Mekhitarian 1969:23 and Stone 2002:277. The contents of J1925 are given in Nersessian (2001) Appendix 3.

12. Metzger 1977:158, 160.

13. Nersessian 2001:30

14. Stone 1969:37-8

15. Burchard 2010:4

16. Burchard 2010:4. Burchard provides a full publication history. On the editorial practices of Mekhitarist Fathers and the importance of their work see Calzolari 2014:273-80.

This edition was translated into English in Issaverdens (1907) with a short introduction. The first minor critical edition is Burchard (2010).

3.2.2 Methodology

This textual investigation aimed to better understand the translation technique used to translate *Jos. Asen.* from Greek into Armenian and to identify aspects of the story that have been adapted by the translator. To achieve these aims, a comparison was undertaken of the earliest achievable Armenian text reconstructed in Burchard (2010) with *KritHer*. As with the Syriac version, there are limitations with this method.

First, the *Vorlage* for Arm is no longer extant and it is uncertain how close *KritHer* is to this text. Differences that were identified in the comparison could be due to differences in the Greek model. However, there is good reason to think that Arm was translated from a text that is closer to *KritHer* than any other available option. When passages only witnessed in Greek families *a* and *d* are ignored, it is sufficiently similar for a meaningful comparison to be made. Secondly, whilst Greek and Armenian are both Indo-European languages, Armenian cannot reproduce Greek forms and meanings exactly. For example, it does not have the same range of verb tenses and moods.¹⁷ Thus, the range of ways that the Armenian translator might naturally translate the *Vorlage* has to be taken into account.

Thirdly, Burchard (2010) is a minor critical edition and, as Burchard notes, there is much work still to be done.¹⁸ The Armenian text used is not the original translation and may well contain developments in comparison to the original translation which skews the investigation. Fourthly, the present writer's inexperience in working with Armenian and Greek may lead important elements being missed or to over-emphasise comparatively unimportant features.

Acknowledging these limitations, the present writer was confident that useful data could be provided through the comparison.

17. On the range of considerations in translations, see Rhodes' contribution in Metzger 1977:171-80.

18. Burchard 2010:16-7. However, that Burchard edited both the Greek and Armenian editions is a significant advantage in studying *Jos. Asen.* over other texts. See Tessier (1984).

3.2.3 General Style overview

The Armenian version of *Jos. Asen.* is an engaging piece of Armenian literature. The translation produced a readable Armenian story. Although the translation often shares formal characteristics with the Greek, such as reproducing the Greek word order, it shows few signs of an attempt to render the Greek with a literalness associated with the so-called 'Hellenistic School'. Whilst the translator did not reproduce every detail of his Greek *Vorlage*, neither does he appear to have made significant alterations. Inner Armenian development, apparently from a very early stage, had a greater impact on the content of the story than the initial translator.

3.2.4 Focus of translation

The translator's main interest appears to have been to make a close Armenian translation of his Greek exemplar. Only three verses are not found: 15.8; 29.8-9.¹⁹ Occasional words or small phrases were skipped, though usually with little impact. For example, in 6.1 Arm does not specify that Aseneth sees Joseph *on the chariot*. For a longer example, the description of the contents of Aseneth's storeroom, and that her maiden companions each had their own chamber is lacking from 2.5b-6a.

There are no significant expansions. Occasional small expansions are found, usually clarifying the narrative, such as the plus in 27.8, "and then they said". These occur less frequently than details or phrases that apparently were skipped by the translator.

Arm has many verses that are nearly word-for-word with Greek versions. For example, 28.17:

Version	Text
<i>KritHer</i>	καὶ ἔγνω Λευὶς ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτῶν καὶ οὐκ ἀνήγγειλε τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ.
Armenian	և ծանեաւ Ղևի եղբայրն նոցա և ոչ ծանոցց նոցա,
<i>KritHer</i>	ἐφοβήθη γὰρ μήποτε ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ αὐτῶν κατακόψωσιν αὐτούς.
Armenian	քանզի երկեաւ, վի գուցէ բարկութեանք իւրեանց սպանանիցեն զնոսա:

The only difference is the abbreviation of 'to his brothers' (τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ) to 'them' (նոցա). The loss or abbreviation of indirect objects that are obvious from context is a tendency of the Armenian version, and also common in other versions of the story.

19. Four other verses in *KritHer* are only extant in families *a* or *ad*: 13.10; 25.8; 28.5-6.

14.1 shows some of the translator's other interests and tendencies as he sought to capture the sense of the Greek.

<i>KritHer</i>	Armenian
Καὶ ὡς ἐπαύσατο Ἄσενεθ ἐξομολογουμένη τῷ κυρίῳ ἰδοὺ ὁ ἑωσφόρος ἀστήρ ἀνέτειλεν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατὰ ἀνατολάς. καὶ εἶδεν αὐτὸν Ἄσενεθ καὶ ἐχάρη καὶ εἶπεν· »ἄρα ἐπήκουσε κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῆς προσευχῆς μου διότι ὁ ἀστήρ οὗτος ἄγγελος καὶ κῆρυξ τοῦ φωτὸς τῆς μεγάλης ἡμέρας ἀνέτειλεν«.	և եղև իբրև դադարեաց Ասենեթ ի խոստովանելոյ Տեառն, և արուեսակն ծագեաց. և տեսեալ Ասանեթայ զաստղն ուրախ եղև և ասաց. Լուսւ արդեալք Տէր <u>Աստուած</u> աղաւթից իմոց, վասն զի ահաւաստիկ աստղս այս, որ է հրեշտակ և քարոզ լուսոյ, ծագեաց:
And as Aseneth ceased confessing to the Lord, behold, the morning star appeared from the sky in the East. And Aseneth saw it and rejoiced and said: "Thus the Lord God heard my prayer because this star, a messenger and herald of the great light of day, has arisen."	And it happened, as Asenet' ceased from confessing to the Lord, and the morning star shone forth. And when Aseneth had looked at the star, she became cheerful and said: "The Lord God indeed heard my prayers, because behold this star, which is a messenger and herald of light, has shone forth."

First, the narrational marker **և եղև** is introduced into the verse, which follows biblical usage. Here and elsewhere where it has no corresponding phrase in *KritHer*, and it seems the translator wanted to indicate to the reader that a new event or scene is starting.²⁰ Secondly, Arm uses alternative verbal structures. Describing Aseneth's confession, the Armenian has a preposition and infinitive (**ի խոստովանելոյ**) where the Greek uses a participle (**ἐξομολογουμένη**).²¹ Describing Aseneth's reaction, the Greek narrator uses three indicative aorists (**εἶδεν...ἐχάρη...εἶπεν**), which the Armenian translates with a past participle (**և տեսեալ**), a verb with a noun (**ուրախ եղև**), and an aorist indicative (**ասաց**). It is possible that Arm is reflecting his *Vorlage* at this point, but it appears more likely that the Armenian translator sought to avoid from monotonous strings of aorist indicatives for reasons of literary taste.

Thirdly, Arm does not have a vocative highlighting the star's appearance (**ἰδοὺ**). The comparative lack of a vocative is not uncommon.²² However, an exclamative (**ահաւաստիկ**) is introduced into Aseneth's speech. Fourthly, Arm uses a relative clause to explain the nature of the star. The intro-

20. In addition to *KritHer*, e.g., 9.1; 10.1, 16; 11.1; 15.11. **և եղև** is used in the same place as **καὶ ἐγένετο** in *KritHer* in: 1.1; 3.1; 21.9; 22.1; 23.1. This tendency is also apparent in the introduction of a title to Aseneth's Psalm: "Asenet's hymn of confession to God" (**Աւրհնութիւն խոստովանութեան Ասանեթայ <առ Աստուած>**).

21. L1 and L2(435&) also use an infinitive here (*confiteri*), which reflects a parallel approach.

22. e.g., vocatives in *KritHer* are not extant in: 10.16; 13.9; 18.1; 25.5; 28.10.

duction of relative clauses is a feature of the Armenian translation, most common in the translation of Greek participles. However relative clauses also appear to be the translator's preferred construction in breaking down long Greek sentences into more manageable units.

The translator's interest in portraying the sense of the narrative can also be seen through other relatively common features such as the use of hendiadys in the translation of verbs. For example, in 21.21 *KritHer* "he led me" (ἡγάγε) is translated "he fetched, he brought me near" (ած մատուց).²³ The same technique for trying to capture the range of a target word is also found with nouns and adjectives.²⁴

3.2.5 Unit of translation

From the precision of the translation, the unit of redaction appears to have been short: the clause or at most the sentence level. Burchard 1983:233 suggested that Arm shows signs of being made by the so-called 'Hellenising school'. The 'Hellenising' or 'Grecizing' school²⁵ refers to a group of translations from Greek into Armenian in which the translators show a tendency to extreme accuracy in representing the Greek in Armenian. The importance of precisely rendering the Greek outweighed the accessibility of the translation produced. There is disagreement over the period in which these translations took place as there is little evidence for the identity of translators or where they worked. However, the period between the late sixth- and early eighth-century is generally accepted.

The translations produced are noticeably different to 'pre-Hellenising School' translations. How the translators worked is poorly understood. Terian argued for seeing Constantinople as the centre for Hellenising School translations.²⁶ Whilst this conclusion is disputed, Terian's observation that the texts translated represent core texts of the *trivium* in the late classical period²⁷ is widely accepted.

23. See also e.g.: 3.2; 12.12; 18.6; 29.2.

24. Both infrequent but see e.g.: 1.6; 2.2; 5.5; 15.1; 18.6; 23.3.

25. See especially Muradyan (2012), Hairapetian (1995); Mercier (1978); Terian (1982); Sirinian (2001). For practical analysis translation technique of Armenian texts associated with the Hellenising School see e.g., Lehmann (1993) and Muradyan (2005).

26. Terian 1982:183

27. Terian 1982:183

More recent scholarship seeks to present the Hellenising School as representing an 'extreme manifestation' of Greek influence, compared to more moderate influence in the previous translations.²⁸ Additionally, there is a move to understand the wider cultural influences at work. For example, the Armenian hellenising translation movement is a parallel development to that in Syriac.²⁹

The present writer investigated the features of *Jos. Asen.*'s translation in order to see whether it displayed the characteristics associated with Hellenistic School translations. The investigation used the features for assessing literalness set out in Muradyan 2005:58-70. The following observations can be made:

1. There are few examples of transliteration. The instances found were probably loan words in use in Armenian at the time.³⁰
2. Few Greek compounds were literally translated, and all probably reflect common Armenian usage.³¹ Non-literal translation of compounds is more common.³² Non-literal translation of Greek words with prefixes is relatively rare,³³ as is the use of an Armenian compound to render a Greek expression.³⁴ The non-literal translation of adverbs is rare.³⁵
3. The nature of *Jos. Asen.* means that it is difficult to assess the use of fixed equivalents as most of the terms that would clarify this issue are not used. The one instance that may point to the use of a fixed equivalent is in 4.7: *καὶ σώζει αὐτήν...* (and he saves it...), which is translated *և նա է փրկիչ...* (and he is the saviour). Possibly the root of the Greek verb attracted the Armenian translator's eye under equivalence of *σωτήρ* - *Փրկիչ*.
4. Use of hendiadys is relatively low for nouns³⁶ and adjectives.³⁷ It is more common with verbs. However, in comparison to Syr, the use of hendiadys is low.

28. Muradyan 2012:19

29. See e.g., Muradyan 2012:2; Brock 1977:4; Terian 1982:182.

30. 12.11 *κῆτος*/կէտն; 13.9 *τύμπανον*/թմբկի; 19.8 and 22.13 *ἀδαμάντινα*/ադամանիեայր.

31. E.g., *Ἡλίουπόλεως* rendered *Արեգ քաղաքի* (1,2, 3, 7; 3.1; 21.2); *θεοσεβῆς* rendered *սուստիածամաշու* (4.7; 8,5,6; 21.1; 23.9, 10, 12; 28.7); *προδρόμους* rendered *յառաջընթաց* (24.15).

32. E.g., *χρυσσοῦφῆν* ('interwoven with gold') by *զընդերուզեալ ծիրանիսն* ('being interwoven with purple') (10.10); *ἀμίαντος* (undefiled) by *սուստ աղծուիթեան* (without stain) (15.14).

33. e.g., *προσκαίμενοι* (who are devoted to) by *որք կայցեն առաջի* (who go before) (16.14); *ἀπέστησαν* (depart) by *ի բաց կացին* (they stood far off) (24.6).

34. e.g., *γέγονε ξηρόν* (has become dry) by *ցանաքեցալ* (became dry) (13.9).

35. e.g., *πλαγίως* ('sideways') by *խեթի* (angrily) (4.9); *οὐχί* (no!) by *ոչ է այդպէս* (It shall not be so) (9.5).

36. E.g., 1.6 *ἔρις* (strife) by *նախանձ և հակառակութիւն* (rivalry and hostility).

37. E.g., 23.2 *μεγάλας* (large) by *մեծամեծ և բարիս* (large and good).

5. Arm does not provide many examples of the syntactical features often used to assess a translation. There are few genitive absolutes³⁸ or accusative with an infinitive³⁹ in *KritHer*, so no conclusion can be made on the translator's approach to them. There is more evidence for the use of participle clauses and the translator shows a wide variety of strategies to convey the sense. The translation of participles with substantive function also varies.⁴⁰

This investigation showed that whilst Arm can be described as a close translation, the translator did not pursue techniques characteristic of the Hellenising School.

3.2.6 Translator limitations

Comparatively few instances can be cited as scribal mistakes. Haplography appears the root of passages not found in Arm in 2.5b-6a; 10.15; 12.3; 16.19-20; 17.3; 18.10. Plausibly, this took place at translation, but very early in transmission is possible. That 26.7 was not transmitted is perhaps reflects an entire line of the model text being skipped during translation. Occasionally the translator condensed a passage (e.g., 12.2), but what happened in other cases is more difficult to decide.⁴¹

Two propagative mistakes indicate a general level of conservatism by copyists. In 11.12 there is the nonsense word $\mu\mu\mu$. This probably started out as $\mu\mu\mu$, but once $\mu\mu\mu$ entered the tradition it was copied. In 14.5, $\mu\mu\mu$ appears faulty but was widely copied.⁴² Similar examples can be given on a literary level, where the narrative refers back to events no longer included earlier on.⁴³

An interesting orthographic, or perhaps phonographic, translation mistake is found in 16.1. *KritHer* reads: ...καὶ παρέθηκεν αὐτῷ τράπεζαν καινήν... (and she set before him a new table). In Armenian this becomes: ...և եղ արարալի նորա սեղանի ունալ... (and she set before him an empty table). Arm apparently read the adjective καινήν (new) as κενήν (empty).⁴⁴

38. E.g., in 19.1 καὶ ἔτι λαλούντων αὐτῶν ταῦτα (and when they heard these things) by μ $\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu$. Arm uses an indicative imperfect 3pl.

39. 1.1 Arm mirrors the use of an infinitive, although with an additional preposition; 12.7 Arm introduces the logical subject in the dative; 23.1 uses a regular equivalent, but with the logical subject in the dative rather than accusative.

40. e.g., with a substantive noun in 4.7 καὶ ἔστιν ἄρχων (and he is ruling) by μ $\mu\mu$ μ $\mu\mu$ (and his is a prince); with a relative clause in 12.1 ὁ κτίσας...ὁ δοῦς.. ὁ ἐξενέγκας... by μ $\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu$... μ $\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu$... μ $\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu$...; or with a participle in 12.14 τὴν ἐγκαταλελειμμένην by $\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu\mu$.

41. E.g., 17.7; 28.2

42. I am grateful to Mr Robin Meyer for these examples.

43. E.g., in 10.10 Aseneth never puts on the black garment which she later removes. In 28.13 Simeon claims that this is the third (rather than second) time Aseneth has been wronged. The latter example could have entered the tradition in many ways, but once there it was transmitted.

44. This change also occurs independently in Greek manuscripts W and AP.

On two occasions Arm chose an alternative meaning for a Greek word than the narrative context suggests. In 26.3, the verb φθείρω can mean both 'to be destroyed, perish' and 'to be corrupted'. It is this second sense that the Armenian translates using անկործանելիք, where the first is more appropriate. Secondly, the problematic word ἀναξυρίδας, which Burchard describes as "an ill-defined piece of oriental clothing", and translates as 'buskins' in 3.6; 18.6.⁴⁵ In 3.6, the Armenian re-orders what Aseneth puts on and conceptualises it as 'shoes' (կաշիկ). The item is only in 18.6 on the support of families *a* and *d* which seem to add it as a harmonising addition.

There are a few particularly odd readings that are without parallel in the textual tradition. In 12.14, Arm has Aseneth declare that the Lord is a sweet father *and* mother. And 16.16 Aseneth is compared to a *mother* (գլխաբեր) in Arm rather than a cedar (κέδροι).

3.2.7 Translation tendencies and technical aspects

Aside from alternative verbal forms and the use of relative clauses mentioned above, five other features of Arm are important for considering Arm's translation tendencies. First, Arm shows a tendency to clarify details in the text through expansion. For example, in 3.6, Arm adds that the belt was placed *around her waist*.

Secondly, Arm is not consistent in the translation of Greek vocabulary.⁴⁶ For example, in 1.1-6, Arm uses inflections of երկիր (land) where *KritHer* uses τὴν γῆν (the land), τῆς χώρας (the land/country), τῆς οἰκουμένης ('civilised world'). In 10.15-6, *KritHer* describes 'the floor' in both instances with τὸ ἔδαφος, which Armenian renders with գետնի and յատակի respectively. Related to this, the translator sometimes adapts actions, perhaps to reflect contemporary practice. For example, in 5.7 and 28.9, *KritHer* says that a character got down from the chariot and extended their right hand (ἐδεξιώσατο). In both instances, Arm uses ընկալալ, 'to embrace/receive'.

Thirdly, Armenian often does not provide a subject or an indirect object that is clear from the context. This is especially the case where the subject is repeated in *KritHer*, e.g., 7.4; 14.10. Less frequently, Armenian clarifies a subject or an indirect object not found in *KritHer*. Fourthly, possessive pronouns are sometimes skipped in Armenian. Finally, Armenian shows a tendency to reverse

45. Burchard 1985:206 fn. n.

46. See Burchard 1983:234 for more examples, as well as §4.3.2.2.

the order of pairs of words compared to *KritHer*. For example, in 2.4 and 13.11, the list of items in Aseneth's store is preserved, but gold and silver are reversed.⁴⁷

3.2.8 Text-critical importance

Three features of Arm show its text-critical importance. First, the quality and method of translation makes Arm useful for emending corrupt passages in extant Greek versions. Secondly, Arm represents a single translation of an ancient *Vorlage*, which could be as old as that for Syr. The copying rate for Greek manuscripts in the seventh and eighth centuries was low and so a translation in the ninth to eleventh century may well be from an ancient text. Thirdly, Arm shows close affinity to the text of Syr and L2, though preserves the fullest text of the three.⁴⁸ As part of this joint attestation, the nature and antiquity of the underlying Greek version is evident.⁴⁹

However, Arm is not a 'silver bullet' in recreating the earliest form of the Greek text of *Jos. Asen.* Whilst the translator paraphrased little and made no significant additions, the present writer's analysis shows that Arm has its own tendencies. Further, its theological differences means that the version as a whole needs consideration when assessing the value of its variant readings.

3.2.9 Influence of biblical texts

The narrative style of *KritHer* has a strong affinity with biblical passages and the story contains many biblical allusions, which Arm maintains. This is important in so far as it shapes the reader/hearer's perception of the type of story it is. There is one point in the narrative where the translator may have altered a detail to bring it into line with the Bible. In 22.13, the narrator tells the reader that Levi saw Aseneth's place of rest. In *KritHer*, Aseneth's foundations are in the 'seventh heaven', but Arm reads the 'third heaven'. However, as noted in the previous chapter, this variant is found in Syr and L2, suggesting that 'third' may have been in Arm's model text.

3.2.10 Theological differences

The most important differences between *KritHer* and Arm are the characterisation of Joseph and Aseneth. Additionally, there are changes that hint at a religious motivation.

47. See also e.g., 4.7; 8.9; 12.13; 16.14, 19; 22.5, 7, 9.

48. See Fink 2008:18-22.

49. Burchard 2010:14-15

In comparison to *KritHer*, Aseneth's testimony in Arm downplays Joseph's relationship to God. One way of reducing Joseph's status was to turn a description into a simile. For example, in 6.3 Arm clarifies that Joseph is *like* a son of God.⁵⁰ A second way was to alter the title from 'son of God' to 'beloved of God', as happens in 6.5; 13.13 and 23.10. And a third way was to rework the comparison. In 6.4, *KritHer* has Aseneth ask rhetorically: "what womb of woman shall bear such a light?" Arm renders 'light' (φῶς) as 'illuminator' (լուսավոր մարդ), which points towards Joseph's role, rather than the heavenly origin that *KritHer* suggests.

Regarding Aseneth, the translator avoids some imagery which may not have been viewed as appropriate in a monastery. First, there is a reduced focus on Aseneth's body. For example, in 8.5, Arm does not transmit a description of Aseneth's breasts in response to Joseph putting out his hand to halt Aseneth's advance. Secondly, Aseneth's actions are toned down, for example the extent of the kissing in chapter 19 is reduced. Thirdly, the description of the seven maidens lacks the detail that they were 'serving' Aseneth in 17.4. This could be interpreted as motivated by a view that it was inappropriate for an ascetic such as Aseneth to have servants. Finally, Aseneth's status before God is also downplayed. In 15.4, Aseneth loses her position as 'first' in 'the book of the living in heaven', and is now only 'before many others'. And in 15.7, Metanoia loves all virgins, rather than loving Aseneth in particular.

There can be little doubt that Arm was translated in a Christian context, most likely a monastery where there were sufficiently capable translators and scribes.⁵¹ Aside from characterisation, there are a number of small differences in the versions that hint that the context may have influenced the translation. Whilst they are not sufficient to describe the translation as 'Christianised', they indicate the milieu of translation. The most obvious example is found at the end of 15.7. At the end of the angel's description of Metanoia ('Repentance'), an expansion points to the resurrection: "And in their search for him they will have rest and he will save them." The importance of repentance as a theme in the narrative is also highlighted in 12.13. Aseneth describes God in *KritHer* as "helper of those in need", but in Armenian God is "helper of sinners." The reason for sinning also attract alteration. In 7.4, Joseph gives the reason for despising the advances of the Egyptian wo-

50. Only attested in Arm. See also: 6.2; 13.13; 21.4. Arm of 21.4 also omits that Joseph was 'firstborn'.

51. On the problematic nature of the sources for early Armenian monasticism, and considerations for tying the translation of *Jos. Asen.* to a monastic origin in an early period, see Garsoïan (2005).

men. *KritHer* reads: "I shall not sin before the Lord God of my father Israel or against the face of my father Jacob". The Armenian version condensed this and changed the reference to: "I shall not sin before the Lord, the deliver of Israel." The 'deliverer' can be read as a reference to God's future actions.

Those looking for Christian influence in *Jos. Asen.* are drawn to supposed eucharistic references. Arm preserves some pertinent alterations here. The 'blessed bread of life' (ἄρτον εὐλογημένον ζωῆς) becomes 'blessed (and) life-giving bread' in 8.5 and 15.5. In 8.9, *KritHer* describes the bread as 'of your life', but Arm reads 'of life'. These readings have stronger suggestions of the Eucharist, possibly from the influence of the liturgy. This may also be the case in the altered wording in 13.1, which appears more confessional. Finally, in 8.6, Armenian clarifies that the Godfearer only kisses his 'pious' (բարեպաշտ) mother and sister. This addition brings to the fore a religious dimension to the relationships, emphasising proper religious observance.

3.3 The context of the Armenian version

3.3.1 The split textual tradition

Burchard identified that the Armenian textual tradition of *Jos. Asen.* stems from a single translation, no longer extant, and has two branches. One branch is represented by manuscript 332 (M1500), which he termed Arm^f. 332 ends in 28.13. The other branch has a common ancestor, which Burchard called the 'hyparchetype'. The most notable feature of the hyparchetype is that it does not transmit 25.5-27.11 and has, instead, "a short pasticcio composed of fragments of the omitted text plus some new phrases..."⁵² No Arm manuscript preserves 29.8-9. On the relationship of the two sides of the tradition Burchard notes:

Despite all the differences, Arm^f and the hyparchetype are so close where they overlap that they must have a common ancestor. Since they also share a modest number of corruptions, this ancestor was not [the original translation], but it came close to it.⁵³

In Burchard (2010), 163 readings that are only extant in 332⁵⁴ are included in the edition (shown in underlined text). 132 readings are included in the edition on the strength of the hyparchetype

52. Burchard 2010:10

53. Burchard 2010:13

54. See Burchard 2010:12; 1990:69-70, 76. This manuscript is an important witness for other traditions. See Stone 2012:36 where it is a base text for the Armenian edition of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, and Cox 2006:33 in his edition of Armenian Job.

(identified in <brackets>).⁵⁵ However, caution is necessary in dealing with the hyparchetype as Burchard considered that the relationship between the various sub-families is "not yet entirely clear".⁵⁶ Analysis of these readings reveals tendencies that must have emerged at a very early stage in the transmission of the text.

332 and the hyparchetype are often complementary for reconstructing passages. The differences are illuminating. For example, from 332 the absence of two details stands out.⁵⁷ In 20.6, Aseneth's family do not see Aseneth 'appearing in a vision of light', but only that her beauty was like that of the heavens. This reduces the theophanic feel of Aseneth's encounter with the heavenly man. In 28.2, 332 does not say that the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah fell on the ground before Aseneth when they made their supplication. This reduces the desperation of their response and the parallel with Aseneth's earlier action before the heavenly figure.

Two scribal habits stand out from the text not transmitted in 332. First, the removal of one part of hendiadys in descriptions, or apparently repetitive passages. For example, 6.5: "And now, where shall I go *and flee* from his face...".⁵⁸ Secondly, a disinterest in pronouns, especially when they are the indirect object of the verb. However, subject personal pronouns or emphatic pronouns were usually transmitted.

The hyparchetype also skipped some interesting details.⁵⁹ In 7.3 the hyparchetype lacks that the women *wanted to sleep with Joseph*. Perhaps this explanation was perceived as too erotic to be stated. This might also explain the absence of a description of Aseneth's revived breasts in 18.9, and the lack of Joseph 'winking' to call to Aseneth in 19.10. In 12.2 the hyparchetype says that the cosmic stones *do* surpass the Lord's commands by the loss of the negative $\alpha\lambda$. This was then copied, despite it contradicting the context.

Three scribal habits can be suggested from what is not found in the hyparchetype. First, like 332, to remove one part of a description. For example, in 11.10, God is no longer compassionate *and merciful*.⁶⁰ Secondly, specific details in descriptions were apparently skipped. For example, the specific-

55. Readings are listed in Burchard (2010) appendices 1 and 2 respectively. Appendix 3 provides readings of 332 relegated to the apparatus. These largely reflect scribal irregularities.

56. Burchard 2010:10

57. See also: 4.7; 7.2; 21.8; 22.9; 25.1.

58. See also: 3.5; 6.6; 8.6; 11.7; 16.5; 18.6.

59. See also: 5.4; 14.12; 15.10; 16.16; 21.2.

60. From many examples, see 7.3; 16.13; 19.10; 25.3.

ation of the $\omega\lambda$ (right) hand is often lost.⁶¹ Or 1.9, where the reader no longer learns that Pharaoh's son's fiancé is a princess of the Moabites. Thirdly, a preference for removing abstract references. On four occasions իբրև (like, as) is left out, which results in a direct comparison.⁶²

Both 332 and the hyparchetype show a tendency towards asyndetic constructions, though it is more pronounced in 332. Arm, in general, makes greater use of asyndetic constructions than *KritHer*.

The most significant difference between 332 and hyparchetype is 25.5-27.11.⁶³ 332 includes this passage in a similar form to what is found in the rest of the tradition.⁶⁴ However, in hyparchetype, this section is replaced with the following text:⁶⁵

And it happened at dawn. And behold, Asenet' came with (her) chariots and soldiers before and after (her). And in ambush Dan and Gad and Pharaoh's son became hostile, they fell upon (her). And Asenet' saw and called out to God Most High. And behold, the men of God, who having come to Asenet', appeared. And the Lord became her defender. And their swords were broken and every warrior melted away like a wax-candle in the presence of fire. And Pharaoh's son fell on the ground before Asenet' and was destroyed and became to her a dead man. And when the sons of Jacob had washed (him) they came with anger.

A great deal of the narrative is passed over: there is no report of mass slaughter, Aseneth fleeing, Benjamin's handiwork at slinging stones, or the decision of sons of Bilhah and Zilpah to kill Aseneth. Aseneth's salvation comes from the Lord, who dispatches the ambushers, rather than the actions of the sons of Leah. An interesting element of this pasticcio is that it preserves one element from 27.3 not found in 332, that Pharaoh's son fell dead.⁶⁶

A final notable feature of the Armenian tradition is the variation in where the story finished. 332 finishes at 28.13, a very unsatisfactory conclusion to the story, unless the copyist wanted to finish with an ethical dilemma similar to the biblical Jonah. The only representative of Arm^g ends at 21.9 (the report of Aseneth giving birth to Manasseh and Ephraim), whilst Arm^c ends at 22.10 (the end

61. 8.5; 11.1x; 15.14; 16.15, 16x; 20.2; 23.16.

62. 16.8, 18; 21.4; 24.14.

63. In Burchard (2010) the versification for 27.5 is incorrect. 27.4 continues until ի Կեդեդսստէն .

64. There are two obvious corruptions, 26.7 and 27.3.

65. The present writer's translation from Burchard 2010:139-40.

66. e.g., Burchard 1979:1. Burchard 2003a:316 otherwise only lists L1 Ngr Rum.

of Aseneth's meeting with Jacob). Both provide logical conclusions and suggest an interest in the biblically-relevant parts of *Jos. Asen.* as the main reason for copying the text.

3.3.2 The context of translation

There are no external clues for the date and context of the translation of *Jos. Asen.* into Armenian. Burchard initially suggested the sixth or seventh century because the story was translated into good but not entirely classical Armenian.⁶⁷ In his later publications, Burchard was more cautious, suggesting first that any date in the sixth to eleventh century is possible,⁶⁸ and most recently that a tenth or eleventh century date,⁶⁹ or ninth or tenth century date is reasonable.⁷⁰ Three lines of inquiry have so far proved inconclusive.

First, whether a Greek majuscule or minuscule underlies the *Vorlage* for Arm. If a majuscule *Vorlage* could be shown, it would suggest a translation date before the ninth-century. Scribes quickly lost the ability to read majuscule text after the introduction of minuscule. No variants have been identified that could be attributed to misreading a Greek majuscule script. Burchard thinks a minuscule text is more likely, but there is no definite proof.⁷¹

Secondly, outside attestation. The compiler and scribe of 332, Mxit'ar of Ayrivank' (1222-1307 CE), writes that his selection of contents was based on a booklist ascribed to Yovhannēs Sarkawag of Halbat (1044/45-1129).⁷² This reference would indicate that *Jos. Asen.* was translated by c.1100. However, it is difficult to be sure that *Jos. Asen.* is the work referred to by Yovhannēs,⁷³ and Mxit'ar could have included *Jos. Asen.* as he sought a work about Joseph and *Jos. Asen.* was to hand.

Thirdly, the relationship of *Jos. Asen.* to similar works translated from Greek. The most useful comparison would be with the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* or *Life of Joseph*, which *Jos. Asen.* is often transmitted with. Unfortunately both are problematic comparisons for several reasons. For example: a lack of clear evidence for when the texts were brought together; differences in the translation technique used between the works; and the transmission pathways of the works appear

67. E.g., Burchard 1983:228

68. Burchard 1999a:89

69. Burchard 2010:2

70. Burchard 2010:15

71. Burchard 1983:230; Burchard 1999a:87-8

72. See esp. Stone (1976), also Stone (1982), Burchard 1965:32; Burchard 1983:227-8; Burchard 2010:13-4

73. Stone 1976:299-300

different, suggesting that the text for different works in particular manuscripts came from different exemplars.

Attempts to identify periods of contact between Greeks and Armenians when *Jos. Asen.*'s translation was more likely to have taken place hold little hope of success. There was sufficient interaction between Greeks and Armenians throughout the sixth to twelfth centuries that no time could be said to be impossible. Armenians were the largest non-Greek component of the Byzantine empire.⁷⁴ Garsoïan (1999) and Yarnley (1976) survey numerous contacts between Greeks and Armenians both in Armenia itself, and by travelling Armenian scholars in major centres of scholarship, principally Constantinople.⁷⁵

3.3.3 Relationship to the Bible

In Armenian, *Jos. Asen.* was often transmitted in the Bible.⁷⁶ There is good reason to assume that it entered Armenian literature as part of the Bible as it is easier to understand *Jos. Asen.* moving from the Bible to extra-biblical material than the other way round. Although how and when *Jos. Asen.* came to be included in the Armenian Bible is unknown.⁷⁷ The first complete Bible was probably not produced until the end of the twelfth century in Cilicia. Before then, manuscripts consisted of selections of books.⁷⁸ With very few extant manuscripts from before the twelfth century, it is difficult to know how *Jos. Asen.* was treated and with which books it was transmitted in this early stage. The story is found in several different positions in manuscripts⁷⁹ and it is unclear whether this reflects how the story was transmitted in the exemplars, the whim of the copyist, or the practice of the monastery. Cox has argued that the Old Testament and non-canonical texts (from the perspective of other Christian denominations) were probably in place no later than the tenth century.⁸⁰

74. Garsoïan 1999:53

75. Even if the translation could be tied to a particular region, such as the Cilician kingdom, Boase (1978) shows the matter would not be any clearer.

76. Only three families do not include Bibles: Arm^{a.d.g.}. Arm^h also appears to not include Bibles but Burchard's description of both manuscripts in the family is brief.

77. Nersessian 2001:24

78. Nersessian 2001:30

79. See Burchard 1983:215.

80. Cox 1984:209. On the relationship of the development of the Armenian Bible to the Vulgate and Septuagint see Johnson (1984).

One possibility is that the presence of *Jos. Asen.* relates to the story's inclusion in canon lists used by Armenians.⁸¹ However, the role of early Armenian Canon Lists is not fully understood and there is uncertainty with regard to the actual usage of the works named in the Armenian Church.⁸² In the canon list referred to by Mxit'ar of Ayrivank' for 332, Stone concluded that the titles show dependence on a list close to the *List of Sixty Books* known from Greek sources, which had already been adapted by prior copyists.⁸³ It is conceivable that the copyist sought works in Armenian which resembled those referred to in the list that they had.

Another possibility lies in the conception of what a canon list is. Mxit'ar's list would represent the widest conception to the bounds of Sacred Scripture from known lists. Stone suggested it is better read as the "list of sacred and revered books suitable for inclusion in a theologically learned man's library."⁸⁴

This highlights a challenge when considering *Jos. Asen.* among Armenian Bibles: "...there is no clear and consistent conception of canonicity."⁸⁵ Just because *Jos. Asen.* is found in an Armenian Bible does not mean in a Western European sense that it carries the same authority and function as other works. Authority and function can only be determined through examination of the lectionary, ecclesiastical literature and church practice, which remains a lacuna in research.

The function of *Jos. Asen.* within the Armenian Bible is pertinent. *Jos. Asen.* is among a number of works regarded as apocryphal or extra-canonical in other Christian denominations and which appear to have been from an early point.⁸⁶ Many more works were transmitted outside the Bible. Stone argues that the wide range of Armenian apocryphal literature shows a purposeful creation, and that they influenced later thought, literature and culture.⁸⁷ These works often fill out or provide interpretation of Old Testament works, or point out the moral or religious message of characters or events they relate to.⁸⁸ In the case of *Jos. Asen.*, all three of these reasons may be in play.

81. The relationship of canon lists to practice is one of considerable dispute. It appears that many 'canon lists' found in Church Council documents, certain ordinals, or in manuscripts reflect practice outside the Armenian Church. See Stone 1976; Nersessian 2001:24ff.

82. Stone 1973:486

83. Stone 1976:291-2; 299-300

84. Stone 1976:300

85. Nersessian 2001:24

86. On the function of apocryphal literature in the Armenian Bible, see Stone 1999:148ff and (2006a).

87. Stone 2006a:134; 1999:148

88. Stone 2006a:134. See also Calzolari (1999). Thomson (1982) provides a comparative perspective on Armenian literature before the ninth century that also should be considered.

Further, once the story had been transmitted to a certain level, its presence in a full Bible or Old Testament may even have come to be expected.

3.4 Conclusions

In considering the witness of Arm to the story when establishing a critical edition, Arm's tendencies need to be borne in mind. Some trends throughout the Armenian tradition are notable: first, preserving or heightening biblical allusion does not seem to have been important. Both sides of the tradition omitted biblical allusions; secondly, the Armenian tradition suggests an effort to reduce the divinisation of the characters, though not a systematic attempt; thirdly the Armenian tradition does not transform the heavenly man into an 'angel' in the text, suggesting that whilst the man's identity is just as clear in the Armenian as the Greek, there was a conservatism about changing the text in this respect. These trends suggest that it was the narrative, and probably its exegetical possibilities for the Genesis narrative, rather than specific details that led to the story's wide transmission.

The text of *Jos. Asen.* was not transmitted with the precision that a work such as a Gospel might receive. The lack of extant manuscripts from before the evolution of the Armenian Bible as a single (or double) volume means that there is a lack of understanding as to how *Jos. Asen.* was initially transmitted. An analogy can be made with *Jos. Asen.*'s own later tradition. Families Arm^{a.d.g} do not include Bibles among their manuscripts and the text they transmit is more fluid than in other families.⁸⁹ This may help explain the textual fluidity before the first witnesses appear.

Research is needed to better understand tendencies displayed in the different families of text. In particular, comparison of the story as told in families preserved in biblical manuscripts, and families transmitted predominantly in non-biblical manuscripts. Evidence from analysis of transmission tendencies in the Armenian tradition will provide useful comparative data to the Greek tradition.

89. Burchard 2010:11

Chapter 4

Reading the Syriac and Armenian versions side-by-side

4.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters concentrated on the Syriac (Syr) and Armenian (Arm) versions as individual witnesses to *Jos. Asen.*. They showed that understanding the translation technique used and the context of transmission are important factors for appreciating a version's witness. Both Syr and Arm are important for constructing the earliest achievable text. But their textual value becomes more significant when taken together because they are early witnesses preserving a fuller version of the story. Together with the third fuller ancient translation, Latin 2 (L2), Syr and Arm are the foundation of the Burchard-Fink textual hypothesis. They also give interesting clues regarding how the work was read and interpreted.

This chapter seeks to discover what can be found by reading the two versions comparatively. It surveys two contributions concerning the affinity of Syr and Arm, then adds reflections from the present writer's work. The present author was not able to extend this investigation of the ancient versions to include L2. It is hoped that this chapter will serve as an impetus for further investigation.

4.1.1 Methodology

The present author read Syr and Arm alongside each other using the editions described in chapters 2 and 3, together with *KritHer*. The comparison was made using 1.1-13.15; 16.8-25.4; 28.1-12. This represents the text extant in Syr and both sides of the Armenian tradition. As Arm is more divergent where one side is not extant, using verses only witnessed in one side would add additional variance into the comparison.

In conducting the comparison, the present writer was aware of methodological limitations. First, Arm and *KritHer* are reconstructed editions, not 'original' texts. Further the Armenian witness

cited in *KritHer* had not been as fully investigated as in Burchard (2010).¹ Thus *KritHer* may have been influenced by assumptions based on Burchard's available Armenian text. Burchard (2010) is only a minor edition of the text, dependent on a selection of manuscripts and samples of others.

Secondly, comparative analysis is based on subjective judgement. The comparison used two Indo-European languages and a Semitic language with long and developed literary traditions. Without the benefit of knowing when and where the translations took place, much could easily be made of relatively insignificant details, or important trends missed.

Thirdly, the *Vorlage* of Syr and Arm is likely to have differed both in the actual Greek words before the translator, and the Greek script. Because of its age, Syr was certainly translated from a majuscule Greek text, whereas the situation with Arm is not yet resolved.² Consequently, in reading Syr and Arm together with *KritHer*, other factors are influencing the versions.

Whilst it is important to take these factors into account, they do not invalidate the general conclusions that can be made from reading the versions comparatively.

4.2 Scholarship on the affinity of Syr and Arm

The present writer is only aware of two attempts to elucidate the textual relationship of Syr and Arm: Burchard (1983) and Fink (2008).

Burchard (1983) is an introduction to the Armenian version of *Jos. Asen.*. In Burchard's comparison with other versions, two important observations are made. First, that there are several passages where Syr Arm L2 all preserve text that is not extant in the rest of the tradition, and share variants against other versions.³ Secondly, Burchard provides a comparison of *VorlT* with Syr and his working texts of L2 and Arm for 25.1-4.⁴ This comparison is used to show the 'exact' nature of the Armenian translation.

Fink (2008) builds on the considerable additional research on the textual tradition since 1983. Pages 18-22 provide evidence for her stemmatic presentation (p.17) of the textual tradition of *Jos. Asen.*. Fink establishes the joint nature of Syr Arm L2 by showing that in 8 places they jointly have shared 'gaps' (*lücken*) independent of the rest of the tradition, and 20 shared readings in the posit-

1. E.g., compare Arm editorial decisions in Burchard (2003a) and (2010) for 1.1; 3.3; 11.14.

2. Burchard 2010:14

3. Burchard 1983:229.

4. Burchard 1983:231

ive text. These Fink uses to postulate a joint ancestor (ϵ), which she describes as a faithful copy of the earliest achievable text (ω'). Next, Fink shows that Arm and L2 had a common ancestor (M_1), which represents a further copy of the text after ϵ , through 18 readings where Arm L2 agree against Syr and the rest of the tradition. She notes that there are 8 readings where Syr L2 agree against Arm, indicating a divide in the *Vortage*. Fink's conclusion is that Arm L2 are good text witnesses whose readings are important for where Syr has lost or paraphrases text.

Analysing the contributions, it is important to note that Burchard (1983) was a significant step forward in research, especially for highlighting the impact of translation technique. Two observations need to be taken into account. First, thanks to additional research, Burchard's examples need close analysis. Of the verses he cites for evidence of the close relationship,⁵ some have subsequently been found in other versions and should be dismissed,⁶ and in others it is unclear what Burchard was pointing to.⁷ Secondly, 25.1-4 appears to be particularly closely translated and, in the present writer's opinion, is not a representative passage. Fink's work is a logical application of the apparatus of Burchard (2003a). However, the conclusions need to be read in the light of work on translation technique and effects of the transmission of the text.

4.3 Reading Syr and Arm together

The 291 verses compared produced a wealth of data. Two features are considered here: verse-level trends; and translational tendencies.

4.3.1 Verse-level trends

At the verse-level, three tendencies are identified: condensing the text; verses where Syr Arm agree against *KritHer*; and verses where Syr or Arm agree with *KritHer* against the other.

5. Burchard cites: 5.5; 6.2; 8.9; 10.2; 13.11; 16.10; 18.9; 19.8; 20.5, 9; 21.4, 11, 19, 21; 22.7, 9.

6. 19.8 διότι - <ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις] and καὶ> - <τείχη ζωῆς>] the first reference is shared by AP, the second with G. Only Syr Arm L2 preserve both. 20.5 <καὶ - ὀξυγράφου>] is preserved in M.

7. 20.9 and 21.4 may refer to the run of the text. 21.19, 21 is uncertain. In 6.2 οὐχὶ λελάληκα λέγουσα] (which Burchard 2003a:104 says suggests that the text was originally longer) and 13.11 καὶ οἱ - χρυσοῖ] (which Burchard regards as an addition in Syr Arm L2) it is difficult to judge without a better understanding of the earliest achievable version of *Jos. Asen.*.

4.3.1.1 Condensing the text

Syr shows a stronger tendency to condense passages than Arm.⁸ This reflects the approach to rendering the story in Syr, but also indicates that Arm was not immune from the procedure either. Interestingly, Syr and Arm independently condense only 3 verses (6.6; 12.2; 21.7). The results are most pronounced in 21.7:

<i>KritHer</i>	Syr	Arm
καὶ περιστρέψεν αὐτοὺς Φαραὼ πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐπὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν καὶ προσήγαγεν αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τὸ στόμα αὐτῶν καὶ <ἤρσεν> αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τὰ χεῖλη αὐτῶν καὶ κατεφίλησαν ἀλλήλους.	ܕܝܐܠ ܠܥܝܦ ܠܥܝܦ ܠܥܝܦܐ ܠܥܝܦܐ ܠܥܝܦܐ ܠܥܝܦܐ ܠܥܝܦܐ ܠܥܝܦܐ ܠܥܝܦܐ	Եւ դարձոյց զինոսա Փարաւոն յիրեարս Լ մերձեցոյց զինոսա, Լ մալտ եկեալ Լամբուրեցին զմիմեանս:
And Pharaoh turned them to each other, face to face, and brought them together by their mouths, and he joined them by their lips, and they kissed each other.	And Pharaoh turned them towards to each other, and they kissed each other.	And Pharaoh turned them towards each other, and drew them near, and then having come together, they kissed each other.

KritHer is well supported in this verse from FW L₁ L₂ a. The verse is the conclusion of the theme that has run since 20.9, that it was Pharaoh who officiated at the marriage of Joseph and Aseneth. This is the resolution of events set in train at 8.5, when Joseph stops Aseneth kissing him following Pentephres' invitation for Aseneth to greet Joseph. The kiss seems to signify the solemnisation of the marriage in all three versions, but *KritHer* is concerned to show the explicit detail of who causes the kiss to happen. Syr Arm summarise the main detail, the coming together and kiss, but avoid all reference to faces and lips. Both versions avoid potentially erotic detail elsewhere, e.g., 22.9, although there is no systematic removal of such details. Arm also presumes an additional Greek aorist participle construction relating to the coming together.

A variety of possible explanations can be given for condensations of the narrative, for example: scribal mistakes, lack of interest in lists, avoidance of repetition of narration, or alternative focus.

8. 48 verses in Syr appear condensed, but only 10 in Arm.

<i>KritHer</i>	Syr	Arm
...Καὶ ἰδοὺ οἱ υἱοὶ Λίας ἤλθον τρέχοντες ὡς ἔλαφοι τριετείς κατ' αὐτῶν.	ܐܘܬܝ ܠܠ ܘܫܘܪܘܘܐ... ܠܠܘܐ ܗܘܪ ܘܠܘܘܐ ܠܠܘܐ	...ܠܘܘܐ ܘܠܘܐ ܘܠܘܐ ܘܠܘܐ ܠܘܘܐ ܘܠܘܐ ܘܠܘܐ ܘܠܘܐ ܠܘܘܐ ܘܠܘܐ ܘܠܘܐ ܘܠܘܐ
And behold, the sons of Leah came running like three-year old stags against them.	And see, the sons of Leah ran and arrived like young stags.	And see, the sons of Leah came running like a herd of stags.

The Greek simile could easily have been reproduced by the translator of Syr and Arm. However, both chose another option. Syr uses a less specific description which makes an allusion to Song of Songs 2.9, 17; 8.14 in the Peshitta. Arm uses a different image (herd).¹⁰

4.3.1.3 Where the witness of Syr and Arm diverge

Syr or Arm sometimes diverge in their witness with one having a reading that agrees with other parts of the tradition against the other. Syr diverges about twice as often as Arm.¹¹ These often present interpretive changes. For example, in 28.11 Aseneth appeals to the sons of Leah to abandon their blood lust. In Arm and *KritHer* Aseneth reminds the sons of Leah that the men are "your brothers and the blood (αἷμα, ܘܪܝܠܘܐ) of your father Israel." Syr reads 'sons' (ܘܠܘܐ) instead of 'blood'. Syr apparently is clarifying the relationship.

The details that are not transmitted are also of interest. For example, in 17.8 Arm does not record the number of horses pulling the heavenly man's chariot, a detail found in Syr and much of the tradition. Numbers are lost from Syr or Arm from time to time.¹² This suggests that specific numbers did not always have the significance attached to them by modern scholars.

4.3.2 Translational tendencies

Four tendencies are visible through comparative reading.

10. κατ' αὐτῶν (against them) is only witnessed in BD and family a.

11. The author found 78 cases where Syr diverged and 34 cases where Arm diverged.

12. Arm preserves a different number on four occasions (2.11; 4.1; 22.13; 24.10) and has lost two numbers (3.2; 5.5). Syr preserves one alternative number (5.4) and lost one number (23.2). In 2.11 and 23.2 the alternative number could be due to misreading the *Vorlage*, others may be due to cultural preferences. For example, Armenian tradition for 22.13 records the second, third and fifth heaven as the location Levi sees Aseneth's foundations, but Syr, L2 and others read 'seventh heaven'.

4.3.2.1 Interaction with the Bible within the version

Neither version provides evidence for the text being reworked to include biblical quotation or stronger biblical allusion. However, the way Greek proper nouns were rendered shows that the translators were influenced by the Bible in their own language.

Modern readers of *Jos. Asen.* are used to reading the Septuagint version of the proper nouns Heliopolis (Ἡλιουπόλεως), Aseneth (Ἀσενέθ), and Pentephres (Πεντεφρής), rather than transliteration of the Hebrew Bible names 'Ōn (און/אן), Asenath (אסנת), or Potiphra (פּוֹטִיפָרָה). The translation of a story related to the Bible raises the question of the influence of Genesis in the translator's mental text on their translation.

Syr uses the Peshitta rendering of 'Ōn (ܐܘܢ), and Potiphra (ܩܘܬܝܦܪܐ), which follow the Hebrew Bible, 'Āsyāth (ܐܣܝܐܬܗ), the result of an inner-Syriac corruption where *nun* and *yod* were confused, as well as with the names of Simeon (ܫܝܡܥܘܢ) and Reuben (ܪܘܒܝܢ), which in Syriac has final *lamadh* rather than *nun* as in Hebrew. However, in 1.2 Syr provides a clarification: "'Ōn, which is called in Greek Heliopolis"¹³ (ܐܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܗܝܠܝܘܦܘܠܝܫ ܕܗܝܠܝܘܦܘܠܝܫ ܐܘܢ), also in 21.11: "priest of 'Ōn, city of the sun" (ܩܘܬܝܦܪܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܗܝܠܝܘܦܘܠܝܫ ܐܘܢ). Syr follows the proper nouns that were in use, rather than transliterating the names. However, with 'Heliopolis', the translator occasionally felt the need to explain the reference. Arm also follows the cultural precedent of the Armenian Bible in rendering Heliopolis (Արեգ քաղաքի), Aseneth (Ասենեթ) and Pentephres (Պենտափրէ), though the textual tradition contains some variety.

4.3.2.2 Variation in vocabulary

Those investigating the textual tradition through Burchard (2003a) can easily miss the variation used in the way that particular Greek terms were translated. Syr and Arm are referenced in the apparatus with Latin and German translations respectively. Extending the example of Burchard 1983:234 to include Syr gives a flavour of the variations found for the term 'thicket of reeds'.

13. cf. Exodus (LXX) 1.11

Verse	<i>KritHer</i>	Arm	Syr
24.19	εἰς τὴν ὕλην τοῦ καλάμου	ܫ ܥܪܝܒܝܢ ܥܗܥܩܘܢܝܢ	ܩܒܘܝ ܩܒܘܥ
24.20	ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ τοῦ καλάμου	ܥܪܝܒܝܢ ܥܗܥܩܘܢܝܢ	ܩܒܘܝ ܩܒܘܥ
24.20	ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ τοῦ καλάμου	Reference lost through condensation	
27.8	εἰς τὴν ὕλην τοῦ καλάμου	ܫ ܒܘܫܦܪܐ ܥܗܥܩܘܩܝܢܝܢ	ܩܒܘܝ ܩܒܘܥ
28.7	εἰς τὴν ὕλην τοῦ καλάμου	ܫ ܥܪܝܒ ܥܗܥܩܘܢܝܢ	ܩܒܘܥܝ ܩܒܘܥ
28.8	εἰς τὴν ὕλην τοῦ καλάμου	ܫ ܩܦܝܪܘܩܘ ܥܗܥܩܘܢܝܢ	ܩܒܘܥ
28.16	ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ τοῦ καλάμου	ܫ ܩܦܝܪܘܩܘ ܥܪܝܒܝܢ ܥܗܥܩܘܢܝܢ	ܩܒܘܝ ܩܒܘܥ

Arm uses three different terms in different combinations, whilst Syr changes the order or utilises one part of the description for the whole. Idiom was also treated in different ways in Syr and Arm. For example, in 19.6; 20.9 and 24.2, *KritHer* has the Greek idiom εἰς τὰ ὦτα αὐτοῦ (literally: 'speak into his ears'). Arm translates this literally (ܩܘܠܘܢܝܢ ܥܗܥܩܘܢܝܢ), whereas Syr felt no need to retain the idiom and uses an indirect object for the verb of speech (ܩܒܘܥ).

4.3.2.3 Attitude to location and setting

Analysing how Syr and Arm dealt with spatial references indicates that the translators were content to adapt descriptions for their own purposes. Exact location and the description of the setting was apparently not a high priority for the translators. The clearest example of this is the description of the layout of the ambush in 24.20. *KritHer* is not easy to understand spatially and both Syr and Arm chose to simplify the description.

Two other examples are illustrative. First, in 10.2, Aseneth takes down the skin curtain from the window. The Greek vocabulary is reminiscent of the temple curtain and is often seen as a biblical allusion.¹⁴ If this allusion was recognised by the translators, they show no attempt to reproduce it. Arm refers to a 'sackcloth covering' and Syr just has the 'curtain of the doorway'. Secondly, in 10.9-13, *KritHer* identifies which window Aseneth throws away her various possessions. In Syr and Arm the only direct reference for this is in 10.11, to the North.

14. E.g., Bohak 1996:70-71; Kraemer 1998:119

4.3.2.4 Transition points

One of the tensions in *Jos. Asen.* is at what point Aseneth's conversion or transformation takes place. Syr and Arm interpret the moment differently to *KritHer*. In 11.1, the story moves to the eighth day after Joseph's visit. The narrator reports that Aseneth raises herself from the ashes a little because of her tiredness and fasting. Syr expands this summary to become a statement about her repentance through fasting and self-denial. In 11.1x-y Syr does not have any reference to continued mourning and discouragement. Then in 11.3, Syr applies Aseneth's first soliloquy to represent what she has been saying for the past seven days. The prayer becomes representative of her past state, rather than a new moment, and thus it appears from the Syr perspective that the transformation has already taken place. Arm provides the same temporal shift for the prayer through a narrational insertion in 11.7: "this only she used to think and say". The interpretation found in Syr and Arm lays more weight on Aseneth's seven days of repentance rather than the moment she prays.

4.4 Conclusions: re-envisioning the story

The fact of the translation and transmission of *Jos. Asen.* into Syriac and Armenian shows that the story found a function in the new language. Considerable effort and expense was needed in the production of a translation. A good explanation for this is the importance that was attached to Genesis and its interpretation.¹⁵ Syr and Arm point to the interpretive value of the story to those who transmitted it.

The act of translation was also a process of redaction. Differing levels of close translation are found at different times in each version. Whilst Arm is often closer to *KritHer*, Syr can be on occasion. Undoubtedly the context of the translation had a heavy bearing; the literary style of the time, the intentions of the translator and the intended audience, among other factors. But Syr and Arm also clearly choose their own interpretations from time to time. These revisions brought new nuances to the reading of the text. At the most basic level, vocabulary links in Greek were lost and new ones created. Thus, it is important to retain an overview of the whole text of a version.

It is interesting to note that some common themes are emphasised in Syr and Arm in comparison to *KritHer*, especially, the increased focus on repentance. This is seen in a variety of places, in:

15. Charlesworth 1987:151. On the Armenian context see Stone (1999), especially p.148.

summary passages, selection of vocabulary, changes to the temporal setting of parts of the narrative and the presentation of characters. The most likely context for such translations is in a monastic setting, by monks placing special value on such literature. Further, explicit Christianisation of the narrative is not evident in either version. The story alone appears to have been sufficient to sustained the reader's interest.

In summary, section 1 has shown the importance of the context of translation and transmission when dealing with the two most ancient witnesses to *Jos. Azen.* It has shown the dangers of discussing the text of a version in isolation from its context. The next section applies this insight to the three longest Greek families of the story.

Section 2

Joseph and Aseneth in Byzantine Greek Contexts

Chapter 5

FWG — *Joseph and Aseneth* as exhortatory literature

5.1 Introduction

In section 1, the focus was on the Syriac and Armenian translations. Along with Latin 2, they are early translated versions that witness to a similar version of *Jos. Asen.*. As *Jos. Asen.* is now universally agreed to have been originally written in Greek, understanding the Greek text that lies behind them relies on retro-translation. A Greek text stemming from the same, or a very similar, *Vorlage* is important as a reference point and for avoiding adding variants in retro-translation that were not originally there. For this, Greek manuscripts F, W and G have a significant place in reconstructing the earliest achievable text and textual development of *Jos. Asen.*. Together they represent the closest Greek witness to the early and fullest translated versions. Consequently, FWG have a significant place in the reconstructions of Burchard and Fink.

Whilst Burchard grouped manuscripts F, W, and G together in family *f*, they are quite different and interesting manuscripts in their own right. They witness to the particular Christian contexts in which the story was read and have features absent from much of the rest of the tradition. F and W contain 3 Christian exhortatory insertions that suggest how the story was intended to be read in monasteries.¹ G includes miniatures from a larger picture cycle. Further, even brief consultation of F, W or G shows that they preserve a less homogeneous witness to the story than is sometimes supposed. Yet FWG have received little attention as individual witnesses. The most important contribution has been Burchard (1987a), with its overview of the manuscripts and their place in the transmission. Additional information was brought to light in Burchard (2008), which deals with the Romanian connections of this text form.² The author's investigation builds on Burchard's research.

1. An abbreviated translation is found in the Romanian version. See Burchard (2008).

2. Most recently on the Romanian version see Tinca (2015). However this article does not know Burchard (2003a) and contains many mistakes.

This chapter starts by looking into the nature of the F, W, and G and their relationship to one another. It then explores how the story is presented, with particular attention to the homiletic insertions in FW and the miniatures in G. The aim is to show that FW and G present *Jos. Asen.* as exhortatory literature— they persuade readers to engage with the characters as paradigms of moral behaviour for the reader to emulate. The previously unpublished texts of FW and G are presented in the author's synoptic edition (appendix 1).

5.2 The manuscripts and the edition

5.2.1 Manuscript witnesses

F (Bucharest, Biblioteca Academiei Române, Gr. 966, f.126r-140v) is a miscellany of mainly theological works written on paper in the seventeenth century, copied at the monastery of Radul-Voda, Bucharest.³ The text is written continuously in black ink, with two columns per folio, 31 lines per column. The hand is neat with occasional abbreviations. Red ink is used sparingly for the title, initial letter, and 5 occasions when an abbreviation of εἰπῶν is written in the margin, indicating the start of speech or prayer.⁴ The upper and outer corner of each folio has suffered water damage and most text in the damaged area is illegible.⁵ Folio headings in red ink were added after the water damage.

The textually closest relative to F is W. F preserves a fuller and generally better text than W, with superior spelling and pointing. F has fewer obvious expansions in the text than W and almost all are single words. Most can be explained as either clarifications,⁶ intensifications of the text,⁷ or mistakes.⁸ The most interesting is in 21.21 where F says: "and the beautiful one, *the son of God*, entrapped me".⁹ F has a number of unique readings that reflect confusion in the mind of the copyist. For example: in 1.7 the firstborn son of *Jacob* rather than Pharaoh hears about Aseneth and goes to

3. See Burchard 1987a:568-72; 2008:542. The author consulted digital colour images of the relevant folios as the basis of his research.

4. 127r (3.3), 129r (8.9), 130v x2 (11.7, 10), 131r (12.1). Other marginalia include: ὅρα γνώμην ἀγαθὴν γυναικός· καὶ ἐξομολόγησιν 135v (23.5); περὶ ἄσυνεθ α· αγ ἀγω 126r (1.6) [later hand]; 138v α μήλαφ<ον>οι (26.5); illegible readings on ff. 126v, 136v.

5. Missing text is noted in the edition.

6. e.g., 18.7; 22.13; 24.8

7. e.g., 6.8; 7.7; 15.10; 21.8; 27.1

8. e.g., 18.1; 24.15. For other additions see: 10.8, 9; 11.7; 14.15; 19.3; 24.10

9. τὸ κάλλος ἤγρευσέ με ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ

his father; and in 24.9, Pharaoh's son reports Joseph saying that he was sold to the *Israelites* (Ἰσραηλίταις) rather than Ishmaelites (Ἰσμαηλίτας) as expected.

W (Sinai, St Catherine's Convent, Gr. 1976, f. f. 57r-102v¹⁰)¹¹ was copied in 1625 or 1655 and is a miscellany of works written on paper at Mount Sinai.¹² The text is written continuously in black ink in a single column of approximately 17 lines per folio. The hand is rushed and there are many abbreviations. A simple black cross is found at the top centre of each folio. Only a single piece of marginalia is present.¹³ The verso of the folio prior to the commencement of *Jos. Asen.* is blank. The story starts with a decorative header. The title and initial letter are written in red ink along with 14 other individual majuscule letters which mark narrative breaks in the story.¹⁴

Some thirty verses found in F are not present in W.¹⁵ On two occasions longer passages were passed over. First, Aseneth's prayer ends in 12.9 and the narrative skips to 14.1. A short expansion concludes Aseneth's soliloquy: "for you are God alone forever, amen" (ὅτι σὺ εἶ θεὸς μόνος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν). Consequently, Aseneth's confession is much shorter. Secondly, the passage 16.13 διότι σπινθῆρες — 17.2 is abridged to: "and he said to her: 'do not be afraid'" (καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῆς μὴ φοβοῦ). The result is that W contains no assurance that Aseneth has had the mysteries of the Most High revealed to her, and no account of the strange events with the honeycomb and the bees. The narrative passes straight to the calling of the seven maidens for a blessing. A possible reason for this is that the copyist of W thought that this section was rather odd and a distraction from his exhortatory purpose. However, W does preserve several better readings than F.¹⁶

G (Viginia Beach VA, Private collection of Mrs H. Greeley, f.60r-107v) is the best studied manuscript of *Jos. Asen.* in the family because of the miniatures within it.¹⁷ Its history of ownership is also comparatively well known.¹⁸ The manuscript is a luxury edition containing Pseudo-Ephrem's Homily

10. Burchard refers to the page numbers written in Greek letters, 53r-98v.

11. Philonenko was not able to see W (Philonenko 1968:4).

12. See Burchard 1987a:568-72; 2008:542. Digital images of the relevant folios were made available to the author and formed the basis for his research.

13. In the top left corner of f.58v an undeciphered abbreviation is followed by *ασενυθ*.

14. ff: 68r (8.9); f. 69v (10.1); 72v (10.17); 74r (11.10); 74v (11.19; 12.1); 75v (14.1); 80r (16.9); 81r (18.1); 87r (21.9); 90r (23.1); 101v (29.8); 102v (ending).

15. 4.4-6; 12.10-12, 15; 13.1-2, 7-11, 13-15; 16.14-16x, 16.17x-17.2

16. See: 8.7; 10.3; 17.4; 18.8, 9; 19.2, 4; 21.3, 8; 22.3; 27.10; 29.5

17. See Pächt (1954); Vikan (1976a) and (1976b); Burchard 1977:79-80; 1987a:567-8. The William H. Robinson Ltd sale catalogue of 1950 (item 26) is still of interest. The author was only able to consult black and white microfilm taken prior to G's auction in 1950, which is available at the Courtauld Institute, London.

18. Vikan 1976a:60; Burchard 2008:547-8

On the Most Beautiful Joseph (LJos) and Jos. Asen.. A draft treaty written in Italian between the King of France and the Sultan of Turkey, dated Constantinople, February 1535 has been added. The text is written in an archaising hand imitating the eleventh or twelfth century. Undoubtedly the miniatures of *LJos-Jos. Asen.* are the work of Luke the Cypriot, identified through his colophon (f.108r). Luke was a calligrapher and founded an important scriptorium, going on to be Metropolitan of Wallachia.¹⁹ That he writes as a deacon in his colophon means that G must have been produced prior to 1583 when he became bishop of Buzău, in modern day Rumania.²⁰ One piece of marginalia is found with the text of *Jos. Asen.*²¹

The beauty of the artefact can easily obscure four important features of its witness. First, G does not transmit the expected text between 2.3 καὶ ἦν πάντα and 10.1. Instead, it has a short and very different introduction. Secondly, there are seventeen miniatures within *Jos. Asen.* which provide visual interpretation of some parts of the text. Thirdly, the editor of the story redacted it in a way that was conservative in terms of the story line but often rewrote the text. Outside 2.3-9.5, several verses are not found.²² Some of these appear to be copying errors. For example, the jump from 16.8 τὸ κύσσοσ to 16.13 τοῦ ἀνθρώπου probably reflects the copyist skipping of a whole page in the exemplar. Others reflect differences in the detail of the story. For example, G recounts that Aseneth did wash her face after being brought water in 18.9. This is in contrast to much of the rest of the tradition that states in 18.10 (not present in G) she did not wash her face. The lack of any part of 21.10-21, partially extant in FW and thus likely in G's *Vorlage*, suggests that the copyist felt Aseneth's psalm unnecessary for his version of the story. However, in 12.4-5 the characteristic formula from 21.11-21 is found: ἡμαρτον κύριε ἡμαρτον ἐνώπιόν σου ('I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned before you'). This suggests a knowledge of the passage and some deliberate recycling of material. G also has many small expansions to the text. These often make little difference to the story but add some clarification. For example, in 23.1 G makes Pharaoh's son's desire clear: τοῦ συγγενέσθαι μετ' αὐτῆς ('to sleep with her'). Others provide a different vision of what happened. For example in 21.9 G in-

19. For an overview of his life and work see Vikan 1976a:2, 485-507

20. See Burchard 1987a:345-6; 2008:547-9

21. At the top right hand side of f.63r (alongside the text of an exhortatory insertion) is a gloss in Rumanian by the learned seventeenth-century Moldovan Metropolitan and poet Dosofteiu. Burchard 2008:548-9 notes that it is designed to interpret 'of the Hebrews'. It reads "They could not have been Jewesses, because the Jews had not yet arrived in Egypt."

22. 10.12; 13.8, (10), 11; 16.4, 6-7, 8 τὸ κύσσοσ -13 τοῦ ἀνθρώπου; 16.22-17.2; 18.10; 20.4; 21.10-21; 22.12. 25.8 and 28.5-6 are only found in families *a* and *d*.

cludes: καὶ ἔλθόντες Ἰωσήφ καὶ Ἀσυνέθ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ ἐπὶ κλίνης καὶ ἔγνωσαν ἀλλήλως ὡς εὐλογημένον ζεῦγος ('And Joseph and Aseneth went into the house on the bed and knew each other like a blessed couple.').

Fourthly, there are indications that Luke was not a careful copyist of the text. The mistakes found in G include dittography;²³ phonetic confusions (εἶδε rather than οἶδε in 11.12); gender confusions; and haplography that impact the narrative— for example, in 19.5, G passes abruptly from ἀπέρριψεν ἀπέμοῦ to καὶ δέδωκέ. As a result there is no the description of the heavenly man's coming, apparently through skipping to the next καὶ. There are also many corruptions. For example, in 25.1, G reads that Pharaoh's son was *between them* the whole of that night (καὶ ἀνα μέσον αὐτῶν ὁ υἱὸς Φαραὼ ὄλην τὴν νύκταν ἐκείνην). This seems to have been caused by ἀνέστη ('arose') being corrupted to ἀνα μέσον, to which αὐτῶν was subsequently added to make sense of the corruption. Finally G introduces several odd readings. From a wide choice see, for example, 1.5 where Aseneth is neither like the Egyptians *or the Hebrews*, and 10.1 where Aseneth is in the tower with her seven maidens 'and other women'.

5.2.2 Manuscript relationships

5.2.2.1 The relationship of F and W

Burchard and Fink both state that F and W preserve a similar text, although W is often inferior.²⁴ Neither is a copy of the other, rather they share a common ancestor.²⁵ The common features given as evidence are: the shared title; the presence of three homiletic insertions; and the similarity of text. This presentation can lead the reader to understand that the manuscripts are very similar. However, there are notable differences.

The aim here is to add detail to the understanding of the relationship of F and W by considering their similarities and differences. This will help show that *Jos. Asen.* was treated with a degree of flexibility even within an apparently liturgical framing of the story. With such weight placed on FW as the basis for the reconstruction of the earliest form of the text, motivations and the effects

23. E.g., in the condensation *μετὰ* is repeated on the page turn. See also 11.8; 13.6; 14.4; 15.7, 8, 11; 16.14; 18.11; 22.8; 23.2, 14; 24.7; 26.1; 29.8

24. Burchard 2003a:17; 2003b:239; Fink 2008:28-9

25. Fink 2008:17, 29 designates σ in her stemma.

of the differences are important for understanding FW in the wider context of *Jos. Asen.*'s textual tradition.

The author's synoptic edition of FW shows their broad similarity. Four elements point to them sharing a common ancestor. First, FW both do not preserve whole verses²⁶ and significant sections of verses²⁷ in comparison to other versions. Secondly, the exhortatory insertions are found in the same locations and with largely the same content. Thirdly, FW share readings against the rest of the tradition. In addition to those cited by Burchard and Fink (7.1; 27.3), see for example: 8.5, where FW give no report of Joseph extending his hand towards Aseneth to stop her advance, or the narrator's description of Aseneth. FW report: "and they greeted/kissed each other" (*καὶ ἡσπάσαντο ἀλλήλους*); 10.8, where Aseneth takes out a *χιτῶνα*, rendered by F *κῆθωνα* and W *κίθονα*. The use of *theta* in this word is found again in this verse and in 14.12 (FW *κόθονα*); 14.15, where FW reads 'face' (*πρόσωπον*) in comparison to the commonly attested 'head' (*κεφαλὴν*). Fourthly, FW preserve readings that are corrupt and unlikely to have arisen independently. For example, the angel's first call to Aseneth in 14.4 is not transmitted, but there is a narrator's comment that 14.6 is the second call.²⁸

Whilst FW share many similarities, there are three significant areas of difference. These indicate that the copyists felt they had the freedom to adapt their text. First, there is often variance in the use of verbs, prepositions and nouns. With verbs, scribes regularly diverge on compounds (4.8 F *παραδόσω* W *δῶσω*), root (10.9 F *ἔβαλεν* W *καθῆκεν*) and tense (15.7 F *εἶπεν* W *λέγει*). The copyists had their own preferences for prepositions and they apparently felt able to update references within the text. For example, in 2.3 affixed to Aseneth's walls are:

<i>KritHer</i>	F	W
...οἱ θεοὶ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων...	[F lac.] τῶν ἐλλήνων.	θεοὶ τῶν ζοίνων.
the gods of the Egyptians	...of the Greeks	gods of the heavens

Secondly, the copyist of W felt able to condense the story significantly, and rewrite some passages,²⁹ whilst maintaining a narrative that is entirely recognisable. F also occasionally condenses the text,

26. 1.1-2; 11.2, 14-18; 12.5 *ἀγῶν Ἀσενὲθ* -8, 12 *ῥῆσαι μεῖ* -14; 13.3-6, (10), 11; 14.4, 9-11; 15.7 *καὶ ὑπὸ* -8; 16.3, 17; 17.3, 5-6 *τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*; 21.10, 14, 19-20; 23.9; 24.12; 25.1 *καὶ οἱ φύλακες*-2, 8; 28.5-6

27. 4.5; 8.5; 10.12; 11.6; 13.1, 12, 15; 14.14, 15; 15.13-4; 16.14, 16, 17γ; 17.4; 19.8, 10; 20.1; 21.5, 11; 22.6-7,13; 23.7, 8, 10; 24.20; 27.3

28. See also 1.9; 2.11; 3.6; 7.1; 9.4; 23.12; 25.1; 27.11; 28.13

29. E.g., 2.12; 4.7; 17.9; 20.1-2, 5

for example in 10.11. Thirdly, W makes some interpretive changes to the story. The clearest example is the description of the heavenly figure. Whilst F refers to the figure as 'the man' (ἄνθρωπος), W often prefers 'angel' (ἄγγελος);³⁰ and 'the one who appears' (ὁ φαινόμενος).³¹

In summary, F and W need to be considered as witnesses in their own right, reinterpreting the story in line with their own motivations. Whilst it is true to say that they are textually similar, they also show distinct individual development and provide different interpretations.

5.2.2.2 The relationship of FW to G

The relationship between FW and G is complex. G is better described as a second cousin rather than sibling to FW. Fink has provided positive examples to support the proposed relationships in her stemma.³² This section does not challenge Fink's textual conclusions but fleshes out her observations.

For the reader, the differences in the story between FW and G can be quite stark. For example, the extent of the story they preserve is different. Excluding 2.3-9.5 and 21.10-21,³³ the points at which the copyists chose to abridge or condense the text are different.³⁴ On the level of individual verbs, prepositions and nouns, G often differs from FW. Where FW are similar to other witness, it can be shown that G sometimes rewrote passages, probably in line with his literary taste. For instance, the opening of 10.8:

FW	G
καὶ ἀπῆλθον αἱ παρθένοι ἑκάστη εἰς τὸν θάλαμον αὐτῆς (καὶ—ἐαυτῆς >W). καὶ ἄνεστη Ἄσυνέθ ἡσύχως καὶ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸν θάλαμον αὐτῆς τὸ δεῦτερον...	καὶ ἅμα τὸ ὑπάγειν αἱ κορασίδες ἐκ τῆς θύρας ἐκατέβη ἡ Ἄσυνέθ καὶ ἤνοιξε τὴν θύραν εἰσυχῶς καὶ ἀνῆλθεν εἰς τὸν θάλαμον αὐτῆς τὸν δεῦτερον...
And the maidens went each to her chamber. And Aseneth arose quietly and went out into her second chamber...	As soon as the girls departed from the door, Aseneth went down and opened the door carefully and went up into her second room...

30. 14.3, 6; 15.1, 2

31. 14.14; 15.15; 16.1; 17.6, 8

32. Fink 2008:28-9. To Fink's list of occasions when FW G agree against L1 can be added 12.1 FWG τὰ ὄρατὰ L1 *inuisibilia*

33. As well as 25.8; 28.5-6 which are only attested in *ad*.

34. G preserves text where FW does not: 11.2, 14-18; 12.6-8, 13-14; 13.3-6; 14.4, 9-11; 15.8; 16.3, 17; 17.3, 5; 23.9; 24.12; 25.2. FW preserves text where G does not: 13.8, 11; 16.4, 6-7, 9-12, 22-3; 17.1-2; 18.10; 20.4; 22.12.

G has rewritten the opening clause. It uses a different verb and a different form (F ἀπῆλθον G ὑπάγειν). G refers to the location the girls depart from (ἐκ τῆς θύρας), rather than where they are to go to (εἰς τὸν θάλαμον ἑαυτῆς). The later part of the verse shows the different location the versions think the events took place. In G, Aseneth apparently went down and stayed downstairs in 10.2, and only returns upstairs to her second room after her companions try to see her. In FW, Aseneth returned to the upper floor after her trip to the ground floor to collect ashes, and everything takes place in the rooms described in the early chapters, largely unknown in G through abridgement.

At the level of scenes, FW and G can show considerable differences in approach and interpretation. For example, in the honeycomb pericope of chapter 16, F make a great deal of the discovery of the honeycomb, whereas G passes over it a few words— though this may be a copying mistake.³⁵ The supernatural nature of the heavenly man is clear in F but hardly considered in G (16.13). The origin of the honeycomb is explained in G but not F (16.14). Aseneth is commanded and explicitly eats the honeycomb fragment in G, but not F (16.15). The eating results in physical transformation in G but the only promise in F is that Aseneth's youth will be preserved. G reports that the man squeezed the honeycomb and his hand became like blood (16.17), but F passes straight to the man commanding bees to come from it. The bees envelop Aseneth, but only in F is it recorded that they make honeycomb on Aseneth (16.19). Only F records that there were bees who wanted to harm Aseneth and these had a different fate to the others. And only F records any evidence of the man questioning Aseneth about what she saw (17.1-2). The honeycomb just disappears from the narrative in FW, whereas G reports it is miraculously burnt up (17.3).

In summary, speaking of the witness of FWG as a 'family' is not straight forward. In addition to the above, there are plenty of instances all three diverge. For example in 21.9 the house that Aseneth gives birth to her sons in belongs to: Joseph (F), Pentephres (W), or Pharaoh (G). Scribes were always editors to some extent. The individual manuscript context of transmission has a much greater influence on the function of these scenes than is often recognised.

35. W abridges 16.13-17.2.

5.2.4 The edition of FW G

FW and G are edited in different columns in the synoptic edition. The reasons for this decision were: first, that FW preserve many readings that differ with G which would produce a cluttered apparatus; secondly, all three manuscripts are unpublished and editing the texts in separate columns makes access to the texts easier for readers; and thirdly the physical context of G, with its interaction of text and miniatures, means it preferable to consider it separately.

For FW, F was used as the base text. Initial letters of personal names were capitalised and chevrons and guillemet were added to indicate direct and reported speech. In the manuscripts there are many abbreviations which are expanded without annotation. Orthography and accenting usually follows the manuscripts referred to. Divergences in orthography judged to be the result of aural or phonetic changes are not noted. Iota subscript is often written in-line in F, but is rendered as subscript in the edition. For the story, the punctuation is the present author's own, apart from the insertions in FW where the punctuation follows F, and the new opening in G which largely follows the manuscript.

Some additional sections of text are now readable in F, particularly in the insertions. The following amendments can be made to Burchard 2003a:346-51:

a) Between 21.9 and 22.1

Line	Note
9	Burchard's conjecture of ἐξήγαγε is correct
10	delete "(unlesbar F)"
18	delete "(-γίνετο F)", F's reading matches W
21	note on W's losses should be placed before καὶ
27	[σκέ-] should read [σκαί]
45	πρὸς should be followed by (πρὸ W)
55	delete the second (>W)
81	From what is now visible, W καὶ ἐκυβέρα should be placed with the last section of W text, line 69

b) After 29.9

Line	Note
24	delete "(νοι unlesbar F)"
30	ἡμερον is the reading in F and W.

5.3 Framing and telling the story in FW G

5.3.1 Exhortatory insertions in FW

A notable feature of FW is the presence of three exhortatory insertions: between 7.7 and 7.8; bridging the section between 21.9 and 22.1; and after 29.9. These insertions were present in the common ancestor of FW and the Greek model for the Romanian translation.³⁶ The Rumanian version is heavily condensed and not surveyed here. In F and W, the insertions are not differentiated from the continuous text of the story.

The first insertion, between 7.7 and 7.8, comes in the context of Joseph remembering his father's commands to his children in 7.5: "Guard yourselves securely children from sleeping with a strange woman, for union with her is destruction and ruin." The insertion makes an appeal to those addressed to consider Joseph's example of steadfastness whilst a stranger, outlaw and prisoner (ὁ ξένος· ὁ ἀπολις· ὁ αἰχμάλωτος). It reminds them that this is what they are: strangers and captives. The narrator states that it is the fear of God (διὰ τὸν φόβον τοῦ θεοῦ) and the love of God (ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἔρωσ) that allowed Joseph to overcome the desire and affection of women, as well as their possessions and beauties.

The second insertion is really two frames to a passage that includes material from 21.11-3, 15-18, 21. The insertion follows the report of Joseph's marriage to Aseneth and the birth of Manasseh and Ephraim. In the first part of the insertion the narrator returns to reiterating Joseph's temptations and obstacles. He recapitulates the themes of the desire of the Egyptian women, their status and gifts. The focus then becomes the aid which God gave to Joseph, reminding the hearer that Joseph would not have been able to survive without it. The hearer is shown the necessity of imitating Joseph in the presence of grace and the Gospel to similarly receive such riches. Finally, the narrat-

36. See Burchard 2008:543, 545-6

or moves to consider Aseneth and remarks that it was through knowing the living God that she was able to renounce the idols of the Egyptians, which she did by giving thanks.

After the fragments of 21.11-21, the second part of this insertion asks the hearer: who is righteous and wise? After stating that it is those who guard themselves from all sorts of sins, the narrator juxtaposes this with the question: who is Aseneth? The focus of the passage is on her method of penitence: in sackcloth, dust and ashes, submitting to wearing careworn skins (*σκληραγωγίαν σώματος*), fasting and vigils and other acts of abasement. The narrator ends by pointing the reader back to the story: what happened after these things?

The final insertion comes after the story has finished. It again recapitulates the main theme of how Joseph overcame many challenges and kept himself from worshipping idols. Joseph is now referred to as being 'guarded like the apple of God's eye', which picks up statements about Aseneth in 25.5 and 26.6. Aseneth's transformation occasions the narrator to rejoice, using words from Psalm 106.2(LXX), and notes that Aseneth *trod down* her enemies. The final remarks are a call for the hearers to not seek to punish 'our' enemies, but rather place them under divine vengeance, picking up St Paul's words in Romans 12.19 .

The main focus in FW's insertions is an appeal to the example of Joseph. Hardships that Genesis narrates about Joseph, not found in *Jos. Asen.*, are reiterated in each insertion. However, there is no development of Joseph's character and no attempt to consider Joseph's internal response to Aseneth. The treatment of Aseneth is cursory and she functions as an example of good practice. Aseneth is seen as modelling appropriate penitential behaviour for those being addressed, presumably monks. There is no indication that Aseneth is a model for making converts to Christianity. Rather, she becomes a type for readers to emulate. As such, it is no surprise that there is no further development of her character either.

In considering the reason for the transmission of the story, it is interesting to note that there is no attempt to add either any 'after story', to link it to veneration of relics or even a specific liturgical event. The biggest contextual leap that the author of the insertions makes is to appeal to hearers to leave vengeance to God. If this ever related to a particular incident, there is no evidence to suggest what it was. The insertions show that *Jos. Asen.* could stand alone as a morally inspiring story.

The treatment of the insertions also reveals something about the manuscripts. W's text of the insertions is shortened through the loss of sections of text without any attempt to summarise. This reflects W's tendencies within the story itself. F and W both contain numerous copying mistakes, though F is the better version of the insertions.

5.3.2 The story in FW

The version of *Jos. Asen.* preserved in FW is, in general, a rather full version of the story. It is given a Christian interpretation through the exhortatory insertions. Whilst the biblical quotations found in the insertions show that the editor could cite Scripture when desired, there is no expansions in the rest of the story giving additional quotation or allusion to Scripture. Neither is there explicit Christianisation of the story's narrative. The editor and subsequent copyists apparently accepted the story as it was.

The exhortatory insertions make clear the specific interests of the editor. Sometimes these appear to have had little effect on the story overall, at other times they may have affected redactional decisions. If the person who added the exhortatory insertions was also an editor of the text, his interest in Joseph did not lead to a heightening of Joseph's role in the story. Indeed, Joseph is not introduced in FW until 3.1 due to 1.1-2 not being transmitted. This focuses the introduction on Pentephres and Aseneth. However, the presentation of Aseneth is sharpened in FW in comparison to other versions. This is particularly noticeable in Aseneth's prayers and confession. The skipping over of Aseneth's second prayer (11.14-18) means that Aseneth moves straight from acknowledgement of who God is to standing and praying. The subsequent confession is short and this helps make the focus of her prayer the fear of the 'wild old lion'. That 13.3-6 was not transmitted means that only 'highlights' of her penitence are presented. This leads the reader back to the identity of Joseph and Aseneth's love for him. A concise presentation of themes is apparent: repentance, fear of what leads away from God, penitential practices.

Interpreting the honeycomb scene is a challenge for any interpreter and it seems that the copyists of F and W were also not quite sure what to make of it. This is the most likely reason for W passing over 16.14-17.3, only covered by an expansion where the heavenly man instructs Aseneth: 'do not fear'. In F the scene has experienced some corruption, which makes it even more baffling. Aseneth never explicitly eats the honeycomb in 16.15 and the only transformation recorded is that

(16.16): "the immortal ones will encompass your powers and your youth shall not see old age." It is notable that no part of the scene with the heavenly man receives any exhortatory comment.

A final observation is that the loss of 1.1-2 also removes a temporal setting for the opening of the narrative. This indicates that the redactor of FW's ancestor did not find particular significance in the precise timing of events.

5.3.3 The miniatures and the text in G

G preserves seventeen miniatures within *Jos. Asen.*. Miniatures are also found in the two manuscripts Burchard described as 'early modern Greek',³⁷ and are part of a cycle covering *LJos-Jos. Asen.*. Gary Vikan studied the picture cycle found in these three manuscripts. He argued that what is extant today represents only part of an original miniature cycle, that it was the product of an "original, individual creative effort", and that it probably came into existence in the eleventh century.³⁸ Vikan also provides a detailed study into how the artist adapted and used contemporary style and details in the miniatures in G.³⁹ Burchard 2003a:359-65 provides the most accessible summary of research into the miniatures and a description of the cycle of images. He also surveys the relationship of the miniatures to the text. In comparing the content of the miniatures with the surrounding text, the following observations can be added to Vikan's analysis:⁴⁰

First, in two scenes the miniatures depict something that is not transmitted in the text. The fourth miniature (10.10, f.65v) shows Aseneth throwing a piece of clothing, though not the crown which she wears, from a window— G only mentions gold and silver objects. In other versions, Aseneth throws out clothing in 10.11, which suggests that textual reference to Aseneth casting out her idolatrous clothing was included in an ancestor to G.⁴¹ The sixth miniature (14.1, f.75v)⁴² shows the arrival of the heavenly man. The miniature portrays him as an angel with wings and holding a sceptre. G only describes his appearance as like Joseph's without reference to him carrying a sceptre, a detail found in other versions. This suggests that G's description is condensed.

37. On these, see §8.5.

38. Vikan 1976a:568, 586; Vikan 1976b:196. Due to the state of research when Vikan wrote, he understood G and the so-called "early modern Greek" to belong to two different text families (*b* and *a* respectively). This needs to be taken into account when evaluating his work. Vikan also assumes (at least in some places) that Philonenko's edition is the earliest version, with G and revised Greek witnesses being expanded texts.

39. Vikan (1976a) chapter 4

40. In addition, G's miniatures are almost all transported to outdoor settings.

41. Vikan 1976a:324 noted this action was found in Philonenko's text.

42. Vikan 1976a:327-9

Secondly, the miniature depicts something that agrees with G against other versions in two instances. In the second miniature (2.1, f.62r)⁴³ Pentephres' house is portrayed as a tower with the ten chambers on top following G's description, rather than Aseneth's tower lying beside the house, as in other versions. In the ninth miniature (18.9, f.86r)⁴⁴, three companions are displayed with Aseneth, and Aseneth appears to be washing rather than just stooping to wash. This fits with G's version of events, where Aseneth sends *companions* to draw water and washes, rather than FW where a single companion is sent and Aseneth explicitly does not wash.

Thirdly, the fifth miniature (11.15, f.69v)⁴⁵ disagrees with G and most other versions. Aseneth is shown standing in a prayer posture. G records that Aseneth arises, but then clarifies this by saying she only raised herself to her knees. L1 records that Aseneth stands to pray here, without reference to kneeling. Before making any conclusion about this scene, Burchard notes that 11.11, 15-18 is textually uncertain,⁴⁶ and the miniature may just represent the accepted custom of the illuminator's time, rather than a reading to which G has subsequently added a reference to kneeling.

Fourthly, in the eighth (16.15, f.82r) and sixteenth miniatures (23.6, f.95r), it is unclear what scene is depicted. The former is difficult to pin to a particular narrative moment because both the contents of the table and the hand positions and facial features of Aseneth and of the angel could represent more than one scene. Vikan suggested that it represents 16.1, where the angel asks for a piece of honeycomb.⁴⁷ However, it could equally well be a reference to 17.1 where the angel asks Aseneth whether she understands what has happened. 17.1 is not transmitted in G but is present in other manuscripts in family *f* such as FW and L1, and miniatures elsewhere preserve details not in the extant text, so this is not impossible. In the sixteenth miniature two elements of the scene are presented simultaneously. Pharaoh's son warns Levi and Simeon what will happen if they ignore his demand (23.6), whilst Levi signals to Simeon to cease from anger whilst making his response to Pharaoh's son (23.8-9). Vikan states it only shows Pharaoh's son warning the brothers.⁴⁸

Finally, in two miniatures the artist takes an interpretive approach. In the twelfth miniature (21.4, f.90v), Pharaoh greets Joseph. Vikan thought that the artist had mistaken Aseneth for Joseph as

43. Vikan 1976a:314

44. Vikan 1976a:335-6 incorrectly labels this f.87r.

45. Vikan 1976a:324-7

46. Burchard 2003a:150

47. Vikan 1976a:331-3; Burchard 2003a:362

48. Vikan 1976a:349

this is the scene that fits with the text.⁴⁹ However, this could just be artistic licence applied to 21.3. In the fourteenth miniature (21.9, f.91v), there is a feast scene with five figures. Vikan thought they were the five important figures of the narrative: Joseph, Aseneth, Pharaoh, Jacob and Benjamin.⁵⁰ This is a good solution, even though neither Jacob nor Benjamin have yet arrived in Egypt in the story.

Additionally, it is noteworthy that the opening miniature (before 1.1, f.60r) shows Joseph sitting in splendour, rather than Aseneth. The reason for this is probably that Luke the Cypriot saw Joseph as the most significant character in the text, if this was not already the picture present in his exemplar. This view is supported by the manuscript's likely original contents of two works about Joseph and the fact that the epilogue only mentions Joseph.

5.3.4 The story of *Jos. Asen.* in G

Jos. Asen. commences on f.60 without a decorative header or a title. The previous work, *LJos*, finishes on f.59r and there is a signature on f.59v.⁵¹ Burchard suggested that a leaf may be missing between folios 59 and 60, partly on the basis of the similarity of the first part of the colophon on f.108 to the title found in other versions: ἕως ὧδε τὸ πέρασ τοῦ παρόντος λόγου ἐγένετο τοῦ δικαιοτάτου Ἰωσήφ τοῦ (+τοῦ dittography) παγκάλου. However, Burchard does not exclude that *Jos. Asen.* simply carried on from *LJos*.⁵² The latter suggestion seems more likely. *Jos. Asen.* commences with a picture and the opening text on f.60r. If a leaf was missing that would indicate that the title took up the whole of the verso side and nowhere else is a recto left blank. Further, the manuscript itself starts (f. 1r) with a artistic header followed by the majuscule title: τοῦ ὀσίου καὶ θεοφόρου πάτρος ἡμῶν Ἐφραὶμ τοῦ Σύρου λόγος (followed in minuscule by) εἰς τὸν πάγκαλον Ἰωσήφ:- It is a reasonable assumption that both works had become associated with Ephrem Syrus, and the copyist felt no need for an additional title. The description of *Jos. Asen.* as λόγος ('speech' or 'discourse') fits with the title found in F and W.

The most significant textual difference in G other versions of *Jos. Asen.* is the short passage that bridges between 2.3 καὶ ἀργυροί and 10.1. In less than 250 words a very different picture is presen-

49. Vikan 1976a:343-4; Burchard 2003a:363

50. Vikan 1976a:347; Burchard 2003a:363

51. Vikan 1976a:494-5 notes that the top line is probably the signature of Voevod Radu Mihnea, a friend and patron of Luke, and prince of Wallachia from 1601. The second is an attempt to copy it.

52. Burchard 1987a:568

ted of Aseneth in comparison to other versions. The reader finds that Aseneth is served in her tower by male and female slaves and that her virgin companions are the daughters of the Hebrews. The story of conversion begins with God calling to Aseneth to tell her that she will be Joseph's husband. Aseneth is frightened but responds with a hymn of praise where she recognises that God is God, of all that is seen and unseen, and the Creator of all. Aseneth prays that what has been spoken may happen. It is then reported that Aseneth believed in the Lord God, denied her father's deities and made a trinitarian confession to the God 'that leads all people to be saved.'

As a consequence, the reader learns little of Aseneth's living quarters and practices, Aseneth makes no rejection of Joseph to her father, Joseph never arrives before his 'return' after the heavenly man's visit, and the start of her conversion comes not through the sight of Joseph but rather God speaking directly to her. Further, the reader has no idea that Joseph plans to come to the house. The principal effect of the insertion is to bring the reader directly to Aseneth's penitence and prayer. This shifts the story's focus from Aseneth's great change in station to her response to the heavenly voice.

The implications of G's new introduction were not applied throughout the text. For example, the path to Aseneth's repentance is not triggered by meeting Joseph, which makes Aseneth's later appeals to Joseph's beauty sound odd. Aseneth sees the heavenly figure in 14.9 and sees that he is like Joseph in every respect, but Aseneth has never seen Joseph. Similarly, without 8.5 and the reference to bread, cup and anointing, the first reference to it comes abruptly in 15.5 without explanation of its significance.

Understanding how G presented the honeycomb scene suffers from the G not including 16.9-13 τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. But there is good reason to think G preserved an alternative interpretation. First, Aseneth obediently goes off to her storeroom and finds the honeycomb.⁵³ Secondly, G oddly has the angel say in 16.16 that 'until now' (ἕως τοῦ νῦν) she has been eating the bread of life, drinking the cup of immortality and anointed with the oil of incorruptibility, but it is only now that she is physically transformed. Thirdly, when the angel takes the honeycomb and squeezes it (16.17) his hand becomes like blood. Fourthly, the bees all obediently fly off when the angel commands. There are no bees that want to harm Aseneth. These four factors point to the scene being focused more on

53. In 16.9 referred to as τὸ κύσσοις.

the validation of the heavenly man's words than on the transformation of Aseneth or a prophecy of what will happen in the following chapters.

5.4 Conclusions

Manuscripts F, W and G are testimonies to how *Jos. Asen.* could be reinterpreted. They show how particular details can gain or lose importance. Whilst this statement can be made of any manuscript witness of the story, it is more significant with these manuscripts because they are central to theories of the text's development. Further, they show how 'intrusions' (pictorial or textual) could be made into the text and considerably shape the interpretation of the story.

F and W are closely related witnesses, but focus on their similarity can obscure considerable divergences. Readers knowing the story through W would have a quite different understanding of it compared to F. The comparison of F and W gives useful information on the methodology used by the redactor in condensing the story: a tendency to cut sentences or longer units rather than rewrite, and to change individual words rather than to change a scene. The presence of explicitly Christian exhortatory insertions and their lack of apparent influence on the rest of the text also shows an inherently conservative approach to the presentation of the story itself. But the presence of the insertions repeatedly draws attention to the character of Joseph. The reader is drawn into considering the text in the light of the biblical narrative of Joseph. Further, the reader is called to emulate Joseph, and in specific ways Aseneth also. The intertextual links presented call attention less to the virtues of the characters themselves, but rather to their example being held up as an ideal for the reader to emulate.

G presents *Jos. Asen.* in a different context, with the presence of miniatures that closely relate to the text. Fundamentally, G tells an alternative story to FW. The reader is largely ignorant of Aseneth's idolatrous past and discovers that the events narrated are set in train by an explicit divine intervention. That G is complementary in many places to FW shows the level of divergence that could be created by specific reinterpretation within the story. In joining together of parts of the story also found in FW with a christianised alternative opening, as well as miniatures displaying some contemporary fashions, the reader is drawn to see the story played out in a contemporary setting. The story becomes one in which the characters move from possessing antiquarian interest to be examples to be emulated. That trouble and cost has been taken to illuminate the manuscript

points to the importance attached to the story. Further, *Jos. Asen.* following the explicitly moralising *LJos* points to contemporary relevance for the virtuous behaviour of the characters.

In summary, whilst it is valid to say that the Greek manuscripts of family *f* stand in a contrast to other versions, it is not clear where this statement takes scholarship. The common ancestor that FWG descended from is lost, along with knowledge of the intervening stages, which could have been numerous. Further, reconstruction of this ancestor using ancient translations and these manuscripts leaves many unresolved problems. It is important for scholarship to understand what it can from the textual variants that are significant in narrative terms, whether they are small or large, and arose by accident or design. These are not only clues to the wording of the shared ancestor, but also socio-cultural evidence for how later forms of the story were read. Once variants entered the transmission chain they could provide the impetus for the text to receive a new life, and to be interpreted and used in very different ways. In this way, the manuscripts are viewed as "active historical phenomena in their own right, not merely as passive witnesses."⁵⁴ This also helps scholarship return to a fundamental principle associated with any text: "If we accept the multiple forms in which our artifacts have been transmitted, we may recognize that medieval culture did not simply live with diversity, it cultivated it."⁵⁵ The apparently solid Greek text foundation of family *f* as the basis of *KritHer* thus needs to be carefully considered to understand the wider contextual factors shaping the story.

54. Baun 2007:34

55. Nichols 1990:8-9

Chapter 6

Family Mc: a metaphrastic revision

6.1 Introduction

Family Mc is the Cinderella of *Jos. Asen.* text-versions. Prior to the deciphering of manuscript M, the three manuscripts of family c (HJK) were considered of little text-critical worth. The manuscripts were described as are late, the Greek was considered 'improved', and it was noted that HK preserve a revised ending appended from 16.17, which Burchard labelled "early modern Greek".¹ For Philonenko, these manuscripts represented the penultimate step in the text's development: the second long recension.² Consequently, family c was virtually ignored by scholars.³

Burfeind (2001)'s discovery that the eleventh-century under-text of the palimpsest M was related to family c changed the significance of Mc. The oldest witness was now among the earliest preserved Greek texts of *Jos. Asen.*. Although not all the folios of *Jos. Asen.* had been reused, large sections of text were preserved. Burfeind's deciphered text included material as far as 28.2 which proved that the revised ending in HK was a later revision.

Burchard regarded the identification of M and its relationship to family c as one of the three significant changes in his reappraisal of *Jos. Asen.*'s textual tradition.⁴ Whilst a revised account of family Mc is given,⁵ the slow process of deciphering the under-text came too late to significantly influence *KritHer*'s text and apparatus. M is listed among the *Unständige Zeugen* throughout and only sporadically referred to in the apparatus.

Fink (2008) presented a detailed text investigation of M and family c from Burchard's text notebooks, and an edition of the decipherable text from 16.13-29.9. She showed that M supports read-

1. E.g., Burchard 1977:68, 80; 1985:180; 1987b:33

2. Philonenko 1968:10

3. Burchard 1987a:350-1 is the only published investigation into the version. This is a lacuna in Humphrey (2000) as a description of the field.

4. Burchard 2003a:10

5. Burchard 2003a:20-22. See also Burchard 2003b:243-4.

ings postulated as original by Burchard but only found in translated versions.⁶ Fink gives positive examples where M HJK preserve a reading different to the rest of the tradition, and to a common ancestor for *Mc ad* where they share readings against the rest of the tradition. A new investigation of the folios used from the donating manuscript led to the significant conclusion that M originally contained a lightly abbreviated version of Aseneth's psalm (21.10-21),⁷ *contra* Burfeind's assumption.⁸ This is significant because the only other evidence for this passage in Greek is in family *f* manuscripts.

The text of HJK remains unpublished and consequently the author produced an edition for the purposes of his research.⁹ This edition, together with Fink's edition of the later chapters of M and Burchard (2003a)'s edition of the revised ending to H and K, provided scope for a re-evaluation of the witness of family *Mc*. Whilst Fink's work on family *Mc* has shown the text-critical importance of the four manuscripts, investigation of the version lags behind. In recent articles touching on *Wirkungsgeschichte*, family *Mc* is notably absent. Standhartinger (2009) fails to mention family *Mc* despite its relevance to her discussion, and Standhartinger (2014) unearths no additional literature.

In this chapter, a summary of the manuscripts and their relationships will be given before the story presented in *Mc* is examined. The investigation concludes that *Mc* represents a metaphrastic revision of the story and shows how *Jos. Asen.* was revised for a new generation of readers.

6.2 The manuscripts and their relationships

6.2.1 Manuscript description

Family *Mc* is made up of four manuscripts:

The oldest is M (Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, MS Rehdiger 26 (also known as Codex Vratislaviensis)). M is a palimpsest that consists of 120 folios from more than one donating manuscript. The upper text contains a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century copy of Homer's *Iliad*, together with

6. Fink 2008:37. To Fink's examples from 16.19; 18.9; 19.8, 10; 20.5 should also be added 24.19 <λαβέ>.

7. Fink 2008:36

8. Burfeind 2001:49, 53

9. Only H is has previously been microfilmed. The author was able to consult these images at the Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing (ITSEE) at Birmingham University. In September 2013, digital colour images of HJK were made available to the present author at the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Jerusalem. The edition and textual notes are based on the consultation of these images. The text of the revised ending was compared with Burchard's edition.

miniatures of battle scenes.¹⁰ One of the donating manuscripts contained *LJos* and *Jos. Asen.*, as well as patristic works.¹¹ Fink (2008), superseding Burfeind (2001), gives detailed analysis of the hand of the under text, dating it to the first half of the eleventh-century, and the arrangement of donated folios.¹² Fink was able to decipher additional folios showing that M continued to 29.9.¹³ All that is known of its provenance is that at some time it entered the collection of Thomas Rehdiger (1540-1576), the son of a Breslau patrician.¹⁴

Fink's edition of the decipherable text from the extant folios of M covers 16.13-17.3; 18.6-21.4; 24.15-28.3; 29.3-9.¹⁵ A fairly full text is preserved with only 16.17-17x; 25.1-2 omitted.¹⁶ There are many unreadable sections within these verses marked in the edition. M spelled Aseneth's name Ἀσενῆχ. Fink's edition lacks the text's breathing and accents. Comparison with family *c* suggests the common ancestor of HJK underwent a further stage of revision compared to M.

The remaining three manuscripts are today located in Jerusalem. H (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Jerusalem, MS Panhagios Taphos 73) is a paper manuscript dated to about 1600,¹⁷ consisting of 325 pages. In 1625 it was stamped by Ambrosio Gradenigou, Abbot and librarian of St Mark's Monastery. By 1779, it had reached the Lavra of St. Sabas. At some point 53 pages of a printed text entitled ἄνθος τῶν χαρίτων were appended.¹⁸ The contents of the manuscript are: the advancement of John the Theologos (p.1); a narrative about a holy image of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Theodore the shipowner and Abraham the Hebrew (p.138); the martyrdom of St Eirene (p.166); the life of Philaretos the merciful (p.220); *Joseph and Aseneth* (p.273); history of Queen Niketa (p.307); martyrdom of St. Niketa (p.313).

The text of *Jos. Asen.* is presented continuously with the only division coming on p.295 where a cross is marked in the text. The cross stands at the end of chapter 13 and is also found in K. Whilst the hand is fairly clear, the scribe made many mistakes. On one page turn he repeated an entire sentence (p.275). Majuscule letters are occasionally used, sometimes for no apparent reason. One

10. For catalogue entries, see Burfeind 2001:43 fn 6.

11. Burfeind 2001:45-6

12. Fink 2008:32-8

13. Fink 2008:32, 39-44

14. Burfeind 2001:44

15. Fink 2008:39-44. The author did not consult this manuscript because of the constraints of his research. He is grateful to Dr Fink for making available a digital image from her research for his appreciation.

16. 25.8 is also absent, but this is only attested in family *a*.

17. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1891:156-8

18. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1891:156

noticeable feature for a modern reader is that often the scribe writes the long vowel above the short vowel (and *vice versa*). During the Roman period, the differences in vowel length had been lost from the spoken language.¹⁹ This led to uncertainty among scribes with regard to the correct spelling of the written language. Abbreviations are regularly used for *καί* and case endings. Aseneth is written *ἀσενέχ* throughout as in M. The only marginalia are indications of the first word on the following folio.

J (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Jerusalem, MS Saba 389) is a paper manuscript catalogued as containing 182 folios, dated to the seventeenth century.²⁰ The manuscript finishes abruptly at f.116, mid-sentence. No information is given on its provenance. The contents of the manuscript are: Life of St. Xenophon; Life of St. Alexios; John Chrysostom's *Sermon on the vain life*; Maximus' *Concerning the love towards God*; part of Niphonos' *The beneficial chapters*; *Concerning the One who slayed his Son through His love*; *Concerning Julios the merciful*; *Joseph and Aseneth*.

Burchard gives the folio references as 92r-113v, but the folios now have numeration giving 95r-116v. The title is presented in red ink with an elaborate scroll above it made up from two intertwined dragons. The hand is clear and the scribe is superior to H in his spelling, case endings, and use of breathings and accents. J preserves text that is not found in H and K.²¹ Like in H, Aseneth is written *ἀσενέχ* throughout. A considerable amount of marginalia is present. The most interesting is at the top of f.95v where the comment is found: "this entire narrative is lies and let men not be deceived".²² There is a good deal of insect damage.

Finally, K (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Jerusalem, MS Saba 593) is the last extant Greek manuscript of *Jos. Asen.* to be copied by hand, completed by Samuel the Hieromonk in September 1802. The manuscript contains 472 pages and 13 separate folios, although the catalogue does not account for the first 213 pages.²³ No information is given on its provenance. The contents are: the vision of

19. Horrocks 2010:160ff

20. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1891:516

21. see e.g., 6.1; 7.5.

22. τοῦτος ὁ λόγος εἶνας (-αι?) ψευματα <καί> μὴ πλανασθαι <ἄνθρωποι>. Other marginalia includes: bottom of 99v (4.10-5.5) ἀβρααμ; top of 100v (5.5-6.2): ὕλλη ὕλλη σαβαχθανι; bottom of 101r, upside down (6.3-7.1): κατακῦγου τῶν κεράων ὅταν ἦδεν ὁ ζῆ ἐκ ὁ βασιλε τὸν κῆ ἡσθί μεκων υψυλου και επυρμρουου; 101v (7.1-4) in a different hand: ἀμαρτω. There are also pen tests on 104v, 108v (which also has an undeciphered sentence), 109v, and an undeciphered sentence on 115v.

23. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1891:604-5

Demetrius written down by Metrophanos the hieromonk and revised into common speech by Laurentios the hieromonk (p.214); martyrdom of St Eirene (p.340); *Joseph and Aseneth* (p.414-471).

Jos. Asen. has its title and initial letter in red ink. The hand is more cursive than in H and J. *Aseneth* is written ἀσενέθ throughout. Many abbreviations are used, but there is little crossover with H as to where abbreviations are used. The scribe adds more punctuation than H. No marginalia is present. Insect activity has damaged the margins.

6.2.2 The relationship of H, J, and K

Family *c* preserves a similar witness to the other families until midway through 16.17y. J stops in 16.10 when the manuscript ends abruptly, whilst HK continue on from 16.17y with a new ending. The written style of this ending probably reflecting the basic written Koine of monks in the Jerusalem area in the Turkish period. Only 4 verses are entirely untransmitted before 16.17y: 16.6-7, 17-17x. Burchard noted that H and K are so similar that K might be a copy of H.²⁴ Fink argued that K was not a copy of H, but that they share a common ancestor.²⁵ Whilst K has only one (minor) additional reading to H,²⁶ and K skips some details compared to H,²⁷ the spelling, accenting and breathing is far superior in K. Thus Fink's assertion is probably correct.

J has always been viewed as close but independent of HK. Burchard gave three examples of secondary readings in HK: 6.1 and 8.6 where J preserves clauses lost from HK, and 14.11 where the reading in HK is corrupt.²⁸ To this can be added 7.4.²⁹ Other features point towards this conclusion, for example: expansion in HK not shared by J,³⁰ differences in word order between HK and J,³¹ different verb forms,³² and differences in the choice of case.³³ Burchard also gives an example where J is secondary to HK, in 6.7 where J loses ἐν αὐτῷ. The copyist of J apparently did not feel constrained to copy his model exactly.³⁴

24. Burchard 1977:80; 2003a:20-1

25. Fink 2008:30

26. 9.5 ῥῆ

27. See: 9.1; 10.1; 11.14; 13.14; 14.9, 12, 14

28. Burchard 2003a:21

29. J (with W and L1) preserves οὐδὲ κατὰ πρόσωπον τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς μου Ἰακώβ, which is lost from HK.

30. e.g., end of 2.2, HK adds μαρμάρης.

31. e.g., 4.10; 5.1; 13.2.

32. e.g., 4.4 J λαλήσω, HK λαλήσα; 15.1 J ἔστη, HK ἐστάθη.

33. e.g., 1.5 J ταῖς θυγατάσι τῶν Ἑβραίων, HK των θυγατερων των αιβραιων.

34. e.g., 8.6 HK θεοσεβῆς J θεοφιλης; 8.9 HK θεόν J κύριον. 6.3 HK ἐστιν J ἦν.

There has been speculation over what can be concluded from J suddenly finishing at 16.10. Fink describes J as 'breaking off',³⁵ without noting that the text finishes mid-word at the bottom of a page and the manuscript has lost its final portion. There is no reason to think that the text did not originally continue, but whether the ending was similar to that in HK or not is unknown. That the text of J is closer to HK than M suggests it is more likely to have contained the revised ending.

HJK are often assumed to be the result of a local redaction. Fink postulated that the ancestor of family *c* originated in Jerusalem,³⁶ presumably because that is the present location of the manuscripts. However, HJK are located together now because Patriarch Nikodemos (1883-90) decided to gather the many Greek Orthodox collections of manuscripts in the Holy Land into one, secure location.³⁷ He had become concerned at the loss of manuscripts from neglect, sale to collectors, and even their use by monks as kindling for fires.³⁸ The manuscripts from the library of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre were labelled "Taphou", and those of St Sabas monastery as "Sabas".

J and K were possibly copied at St. Sabas. H spent at least part of its early life at St. Sabas, before coming to the library of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre. Thus St Sabas monastery is a more likely source for family *c*. However, as pilgrims and benefactors from far off brought manuscripts as gifts to monasteries, the redaction of family *c* could easily have taken place elsewhere. That the only extant descendants of *c* are found in Jerusalem may have more to do with a nineteenth-century Patriarch than the historical situation of the story's copying and use.

6.2.3 Edition of HJK

The edition uses J as the base manuscript with variant readings from HK. Family *c* was the first edition produced in this project. The present editor decided to often standardise accenting and orthography. Punctuation reflects the present editor's decisions. Proper names have a majuscule initial letter, not found in the manuscripts. *Nomina sacra* and abbreviations are expanded without annotation.

35. Fink 2008:30

36. Fink 2008:30

37. Betts 2009:180 assertion that some 60,000-70,000 manuscripts were transferred from St Saba monastery to Jerusalem is clearly an exaggeration.

38. Vocotopoulos 2002:17-8

6.2.4 The relationship of HJK to M

Fink describes M as "closely related to *c* but wholly independent from it" and gives examples from 1.1-2.4 to illustrate this. Fink also provides examples where *c* and M share small 'losses' compared with the rest of the tradition.³⁹ To test Fink's conclusions, 16.13-17y were compared using the author's edition of HK and Fink's edition of M. Four observations can be made.

First, M and HK share positive readings in contrast to the tradition. For example, in 16.13:

F ⁴⁰	M HK	AP ⁴¹
καὶ ἐπέβλεψεν Ἀσυνέθ ἀτενίζουσα τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτῆς εἰς τὴν χεῖρα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου	καὶ ἦν ἀτενίζουσα μετὰ τρόμου εἰς τὴν χεῖρα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (M ἀγγελοῦ).	καὶ λοιπὸν ἦν ἀτενίζουσα δι ὄλου μετὰ φόβου πολλοῦ καὶ τρόμου εἰς τὴν χεῖρα τοῦ ἀγγέλου
And Aseneth looked attentively, gazing earnestly with her eyes at the hand of the man.	And she was gazing at the hand of the man (M angel) with trembling.	and accordingly she was, all the time, gazing with much fear and trembling at the angel's hand.

MHK and AP share features of a development compared to F, supported by the Armenian version. The initial indicative verb (ἐπέβλεψεν) in F is not found, nor reference to Aseneth's eyes. MHK focus the reader's attention on Aseneth's physical reaction, her trembling. AP expand Aseneth's reaction further. MHK and AP show different ways the passage was developed with shared concerns.

Secondly, M and HK share readings that are unlikely to have arisen independently. For example, in 16.16x it is likely that the ancestor of Mc and *ad* read ἔθηκεν. MHK read ἔθηγε(ν). Apparently the ancestor of MHK wrote a gamma instead of a kappa, which was then copied. To this can be added that in every instance where M HK use an alternative conjunction to καὶ, MHK agree in the conjunction that they use.

Thirdly, there are some instances where M differs from HK. For example, in 16.13, Aseneth looks at the hand of the 'angel' in M, but the 'man' in HK. This is probably accounted for M and HK stemming from different exemplars that were more or less systematic in replacing references to the

39. Fink 2008:36-7

40. W breaks off earlier in the verse and only recommences at 17.4.

41. Q has lost this sentence.

'man' with 'angel'. The differences in title should be taken into account. M entitles the story: Πράξης τοῦ παγκάλλου Ἰωσήφ καὶ τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ Ἀσενέθ (Acts of the all-beautiful Joseph and Aseneth his wife). Whereas *c* titles it: Λόγος εἰς τὴν Ἀσενέχ (Κ' Ἀσενέθ) θυγατέρα Πεντεφρῆ (Narrative about Aseneth the daughter of Pentephres). The difference suggests that the ancestor of *c* had a title reflecting the central character of the story.

Fourthly, in some instances, M seems to preserve a fuller text than HK. In 16.15 it appears that at some stages the copyists behind HK skipped some details in comparison to M. The **bold** words are not found in HK: "...the ones who remain in **the Lord God...** for **all the chosen ones of God** and all the sons of the Most High... for this is the honeycomb **of life...**" However, HK also have better readings than M. For example, in 16.15 M has lost that the heavenly figure places the fragment of honeycomb into Aseneth's 'mouth'.

In summary, there is good evidence for M and HK sharing a common ancestor, but both are likely to be a developmental step away from that ancestor.

6.2.5 The relationship of the shared text of *Mc* and the wider tradition

Reading family *c* to 16.17y and the extant portions of M from chapter 16 onwards in comparison to other versions suggests some characteristics of *Mc*'s redaction.

First, *Mc* is largely similar to FW and *a*. The redaction of *Mc* is notable in terms of the degree to which certain changes are made, rather than the type of alterations. Most changes can be summarised as reflecting the stylistic tastes of the redactor. This can be seen in: a tendency to use alternative paratactic conjunctions to καί,⁴² or asyndetic constructions,⁴³ in a similar but independent way to family *a*; a tendency to replace strings of indicative verbs with aorist participle plus indicative; alteration of verb and verb tense; use of alternative prepositions; the introduction of alternative nouns and adjectives. The last point is quite common. For example, in 3.1, Joseph is gathering grain 'of that place' in *KritHer* (τῆς χώρας), but 'in that city' (ἐν τῇ πόλει) in family *c* alone; or in 5.3, Pentephres goes out with his 'kin' (συγγένεια) in *KritHer*, but his 'household servants' (θεραπεία) in family *c*.⁴⁴ These small changes make the text a little more interesting to read,

42. The common alternatives used are: τότε, δὲ, οὖν, and γὰρ. Less frequently: ὅπως, ἀλλὰ, νῦν, and ὅθεν.

43. e.g., 17.1; 18.7, 11; 19.9, 10

44. This variation is also found in E, but it probably occurred independently.

and may have been designed to reduce the prejudices of readers with a better literary education. However, they did not affect the narrative of the story.

As noted above, the text of only a few entire verses were not transmitted in Mc. Both M and c have lost 16.17-17x, perhaps because the common ancestor's redactor decided to cut these quite enigmatic verses describing the making of a bloody cross in the honeycomb. M lacks 25.2-3, which is a conversation between Pharaoh's bed-chamber guards and Pharaoh's son. This can be explained as a desire to shorten detail and dialogue that was seen as unnecessary. There are many small losses compared to fuller versions of particular passages,⁴⁵ but the hand of the redactor is mainly confined to passing over many inconsequential narrative details. The general impression is that the redactor wished to shorten the narrative without abridging it through skipping long passages.

Certain patterns can be discerned in the losses of Mc compared to other versions. There is a tendency not to transmit location⁴⁶ and temporal references,⁴⁷ as well as to leave out one part of multi-word descriptions. Some specific losses do point to particular interests of the redactor. For example, in 12.2, a pre-Socratic account of cosmology is found in other versions that is absent. Thus, in family c, Aseneth's description of God's action in creation appears closer to Genesis 1. As argued below, there is also an avoidance of potentially erotic details and a lesser role for characters such as Metanoia.

The redactor made no effort to heighten narrative elements that have been suggested as biblical allusions. Indeed, key elements found elsewhere in the tradition of these scenes are not found, suggesting that if the redactor did understand them as allusions, he had no interest in keeping them. For example, losses reduce or remove allusion to: the river(s) in the garden of Eden (2.12); Pharaoh's second chariot (5.4); and grinding the idols to dust (10.12).⁴⁸

Very little is expanded within the story. There is no extra dialogue. The expansion of 14.2 by the insertion of a verb, that "heaven *was split open* (ἐσχίσθη) and a great and unspeakable light appeared" is one of the few places where the redactor potentially heightens biblical allusion. In Mark 1.10 it is used of the heavens being torn apart after Jesus' baptism. This verb is not used in the Sep-

45. For examples of a large proportion of a verse being lost see: 16.16, 16x; 21.3; 24.20; 28.3.

46. 1.8; 2.1-2, 4, 7, 8, 10; 3.2; 5.5; 10.1; 11.1; 14.12; 15.1.

47. 1.1; 3.2; 9.2; 10.16; 10.17

48. If ever found more widely than families *ad* and the so-called 'early modern Greek'.

tuagint for the heavens, only of the Red Sea (Exod 14.21) and some objects. Occasionally, the reactor provides clarifications, usually only a word or two. For example, in 5.5 family *c* notes that the rays of the crown are above *the stones*.⁴⁹ In 12.9, Aseneth clarifies that: "I threw away all *of the gods of the Egyptians* from me..."⁵⁰ In 26.3, the reason Joseph goes about his grain giving is because of 'the famine'. An expansion that was probably designed to change the meaning of the passage comes in 19.10. Here an addition clarifies that Joseph and Aseneth embrace with their hands, rather than their bodies. On another occasion, the redactor increased the narrative contrast. In 26.2 Joseph tells Aseneth: 'rather depart and fear nothing about anything', shortly before she is ambushed.

The characteristic changes show *Mc* to be a conservative redaction. The redactor had sufficient respect for the story not to rewrite it in any significant way, but felt able to make minor changes. This reworking appear to have taken place as the redactor went along and suggests his unit of redaction was short, possibly sentence-length.

Mc witnesses a number of copyists' mistakes and corruptions, which could be from an early copyist. Haplography appears to be the cause of present form in which 2.1-2, 3.2 and 5.7 were transmitted. In 4.12 family *c* apparently makes a phonetic confusion as it used ἐδέϊτο (he begged) where other witness use the contextually more appropriate ἡδέσθη (he was ashamed). And family *c* systematically reads κυρίον instead of the expected κηρίον (honeycomb) found in *M* in chapter 16. An interesting corruption is found in 16.14. It seems a misreading was creatively reinterpreted:

M HK	<i>KritHer</i>
ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ παντὸς ἄνθους ἐξ αὐτοῦ γὰρ ἐσθίουσι πάντες οἱ υἱοὶ (M οἱ εκλεκτοί)...	...ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ. καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἐσθίουσι καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐκλεκτοὶ...
...in the paradise of God and every blossom. For from it, all the sons (M chosen) eat...	...in the paradise of God. And all the angels of God eat from it and all the elect...

The ancestor to *Mc* seems to have read ἄνθρωποι (men) rather than ἄγγελοι (angels). ἄνθρωποι was abbreviated, as commonly happens. Seeing the abbreviation, the redactor or an early copyist

49. HK read τον λίθον ('the stone') here, but as "twelve chosen stones" have just been referred to, HK's reading appears a secondary mistake based on the confusion of vowel length moving from the plural to the singular.

50. e.g., 2.4, 8; 7.1.

behind Mc may have made the connection of roses and blossom (ἄνθος), and amended the sentence to fit his mental picture.

Taken together, the changes outlined suggest that the unit of redaction was probably a sentence in length. This points to the redactor's main interest being in 'touching up' the text, perhaps making the style more fluid and updating the vocabulary. Where the redactor does intervene in the story, in a relatively minor way.

6.3 Family Mc: a metaphrastic redaction of *Jos. Asen*.

Analysis of Mc points to the common ancestor being adapted by a redactor to meet the requirements of the intended audience. This suggests that the redactor thought the text needed some intervention and that he was sufficiently competent to undertake it. A plausible context for this revision is ninth and tenth, when there was a surge in the rewriting of hagiographical works for the contemporary audience.⁵¹

Hagiographical texts appeared quickly within Christian literature. Whilst some texts were written in an Atticising literary style from the beginning, often hagiographical works were written in a basic written Greek, what could be described as a more colloquial style, closer to the everyday language and accessible to a wider audience.⁵² Rapp suggests that from an early point there was dissatisfaction with this popular style among more educated readers and hearers, and that the first flourishing of stylistic improvement came in the seventh century as a response.⁵³ However, the first substantial volume of textual evidence for this comes from the ninth-century, when the changes were already underway.⁵⁴ As Hinterberger notes: "Hagiographical metaphraseis continued to be written even after the final fall of Constantinople, culminating in a last significant metaphrastic wave during the 16th and 17th centuries."⁵⁵

The term 'metaphrastic text' is used to describe a hagiographical text that has been rewritten to make it more acceptable to the intended audience.⁵⁶ The act of rewriting implies a considerable expenditure of resources. It points to a contemporary audience considering the present version's

51. Rapp 1995:34-5

52. Horrocks 2010:220

53. Rapp 1995:35

54. Høgel 2002a:20

55. Hinterberger 2014:36-7

56. Demoen 2004:171-3. See also Hinterberger (2014). On the difficulties of terminology see Codoñer (2014). On the cultural context see Rapp (1995) and Paschalidis (2011)

style insufficient and worthy of the effort to improve it.⁵⁷ The most famous figure associated with metaphrastic revision is Symeon Metaphrastes,⁵⁸ who was active in the tenth century. His fame is at least in part because of the scale of his work: his name is associated with the Metaphrastic Monologion, a collection of 148 texts which underwent varying degrees of metaphrastic revision. This collection had a significant impact on Byzantine hagiography. Although *Jos. Asen.* was never part of the Metaphrastic Menologion, the story experienced similar treatment in family *Mc* to some of Symeon's texts. That is, the oral rephrasing of a text as the narrative progressed with only minor amendments to the style.⁵⁹

From relatively scant evidence, it appears that Symeon worked using a team of scribes. Symeon would either read the text himself or have a scribe read it for him. Symeon would then orally rephrase it, to be taken down in shorthand by a scribe. This transcript would then be written out in full and checked. In process, this was similar to contemporary translation technique.⁶⁰ The oral approach allowed speed and the possibility of profound reformulation. But it also restricted the process to following the narrative from start to finish. As Høgel notes: "...what surprises the most when comparing a Metaphrastic text to its old version is the faithfulness of the Metaphrastic text to the sequence and factual content of the old narrative. The two texts very seldom diverge."⁶¹

Three factors point to *Jos. Asen.* as a metaphrastic revision in a similar vein to Symeon's technique, although without any Atticising tendencies.⁶² First, the narrative sequence between the likely shared ancestor to family *f* and *Mc* is virtually identical. The differences largely revolve around changes in vocabulary and changing the sentence structure. Secondly, the redactor did make numerous interventions that together point to an attempt to alter aspects of the style that may have put off more educated readers. For example: breaking up monotonous strings of indicative verbs, expansions through the use of adverbs,⁶³ or replacing common verbs with those considered

57. Rapp 1995:34

58. See esp. Høgel 2002a; 2002b

59. Høgel 2002a:90-109; 2002b:29-32

60. Høgel 2002a:94-6

61. Høgel 2002a:135

62. *Mc* does not show the strategies of Symeon Metaphrastes for elevating that language of a text, noted by Hinterberger 2014:46, such as: use of $-\mu$ verbs; adding or substituting optative-, pluperfect- and future infinitive-forms for less explicitly classicizing words/forms; introducing hyperbaton.

63. e.g. $\delta\mu\omicron\iota\omega\varsigma$ in 10.10; 13.9; 14.3

more elevated. Thirdly, the short passages of dialogue that are skipped can be explained by their content being summed up already, a feature of metaphrastic texts.⁶⁴

In addition to these features, the context for the use of metaphrastic texts was probably monastic, as monks had the time to use these texts liturgically. Thus *Mc* probably originated in a monastic context. That there was not greater atticisation of the text may be due to the genre of the work, being related to biblical events, if it is not due to the competence of the redactor. There are indications that the ancestor of *Mc* was a hagiographical collection, from which *Jos. Asen.* was then copied into theological collections. The ancestor of *Mc* could well have been a collection of texts for liturgical usage, perhaps to be read at the office of Orthros on the saint's day. Metaphrastic collections achieved huge popularity and it is conceivable that at some point a compiler wanted a similarly reworked version of *Jos. Asen.*, a text that was already important to them.

6.4 A revised story

6.4.1 *Jos. Asen.* in *Mc*'s version

Mc's reversion of *Jos. Asen.* is conservative. But whilst the changes made were relatively small, the redaction did affect certain elements of the story (the impact of the revised ending is considered separately in §6.4.2).

Three themes of *Jos. Asen.* were targeted by the redactor. First, potentially erotic details are suppressed. For example, in 7.2, the redactor does not include that the motive of the women who troubled Joseph was to sleep with him. In 8.5, the redactor says that Joseph placed his hand on Aseneth, but not between her breasts as in other versions. And in 20.5, Aseneth no longer returns Joseph's kiss. However, potentially erotic physical description was not systematically removed. In 18.9 the description of Aseneth's transformed body is preserved. These examples point to the suppression of details considered unnecessary for the story.

Secondly, the character of Aseneth is subtly altered through a number of small changes. Aseneth's religiosity is heightened through her ability to recognise Joseph's identity as "blessed son of God Most High" (8.2). Aseneth throws ashes on her head 'earnestly' (ἐκτενωῶς) in 10.14. In 12.5 she admits that she has sinned in ignorance but also in knowledge, which goes beyond other versions.

64. Høgel 2002a:139

The narrator emphasises in 14.4 that Aseneth remained bowed down when the heavenly figure arrived. But this religiosity is also tempered. For example, the redactor has no reference to Aseneth grinding her idols to pieces (10.12; 12.12).

Aseneth's relationship with Joseph is presented from a different angle. For example, in 6.1 Aseneth's first reaction on seeing Joseph in family *c* is to be 'comforted' (παρεκλήθη) rather than 'cut to the quick' (κατενύγη ἰσχυρῶς), as found widely in families *f*, *a* and *d*. In 11.12, Aseneth complains that her 'soul' is lonely rather than complaining of her present state. This perhaps points towards Joseph's role being more than just a husband in the long term. Finally in 26.2, in an expansion in M, Joseph reassures Aseneth to depart 'wholly without fear'. Aseneth departs and then encounters the ambush then Pharaoh's son. Whilst she is afraid in the ambush, when she is left without protectors she follows Joseph's instruction. As the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah arrive with their blood-covered swords, Aseneth immediately turns to prayer, and the Lord God saves her through the miracle of the swords becoming ashes. These points emphasise the importance of Aseneth for the redactor, presumably as an example to readers.

Thirdly, the presentation of other characters is changed by the redactor, especially Levi and Metanoia. Although only one key passage on Levi is extant, Levi's prophetic credentials are missing in 26.6. Levi just tells his brothers that Aseneth is in trouble. There is no description of Metanoia in 15.7, but some is transmitted in 15.8. This suggests that the redactor initially sought to downplay her importance. The two characters provided alternative interpretive possibilities that the redactor was uninterested in exploring. This is perhaps because he considered they would detract from the main storyline.

The redactor also altered some details in the narrative. These single point changes are interesting for what they suggest about the redactor. First, in chapter 16, the heavenly figure instructs Aseneth to bring honeycomb from her storeroom, which appears to have miraculously appeared there. Two details of this scene that are skipped are probably the result of the redactor, rather than a mistake. In 16.9, family *c* has no explanation as to why Aseneth thinks the honeycomb came from the man's mouth (elsewhere: "because its smell is like the smell of this man's mouth"). In 16.11 this statement is also not found. It is plausible that on both occasions the lack of the statement was the result of the copyist's eye skipping: between two instances of τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου (v9), and στόματός σου (v11) respectively. But it more probable that the redactor wanted to connect the miracle of the

honeycomb's appearance to the heavenly figure's words: he spoke and it came into being. Also, verse 16x provides a bridge from the description of the transformation that has happened to Aseneth to the arrival of the bees (16.17y) by saying that "the angel touched the honeycomb". This entails the passing over of the miraculous 'healing' of the honeycomb and the heavenly figure running his finger over the honeycomb, making a cross of blood. The most likely reason for this scene not being transmitted is that the significance of the honeycomb for the redactor was in Aseneth eating from it, and the fate of the bees that arose from it. The 'sign of the cross' has no narrative bearing on the rest of the story and so was not included.

Secondly, in 1.7 Mc reports that Pharaoh's firstborn son begs Pentephres, not Pharaoh, to give him Aseneth as a wife, then asks his father. It is difficult to explain this as a scribal error, unless the copyist just became confused between the characters. Instead, it is plausible that this change reflected contemporary marriage arrangement.

6.4.2 The new ending of HK

H and K preserve a new ending which introduces a new scene. In 16.17y, the text reads *καὶ οἱ σίμβλοι ἦσαν ἀναρύθμητοι μυριάδες* ('and the cells were innumerable'), then continues with the new ending. Burchard 1977:80-3 published an edition of the ending, which was reprinted in Burchard 2003a:350-1 with a new introduction.

A key feature of the new ending is a meeting between the angel and Joseph. Burchard speculated that it could be an original component of the story.⁶⁵ In *KritHer* 15.9, the angel says he will go to Joseph, but after he departs (17.8) there is no account of the meeting, only Joseph's statement that the angel indeed came and spoke to him (19.9). The inclusion of a scene narrating the meeting between the angel and Joseph in the new ending addresses this apparent deficiency. However, Burchard concluded the revised ending was unlikely to contain any original details because of the literary arrangement, the tendency of omission, the increased value given to Joseph and the late dating of the manuscripts.⁶⁶ The provision of this scene thus suggests that the redactor felt this meeting was missing and that adding it provided a more satisfactory narrative.

65. Burchard 2003a:20

66. Burchard 2003a:20; 2003b:237

The ending is of interest in its own right. As Gemeinhardt notes: "...Christian hagiography is first and foremost a religious affair, not a literary one, and should not be detached from its contexts in piety, liturgy and cult."⁶⁷ The new ending shows two points about its religious context. First, it highlights the concerns of the redactor. Secondly, the redactor was able to alter the course of the story. This suggests that the story at the time of revision was either sufficiently unknown that the change would not be noticed and the new version could become authoritative, or that the ending was felt so unsatisfactory as to need alteration and the new version soon displaced the older version.

The revised ending runs as follows:⁶⁸ The angel disappears (§2) without the explanation of the bees or further interest in the honeycomb. Aseneth is unsure whether her repentance has been accepted (§4), not knowing that the man was really an angel (§6), but is reassured by a divine ray (ἀκτῆς τῆς θείας, §5). Realising what has happened she sits on her throne and 'magnifies' God (§7). The angel then appears to Joseph (§8) and declares that Aseneth has been given to him as a wife (§12). Joseph is still not sure and points out that Aseneth is an abomination because she serves idols (§17-18). To marry Aseneth would cause him to sin and he would be condemned by God to the fires of hell (§20). The angel explains all that Aseneth has done in repentance (§22-26), and underscores that this is the Lord's will (§27). The angel's departure is not narrated. Joseph rejoices (§28-29) then sets off for Heliopolis (§30). Sending messengers ahead, Joseph instructs Pentephres to make ready a wedding feast (§32-33). Pentephres and his servants meet Joseph and bring him into the house for the wedding (§36-40). Pharaoh later hears what has happened and rejoices (§42). The narrator informs the reader that Joseph sees sons and daughters(!) with Aseneth, without reference to Manasseh and Ephraim (§45), and that Aseneth stood in honour, reverence and wisdom in Joseph's house (§47). The ending sums up the message of the story: that God helps those who trust in Him (§49), that Joseph overcame trials (§51), and that the prophecy of his parents bowing down to him was fulfilled (§54). For these reasons, 'we' extol Joseph who patiently and obediently overcame (§55).

The content of the new ending clarifies why Joseph accepted Aseneth and increases the role of Joseph, explicitly extolling Joseph as an example to follow. A further divine sign is needed to confirm Aseneth's transformation (the divine ray), and Joseph takes more convincing. The redactor of

67. Gemeinhardt 2014:38

68. § refers to divisions in Burchard (2003a).

the ending shows no interest in the bees of the honeycomb, Aseneth's physical transformation, or setting the wedding scene in Pharaoh's house. Instead, the wedding is now held in Pentephres' house and Pharaoh only hears about it later on. This change reduces a significant link to the biblical text of Genesis, as does the report that Aseneth gave birth to daughters. Indeed, the story ends at 21.9, without Aseneth's psalm, the arrival of Jacob and the other sons, or the adventures with Pharaoh's son. Further, the redactor changes, among other events, who meets Joseph when he arrives, and who makes the marriage. Taken together, these factors indicate that solving the biblical problem of *how* Joseph could marry Aseneth (Genesis 41.45) was the main concern of the redactor, but beyond this narrow aim he had little concern for other biblical connections.

6.5 Conclusions

The ancestor of Mc made a light revision of the text it received. This revision largely focused on changes to the style of the text, but also made many small changes that point to the concerns of the redactor. This combination of factors means it is helpful to consider Mc in the wider context of metaphrastic revision. That a metaphrastic revision of the text was carried out indicates that at least one reader felt the text needed 'improving' without any serious amendment. It also suggests that the story still had a role as a hagiographical text. At a later point, the ancestor(s) of family c underwent further revision and a new ending being provided. 21.9 is an obvious place to end the story for a redactor wanting to shorten the narrative,⁶⁹ or who is interested in the narrative as it related to the biblical story.

The text of Mc is, in general, close to families *f* and *a*. That this version has not played a more central role in textual discussions is largely due to the late discovery of M's identity and the scholarly disinterest in 'improved', later versions. From a literary perspective, that the redactor appears to have altered so little is an interesting comment on the constraints that he felt.

Manuscript M and those of family *c* provide different manuscript contexts for the story. M and J contain assorted theological works, whilst H and K contain collections of saints' lives. M also contains *Life of Joseph*, whilst this work is not known in HJK. This raises interesting questions about how *Jos. Asen.* was transmitted and read, and how the ancestor manuscripts travelled, with few avenues for answers.

69. This is independently seen in the Armenian tradition.

Chapter 7

Family *a*: a *menologion* version

7.1 Introduction

Family *a* played a significant role in the early stages of modern critical scholarship on *Jos. Asen.*. The *editio princeps*, Batiffol (1889), was based on manuscript A, with C being part of Batiffol's apparatus. Consequently most early work on the Greek text used this developed version.⁷⁰

Burchard's research brought many new manuscript witnesses of *Jos. Asen.* to light, including four others in family *a* (OPQR). Burchard's theory of textual development relegated family *a* to being at least one development stage away from the earliest achievable version. However, for those wanting to work with Burchard's ideas, Batiffol's edition remained the only text available until the publication of *VorlT* in 1979, updated and printed in Burchard (1996). Philonenko (1968)'s alternative theory placed family *a* as the latest stage in the story's development in Greek, and the apparatus made only occasional reference to it. Further, as scholarship focused on issues of the earliest form and provenance of the story, this version provided minimal interest. Thus from the 1980s onwards there was little incentive to consult Batiffol's edition. Even Burchard's landmark study of the story's manuscripts and transmission history did not increase interest.⁷¹ Standhartinger (2009) briefly considered the context of *Jos. Asen.* in A and O as *menologia*, collections of saints' lives organised in order of their festival days. But Standhartinger added little other than suggesting that *Jos. Asen.* was possibly read as a martyrdom in this context,⁷² which seems unlikely.

Fink (2008) provided a clinical reappraisal of the textual relationships, starting with an overview of the internal relations between the manuscripts and the characteristics of the family.⁷³ Comparison with family *Mc* lead Fink to postulate 'contamination' from the ancestor of *Mc* to the ancestor of

70. For example, *Jos. Asen.* provides the sole reference for an alternative meaning Lampe's *Patristic Greek Dictionary* for *προδρόμος* (p.1144, §C) and *συγλάω* (p.1271 as passive intransitive).

71. Burchard 1987a:562-3

72. Standhartinger 2009:222

73. Fink 2008:47

family *a*, as well as from the predecessor of A on the predecessor of B (in family *d*).⁷⁴ Fink argued that understanding these relationships when producing a critical edition of the text helps reduce the influence of later developments. Thus Fink's edition of the Greek text reduced the number of readings that find support in family *a*.

But family *a* is more than a resource for text criticism. As Michael Fox noted:

The fiction of textual autonomy cannot even be imagined to apply to a redactor's work, for redaction cannot exist by itself. It is absolutely dependent for its existence on its context— a context it creates in order that it might itself exist.⁷⁵

The redactor(s) of family *a* expended time and resource in refining the story to his taste. It is likely that *Jos. Asen.* was previously known to the redactor's intended audience as otherwise the story would not have been chosen to enter the *menologia* tradition. Thus the redaction must have served a purpose. Trying to grasp that purpose and the context in which the redaction took place will help scholars understand the factors at work in the wider transmission of the story.

Too often family *a* is dismissed with the comment of 'stylistically improved'. Yet family *a* offers important insight into the how *Jos. Asen.* was read over a protracted period. The manuscript context highlights the importance of *Jos. Asen.* being read as a piece of hagiography. Also, family *a* is the most popular Greek version of the story by the number of manuscripts preserved. Therefore, family *a* gives a rich resource for looking at how copyists and subsequent redactors reinterpreted the story and the emphases that they chose. These factors point to the need for a reappraisal of family *a*.

To carry out a reassessment a new edition was needed.⁷⁶ Batiffol (1889) had not seen all the available witnesses and sometimes emends his text away from A. Burchard (2003a) does not allow the family to be reconstructed because of the limitations of his project. Several times it notes that one or more family *a* manuscripts paraphrase a particular reading,⁷⁷ and once he leaves out family *a*'s reading all together.⁷⁸ To help stimulate fresh research and make all the readings available, a new edition was created.

74. Fink 2008:50-3, 53-7 respectively.

75. Fox 1991:151

76. *Contra* Burchard 2003a:24 which argued there was no need.

77. E.g., 18.4 (Burchard 2003a:231)

78. 17.17x ἔθηξε (Batiffol's emendation. APQ ἔθηγε (Q-ν)) δὲ (>Q) ὁ ἄγγελος τὸ κηρίον (A τῶν κηρίων Q τῶν κηρίου)

The aim of this chapter is to broaden understanding of family *a*. It begins with a survey of the manuscripts, their relationships and the formation of the new edition. It then considers how *Jos. Asen.* is told in family *a*, as well as some of the interesting scenes in the individual manuscripts, before moving to reappraise the origins and development of the family. This study argues that the origins of family *a* were in a renewed interest in hagiography and the organised compilation of saints' lives within a monastic setting. The impetus was probably less for exhortatory or moralistic purposes as in FW G, than to provide a suitable text for reading on Aseneth's saint's day, the 13th of December according to A.

7.2 Manuscript witness, relationships, and the new edition

7.2.1 Introduction

The text form known as family *a* is preserved in 5 manuscripts (APQCR), with the contents page entry preserved in a sixth (O).⁷⁹ The manuscripts are now preserved among great collections: Mount Sinai, the Vatican Library, Mount Athos and the Bodleian Library in Oxford. However the original provenance of all of them, perhaps with the exception of the Sinai manuscripts, is uncertain. Their survival probably owes a great deal to ending up in a stable library.

A comparison of the text of family *a* with other witnesses to *Jos. Asen.* shows some distinct characteristics. These are either unique to this family, or shared with a related family. The most notable of these are the loss of certain passages (11.1x, 15-18; 15.12x; most of 16.16x-17x; 21.10-21), the rearrangement of the verses in chapter 6, and an expanded ending that includes a quotation from Genesis. These features will be dealt with in §7.3. This section will set out the basis for the edition: an overview of witnesses, their relationships and notes on the new edition.

7.2.2 The Manuscripts

O (MS Sinai, St. Catherine's Monastery, Gr. 504) is the oldest witness of the family, and most likely of *Jos. Asen.* in Greek. Burchard notes it is a tenth century manuscript and that only the title and *incipit* in the table of contents are preserved. Seventeen items are listed, but only the first six are

79. The author was able to view C in person, supplemented with high quality digital photographs, and APQR using microfilm. Manuscript O was not seen and its witness to the title and *incipit* were noted from Burchard (2003a).

now extant.⁸⁰ It is assigned to family *a* on the basis of the title. The manuscript is a half-year menologion covering November to April.⁸¹

A (MS Rome, Vatican Library, Vaticanus Gr. 803, f.133r-147v) dates to the eleventh or twelfth century. The manuscript forms part of the so-called *Fondo Antico* of Greek manuscripts at the Vatican Library. This group of manuscripts was brought together at the beginning of the seventeenth century and its provenance before then is not known. A was rebound in the early seventeenth century under the restoration project of Pope Paul V,⁸² when any traces of its earlier history on its binding or fly leaves were lost. The manuscript is a two-month menologion covering November and December.⁸³

Batiffol used A as the base for his edition of *Jos. Asen.* and generally it preserves the fullest text. The text is clearly written and set out in two columns. There are occasional spaces in the otherwise continuous text. Batiffol largely reproduces the internal divisions in A and these provide the majority of his chapter divisions. Reissler's versification of *Jos. Asen.*, taken over by Burchard, often follows the punctuation of A. Thus A still exerts some influence over how the story is read today. A is usually quite accurate in content and spelling, but comparison with other manuscripts highlights a few copying mistakes.⁸⁴

P (MS Mount Athos, Konstamonitou, 14, p. 597-702) is a fifteenth century manuscript in the relatively small library at Konstamonitou Monastery. The monastery had a turbulent history prior to the nineteenth-century and it is a wonder the manuscript survived. However, it is not clear if the manuscript was copied at the monastery or was a gift to it at a later stage. The manuscript is a collection of works by Greek Fathers, hagiographical lives, as well as *Liber de Dormitione Deiparae*, *Life of Adam and Eve*, *Testament of Abraham* and *Jos. Asen.* *Jos. Asen.* comes towards the end of the manuscript and is preceded by a sermon of Basil of Caesarea (*De Moribus*) and followed by Macarius of Alexandria's *Visio de sorte animarum* and Ephrem Graecus' *De Communi Resurrectione*. No structure to the manuscript contents is apparent.

80. Kraft and Purinton 1972:4

81. Burchard 1987a:563

82. Choulis 2013:147-152

83. Burchard 1987a:563

84. E.g., see 14.9 οἱ; 26.6 ἀντῶν;

Each folio contains a single column. The text is written continuously in a neat hand with relatively few abbreviations, aside from *nomina sacra* and common prepositions and conjunctions. Usually numbers are written out; only towards the end are they abbreviated to letters, but there is good reason to think this was the scribe's preference, rather than what was in his *Vorlage* (see below). The copyist occasionally confuses vowel length in words. In general, the text of P covers the same area as A. Where P appears to have not included text that was probably in the ancestor to the family, this is rarely more than a word or two. These instances are often shared with Q, suggesting both shared the same model.⁸⁵ In addition to the three expansions shared with Q (4.3; 10.5; 19.5), P also expands 13.9. There is little marginalia.⁸⁶ Speech marks are given in the left hand margin for the text of Joseph's prayer in 8.9 (pp.621-2) and 12.1 *αἰῶνας καὶ* — 12.2 οὐ βυθισθήσονται (p.634), which possibly is to pick out the cosmological content. Outside the *incipit*, the only letters that appear 'highlighted' are in the opening words of Aseneth's prayer in 12.1, which is rendered in coloured majuscule. P's text relates most closely to Q. P also confirms several of Batiffol's emendations.⁸⁷

Q (MS Rome, Vatican Library, Palatinus Gr. 364, f.293r-310v) is a fifteenth century manuscript and its original provenance is unknown. In 1622 Q, and also B (family *d*), were part of the rich and celebrated Palatine Library in Heidelberg. The capture of the city by the forces of the Catholic League led eventually to the library's books and manuscripts being transferred to Rome. As part of the relocation, any evidence dealing with the growth of the collection was removed.⁸⁸ Today an inscription in the inside cover records Q's origins as booty presented to Pope Gregory XV. On the following leaf there is also an inscription to "Papa Nataniel" describing the work as "Book of divine services of the Greek Church, many and various, pertaining to their rites"⁸⁹. The manuscript itself is made up of two parts (ff.1-142; 143-354), of which *Jos. Asen* is in the second.⁹⁰ The manuscript mainly contains assorted works of Greek Fathers, though in the second part there are the martyrdoms of saints Demetrios and George. Immediately preceding *Jos. Asen*. is what is described as a *paraphrasis* of Michael Psellios' work on *Song of Songs*, and *Miscellanea Liturgica*, some attributed

85. E.g., 9.4 καὶ τῷ πρωτῷ — 9.5 σήμερον; 13.1 καὶ πρὸς—13.2 κατέλιπον (although the passage not found in Q is longer); 19.11; 21.7 (wider than Q); 24.20.

86. p.597 (different hand) προσεχρονιδι το αναγινωσκοντα οτι <καὶ> ταυτα <καὶ> κρατῶν ου οιδι καθοτι και λιθολω

87. From many examples, see 9.2 γενέσθαι; 14.9 οἱ

88. Bepler 2001:955-6

89. "*Liber diuinorum officiorum Ecclesiae graecae, multa et uaria ad ritus earum pertinentia.*" And a second hand refers to what this scribe may have considered the most significant work: *Pselli exegesis in Cantica canticorum*.

90. Stevenson 1885:222-8

to Romanos the Melode. *Jos. Asen.* is followed by Basil of Caesarea's *Ad Iulianum*. There is no obvious structure to the collection.

Each folio contains a single column of text written in a cursive hand with many abbreviations. The story is regularly condensed, either by skipping text or paraphrasing it. Aside from the verses not transmitted across the family, Q does not transmit 21 entire verses.⁹¹ Many other verses are significantly shortened.⁹² The closest relative to Q is P. Q quite often preserves a different reading to other manuscripts in the family. Occasionally these are closer to the rest of the tradition of *Jos. Asen.* but this may well be through chance rather than the copyist having access to more than one model. The choices made by the copyist would be rather eclectic if he did. A small amount of marginalia is present.⁹³ Whatever else is said, Q shows that copyists felt able to rewrite the narrative without doing violence to the story.

C (MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Baroccianus Gr. 148, f.298v-303v) is fifteenth century manuscript. The provenance of the manuscript before it came into the hands of Giacomo Barocci is unknown. Barocci was a significant Venetian who inherited a rich library from his uncle, which he greatly expanded before his death in 1615/16.⁹⁴ This collection of 240 manuscripts was purchased by William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Chancellor of Oxford University, a few years later and donated to the Bodleian Library. The collection was intended to provide materials for a Greek printing press in Oxford.⁹⁵ The text is written in two columns and covers 1.1-10.5 *κλαυθμοῦ τῆς ἀσενέθ*. It breaks off towards the end of the first column of f.303v. F.304r-305v are blank except for a crude drawing, apparently a man behind a rock, on 304r. The next work commences on 306r. The space left suggests that the story could have continued to roughly the middle of chapter 13. If the copyist planned to continue only part of the story would have been preserved. The other contents in the manuscript mainly include homiletic writings of Church Fathers, as well as hagiographic *Lives*.

91. Haplography appears the cause of the loss for: 5.4-5.7 *συγγένεια αὐτῶν*; 10.11-10.14 *ἐπὶ τοῦ ἐδάφους*; 14.9-11. Other causes relate to: 12.12 *καὶ εἶπον*—12.14 *κύριε καὶ*; 13.1-13.2 *κατέλιπον καὶ*; 14.14-15 (the passage is abbreviated to a single summary comment); 15.5; 18.6-9; 19.7; 24.6, 17.

92. 6.2; 9.4-5; 11.7; 12.1; 12.5, 8, 9, 11; 12.14, 15; 13.10-11, 13, 15; 14.12; 15.2-4, 7-8, 10, 12-13; 16.4, 16; 17.10; 18.4, 5; 22.7, 9; 23.12; 24.1, 20; 29.1-2

93. 297v, beside 10.2 *αγυήνεγκεν* is written *ἀσφαλῆς*; 307v *οἱ φύλακες* is written as a correction in the margin to 25.1; 308v where *ἀσινέθ* is written in the lower margin (partially cut-off in microfilm), under 28.2; 309r where there is an undeciphered abbreviation.

94. See 'Barozzi (Barocci), Iacopo', *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vi (1964), http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/iacopo-barozzi_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/ [last viewed 22 November 2016]

95. Mandelbrote 2006:80-1

LJos immediately precedes *Jos. Asen.*. The text of C is most similar to R. Both share some common redaction of the text, and occasional shared instances where text was probably skipped through haplography that were likely present in the *Vorlage*.⁹⁶

R (MS Sinai, St. Catherine's Monastery, Gr. 530, f. 13v-17r) is a fifteenth or sixteenth century manuscript described simply as 'sayings'.⁹⁷ *Jos. Asen.* finishes abruptly at the end of f.17r at 5.1 νεανίσκος ἀπὸ τῆς. The next work, *Vita of St. Nicolaus*, begins on f.17v and it is unclear why only this portion of *Jos. Asen.* was copied. The title (f.13v) makes reference to Aseneth's confession and marriage, neither of which are covered in the first four chapters. This suggests that originally the entire work was to be copied. The manuscript itself begins with *LJos* followed by *Jos. Asen.*, a pairing also found in C. The rest of the manuscript contains saints' lives, homilies of Church Fathers, *Life of Adam and Eve*, and even some Church canons. The theme of penitence runs through the collection. No information on the provenance of the manuscript has been found by the author. Unfortunately damage to the top of the manuscript means that some text is lost.

7.2.3 Manuscript relationships

The oldest manuscript of family *a* is O. None of the text of the story survives in O. As its title and *incipit*, preserved on the contents page, are very similar to A, Fink argues they should be considered as stemming from a common ancestor.⁹⁸

Manuscripts P and Q together preserve a number of readings that differ A and CR. This is seen in occasions where they have expansions,⁹⁹ alternative readings,¹⁰⁰ or text that is not transmitted.¹⁰¹ P is often much closer to A, and Q is a further development of the story. Q did not have P as its base text because Q contains readings not extant in P but found in other manuscripts. Thus PQ share a common ancestor. Q shows a number of errors attributable to the copyist, haplography in particu-

96. On shared redaction see e.g., the lack of the description of watering the garden in 2.12 or the reduced description of what Aseneth's parents give her in 4.2. On instances of shared mistakes see e.g. haplography in 1.7 (καὶ ἐλεγέν — εἰς γυναῖκα) and 4.10 (οὐχ οὗτός — ὑπ' αὐτοῦ).

97. Kamil 1970:92 gives minimal information (see 753 [530]).

98. Fink 2008:47

99. Significant expansions are found in 4.3; 8.2; 10.7; 19.5; 21.3, 4; 23.1; 26.2

100. E.g., 4.1 ὡς νύμφην θεοῦ] PQ ὡς νύμφην Χϋ; 12.9 παλαιὸς καὶ ἄγριος καὶ ἀνήμερος λέων] PQ δράκων (see below); word order in 24.8; 29.8 ρθ̄ ἐτῶν] P ἐτῶν ἑκατὸν ἑβδομήκοντα Q τῶν ρ.ο (P is presumably an expansion of the abbreviation).

101. See e.g., 2.1, 5; 4.1, 9; 6.2

lar, but also mistakes due to visual¹⁰² or aural confusion¹⁰³ that suggest a quite mechanical copying process. However, Q also displays a range of editing techniques compared to P including: innumerable contractions of the story; frequently rewriting of short passages; and unique, and often interesting, expansions.¹⁰⁴ A and PQ often share readings against CR and thus the predecessor to PQ and of A can be reasonably assumed to have a common ancestor.

The text preserved in C is most similar to R. The two manuscripts share some striking similarities even over the small area of text that both preserve. For example, both preserve *σενέθ* instead of *άσενέθ* in their title; *ώ σάρα* instead of *ώς σάρρα* in 1.5; *άνέθ* instead of *άσενέθ* in 2.3; *ό θεός του ΙΗΛ* (= *Ίσραήλ*) rather than *Ίωσήφ* in 3.3; and both use iota for final vowel of Pentephres (*πεντεφρι*). The differences between them are insignificant and likely introduced by copyists. Only in 2.7 does C preserve a section of text not found in R. CR have several readings that differ from APQ both in what is not preserved and the positive text.¹⁰⁵ Occasionally another manuscript supports CR against the other two,¹⁰⁶ but nothing suggests the relevant copyist used more than one model. Fink postulates that the divergence occurred as far back as the ancestor of family *a*.¹⁰⁷

Despite the underlying diversity within family *a*, the manuscripts provide a relatively unified textual witness to the story.¹⁰⁸ They are much more closely related than, for example, FW to G. Thus an edition of the manuscripts allows the most efficient way to compare the readings they contain.

7.2.4 The edition

The new edition of family *a* in the appendix uses the five manuscripts preserving the story, in whole or in part. Verse division follows Burchard (2003a). Accentuation usually follows the deci-

102.E.g., 1.8 *βασιλεὺς ὦν*] Q *βασιλεὺς σὺ*. An aural mistake is unlikely to produce this reading. Rather a mechanical visual copying process could misread a cursive *omega* as a *sigma* and mistake an *upsilon* for a *nu* if the upstroke was short.

103.E.g., 1.7 *ήκουσεν δέ*] Q *άκουσεν*. The Q reading of a future indicative rather than an aorist indicative makes no sense in the context. It appears caused by a confusion over the length of the initial vowel.

104.Examples of Q's unique expansions: 4.10 *υἱός*] Q+ *ιακώβ*; 7.8 *διότι*] Q+ *παρθενος ἐστιν και*; 16.14 *οἱ²*] Q+ *ἀγίοι*; 18.11 *μου*] Q+ *τί τοῦτο το παραιδοξον θαῦμα*; 28.14 *ἀδελφῆ*] Q+ *μή*

105.For example, in chapter 1 see: 1.3 *τις*] CR *τῆς*; *σατράπης*] CR *σατράπων*; *και ἄρχων* — *του Φαραώ*] CR om.; *ὅτι ἦν* — *Φαραώ*] C(R) om.; 1.4 *Άσενέθ ἔτων* — *τῆς γῆς*] C(R) om.; 1.5 *αὕτη τοίνυν ἡ Άσενέθ οὐδέν*] CR *Άσενέθ οὐδέν*; *εἶχεν*] CR om.; 1.6 *τῶν*] CR om.; *πολεμεῖν*] CR *πολεμους*; 1.7 *και ἐλεγέν* — *εἰς γυναῖκα*] CR om.; 1.8 *σὺ*] CR om.; *πάσης τῆς γῆς ταύτης*] CR *τῆς γ. π. τ.*; 1.9 *σεαυτῶ ταύτην*] CR *σὺ αὐτήν*

106.Instances in the positive text in 1.1-5.1: 1.6 *μνηστευθῆναι ἐπεθύμουν αὐτῆ*] PCR *έ. α. μ.*; 1.8 *Ίωακίμ*] A *Ίακίμ* PCR *Ίακειμ*; 2.11 *τῆ*] PCR+ *αὐτῆ*

107.Fink 2008:17, 47

108.Aside from the rearrangement of chapter 6 and the extended ending, they share some joint mistakes against the rest of the tradition. E.g., 27.6 that Levi and his brothers kill 2,076 men!

sions of Batiffol, with the exception of personal pronouns. Punctuation follows the author's preference due to the great diversity in the manuscripts. The apparatus ignores differences due to vowel length unless the difference reflects an interpretive change, as well as confusions that arose for copyists from pronunciation (e.g., τ and θ) or consonantal clusters (e.g., τγ for ττ). Abbreviations are expanded and not recorded, except for numerals. Occasions where the author has diverged from Batiffol's emendations are generally recorded, though none are of great consequence.¹⁰⁹ However, the aim was not to amend Batiffol's edition, but rather to edit the family afresh. For the reader's sake, personal pronouns have majuscule initial letters. The wide variation in the spelling of personal pronouns is not recorded for the sake of brevity; the example of the name 'Aseneth' illustrates the situation:

A	ἀσενέθ but also Ἀσσενέθ (16.20)
P	ἀσενέθ
Q	ἀσινέθ but also ἀσυνέθ (8.2; 18.2)
CR	ἀσενέθ but also σενέθ in the title

7.3 Telling the story

7.3.1 Family *a* characteristics

Family *a* is a relatively full and detailed version of *Jos. Asen.*. The reader knowing the story from *KritHer* or Philonenko's text will find it familiar. However, some larger portions of text found in other versions are not transmitted and affect the content of the story. These include: Aseneth's physical actions at the start of her penitential fasting (11.1x); Aseneth's second prayer (11.15-18); Aseneth asking for the angel's name (15.12x); the angel miraculously reforming the honeycomb, the 'sign of the cross' miracle, and Aseneth's observance of these things (16.16x-17x ἄνθρωπος¹); and Aseneth's psalm following her wedding (21.10-21).

The characteristic modifications to the style of the Greek of family *a* are well summarised in Fink 2008:47. However, to these can be added the repeated use of εἰθ' οὐτως ('thereupon'),¹¹⁰ and a pref-

109. e.g., the inclusion of πρὸς βορὰν in 2.7
110. 4.1; 10.3, 12, 14; 15.1; 16.22; 20.5; 22.10; 27.4

erence for reporting speech, and sometimes actions, using the present or imperfect tense rather than the aorist.

Turning to the narrative, family *a* shows certain redactional tendencies. Some of these also change the theological outlook of the narrative. Burchard suggests that the earliest version of *Jos. Asen.* referred to Aseneth's heavenly visitor as *ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ* ("a man from heaven"), who appears in 14.3 and who the narrator refers to thereafter as *ὁ ἄνθρωπος* ("the man"). Different versions and manuscripts clarify for the reader that this figure is an angel. Family *a* retains reference to 'the man',¹¹¹ but often makes the figure's identity more explicit. For example: unique to family *a* *θεῖος ἄγγελος* ("divine angel")¹¹² and *ὁ ἐν εἶδει ἀνθρώπου ἄγγελος κυρίου* ("the angel of the Lord in the appearance of a man", 15.11).

Alongside the explicit identification of the heavenly visitor, family *a* distinguishes the role of the angel and the role of God. In *KritHer* 15.2 it is the visitor who has heard Aseneth's confession and prayer. In family *a* it is the Lord God who heard. Then in 15.6 *KritHer* has the man say that he has given Aseneth to Joseph as a bride (*δέδωκά σε σήμερον νύμφην*), whilst family *a* has the angel tell Aseneth that the Lord God has given her to Joseph as a bride (*δέδωκέν σε σήμερον κύριος ὁ θεός*). The role of the angel is dissociated from God, moving God to be the central actor in the story. This focus on the primacy of God is heightened by family *a*'s expansion in 11.11 which reminds the reader that it is God that forgives sins (*καὶ ἐλεήσει μου* "and he will have mercy on me"). The importance of this repentance leading to forgiveness is also emphasised through the expansion in 15.7. Here the figure of Metanoia is described as the *κορωνίς* ('crown'¹¹³) as well as 'overseer' of virgins.

Joseph's divine attributes are also lessened. The references to Joseph as 'firstborn' of God are not included,¹¹⁴ and his status is carefully nuanced. For example, in 21.4 *KritHer* has Pharaoh describe Joseph as *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ πρωτότοκος* ("the firstborn son of God"), whereas A (PQ do not transmit this passage) prefers *ὡς γὰρ υἱὸς ὑψίστου* ("like a son of the Most High").¹¹⁵ The change could be to remove any possible confusion of titles with Jesus.¹¹⁶

111. E.g., 14.3; 19.5, 6, 9

112. E.g., 14.4; 15.2; 16.1, 3, 5, 15; 17.2, 4, 7

113. Lampe lists "*competion; met. height, extremity, crown*". Sophocles lists "*End, close*" as well as *κορωνίς = παρθένος*. It is possible *κορωνίς* had a specific monastic meaning to it, such as 'chief of virgins'.

114. E.g., 18.11, 21.4; 23.10

115. Aseneth's position is similarly lowered here. She is no longer called "daughter of the Most High".

116. E.g., Rom 8.29; Col 1.15, 18; Rev 1.5

The theological concerns of the redactor may account for a few disparate changes unique to family *a*. For example, the lack of 11.1x means that Aseneth's initial repentance is more subdued than elsewhere. The emphasis implicitly moves to the time spent in repentance and the fasting accompanying it. In 12.3 the order of Aseneth's actions in *KritHer* is to cry out, pour out prayer, then confess. In family *a* the order is cry out, confess, pour out prayer. The move of confession before prayer could reflect a focus on preparation for wider prayer.

Finally, commentators often remark on Aseneth's τροφεύς, which Burchard translates 'foster-father'. This title is not found in family *a*. In 18.2 the description τὸν ἐπάνω τῆς οἰκίας αὐτῆς ("the one over her house") is shared with L2 and family *d*. But family *a* alone has it in 18.3, 5, 11. Possibly the redactor was drawn to identify Pentephres' house manager in 3.4 as the same figure Aseneth calls, and so uses the same title. But in a version that preserves so many alternative forms of address,¹¹⁷ the absence of τροφεύς seems deliberate.

Each version of *Jos. Asen.* preserves oddities, small changes that altar the sense of a passage. They invite speculation over the corruptions or influences that lead to them. Three interesting oddities help give a sense of the surprises that await the reader in family *a*

In 27.6 family *a* records that the sons of Leah killed two thousand and seventy six men (δισχιλίοις (Q χιαδας δύο και) ἐβδομήκοντα ἕξ). The tradition is relatively unified with *KritHer* reading ἀπέκτειναν δισχιλίους οἱ ἕξ ἄνδρες ("the six men killed two thousand").¹¹⁸ The *KritHer* reading makes sense as two thousand is the number of men accompanying the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah. However family *a*'s total does not allow an easy explanation and the witness of family *a* shows that scribes copied what they found in their text. The answer probably lies in the ease with which numbers were corrupted in the text as shown by the variance in dates in 3.1 and 22.2 in family *a* alone.

The redactor of family *a* expanded the text with many little details, usually as explanations.¹¹⁹ However, in 23.1 the reader discovers that Pharaoh's son saw Aseneth ἀπερχομένων αὐτῶν πρὸς Ἰακώβ ("when they were going to Jacob"). The purpose of this inversion of detail is not clear.

117. E.g., family *a* preserves Aseneth being called φίλτατον ('dearest') in 4.5, 8 by Pentephres, and κόρη ('damsel') in 19.4 and γυναίκα ('woman') in 19.8 by Joseph.

118. Aside from variations in word order, different numbers are found in G (τοὺς ἄνδρας ὡς δισχιλίους δέκα ἕξ = 2,016), Slavonic (2,016) and E (β ὁ και ρ = 172?). With E, it could be speculated that the *rho* was written instead of *diagamma*, and an *iota* with a confusing macron which could give 2,016.

119. See e.g., 10.5 ἐξω ἰσταμένη; 10.8 τοῦ κοιτῶνος αὐτῆς

Lastly, in 17.6 the angel proclaims in family *a* that Aseneth's companions are to be κίονες καταφυγῆς ἑπτὰ πόλεων (pillars of refuge of seven cities). Burchard's reconstructed reading is ἔσεσθε κίονες ἑπτὰ <τῆς> πόλεως τῆς καταφυγῆς ("you shall be seven pillars of the city of refuge"). Family *a* probably shows at least two stages of corruption in its reading, but this reading was transmitted, however mysterious it must have been to readers.

7.3.2 Notable features

Among other features that differentiate family *a* from other witness to *Jos. Asen.* are two passages of particular interest: a reordered chapter 6, and an expanded ending.

Family *a*, like family *d*, preserves an alternative order for chapter 6. In versions other than families *a* and *d*, the order follows the versification used by Burchard: 6.1-8. In families *a* and *d*Slav, the text runs: 6.1, 5-7, 2-4, 8. Burchard used this pericope to argue for the secondary character of the text preserved in *ad*Slav.¹²⁰ He appealed to the internal logic of the scene: that Joseph has to enter (v2) before Aseneth can make her statement of regret (v4b); and that *ad*Slav make secondary changes to explain the questions asked by Aseneth. Standhartinger used this passage to argue the opposite case.¹²¹ She identifies *ad*Slav having two balanced strophes: the first dealing with Aseneth's situation; the second describing Joseph. The author finds Burchard's assessment more convincing within a wider assessment of the text's development.

Four features of family *a*'s reading are noteworthy. First, the order found in family *a* is a rearrangement in blocks with little editing. The material is not rewritten and nothing is left out. Secondly, Aseneth's initial reaction is made more visceral in family *a* and *d* through reference to τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτῆς (her innards) having 'given way' (συνεκλάσθη) as well as her knees. Thirdly, family *a* increases Aseneth's self-deprecation, a feature also found in Aseneth's prayers of chapters 11-13. The designations ἀθλία (wretched one, vv5, 6) and ταλαίπωρος (miserable one, v5) are particular to family *a*. Fourthly, family *a* introduces a 'woe!' (οἴμοι) in vv5-6. This could be to mirror Aseneth's reaction her with that in 18.7 when she realises her face has fallen.

From these observations, it appears that the redactor wanted to create a scene where Aseneth first experiences a reaction to seeing Joseph, then laments her misfortune with her newly understood

120. Burchard 1970:26-27

121. Standhartinger 1995:37-9

limitations. The sequential aspect of this is strengthened by the introduction of *τότε* before the verb of speaking in v1. This lament leads to a prayer for mercy (v7) before Aseneth moves to frame the real cause of her change of heart: what she perceives about Joseph from that first sight. As seen in the narrative arc of chapters 1-21, realisation and repentance have to precede what God has in store for the heroine. In this reordered version, Aseneth's future is prophetically placed as the high point of the scene, rather than her recognition of Joseph's divine qualities. It shifts the focus more firmly towards Aseneth.

Family *a* preserves an expanded ending unique to itself. After 29.9 the reader passes to the text of Genesis 50.22b-26, followed by a report of Aseneth's death, and a closing invocation to give glory to the Triune God. The text, printed at the end of the edition¹²², reads:

[Gen 50.22b] And Joseph lived to the age of 110 [v23] and Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation and the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born of Joseph's thighs. [v24] And Joseph said to his brothers: "I will die, and God will surely visit you and bring us out from this land into the land which God swore to our fathers Abraham and Isaac and Jacob." [v25] And Joseph made the sons of Israel swear saying: "At the visitation, when God will visit you, collect together my bones that remain with their dust and carry them away with you." [v26] And Joseph died aged 110 years and they buried him in the tomb of the kings in Egypt. And Aseneth also died after Joseph's falling asleep had taken place, being full of years, and she was buried beside Joseph her pledged. Now after all these things we will give glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

The text is approximately the same between the three witnesses, except for the final exhortation which is individual to the manuscripts. The variations found can largely be characterised into two groups:

1. the use of alternative words or mistakes in reading, e.g., *συναθροίσετε* (P *καὶ συνανείσεται* Q *καὶ συναναβησεται*) *τὰ ὀστέα μου*; or *καὶ ἐξάρατε* (A *ἐξ..ατε* P *ἐξάξητε* Q *ἄρατε*) *αὐτὰ μεθ' ὑμῶν*;
2. mistakes in transmission, e.g., *εἶδεν Ἰωσήφ τοῦ Ἐφραὶμ παιδιά ἕως τρίτης* (Q *πρωτης*) *γενεᾶς*; or *καὶ πλήρης ἡμερῶν* (A *ἡμῶν*).

122. Batiffol 1889:86 provided the text found in A, although misses a line of text (*προβεβηκυῖα—πλησίον τοῦ Ἰωσήφ*). Burchard 2003a:356-7 prints the text found in APQ. Page 357 line 5, Burchard has (*ἐθάφη* PQ). This is incorrect, all read *ἐτάφη*.

For the text covering Genesis 50.22b-26, the wording is similar to that of Wevers (1974)'s edition of the Septuagint Genesis. Four differences are notable reading the texts in parallel. First, in Genesis 50.24 the text reads *καὶ ἀνάξει ὑμᾶς* ("and he will lead you"). It is likely family *a* originally read *ἡμᾶς*, the reading in the generally better manuscripts AP, and that Q altered the text back towards the biblical text. Secondly, Genesis 50.25 has Joseph make his brothers swear they will take his bones, to which family *a* adds "with their dust" (*μετὰ τοῦ χοῦ ἀντῶν*). This addition is not listed as a variant reading by Wevers. It is possibly a reference to contemporary monastic burial practice. Thirdly, family *a* loses *καὶ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν* ("and they put him") from Genesis 50.26, which Wevers notes is lost in a mixed group of manuscripts. Finally, family *a* adds that Joseph is buried in the tomb "of the kings" in Egypt. This addition to the text is not attested by Wevers and seems meant to reinforce Joseph's status. Perhaps it was also to help explain how Joseph's bones could be taken up by the Israelites so long after he had died (Exodus 13.19; Joshua 24.32; cf. Sirach 49.15).

The ending then goes on to record Aseneth's death. In the description of Aseneth's relationship to Joseph, the narrator concludes: *καὶ ἐτάφη πλῆσίον Ἰωσήφ τοῦ ταύτης μνηστῆρος* (Q *συνευνου*) ("and she was buried beside Joseph her pledged"). *μνηστῆρος* is the genitive singular of the non-biblical noun *μνηστήρ*, which Lampe defines as: 1. *betrothed*; 2. as an adjective, *mindful*.¹²³ Neither of these translations are suitable as Aseneth was married to Joseph. However, Lampe records that the verb *μνηστεύω*, usually used as *to woo* (as in 1.6) can also mean *pledge* or *guarantee*, which is more appropriate. The translation 'pledged' emphasises that Aseneth was chosen by God for Joseph and stands in contrast to the much stronger theme that Aseneth is accepted through repentance. Q takes a different position, describing Aseneth as a *συνεύνεια*, or *sleeping partner*. Perhaps the copyist of Q wanted to strengthen the marital connection, or thought *μνηστῆρος* was inappropriate as Joseph and Aseneth were married.

The purpose of the expanded ending in family *a* is different to that in other families. The exhortation in FW (family *f*) gives a selective overview of the story focusing on the deliverance of Aseneth from both idolatry and those who wish to harm her and moves to point to an ethical lesson for the reader. The focus is to draw out a key lesson. The new ending in HK (family *c*) rewrites from 16.17y to 21.9 in a novel way with an additional scene. It focuses on the importance of Joseph and reassur-

123. Sophocles' *Greek Lexicon* suggests 'a wooer'

ance that Aseneth was a worthy wife for him. Manuscript D adds after 29.9 that God preserved Joseph's youth to old age as a righteous man because he was of the chosen seed and that the sun, stars and king bowed down to him, fulfilling Genesis 37.5-11.¹²⁴ This ending focuses entirely on the person of Joseph, his righteousness and that all that had happened took place to fulfil the biblical prophecy. In contrast, family *a*'s ending ties up the loose ends of the life of Joseph and Aseneth. The explicit quotation of the Genesis narrative points to an effort to set the story firmly within the context of understanding the Genesis narrative. In this way it adds weight to the authority of the story. It achieves a two-fold purpose: to provide an ending more in line with the hagiographic literature it was read in amongst the earliest witnesses; and to enhance the impression of biblical credibility to the reader.

7.3.3 Variants within Family *a*

There is considerable variance within family *a*. This section highlights four interesting variants within the family *a* tradition which reflect on the interest of scholarship in *Jos. Asen.* and the development of the text in the monastic tradition.

Most changes in the manuscript tradition are relatively unobtrusive—often just swapping vocabulary. However in 4.1 PQ record that Aseneth was not adorned as a "bride of God" (ACR), but as a "bride of Christ" (X̄v̄ = Χριστοῦ). Interestingly this is the only obviously Christian addition outside the ending.

The manuscript tradition suggests that marginal notes or sub-titles found their way into the text. The most obvious example is in 21.10 of *KritHer*, where Burchard records the various introductions to what follows.¹²⁵ In AP, Aseneth's prayer is introduced in 12.1 with: προσευχή και ἔξομολόγησις Ἀσενέθ (the prayer and confession of Aseneth). From the microfilm, A appears to have this written by a second hand in a different ink. Also the first word of the prayer is picked out in majuscule letters (KĒ = κύριε) in AP. The preservation of these features probably owes to relatively mechanical copying techniques once it entered the tradition. However it does suggest that Aseneth's prayer here was seen as particularly significant for the reader. The prayer is a good example of invocation

124. See Burchard 2003a:357 for D's ending after 29.9. The ending of B and the Slavonic is an extended trinitarian exhortation.

125. Burchard 2003a:264

of God (vv1-2), confession (vv3-5), expression of trust in God (vv6-15). The title suggests that readers wanted to be able to find this point within the text.

In 12.9 Aseneth introduces her persecutor as ὁ παλαιὸς καὶ ἄγριος καὶ ἀνήμερος λέων ("the ancient and savage and cruel lion"). PQ change this description to ὁ δράκων ("the dragon"). Whilst PQ return to calling this supernatural persecutor "lion" later in the verse, they also provide an alternative reading to A in 12.10 "their father the devil" (ὁ πατήρ αὐτῶν ὁ διάβολος)— P describes it as "their τηρῶν (perhaps 'recruit'¹²⁶ or 'watcher'¹²⁷) the devil" and Q as "their despot (τύρανος) the devil". This identification of the devil here occurs only in families *a* and *d*. Monica White traced the evolution of dragons in hagiographical texts and argues that whilst they are always "ill-disposed towards people", they change from "minor annoyances" to "the most challenging obstacle for each saint."¹²⁸ By the compilation of the *Synaxarion* of Constantinople in the tenth century, which contains saints' lives that are usually condensed to a single paragraph,¹²⁹ encounter with a dragon appears to have become the saint's defining deed.¹³⁰ It appears that the ancestor of PQ sought to strengthen the supernatural battle Aseneth undergoes in conversion by appealing to this popular representation of the devil. As dragons were seen as akin to the snake that tempted Eve (Genesis 3.16), it could be speculated that the editor sought to show how Aseneth overcame the temptation her ancestor failed to become the bride of God's chosen, Joseph. This may be related to Aseneth being described as "the woman" by AP in 16.12 (also HK) and 19.8 (AP only). It is worth noting that *Vita Adae et Evae* is found with *Jos. Asen.* in P and R. It is possible that *Jos. Asen.* and *Vita Adae et Evae* were both in the ancestor to family *a* and the latter work influenced, in a small way, the interpretation of *Jos. Asen.*

Historically, direct access of women to God has been an uncomfortable subject for many Christian writers. One example suggests that the copyist of A may have tried to weaken Aseneth's stated direct contact with God. In 17.9, Aseneth is horrified at what she has said to the angel, now that she has a chance to reflect on the meeting. PQ have Aseneth say: "I did not know that a god came to

126. See Lampe, τήρων (τήρ-, τύρ-)

127. Cp Genesis 3.15 LXX

128. White 2008:150, 153

129. See: '*Synaxarion*' in Kazhdan (1991)

130. White 2008:157

me" (οὐκ ἤδειν ὅτι θεὸς ἦλθεν πρὸς με). A reads "to it" (εἰς αὐτόν) rather than "to me", presumably Aseneth's room.

7.4 The context of family *a*

Burchard (1987a) noted that as the two oldest witnesses of family *a*, O and A, are *menologia*, the ancestor to family *a* may have been a *menologion*. If this was the case, then the ancestor is likely to have come into existence during the so-called Macedonian Revival of c.800-1000CE¹³¹ and soon became part of monastic reading. Burchard's research convinced him that the ancestor was a minuscule manuscript.¹³² These are reasonable conclusions and 3 additional factors can be presented to support them.

First, the manuscript contents of family *a*. Aside from *Jos. Asen.*, 4 saints' lives are found across three manuscripts in the family: Sophronius Hierosolymitanus's *Vita Mariae Aegyptiacae* (OPR); *Vita SS. Cosmas et Damianus mm. Cyrrihi* (OAC); and Timotheus Alexandrinus I's *Miracula S. Menae*, and *Vita Nicolaus ep. Myrensis*, both found in AQR. There are 15 instances where a work other than *Jos. Asen.* is shared by 2 manuscripts: 5 in PR,¹³³ 2 in OA,¹³⁴ 2 in PC,¹³⁵ 2 in QR,¹³⁶ and one each between AC, PQ, QC and CR, several of which are saint's lives.¹³⁷ Whilst many of these works were popular, taking into account the mix of *menologia* and *miscellanies*, the web of cross-overs suggest the ancestors to the sub-families (AO PQ CR) drew from a common source. The preponderance of cross-overs being in hagiographical works suggests that source was more likely a *menologion* than a *miscellany*. Comparison of the texts of these shared works is required to prove or disprove this theory.

131.Burchard 1987a:563 refers to it as the 'Macedonian Renaissance'. Specialist literature prefers the title 'Macedonian Revival' as it was a revival of knowledge, rather than discovery anew, as is a characteristic of the Italian Renaissance. See Treadgold (1984) and Gaul 2011:200.

132.Burchard 1987a:562-3

133.Iohannes Chrysostomus, *De Paenitentia*; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In annuntiationem B. Virginis*; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Petrum et Paulum sermo*; *Vita S. Iohannes Calybita asceta*; *Vita Adae et Euae*

134.SS. *Acindynus*, *Pegasus*, *Aphthonius*, *Elpidophorus et Anempodistus mm. in Perside*; Eutolmius hagiographus, *Passio SS. Galactionis et Epistemes*

135.Eusebius Alexandrinus (pseudo), *(Sermo 17) De Christi passione*; Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In Publicanum Et Pharisaeum*

136.Andreas Cretensis, *In exaltationem S. Crucis I*; *S. Alexius seu Homo Dei*

137.Respectively: Iohannes Chrysostomus, *In natale D. N. I. C.*; Seuarianus Gabalensis, *De Spiritu Sancto*; *S. Demetrius m. Thessalonicae*; *In pulcherrimum Ioseph (LJos)*. On the last, see below.

Secondly, the reconstructed title of family *a* points to the function of *Jos. Asen.* within a collection of *Lives*. The title reads:¹³⁸

Βίος (+ και πολιτεία Q) και ἐξομολόγησις Ἀσενέθ (ἀσινέθ Q, σενέθ CR) θυγατρὸς Πεντεφρῆ ἱερέως και σατράπου (ί.-σ. >CR) Ἡελιουπόλεως και (>CR) διήγησις (>Q) πῶς (τὸ πῶς O, ὅτε CR) ἔλαβεν αὐτὴν (~ AO) ὁ πάγκαλος Ἰωσήφ (ὁ π. Ἰ. after γυναῖκα AO) εἰς (>Q) γυναῖκα.

Life and confession of Aseneth, daughter of Penephres, priest and satrap of Heliopolis and narrative of how the all-beautiful Joseph took her as a wife.

Two competing priorities are visible in the title: to provide a factual account, stressing its authenticity (βίος); and to provide a conventional narrative of the story (διήγησις).¹³⁹ Family *a* is the only Greek family to explicitly tie these two elements together. As Fox notes, a redactor is no "pious fraud".¹⁴⁰ Rather he sought to bring out the elements that suited the work to the purpose for which it was to be used: in the context of *menologia* providing spiritually inspiring accounts to accompany the celebration of the saint's day. This title points towards its function: an edifying and trustworthy account.

Thirdly, the natural context for the production of hagiographic material was the monastery.¹⁴¹ Monks were a significant element in Byzantine society and there was an emphasis on monks being able to read, at least religious works.¹⁴² The monastery provided the need for hagiographical works, to read on saints' days within or in addition to the liturgy, the resources and opportunity to copy works, and the means for literature to travel through the movement of monks. It was the relative security of particular monastic libraries that meant that witnesses of *Jos. Asen.* survived turbulent events of history.

Within this monastic context, an emphasis on Aseneth's confession of sin is understandable. Monks were concerned with the salvation of their soul. It is precisely the confession element that is cited in the title and the only apparent sub-title in the text.

By way of an excursus, it can also be noted that CR are the only members of family *a* to preserve the combination *LJos—Jos. Asen.*. The author has not had the opportunity to compare the *LJos* text

138. Citing Burchard 2003a:340

139. Ivanov 2010:48

140. Fox 1991:151

141. For overviews of the role of the monk and monastery in Byzantine society, see Charanis (1971); Talbot (1987); Rautman (2006)

142. Charanis 1971:80

in C and R, but it is likely it stems from the common ancestor. It remains an open question whether *LJos* was in the ancestor to family *a*, or whether they were paired together in the predecessor to CR. The answer to this question could be investigated through comparison of the text of *LJos* in M (family Mc) and D (family *d*) as these are the closest relatives to family *a* in Fink's reconstruction of the transmission chain.

7.5 Conclusions

This chapter has sought to widen interest in the manuscript context and text of family *a*. From the context, it was argued that family *a* was redacted within the Byzantine movement to gather saints' lives to be placed in a *menologion*. This redaction shared many of the hallmarks of metaphrastic redaction seen in Mc and probably took place around the same time, also within a monastic context. A further step toward refining that context will require investigation of the text of the other works found across the manuscripts of family *a* to see if there is a common form that could be traced to a common ancestor.

Within the monastic context, family *a*'s version of *Jos. Asen.* probably also moved from the *menologion* into 'miscellaneous' collections. Further investigation of the contents of the latter works will probably provide better clues as to how the story was received in that context. The text of family *a* probably only gained a readership away from monasteries with the advent of manuscript collecting and the purchases of significant figures such as Giacomo Barocci. It is interesting that this initial move away from the monastery left no mark before the modern era.

Study of the text of family *a* has revealed that the redactor sought to revitalise the story through changes to the style and theology, as well as providing a more specific biblical framework through the new ending. Family *a* continued to stimulate monastic copyists and readers, as shown by the adaption of the story within the manuscripts. The context of some of these variants have been suggested, but many more await investigation.

Section 3

Four Abridged Versions

8.1 Introduction

Abridged versions of works categorised within the so-called Jewish or Old Testament Pseudepigrapha rarely receive scholarly attention. These secondary developments often stem from a period considerably after the proposed 'original' was written and provide little help in establishing the earliest achievable form of the text. Where abridged versions do receive attention it is often because they affect text-critical assumptions. For example, Stone's discovery of a datable Armenian 'epitome' of *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, whose text reflected internal Armenian development earlier than previously supposed, challenged the wider theory of the work's textual development.¹ But abridged versions are often very interesting in their own right.

When a redactor abridges a story, what is left out or summarised will make a difference to how the story is understood. Whether it is at the level of a scene, a dialogue or individual details, the story will be altered. The impetus for abridgement comes from a variety of reasons, such as: the impatience of the redactor, the wishes of the person commissioning the copy, the limits of manuscript space, or doctrinal and theological qualms about the contents. The results can provide a window into how redactors were prepared to treat the story, and how it was perceived in different contexts.² In the case of *Jos. Asen.*, abridgements can help scholarship understand what later redactors considered the main points of the story. It can also suggest how the story might be read: for 'historical' information, or as a devotional aid.

In this third section of the thesis, four very different versions of the story that show different degrees of abbreviation and redaction are surveyed and compared: family *d*; the first Latin version (L1); Greek manuscript E; and the Turkish period Greek revision, manuscript 661. They present different approaches to the story and encourage scholarship to think about how *Jos. Asen.* has been used over the centuries. Each version is introduced before comments are made on what can be

1. Stone 2012:27-9; de Jonge 1993:9-11; Burchard 1999:83-4

2. Synaxarion entries provide an extreme case as the key details of a saint's life are covered in a few lines. See White 2008:164-6. To the author's knowledge no synaxarion-style summary exists for *Jos. Asen.* outside Ethiopic (see Piovanelli 1993:43).

identified of the redaction technique, and how the story is presented. A comparison of the four versions is presented at the end.

8.2 Family *d*

8.2.1 Introduction

8.2.1.1 Context

The issue that has divided scholars, especially since the mid-1990s, is which edition is closer to the original text of *Jos. Asen.*: the 'longer' version represented by Burchard's work, or the 'shorter' version edited by Philonenko based on family *d*. As set out in the introductory chapter, the author finds the Burchard-Fink theory of textual development more convincing and, consequently, family *d* is regarded as a redaction. A notable feature of family *d* is that it is considerably shorter than other Greek versions.³ This poses the question: how was this abridgement implemented and what impact did it have on the story?

The relatively similar nature of the witnesses of family *d* means that it is possible to reconstruct a text that is probably similar to their common ancestor, *d*. This was first undertaken in Philonenko (1968). The textual relationship of family *d* to family *a* offers the opportunity to investigate the abridgement process. In general terms, the Burchard-Fink textual development hypothesis identifies that the longer, stylistically improved family *a* shared a common ancestor with *d*, termed *ad*.⁴ A comparison of the two versions, taking into account that both are further redactions of their common ancestor, offers the possibility of making observations on the redactional technique used to create *d*. From analysing these observations, suggestions can be made with regard to the redactors interests and intentions.

This chapter sets out to achieve two aims: first to provide a more nuanced understanding of the text that should be considered when referring to *d*; and secondly, to analyse *d* as an abridgement and point to the tendencies and aims of the redactor. A summary of the secondary literature is provided to address the first. The second aim has not previously been attempted at any length.⁵

3. Burchard 1999b:2 gives the approximate lengths of the editions: Philonenko (family *d*) 8,270; Batiffol (family *a*) 11,700; Burchard *VorIT* 13,400.

4. Burchard 2003a:25-6; Fink 2008:45-7

5. Fink 2008:96-8 is an important contribution that considers the 'short' text, though more accurately the ancestor *ad*, as a document of reception history.

In the synoptic edition, Philonenko's verse numbers are shown using *. In this chapter, verses are referred to in a dual format: 1.6/9. The chapter number is followed by the verse number in Burchard's system (=1.6). The number after the forward slant is Philonenko's system (=1.9). Where it is clear that only Philonenko's system is being referred to, Burchard's is omitted.

8.2.1.2 What is family *d*?

For the majority of scholars, the ancestor (*d*) of the extant witnesses of family *d* is represented by the edition of Philonenko (1968). Kraemer's attitude is typical, describing both Burchard's then edition and Philonenko's edition as "reasonable approximations of the texts that ancient readers would have encountered".⁶ Despite the reservations repeatedly raised by Burchard,⁷ the problems and uncertainties with Philonenko's edition are ignored in secondary literature.⁸ This section draws together work on the witnesses and their relationships, as well as outlining the factors that need to be taken into account in editing and using *d*.

Family *d* is made up of four manuscripts. There are two Greek manuscripts. The first is B (Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Palatinus Gr. 17, f.118v-143v), which is dated to the eleventh century.⁹ Nothing is known of its history prior to its removal from the Palatine Library to the Papal library, as with Q.¹⁰ Burchard describes the manuscript as a "non-menological hagiographical collection", apparently produced for private reading.¹¹

The second is D (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barocci Gr. 147, f.138v-152v), which is dated to the fifteenth century.¹² Like C, D came to Oxford as part of the collection of Giacomo Barocci, acquired by the then Chancellor of Oxford University in the early seventeenth century.¹³ Its provenance and previous ownership are unknown. D is a collection of sermons and saints' lives. *Jos. Aсен.* is preceded by *LJos*.¹⁴

6. Kraemer 1998:8

7. e.g., in Burchard 1970:11f; 1974:81-3; 1980:53-8; (1999b)

8. Standhartinger (1995) is an exception.

9. Black and white microfilm images were consulted.

10. Bepler 2001:955-6. See §7.2.2.

11. Burchard 1987a:564. Burchard cites Ehrhard's description of the manuscript as an "unordered year-collection). Stevenson 1885:9 had described it as a "Menologium mensis Novembris et Decembris".

12. The author consulted high quality digital colour images, now available at <http://bav.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/digitized-items-greek-manuscripts> (last accessed 1 January 2017).

13. Mandelbrote 2006:80-1

14. The relationship of *LJos* in D to that in other manuscripts of *Jos. Aсен.* is unknown.

B and D are closely related but independent of each other: mistakes in one can often be corrected from the other. Neither is a careful copy and D preserves changes that reflect the copyist using more contemporary vocabulary.¹⁵ Although B is one of the earliest extant witnesses, along with D it still shows secondary readings in comparison to the rest of the tradition.¹⁶

Two Serbian Slavonic (Slav) manuscripts are known.¹⁷ The first manuscript, 551 (Belgrade, Narodna Biblioteka, Slav. 29), was destroyed in a Nazi bombing raid in 1941. Fortunately, a usable edition of the text was published by Novaković.¹⁸ The manuscript was a poorly copied theological collection from the first-half of the fifteenth century, written on paper. The second Slav manuscript, 552 (Bucharest, Biblioteca Academiei Române, Slav. 306), is a fifteenth-century collection of saints' lives that has suffered water damage. Burchard cites Jacimirskij's opinion that the manuscript may have come from the monastery of Neamț, in north-eastern Romania.¹⁹ It is not known where *Jos. Asen.* stood in Slavonic church literature and no secondary tradition is known from this translation.²⁰

The witness of the Slav manuscripts is largely similar but neither was copied from the other.²¹ Burchard is of the opinion that the common ancestor was not the translation either, in part because of the many mistakes found in both 551 and 552. Slav is considerably shorter than its *d* ancestor.²² Apart from many small details, there are several important passages that are not found.²³ It is not clear where responsibility for this lies, with the Greek *Vorlage*, the translator, or copyists, or a combination of them.

The relationship of Slav to BD is problematic. Aside from some larger passages that were not transmitted, the *Vorlage* for Slav apparently differed considerably from B and D. Slav is frequently longer where it preserves text and the readings that differ from B and D are often supported by oth-

15. Burchard 2003a:24

16. See examples listed in Burchard 1970:18-21; 1999b:7-11

17. Burchard (1980) gives the most detailed treatment of Slav. This should be supplemented with Burchard 2003a:24-5. The extant manuscript was not consulted by the author.

18. Novaković, Stojan. "Srpsko-slovenski zbornik iz vremena despota Stefana Lazarevića." *Starine* 9 (1877): 1-47 (27-42)

19. Burchard 1980:54. Burchard 2008:546 notes the Romanian connection of this Slav manuscript, the Greek manuscript that became the *Vorlage* of the Romanian version, and G, which spent time in Romania.

20. Burchard 1980:54 notes that *Jos. Asen.* is known in Slavonic literature but through translation of Vincent of Beauvais' Latin abridgement.

21. Philonenko 1968:11 claimed that the differences between the two manuscripts are so small they are insignificant is not accurate. Burchard 1980:57 lists nineteen cases where he thought variants should be noted.

22. Burchard 1980:57

23. Burchard 1980:57 lists 10.14a; 13.9b-14.3a; 15.7b-12; 18.6-20.1; 23.2b-3, 5, 9; 28.8-29.6

er witnesses. Thus, Burchard regards Slav preserving an older, better *Vorlage* than BD, although that *Vorlage* was still not that good.²⁴ Fink postulated that an ancestor to G provided a second model for Slav, and cites 63 examples to support her proposal.²⁵

Slav plays an important role in Philonenko's edition, especially through retro-translation for passages not transmitted in BD.²⁶ Burchard made important criticisms of Philonenko's use of Slav: first, Philonenko's edition does not always represent Slav correctly.²⁷ For example, Philonenko's marking of where Slav is in lacuna is sometimes incorrect, and there are incorrect readings in the apparatus; secondly, not all Slav variants are recorded in the apparatus and this includes occasions where Slav provides a better reading than BD; and thirdly, Philonenko's reverse translations are sometimes dubious, introducing variants where none probably existed. From his observations, Burchard concludes that Philonenko should have made more consistent use of Slav, and this would have provided different readings in several places.

Philonenko's edition is also open to other criticisms. First, Philonenko did not investigate sufficiently the nature of B. Several readings in B agree with a manuscript similar to A (family *a*) against D and Slav.²⁸ Standhartinger 1995:39 noted this phenomenon, but Burchard criticises Standhartinger for underestimating its impact.²⁹ The most comprehensive treatment of the relationship is Fink 2008:53-7. Fink suggests that the copyist of B used a model that was influenced by manuscripts from more than one family and gives 61 examples as evidence. The case is certainly more than coincidence and its implications need to be carefully considered. From the author's perspective, the readings cited affect some relatively odd details and work needs to be done to look at the factors that may have shaped the decisions made in B (or its ancestor).³⁰ Secondly, Philonenko's scarce apparatus did not allow his editorial decisions to be scrutinised. Where his decisions are reviewed he uses a secondary reading on some occasions. Thirdly, Philonenko did not appreciate the close relationship between *d* and *a*, separating them by two stages of development.³¹ This

24. Burchard 1980:57

25. Fink 2008:57-63

26. E.g., in 21.2b/3-8a/7a; 27.10/8

27. Burchard 1980:56

28. Apparently first noted in Burchard 1987a:564

29. Burchard 1999b:5

30. E.g., after the clearly corrupt 22.11/7 which B transmits, B then has in 22.12/7 the person on Aseneth's left as Simon (as in *a*) rather than Joseph (D Slav).

31. Philonenko 1968:22-3. *d* is the short version, *a* is the third long recension.

assumption about the tradition also distorted his choice of readings, particularly where he followed D against B and/or Slav, which are supported by other witnesses.

Where and when *d* came into existence is unknown. Burchard finds no reason to suggest it ever existed in majuscule. He sees the redaction being most plausibly placed in period of the Macedonian revival.³² However, it must have been some time prior to B (eleventh century) to allow time for copying. There are no obvious clues to the place of redaction; a Greek-speaking monastery is most likely. If *d* was redacted for a menologion that may give some clues, but there is no evidence to support this.

What can be said of *d* is that it is the shortest of the four major families of *Jos. Asen.*. This difference in length is largely due to *d* not transmitting entire passages found in other versions. The most significant of these are: Aseneth's first and second prayer in chapter 11, her psalm of praise (21.10-21)³³, and the description of Jacob and Aseneth's reaction on meeting him in chapter 22. Additionally, it does not include numerous small sections of text, often a clause or a sentence. Some of these were intentional, whilst others are probably mistakes.³⁴ This led Burchard to speculate as to whether *d* should be regarded as a shortened copy or a reworking³⁵ and, when compared to *a*, whether both were better thought of as sub-families of their common ancestor.³⁶ That D preserves the pairing of *LJos-Jos. Asen.* suggests that *LJos* also entered *d* through *ad*, although this has not been confirmed through analysis of the manuscripts. There is no reason to assume *LJos* was translated into Slav.³⁷

From the survey above, anyone working on the text of family *d* needs to undertake research into the manuscripts of family *d*, the role of contamination on B and Slav, and the relationship of *ad* to *d*. Burchard's conclusion with regard to Philonenko's edition is reasonable: "[It] is not reliable enough for further work."³⁸ As a minimum, an emended edition needs to be used until research can provide a more authoritative version.

32. Burchard 1999b:27; Burchard 1987a:564. See Treadgold (1984).

33. Although this was almost certainly not in *ad*. See below.

34. Fink 2008:97-8 suggests 5.1, 4; 6.5; 10.2, 5, 11f; 14.5, 9; 16.5, 8, 10, 21ff; 18.3-5; 19.9; 24.10; 25.8; 26.3; 28.5

35. Burchard 1987a:564

36. Burchard 2005a:95

37. Burchard 2003a:25 suggests that *Jos. Asen.* was also transmitted with *LJos* in Slav.

38. Burchard 1999b:12 (author's translation), 29. See also Fink 2008:97.

8.2.2 Methodology

Time constraints and lack of Serbian Slavonic required the author to use of an edition of *d*. The only available edition using the Greek and Slav texts of family *d* is Philonenko (1968), which, as noted above, has significant weaknesses. To reduce the effect of these, the author implemented revisions suggested by Burchard³⁹ to the transcription of Philonenko's text by Craig Evans.⁴⁰ Twenty-six amendments were accepted and these are footnoted in the author's edition.⁴¹ Thus, the author's emended text represents a closer approximation of what the common ancestor of *d* looked like than Philonenko's text, and is the best available at present. In this section, this emended text is referred to as *d* from now on.

To inquire into the redaction technique, ideally the text form that *d* was redacted from would be used. The author accepts the Burchard-Fink hypothesis that *d* and *a* share a common ancestor as the most likely explanation of the evidence. This ancestor, *ad*, was probably a little longer than *a*, as *d* preserves passages found in the rest of the tradition that are not extant in *a*, e.g., 16.17. Also, it was probably of a similar style to *d*, as *a* shows evidence of changes to certain features, for example, parataxis. Unfortunately further research is needed before *ad* can be recreated with confidence. However, because both *a* and *d* show conservative tendencies in redaction—scenes are not rearranged and even the word order is very similar over much of the two versions—*a* provides a useful comparison when its tendencies are taken into account. Whilst *a* and *d* individually were influenced by their redactors away from the common ancestor *ad*, these influences can be recognised, if not entirely controlled.

Consequently, the method chosen for analysing the redaction technique in *d* was to read the author's edition of *a* alongside the emended text *d* as the basis for comparison. During the comparison reference was made to the apparatus of Burchard (2003a) to note features shared with other witnesses, and to the textual comments of Fink (2008). In this way the methodological weaknesses of the comparison were reduced as far as possible.

39. Burchard 1970:13-15; 1999b:5-7, 18

40. Published by OakTree Software through Accordance. Philonenko's square brackets were removed. Philonenko 1968:212 line 18 (26.6/7) was apparently omitted in the digitalisation, but is reinserted into the edition without comment.

41. See: 1.4/6, 6/9; 2.1/1, 8/14; 3.1/1 (x2), 2/3; 5.1/1 (x2), 5/7; 8.6/6; 12.11/10; 14.5/5, 6/6, 9/9; 15.1/1, 2/2; 16.18.13; 21.4/3; 22.12/7; 24.2/2, 15/14; 25.6/7; 26.1/1, 5/5, 8/8

8.2.3 Redaction technique

As it stands, *d* provides a coherent story. There are occasional incongruities that show something is missing. For example, in 16.1/1, 5/3 the visitor instructs Aseneth to go and bring a honeycomb from her storeroom. In *d* at 16.10/5 the visitor then asks Aseneth "Why did you say 'there is no honeycomb in my house'?" This is an odd question in *d* because Aseneth never denied that there was honeycomb in her storeroom. The visitor's question only makes sense in the light of the scene that is extant in *a* and other versions. In *a*'s 16.2, Aseneth bemoans the lack of honeycomb in her storeroom, something she states in 16.6.⁴² *d* also suggests a number of mistakes created through transmission. For example, in 17.10/7 haplography on σου can explain the loss of *a*'s καὶ φείσαι τῆς παιδίσκης σου,⁴³ and an aural mistake possibly accounts for the unique change in 23.4/5 of φίλους πιστούς (faithful friends) into *d*'s φίλοι μου εἰς τέλος (my friends forever).

What is most striking about *d* in comparison to *a* is the long passages that not transmitted. Compared to *a*, *d* lacks 11.1x-14; 12.14-15a; 13.10-12a; 15.3; 16.2-3, 6-7, 9, 16; 17.9; 18.3-5 εἰσῆλθεν, 7, 9b-11; 19.3, 5-8, 11-20.1b; 21.2b-3; 22.6b-9a; 23.12b; 24.11b-12, 16-17; 28.16-17.⁴⁴ These represent blocks of text: entire dialogues, stanzas of prayer, descriptions and narration. In contrast, only one scene is found in *d* that is not in *a*: the events of 16.17-17x. Here the narrator describes the 'sign of the cross' miracle, and that Aseneth saw what the visitor did, standing at his left side. There are a limited number of instances where *d* preserves a fuller text than *a*.⁴⁵ Additionally, *d* has relatively few expansions, which are small and of little significance to the story.⁴⁶ *d* also shows a plethora of smaller details being skipped compared to *a*, which increase as the story progresses.

Compared to *a*, *d* shows little evidence of any sustained attempt at changing elements of the style. The parataxis remains largely καὶ; relatively few alternative conjunctions are used. *d* often agrees with other witnesses against *a* with regard to vocabulary. But there is plenty of evidence that *d* felt able to alter individual words. For example, in 5.5/6 the first item in Joseph's hand is ῥάβδος in *a*

42. See also e.g., 7.2/2 where this is no report of Joseph seeing Aseneth, 10.1/1 where there is no report of Joseph ever leaving, 16.1/1 has no report of Aseneth setting up a table which is later taken down, and 22.10-11/7 which makes little sense.

43. See also e.g., 22.2/2 haplography on δεύτερω.

44. Both *a* and *d* have lost verses in the same scenes: 11.15-18; 15.12x; 16.16x; 21.10-21. 28.5-6 appear to be a plus in *a* and so are not included.

45. E.g., 2.1/1; 3.6/10; 5.5/7; 7.2/2; 8.9/11; 10.8/9-10; 14.8/7; 16.18/13; 23.10/10; 26.4/4, 8/8; 28.7/6

46. See 4.1/2 (BD only); 9.1/1 (but D only); 12.8/7; 13.13/10 (BD only), 15/12; 15.1/1 (BD only), 23.3/4 (but B and D vary and Slav is not extant); 23.8/8, 10/10 (B only); 24.7/6; 27.4/4; 29.5/5

and rest of the tradition, but *σκήπτρον* in *d* perhaps to emphasise his royal power.⁴⁷ In 7.8/11 Joseph accedes to Pentephres suggestion that Aseneth joins them. *a* and the rest of the Greek tradition use the verb *ἡκέτω*, whereas *d* reads *ἐλθάτω*.⁴⁸ Further, individual witnesses also show a propensity to make changes. From a plethora of potential examples, see 12.15/12 where Aseneth recognises that her father's wealth is ephemeral compared to the inheritance of the Lord. All extant witnesses of family *a*, as well as D, use the word *δώματα* with regard to Pentephres. Slav has a reading that is a corruption from *δόματα*. B uses *χρήματα*, which Philonenko accepted in his edition.

In summary, the comparison suggests that the most important element shaping the redaction of *d* was abridgement by simply leaving out material. This is often through entire passages not being transmitted, but is seen in many smaller details being left out as well. Intervention at the level of vocabulary did take place but, compared to *a*, it was less significant. There is little evidence of a desire to change elements of literary style.

8.2.4 A reshaped story

The comments on the redaction technique observed in *d* can hide tendencies that can be observed across the version. Fink (2008) gave a brief summary of the 'short' text as a document of reception history.⁴⁹ The key points were: first, the copyist of the ancestor of *ad* and *d* were "not shy about intervening in the wording of the text". This is reflected in the numerous secondary elements introduced; secondly, the redactor(s) introduced elements that appear to Christianise the text and to correspond to monastic practice. Fink highlights 10.10 with its addition of Aseneth tying a cord around her sackcloth clothing, and 15.12x with its loss of interest in the angel's name; thirdly, that the redactor(s) did not treat the text with caution and diligence, which probably accounts for text not being transmitted in several places.

These points are interesting but can be taken further with specific reference to *d*. Looking at *d* as an abridgement, four observations are noticeable— that the redactor: tightened up the narrative of the story to reflect his concerns; removed or flattened mysterious elements of the narrative; re-

47. See also e.g., 7.2/2 *ὑπερώφω* compared to *d* *σωλαρίω*; 20.6/5 *ὁ πατήρ αὐτῆς καὶ ἡ μητὴρ* compared to *d* *οἱ γονεῖς Ἀσενέθ*; 26.5/5 *ἄνδρων* compared to *d* *δυνατῶν*.

48. See also e.g., 10.2/2 where *KritHer* G *ἔλυσε*, *a* *ἐξέλυσε*, *d* *ἀπεβάλετο*; 17.8/6 *πορευομένων* compared to *d* *ἀναλαμβάνόμενον*. The latter case is perhaps influenced by the vocabulary of 2 Kings 2.11 (cf. Ecclesiasticus 48.9).

49. Fink 2008:96-8

moved or summarised potentially erotic descriptions; and tended to lose specific details of movement within the narrative.

The redactor of *d* was concerned to provide a structured, logical narrative that ensured his interpretation of events could not be mistaken by the reader. Four scenes exemplify this process. The first scene is Aseneth's confession and her appeals to God (chapters 11-13). This is a pivotal point in the story because it moves Aseneth from her idolatrous state to being ready to receive the message brought by the heavenly visitor. Family *a* preserves an initial prayer (11.3-14) and, as this is well attested in the tradition, it is plausible that something similar was in *ad*. This was then followed by the prayer of 12.1-13.15, with its own title in *a*, and probably *ad*. In *d*, the narrator gives a brief note on the day and Aseneth's condition (11.1/1), before using 11.19/12.1 as a bridge into a single prayer. Aseneth's prayer is then largely identical to that found in *a*, although *d* does preserve a more developed invocation of "I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned" in 12.4/5 and apparently introduces it in 12.5/7. *d* also has less of an emphasis on Aseneth's abandonment and desolation.

The overall effect is that *d* reduces Aseneth's confession scene to a single prayer and a less repetitive, more transformation-focused appeal to God. The end product of *d* is that Aseneth's uninterrupted prayer carries her in one movement from her previous state to being prepared for the revelation that is to come. The reasons for these changes can only be suggested. It could be simply to remove the potentially baffling transition between prayers in *ad*. Alternatively it could have been to provide a single focus for devotion on the abandonment of sin and turning to God.

In the second scene, 17.9-10/7, *d* leaves no room for misunderstanding the identity of Aseneth's heavenly visitor. This requires some explanation. Ancestor *ad* must have had the visitor state that God, rather than the visitor himself, heard (and thus responded) to Aseneth's prayer (15.2/2), in contrast to other parts of the tradition. Prior to chapter 17 there is no reason to think Aseneth had not already grasped the visitor's identity. However, *a* and much of the tradition then has Aseneth's private prayer (17.9) where she bewails her inability to recognise who the heavenly visitor had been. This ignorance forms the context of Aseneth's appeal for mercy in 17.10. In *d* any uncertainty over what happened in the angelophany is removed through the absence of 17.9. Aseneth's appeal in 17.10/7 becomes a final appeal to God with regard to her previous ignorance about Joseph. *d* has one clear revelation, the significance of which Aseneth immediately grasped.

Connected to this alteration are the changes in the third scene, chapter 19. Here Joseph returns to Aseneth's residence and meets the transformed Aseneth. In family *a* and the tradition, this is a scene marked by Joseph not recognising who Aseneth is, Aseneth appealing to the revelation of the visitor, and the confirmation of this by Joseph. It ends with Aseneth's transformation being completed through Joseph's kisses delivering the spirit of life, wisdom and truth. *d* differs significantly in the content of this meeting. In *d*, Joseph arrives and Aseneth goes out to meet him, narrated in the sparsest detail. Joseph sees Aseneth and immediately recognises her, calling her to him. Joseph explains that he received good news from heaven about her (ἐγὼ εὐηγγελίσθην περὶ σοῦ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ). They embrace each other (ἤσπασαντο ἀλλήλους) and they are rekindled in their spirit (ἀνεζωοπύρησαν τῷ πνεύματι αὐτῶν)⁵⁰. There is no explicit kissing and no transfer of spiritual gifts through it.

The revision of the scene by *d* focuses attention on the agency of God and the completeness of God's action. The Lord God heard Aseneth's prayer, saw her repentance, accepted her and transformed her. This action is by God alone. Joseph is just another of God's servants, not a semi-divine figure, except perhaps in Aseneth's sight (chapter 6). This tendency is also perhaps seen in 23.11/11 where Simeon and Levi ask Pharaoh's son how they could do such a thing only in relation to God, not to Israel and Joseph as well, as in other versions.

The fourth scene, chapters 24-5, are given a faster paced narrative with less repetition and extraneous detail. The changes made do not affect the overall content of the story, but are characteristic of the redactor's style. 24.16-17 are found in family *a* and the tradition, but not preserved in *d*. Their loss means that the narrative passes straight from the introduction to the ambush plan by the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah to the reaction of Pharaoh's son. It removes the awkward request for Pharaoh's son to listen and that the brothers then spoke in secret. The narrative is smoothed in the same way in 25.1/1 where the initial question by Pharaoh's guards is lost. The narrative passes immediately from Pharaoh's son's arrival to his request to enter. The repetitive refrain that Pharaoh's son will be the brothers' helper is not present in 24.12 (unattested in *d*) and 24.14/13, as is the brothers' refrain that they are Pharaoh's son's servants from 24.4/4, 15/14, 19/16. The description of the ambush layout is minimised in 24.20/21. It can be also noted here that *d* chooses to make fear the

50. This is the same verb used of Jacob in Genesis 45.27 when he sees the provision Joseph has made to bring him to Egypt. The only other occurrence of this verb in LXX is 1 Macc. 13.7.

sole motivation for the brothers through the loss of Pharaoh's son's promise of reward for their actions (24.14/13).

Taken together, these four scenes witness to the redactor's specific narrative interests. Within the narrative, a desire to flatten mysterious elements can also be detected. Character description often sees some alteration. In 14.9/8 Aseneth raises her eyes and looks at the heavenly visitor. The description in *a* and *d* is similar, except *d* does not report that sparks fell from his hands and feet. In chapter 22, where Aseneth meets Jacob, the meeting is rewritten. There is no account of how Jacob is sitting (22.6/5) and the angelic description of Jacob and Aseneth's response (22.7-8) is not included. The description of Levi and Simeon's sword (23.15/14) has no magical element to it and there is no report that Pharaoh's son's eyes are blinded by the sight. In 18.9/7 the description of Aseneth is reduced to a statements about her face and eyes, rather than a whole body transformation. Different factors motivate each change, but it is the overall direction that is important.

The scene with the bees, a favourite for interpreters, also experiences some flattening. When the accounts of *a* and *d* are read together it is apparent that the workings of the mystery is downplayed in *d*. The bees appear without invocation in 16.17y/13 and there is no enumeration of them. The bees retain a strange appearance but do not make honeycomb on Aseneth or feed from it (16.19-20/14-15). When the bees are instructed to depart they do so, but immediately all fall down dead (16.21-2/16). And after their revivification they all depart to the garden (16.23/17). Whilst the scene is still mysterious, the arguably symbolic elements— the number of bees, the distinctions between the bees, the making honeycomb on Aseneth, and only the bees wanting to harm Aseneth dying whilst the rest go to heaven— are absent.

Finally, the blessing of Aseneth's maidens also illustrates this tendency. In 17.4/4, Aseneth requests that the visitor bless the seven maidens who serve her. The blessing they receive in *a* and much of the tradition indicates that they too will have an eschatological position, pillars in the city (*a* reads 'cities') of refuge (17.6). This is despite no conversion being reported for them. In *d* (17.5), the maidens receive nothing more than: "God Most High will bless you forever."

The third observation from the comparison of *a* and *d* is that potentially erotic descriptions are left out or abbreviated in *d*. In 8.5/4, *a* and other parts of the tradition describe what Joseph observes when he places his hand on Aseneth's chest to stop her kissing him. *d* only reports Joseph's action. In 8.8/8 the description of Aseneth opening wide her eyes at Joseph is not present. Then in 18.9/7,

as mentioned above, the description of Aseneth's transformed body does not include the potentially erotic elements (cheeks, lips, hair, neck; and if they were in *ad*, teeth and breasts).⁵¹ The intent in *d* appears to be to simply note the transformation. In 28.14/14 the report of Aseneth taking hold of Simeon's beard and kissing him is absent. These examples suggests a deliberate attempt to focus the reader's attention on the narrative and avoid distraction by lurid thoughts.

The final observation is that the specifics of movement are often absent in *d*. The place that Aseneth goes to is unspecified in 3.6/9; 18.5/3 and 19.2/1. Also, the location of an individual is unspecified in 6.1/1; 17.6/5; 20.5/4 and 22.6/5. Description of spatial movement is not included in 10.1/1, 2/3, 8/9; 18.9/7. The layout of the ambush is condensed in 24.20/21. The purity of Aseneth's bed, particularly in relation to who sits on it, does not receive comment in 15.14/14. And the direction that the window faces is unspecified in 10.11/12. The only spatial comment that *d* preserves that is not found in *a* comes in 16.17x/12 where *d* records that Aseneth stood on the visitor's lefthand side, a passage that is absent from *a*.

8.2.5 Conclusions

In conclusion, the most notable feature of the redaction from *ad* to *d* is the abridging of large blocks of text. But of greater interest is the way that particular aspects are handled: the flow of the narrative, the treatment of the mysterious, the rejection of potentially erotic elements, and the absence of many specific details relating to movement or spatial location. These tendencies show the reshaping of the story in a very different way to *a*. The concentration on the agency of God alone shows that there was theological motivation in the reworking. Beyond that, the lack of original context makes it difficult to judge the importance of features such as the rewriting of chapters 11-13 into a single prayer. Did the redactor expect this new single prayer to have a devotional role outside the story, as is suggested by the title found in the manuscripts, and other means of marking found in *a* and other versions? The author's suspicion is that *d* was edited to be used in a liturgical context as a shorter menological text.

Fink's comment, that *d* shows that the text was no longer treated with caution and diligence,⁵² can easily focus the reader on the carelessness and inattentiveness in transmission. Further, her asser-

51. Although as Burchard 2005a:91 noted, lengthy descriptions or points where the narrative is slow have a tendency to be condensed in *d*.

52. Fink 2008:97

tion that *d* represents a text that is no longer a supplement to the Bible could suggest a seismic change in its Christian usage. It is important to remember what *d* is. It shows the redactor's positive reshaping to forge a shorter version of *Jos. Asen.* with its own distinct messages. Also, *d* almost certainly emerged and was transmitted within monasteries. There is no evidence for its secular circulation. In this respect, it would still have been read within a life of regular Bible reading. Readers or hearers would have been familiar with the Bible and felt the resonances that the text contains, and even adds. For example, 17.8/6 and the description of the visitor's disappearance is lexicographically closer in *d* to the assumption of Elijah. Perhaps it is more useful to say that *d* was redacted to be a more appropriate work for the devotion for its consumers. Just because a work was read beside the Bible rather than in some way as part of it, or in the context of it (for which the only examples are E and within the Armenian tradition), does not mean it could not have influenced the interpretation of the Bible, although firm evidence of this is lacking.

A great deal of work remains to be done on *d*, both in relation to the text, but also the context of its transmission. This survey should serve as a stimulus for future investigation.

8.3 Greek manuscript E

8.3.1 Introduction

In dealing with *d*, the archetype of the extant witnesses was considered. In contrast, E is extant in a single manuscript witness, and there is no evidence of further copying. It is an oddity both in terms of the text it preserves and the manuscript context. The abridged text gives indications that its *Vorlage* was good and early, yet it has been condensed by its redactor. It is approximately 5,300 words, roughly two-thirds the length of *d* or two-fifths the length of *KritHer*. E is the only Greek manuscript that cataloguers describe as an Old Testament.⁵³ However, it is better described as an Octateuch⁵⁴ plus Esther, Tobit and Judith, with the last sixth of its contents being related to the Old Testament. E provides an interesting case study of how abridgement and manuscript context can challenge thinking about how the story was read.

The previously unpublished text of E and the author's translation are included as an appendix.

8.3.1.1 The manuscript

E (MS Mount Athos, Vatopedi 600, paginated f.356r-360r) is a vellum manuscript, 31.4 x 23.4cm, to which paper folios were added.⁵⁵ A colophon on f.236v dates the vellum manuscript to 1021CE, and identifies the copyist as Basil the Reader. The paper folios are assigned to the fifteenth century.⁵⁶ The manuscript today contains 256 folios.⁵⁷

The difference between the vellum and paper folios is clear: the vellum folios are written in two columns in a larger hand; the paper folios contain a single column in a smaller hand. The present pagination is careless. Several numbers are omitted (75, 76, 185, 186, 187, 188), and it skips from 238 to 339, then 360 to 261. The last paginated folio is 262, which contains a Vatopedi monastery own-

53. Eustratiades (1924); Lake and Lake (1935); Saunders (1957)

54. The Pentateuch plus Joshua, Judges and Ruth. See Lowden (1991).

55. Saunders (1957) lists ff. 110, 111, 139-46, 207-8, 237-62.

56. Burchard 2003a:2; Fink 2008:14

57. The present writer viewed black and white microfilm images of the manuscript to carry out his research.

ership inscription. The microfilm shows some staining, and several intrusions by insects in the paper folios, but only occasional sections of text in lacuna or illegible.⁵⁸

E is inadequately catalogued: neither Eustratiades 1924:118 or Saunders 1957:14 identify most of the works in the paper folios, including *Jos. Asen.*⁵⁹ The following description comes from the available catalogues and the author's own investigation.⁶⁰ * indicates items not catalogued by either Eustratiades or Saunders. *Italics* indicate works entirely on paper. Underlining indicates that work is a mix of vellum and paper folios.

Genesis (1r), Exodus (45v), Leviticus (82v), Numbers (108r), Deuteronomy (139r), Joshua (163r), Judges (182v), Ruth (207r), Esther (209r b), Tobit (216v), Judith (224v b), *Commentary of Theodoret on Daniel* (237r), *Susanna*^{*61} (355r), *Concerning Samuel, Eli the priest and his children*^{*62} (255v), *Story of Aseneth*^{*63} (356r), *Bel and the dragon*^{*64} (360r), *Concerning Nebuchadnazar and Arphaxad the kings, and concerning Judith and Holopherns*^{*65} (261r), *Concerning Mordecai and Esther and Hamman*^{*66} (261v).

The eleventh century component contains the Pentateuch and selected works of the Greek Bible (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Esther, Tobit and Judith). The three works found in addition to what is expected in an Octateuch deal with significant individuals of Israel's past. After these are several works on paper, including two Greek 'additions' to Daniel and *Jos. Asen.*, which also revolve around important figures. Finally there are a selection of treatises which do not all relate to other works found in the manuscript. In the eleventh-century works that include paper folios, the text of the missing vellum leaves is found on the paper.⁶⁷ There is no record of why the paper replacements were made. It is likely that the vellum leaves were damaged and a decision was taken to preserve the text by copying it and replacing the affected leaves.⁶⁸ It is likely that the paper leaves contain-

58. Within *Jos. Asen.*, ff. 357v (part of first line); 358v (part of top line, apparently through preservation); 359v (entire first line).

59. A short description is given in Lake and Lake 1935:11, which includes plates of the recto and verso of f.209.

60. Eustratiades's folio references occasionally differ from the author's.

61. ὄρασις πρωτ<ος> τᾶδ̄ προφητ<ος> δανιήλ· περι σουσάννης

62. περὶ σάμουηλ ἡλει τ<ου> ἱερε<ως> <καὶ> τῶν τέκνων:

63. ἱστορία ἀσενέθ

64. ὄρασι τοῦ δανιήλ ἰβ̄· περι τοῦ βήλ.

65. περὶ ναβουχοδονόσορ· <καὶ> ἀρφαξάδ τῶν βασιλέ<ων>· <καὶ> περι ἰουδῆθ· <καὶ> ὀλοφέρνου. Text commences with Judith 1.1. It finishes at an unidentified part τότε προσκαλεσάμ<ενος> τὸν δεῦτερον τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ ὀλοφέρνην· εἶπε

66. περὶ μαρδοχαιου <καὶ> ἔστερ <καὶ> ἐμμάν

67. Numbers 2.31-4.17 is on paper with a small overlap of text; Deuteronomy 1.1-16.16 is on paper, with a small overlap of text in 16.16; Ruth 1.1-4.11 is on paper and the story continues without any overlap on the vellum.

68. This is relatively common for vellum biblical manuscripts as consultation of Saunders (1957) shows.

ing the works following Judith were added at the same time, but this cannot be confirmed without consultation of the manuscript. The works are written in similar, but different hands.

The manuscript is unique both in terms of the works contained and the text-types of those works. Across the Pentateuch (eleventh-century), the manuscript is classified by text critics as a *codex mixtus*. Wevers notes that "its text does not clearly fit into any of the known text families or recensions", and it contains many unique or nearly unique readings.⁶⁹ Commenting on Numbers, Wevers concludes that the copyist displayed a trend towards shortening in very repetitive texts.⁷⁰ The nature of the text indicates that the redactor(s) had considerable impact.

As will be argued below, *Jos. Asen.* shares these traits, but they are more pronounced. One hypothesis is that the works now on paper were originally written on vellum and were copied at the same time as the replacement leaves of Numbers, Deuteronomy and Ruth. A strength of this hypothesis is that a redactor who is inclined to abbreviate the book of Numbers would not have had qualms about a more thorough revision of a work like *Jos. Asen.*. An alternative hypothesis is that a later redactor appreciated the abbreviated style of the vellum manuscript. He decided to add works that he thought would complement the extant works, and undertook a more thorough-going redaction of *Jos. Asen.*.

8.3.1.2 The text

In general, E preserves most of the narrative events of the story. However, there are a considerable number of passages that were not included.⁷¹ In the earlier chapters, the redactor rewrites some elements in his own words. As the story progresses, apparently the redactor's method was simply to leave out material to abridge the narrative.

In the manuscript, the text is continuous through the story. The only orthographical divisions are the initial letter, which is decorated in the left hand margin, and on f.357r, fifth line from the bottom, the abbreviation for κύριε is written in larger letters. This is the opening word of 12.1 and the

69. Wever 1981:706

70. Wever 1981:707

71. Entire verses: 2.1 και ἐπάνω - 2.5, 7-9; 4.3-6; 6.4-7; 10.9, 11; 11.1x-2, 6-9, 12-18; 12.5 ἥμαρτον κύριε - 13.13 εἰς τὸν κύριόν μου Ἰωσήφ; 14.13-15; 16.6-7, (9), 10 τί ὅτι εἶπας - 14 και εἶπεν, 16 και κέχρισαι - 17.4 τὸν θάλαμον, 8 και εἶδεν - 10; 18.3-4, 5-10; 19.8 διότι κύριος - 9, 11; 20.3-4; 21.1, 5 και ἔστησε - 7, 11-21; 22.3 διότι - 4, 6, 12; 23.12; 24.4 λαλησάτω - 7, 12- 13 ἰδοὺ, 16 και λαλήσομεν - 19 προστέταχας ἡμῖν, 20; 25.8; 28.5-6, 28.8-29.6.

start of Aseneth's 'conversion prayer'. There are no obvious marks by a second hand. The title given on f.356r, written in a different hand than is used for marginal titles throughout the manuscript, is unique in the manuscript tradition of *Jos. Asen.*: ἱστορία ἀσενέθ ('History of Aseneth'). This is similar to the title of Judith (f.224vb) βιβλίον ἱστορίας ἰουδαίθ ('Book of the history of Judith'), in contrast to the simpler title used elsewhere of βιβλίον + name (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Esther and Tobit). It suggests a (later?) reader wanted to highlight that *Jos. Asen.* also related to a significant individual figure.

E is unpublished and has received little attention outside the text-critical work of Burchard and Fink. Its 'developed' version of the story is not of obvious direct assistance in determining the dating and provenance of the earliest form of the text. Burchard initially placed E within his eclectic family *b*.⁷² However, he always acknowledged that the manuscripts and versions this family contained "may have been precipitated by the discovery that they do not belong to either *a*, *c*, or *d*, but that is not enough."⁷³ Burchard gave only the briefest summary of E when he traced the afterlife of *Jos. Asen.*⁷⁴ Philonenko (1968) saw microfilm of E and agreed with Burchard on its inclusion in a family with FWG: he placed it in his 'first long recension'. He adds no further information on it, though occasionally makes reference to it in his apparatus.

In his revised theory of the work's development, Burchard excluded E from his new family *f* (FWRum GNgr L1). He noted a number of readings that joined the versions in family *f* against E Syr Arm L2, the other components of the original family *b*.⁷⁵ Burchard noted that E remained difficult to classify because it is paraphrased from time to time, and abridged. He considered there was a relationship with Syr Arm L2, but perhaps also with Mc.⁷⁶ However, as Burchard was unsure about how many uncial versions of *Jos. Asen.* were transliterated, he was unsure whether E should be placed with *ad*, Mc, or *f*.⁷⁷

Fink (2008) identified two transliterations of the story on internal textual evidence, and that one ancestor lies behind all the extant Greek manuscripts. Thus E shares a common ancestor (*M*₂)

72. Burchard 1965:18

73. Burchard 1987b:34

74. Burchard 1987a:576

75. Burchard 2003b:240-242

76. Burchard 2003b:244. Burchard points to the apparatus in *KritHer* for 5.2f; 9.1, 5; 10.1f; 13.15; 15.1, 8 on the relationship between E and Mc.

77. Burchard 2003b:244

with *fMc ad*. The evidence that Fink brings is: a) the title indicates that E's ancestor was independent from the rest of *M2*'s descendants, which show a broadening into a hagiographical title; b) the ancestor of E transmitted Aseneth's Psalm (21.11-21). This indicates the ancestor to E must have been closer to the ancestor of *f* and *Mc*, which also transmit the psalm, rather than *a* and *d* which do not; c) E preserves readings which indicate an earlier stage in the textual tradition than *f ad*;⁷⁸ d) 9 additional readings that differentiate E from the rest of the tradition.⁷⁹ Fink places E as the witness closest to *M2*.

Burchard and Fink have made important contributions in trying to understand the place of E within the development of the text. But E is a good example of where text critical analysis needs to be balanced with consideration of the whole text, rather than individual readings, as well as the manuscript context. It is unsurprising that E has unique readings compared to the rest of the tradition because of the way it was redacted. What is surprising is that Fink only amassed 9 such readings. Also, Fink's argument from the title of E is weak because it was almost certainly added at a later stage than the text was copied and thus is unrelated to previous transmission.

The abridgement of *Jos. Asen.* that E preserves is fascinating both for understanding what the redactor perceived as the most important elements of the story, and for observing how he likely edited the text. Further, E's version of *Jos. Asen.* is an interesting piece of literature in its own right, and deserves to be discussed more widely.

8.3.2 Methodology

In the edition, punctuation and orthography are retained. Chapter and verse divisions are inserted.⁸⁰ Abbreviations are expanded in angle brackets, except for *καὶ* which the copyist almost always abbreviated. To consider the method of redaction, ideally E would be compared with its *Vorlage*, but this is unknown. Burchard and Fink both situate E as being redacted from an earlier and better form of the text. As this is postulated to be relatively close to the earliest achievable form of the text, the author chose to use Burchard's *KritHer* for comparison. The two texts were read alongside each other whilst also consulting Burchard's apparatus.

78. Fink 2008:27-28

79. Fink 2008:26-27

80. The author transcribed E from black and white microfilm.

The weakness of this method is that it is unknown what effect E's *Vorlage* had on shaping E. The author is forced to assume that the redactor of E is entirely responsible for the text in its current form, which is not necessarily the case. Further, *KritHer* contains a number of uncertainties over its wording as well as readings reliant on E. However, it is reasonable to assume that the patterns described in the analysis of redaction technique are indicative of the redactor's general approach, even if specific conclusions should be treated with caution.

8.3.3 Redaction technique

The redactor edited, and to some extent recast the narrative without compromising the story. The reduction in repetition means that the story reads more in the style of Tobit and Judith. This may be influenced by the redacted Old Testament context the copyist wished to add the text to. The redactor emerges as someone who felt confident to adapt the text within the confines of the narrative he found in his *Vorlage*.

The most important tendency of the redactor was to shorten the text. This is seen in two ways. First, by removing passages that the redactor did not think important to the story. For example, the importance and description of Aseneth's tower (number of chambers, decoration and description of the windows) is absent from chapter 2; it is now only described as "large and entirely delightful". The redactor shows minimal interest in spatial movement;⁸¹ the only movements that are described are those essential to the narrative, e.g., sending her companions away (10.7) and fetching the honeycomb (16.2ff). The reader is not led to associate Aseneth's tower with a temple, or to include the courtyard within this imagery. The tower, which is the setting for much of the narrative, becomes the centre of description in 2.10, rather than Pentephres' house. Also, the courtyard becomes less significant through the lack of reference to it.

In addition to descriptions and narration, verbal manifestations of Aseneth's religiosity were removed through not transmitting or abbreviating her prayers. Aseneth's first prayer in chapter 11 is reduced to its key elements:

(3) And she said to herself: "What will I do? Or to whom will I flee? (4) Because I threw down the idols of Egypt whilst hating them. (5) And my father and my mother hate me because of these things. (10) But I have heard that the God of the Hebrews is truly God, and patient and merciful, not considering the sin of miserable people. For (he) does

81. See the losses in e.g., 10.8-9; 14.12, 14; 15.1

not examine the sins of sinful people who are turning back to Him. (11) Thus I will take courage and turn back to Him, and I will confess to him all my sins."

The second prayer is entirely absent (11.15-18), and the third prayer (12.1-13.15) becomes a short description of God's characteristics and a petition. The redactor then provides an expansion after 12.5 that frames elements from the end of the prayer after 13.13. Aseneth's short prayer in 17.9-10, as well as her psalm in 21.11-21 are not present. As a result, a significant part of Aseneth's characterisation is no longer through her prayers of confession to God.

Secondly, the redactor condensed the detail of the narrative. Earlier in the story, the redactor sometimes rewrites short sections in his own words. For example, the description of Aseneth in 1.5:

<i>KritHer</i>	E
καὶ αὕτη οὐδὲν εἶχεν ὅμοιον τῶν παρθένων τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἀλλὰ ἦν κατὰ πάντα ὅμοία ταῖς θυγατάσι τῶν Ἑβραίων καὶ ἦν μεγάλη ὡς Σάρρα καὶ ὠραία ὡς Ῥεβέκκα καὶ καλὴ ὡς Ραχήλ...	μὴ διαφέρουσα ταῖς αἰγυπτίαις· ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ταῖς θυγατρᾶσι τῶν ἑβραίων·
And she was nothing like the maidens of the Egyptians but she was in every way like the daughters of the Hebrews. And she was tall like Sarah and fair like Rebecca and attractive like Rachel...	not belonging to the Egyptian women, but rather to the daughters of the Hebrews.

This happens less frequently after the opening few chapters and is almost non-existent from chapter 19 onwards. More frequently, the redactor gives a summary of an action. For example in 15.2, the description of Aseneth removing her veil is reduced to: "And she did so".⁸²

Sometimes the redactor's enthusiasm in cutting down the story leads to the meaning being compromised. For example, at 4.9, E reads: <καὶ> τῷ πρὶ μετ ὀργῆς πλαγίως τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς εἶπε, which makes better sense with the verb found in *KritHer*, ἐνέβλεψε. At 27.2, E does not say that Benjamin takes a 'stone', leaving the reader confused about what was flung.

The redactor adapted the narrative through changing individual words. There is a tendency to avoid consecutive indicative verbs linked by καὶ, and instead use, for example, an aorist participle followed by an indicative verb. Sometimes the tense is changed as well, often substituting aorist

82. E.g., 14.9; 20.7; 21.5; 23.4.

indicatives for present participles, giving a sense of contemporaneity to events. The redactor occasionally changes just the tense, or introduces a construction using the infinitive. A range of other changes of mood are also found that do not significantly change the story. Broadly, these changes can be seen as making the tense more logical to the situation described, rather than any attempt at Atticising the text. On three occasions the redactor changes the voice of verbs, for example, 4.11 where E has Aseneth say: "I will marry the firstborn son of the king", rather than the passive construction in *KritHer* which starts "I will be married...". This gives the impression of Aseneth taking greater initiative in events.⁸³ Of interest, there is occasional use of alternative aorist ending for verbs.⁸⁴

A more common strategy of the redactor was to substitute a different verb. The redactor often changes the prefix of the verb, for example in 16.15 *KritHer* reads ἐνέβαλε, whilst E reads παρέβαλε. If a different verb is substituted, then it generally a synonym, or at least has a close semantic range. For example, in 14.5, εἶπεν in *KritHer* is replaced with ἀπεκρίθη in E. But sometimes an action is presented from the opposite perspective. For example, in 7.8 *KritHer* reads: "And Joseph rejoiced greatly because Pentephres said..." E reads: "And Joseph rejoiced when he heard..."⁸⁵ Actions are also intensified. For example, in 4.10 in *KritHer* Aseneth accuses Joseph of being caught sleeping with (κοιμώμενος μετὰ) his Master's wife, whereas in E Joseph forces himself upon her (βιάζων).⁸⁶ One explanation could be that rape was seen as worse than adultery, so Joseph's crime was magnified. Alternatively, the change may be to provide a link to what Haman did to Esther. Esther 7.8 is the only time the Septuagint uses βιάζομαι in a sexual context without additional clarification.⁸⁷

But in relation to some aspects of the story, the redactor probably stuck to what was found in his *Vorlage*, rather than adapting it, even to the context of the manuscript that *Jos. Asen.* became part of. The spelling of the name Πεντεφρῆ in E is πετεφρη throughout the story, with the exception of 18.1 (πετεφη), and Aseneth is ἀσενέθ. This is in contrast to Genesis, in the eleventh-century portion of the manuscript, which has πεντεφρῆ and ἀσηνέθ respectively. However, in the marginal note to Genesis 41.45 (f.36r b l.7-10), a different hand adds: περι τ<ῆς> ἀσενεθ γυναικὸς ἰωσήφ, perhaps

83. See also 7.1 and 10.10.

84. E.g., 5.7; 22.1. Wever 1981:707 notes that the pentateuchal books of E have a characteristic preference for Hellenistic verbal forms in the third plural inflection.

85. This is not noted in Burchard's apparatus. See also: 4.1; 8.3; 18.11; 19.3; 21.2; 23.7; 24.3.

86. Cp also: 5.5; 10.15; 11.4; 14.11; 22.10, 13; 25.6; 27.7, 11.

87. E.g., Deuteronomy 22.25, 28: βιασάμενος κοιμηθῆ μετ' αὐτῆς

reflecting the influence of *Jos. Asen.*⁸⁸ It is difficult to see why a reader would want to be able to find this point in the text without an interest in *Jos. Asen.*

The redactor showed little appetite for expanding the text and no biblical quotations appear to have been added. Occasions where the redactor adds a comment are of interest. Some are comments that highlight a theme of the narrative. For example: in 6.3, the redactor has Aseneth say concerning her previous despising of Joseph: "And perhaps someone among those present will tell him."⁸⁹ Aseneth has to confess this herself before she is transformed.⁹⁰

The redactor was content to introduce summaries of the material he otherwise skipped. These can radically change the events they describe. Following 16.16, the narrator does not give the potentially erotic description of Aseneth's transformed body and the mysterious events with the honeycomb. Instead, E reads: "And Aseneth's mouth was sweetened and all of her body. And she was filled with divine grace"⁹¹ (for discussion of this, see §8.3.4). The redactor leaves out all of 12.6-13.12, but gives a summary at the end of 12.5:

While diligently confessing these things and the like to God over many hours, beseeching God about those things which she committed from ignorance, having despised Joseph, to receive pardon. And she said, praying:..⁹²

In 14.11, the redactor introduces a summary of why the angel has come:

For the Lord God has heard your prayer, and he looked upon your distress and he sent me to instruct you, and to teach what you asked to be done.⁹³

The emphasis on instruction and teaching following the reported absolution is interesting because other than a command to change clothes and wash, there is little that the angel could be referring to. This line may reflect a standard motif regarding angelic encounters, rather than a reference to the later narrative.

88. These marginal notes are fairly common through Genesis and appear to ease finding the reader's place in the text as there is no division into chapters or units.

89. <καί> ἴσως τίς ἐκ τῶν συμπαρόντων ἀναγγελεῖ αὐτῷ.

90. See also: 8.5 ("which God Most High loathes..."); 17.6 ("Or why is Aseneth our honeycomb city?"); and 24.4 ("he delivered provoking and most deceitful words"- perhaps a reference to Genesis 34.13), which make the message of the events referred to more explicit.

91. <καί> ἐγλυκάνθη ἀσενέθ τῷ στόματι. <καί> πᾶσι τοῖς μέλεσιν αὐτῆς. <καί> ἐπλήσθη χαρίτος θείας.

92. ταῦτα <καί> τὰ τούτοις ὅμοια ἐμπόνως τῷ θῷ ἐξομολογουμένη ἐμπλείσταις ὥραις προσέθηκε δεομένη τῷ θῷ ὑπερ ὧν ἐξ ἀγνοίας προσέφαλται. ἐξουθενήσασα τὸν ἰωσήφ συγγνώμης λαβεῖν. καὶ εἶπε δεομένη.

93. διότι εἰσήκουσε κῶ ὁ θῶ τῆς δέησεώς σου. <καί> ἐπεῖδεν τῇ κακώσει σου. <καί> ἀπέστειλέ με συνετίσαι σε. <καί> διδάξαι τί δεῖσε ποιεῖσαι.

E displays a range of scribal errors. Some relate to careless copying. For example, the loss of the crucial $\omicron\kappa$ in 13.13 means that E reads "O Lord, I had believed that Joseph is your son...", despite the context being that Aseneth did not recognise who Joseph was. And at 27.6, *KritHer* reports that the sons of Leah killed 2000 men, whereas E reports that they killed $\bar{\beta} \bar{\omicron} <\kappa\alpha\iota> \bar{\rho}$ (172?), which makes no sense. In addition to usual errors of dittography,⁹⁴ confusions of pronouns⁹⁵ and gender,⁹⁶ there are a few interesting phonological mistakes. For example, in 14.12 E describes the linen garment Aseneth is ordered to put on as $\acute{\alpha}\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\kappa\tau\omicron\nu$ ('unmarked'), rather than $\acute{\alpha}\theta\iota\kappa\tau\omicron\nu$ ('untouched').⁹⁷ Whilst the spelling and accentuation in E is better than many manuscripts, there is regular confusion of vowels, especially between long and short vowels. However, this is a common feature of Septuagint and New Testament manuscripts. It reflects changes in the pronunciation of vowels in Greek over time. As Horrocks notes: "since the norms and conventions of written Greek were primarily rooted in tradition and not in native linguistic competence, it was inevitable that all forms of writing, even those based on some form of the spoken language, would show evidence of inconsistency and variation."⁹⁸

8.3.4 A reshaped story

E is an abridgement of *Jos. Asen.* where occasionally the absence of material affects the meaning,⁹⁹ but it is recognisably the same story. The narrative still tells of the conversion and transformation of Aseneth, her wedding to Joseph, the meeting between Jacob and Aseneth, and the scheming of Pharaoh's son to make Aseneth his wife. But the main focus shifts. The lack of much of Aseneth's internal struggle in chapters 11-13 suggests that the story took on a different function for the redactor of E: to narrate the validity of Aseneth's conversion and Aseneth's relationship with Joseph, rather than the process of Aseneth's repentance. This is in contrast to versions that include the story in hagiographical collections where Aseneth's soliloquies are preserved. E's version of the

94. E.g., 25.2; 27.7

95. E.g., 4.8; 7.8

96. E.g., 28.2

97. See also 5.4 where E reads $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ rather than $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\eta\varsigma$; 16.14 with $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\rho\iota\omicron\nu$ for $\kappa\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ (though this could be an itacism); 23.2 with $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$ for $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\epsilon$; 27.7 with $\acute{\epsilon}\theta\eta\kappa\epsilon\nu$ for $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\theta\eta\eta\kappa\epsilon\nu$; 28.2 with η for $\acute{\epsilon}$.

98. Horrocks 2010:229

99. E.g., the lack of Aseneth putting on a veil in 14.14-15; the sequence of events supposed in 18.9f; the context of 18.11; and the loss of Pharaoh's son's plan to kill his father in 24.14 means his attempt in 25.1 comes as a surprise.

text is not one that a reader could use to engage with Aseneth's repentance as part of their own journey of repentance.

The character of Aseneth in E is developed in four different directions. First, Aseneth is presented as more obedient in E than *KritHer*. Whilst Aseneth's outburst against her father (4.9-11) is still there, Aseneth immediately obeys the angel's commands in E's revision of 14.14-15. Aseneth makes no denial that there is a honeycomb in her storeroom and goes to collect it when commanded (16.6). Finally, Joseph gives permission to Aseneth to wash his feet (20.5), rather than Aseneth pressing him.

Secondly, and in contrast, Aseneth is presented as more commanding and self-assured in E in particular circumstances. In 2.6, Aseneth seems to be running a convent, governing the maidens. In 10.6 Aseneth is able to dismiss her companions with a briefer excuse. The lack of the 'foster-father's' reaction on seeing Aseneth after she calls him in 18.2 means that Aseneth just commands preparations to be made. And in 22.9, the transformed Aseneth kisses Jacob without invitation, the first time Aseneth is recorded as kissing anyone in E.

Thirdly, Aseneth's character is formed more by her actions than words in E. Aseneth's soliloquy in chapter 6 is condensed and in chapter 11 it is boiled down to a summary with 12.1 becoming the start of the great confession. 21.10 gives a report that Aseneth praised God, but no actual prayer is reported. Consequently, Aseneth's internal struggles contribute to the narrative to a lesser degree. This also reduces Aseneth's opportunity to display knowledge of Israelite religion and to proclaim the character of God.

Fourthly, Aseneth's transformation is marked by the motif of radiance rather than becoming more physically beautiful. In *KritHer*, Aseneth's transformation is marked in 18.9-10 by a description of what Aseneth sees reflected in the water. This description is missing in E. Instead the 'foster-father' says in 18.11: "I see rays of sunlight shining from you!" (...ἀκτίνοβόλους λαμπηδόνας ἐκ σοῦ ὀρῶ ἀύγαζούσας). The motif of Aseneth's face shining is added into 22.7, when Jacob describes Aseneth's "surpassing beauty" (ἐξαστράπτων κάλλος). This reflects the redactor's reshaping of the event. If the vocabulary was meant to create an allusion, it was not to Moses' appearance after meeting with God,¹⁰⁰ but rather to Jesus' transfiguration in Luke 9.29 where his clothing is de-

100. Exodus (LXX) 34.29, 35 described Moses' face as 'glorified' (δεδόξασται).

scribed as ἐξαστράπτων ('dazzling').¹⁰¹ But the absence of the description in 20.6 of Aseneth's parents seeing her as a vision of light suggests that the redactor was not consistent in highlighting this motif. This also shows the idiosyncratic nature of the redaction.

Other characters are also constructed differently. There is less interest in Joseph's extraordinary nature in E. The lack of 6.3c-6 means Aseneth's assertion of Joseph as God's son is not made until her prayer in 13.13, and Joseph is not presented as all-knowing and all-seeing. In 7.3, E's narrator still says that the women of Egypt want to sleep with Joseph, but without the explanation that it was because of Joseph's great beauty. Consequently, the reader only has Aseneth's assertion of Joseph's attractiveness. In 5.5, Joseph's dress loses its sun-god symbolism, and he holds an olive-wood sceptre, rather than a staff and fruitful olive branch.

The angel has a reduced role in E. The figure is initially presented as 'the voice' in 14.4-8. Only when Aseneth looks up does she see "a man in every way similar to Joseph", with only the description that his face was like lightning to differentiate him. By 14.11, the figure's identity is explicitly stated as he is referred to as the 'angel'. The redactor of E also makes the angel's mission explicit in an addition to 14.11: "For the Lord God has heard your prayer, and he looked upon your distress and he sent me to instruct you, and to teach what you asked to be done." As in *a* and *d*, God's agency, rather than the angel's is stated. However, this instruction is condensed in E compared to *KritHer*. For example, whilst E still describes Metanoia as the daughter of the Most High, she is no longer described as loving virgins and her role becomes redundant. Finally, the angel's departure no longer has its allusion to Elijah's assumption. Instead it is closer to the disappearance of the angel in Judges 13.20 and Tobit 12.20 as E says that "the angel departed from their eyes" (17.8).¹⁰²

Levi is almost unrecognisable as a prophet, and no longer has his special relationship with Aseneth. In 22.13 the report of Levi's ability to see what is written in heaven and reveal it to Aseneth is not transmitted. In 23.8, Levi is only compared to a prophet and there is no report that Levi can read men's hearts. In 26.6, Levi reports that Aseneth is in danger, but the reader has no idea how he could know this as it is not attributed to prophetic insight. This reduction in Levi's prophetic role could be a move to downgrade a character that no longer had significance for the redactor and

101. This is the only occurrence of ἐξαστράπτω in the New Testament. It is found four times in the Greek Old Testament: Nahum 3.3 (of armour); Ezekiel 1.4, 7 (of the chariot); Daniel 10.6 (describing the feet of the heavenly figure). None of these is likely to be a model for Aseneth's transformed appearance.

102. καὶ ὁ ἄγγελος ἀπῆλθεν ἐξ ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν.

risked overshadowing Aseneth's importance. The report in 22.13 that Aseneth now esteems (πάνυ ἐπόθει) Levi *and* Simeon, and that both Simeon *and* Levi were angry at the son of Pharaoh's proposal in 23.7, could be designed to bring the presentation of the pair in line with their presentation in Genesis 34.

E has did not transmit entire themes from the story. All reference to anointing is absent from the description of the God-fearer (8.5), the angel's description of what eating the honeycomb entails (15.5), and the instruction to consume the honeycomb (16.16). The mysterious significance of the honeycomb is reduced without the 'sign of the cross' miracle and the miraculously appearing bees, their appearance and their actions, and the miraculous burning up of the honeycomb (16.16x-17.4a). The absence of the 'sign of the cross' miracle also reduces possible Christian imagery. However, the expansion in 16.16, that "Aseneth's mouth was sweetened and all of her body, and she was filled with divine grace", suggests that the redactor wanted to add a biblical allusion. Aseneth's consumption of the honeycomb gives a similar reaction to Ezekiel's ingestion of the scroll in Ezekiel 3.3.¹⁰³ Also, the honeycomb fulfils a similar function in the narrative to the scroll.

E does not record the events and ethical teaching after the battle scene (28.8-29.6). This means that both Benjamin's decision to kill Pharaoh's son, Levi preventing him and stating a maxim on not oppressing an enemy to death, and his example in caring for Pharaoh's son and returning him to the royal palace are unknown to the reader. The story finishes with an awkward transition from the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah running into the thicket of reeds, to the notice that Pharaoh's son died of his wounds and Pharaoh's mourning.

The wedding scene in chapter 21 is heavily abbreviated. Pharaoh only places golden crowns on Aseneth and Joseph, 'makes the marriage' and holds a banquet. Both Pharaoh's blessing and the bringing of Aseneth and Joseph together to kiss is lost. The person giving the blessing 22.4 is unclear: the subject could be either Pentephres or Pharaoh.

8.3.5 Conclusions

E represents a thorough abridgement of *Jos. Asen.*. The reduced part Aseneth takes, through the abbreviation or non-transmission of her soliloquies and prayers, increases the significance of nar-

103. 16.16 includes: <και> ἐγλυκάνθη ἀσενὲθ τῷ στόματι· <και> πᾶσι τοῖς μέλεσιν αὐτῆς· <και> ἐπλήσθη χαρίτος θείας· Ezekiel 3.3 reads και ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ στόματί μου ὡς μέλι γλυκάζον.

rative events. The function of the narrative also seems to be entirely focused on how Aseneth came to convert to be a Hebrew and marry Joseph. The de-divinisation of Joseph, removal of Levi's non-biblical role and the lack or recasting of the more miraculous events in the narrative gives the story a less hagiographical feel.

E presents a paradox, both as an abridgement, and as part of a highly individual manuscript. It challenges conceptions of the place of the Jewish Pseudepigrapha in Christian transmission, especially in comparison to other witnesses in Greek. Additionally, its lack of what has been seen as clear Christian imagery give pause for thought in considering the importance redactors of other versions placed on that imagery. There is no evidence for wider influence from this version and the microfilm suggests it had not been heavily read. As an experiment it is certainly interesting, but as a version it reduced the avenues for readers to become involved in the story, especially in a monastic context. Perhaps E can represent the nearest point of approach for a non-canonical biblical work in a Greek Bible: it can look like a biblical work, be presented in a biblical work, but in the end it is still 'other'.

8.4 The First Latin Version

8.4.1 Introduction

The form of *Jos. Asen.* known as the first Latin version (L₁) is notable for preserving a text with many unique and interesting features. These point to the story being reworked for a new Latin context. The historical significance of L₁ is that it was through an abbreviation of this version by Vincent of Beauvais that the story became known in the West before the modern era.¹⁰⁴ Little research has focused on L₁, yet if the success of a redaction is measured in copies preserved and its impact on literature, then its impact dwarfs that of *d* and E. L₁ shows how an abridgement could help create a popular and influential version of the story.

The *Editio Princeps* of *Jos. Asen.*, Batiffol (1889), included a Latin edition of L₁ edited by M. R. James. Little notice was taken of this. Despite the discovery of more witnesses to L₁ by Burchard and the known limitations with James' edition,¹⁰⁵ no new edition was published until *Biosca i Bas* (2012). This new edition offers a revised text with an apparatus using the nine extant manuscripts and a Spanish translation. The introduction gives an overview of the witnesses and research, and presents arguments for: concluding that there are really three Latin versions (L₁, 436, and the rest of the L₂ manuscripts)¹⁰⁶; a suggestion that L₁ witnesses to a *Vorlage* closest to Greek manuscript G¹⁰⁷; notes on the characteristics of the text¹⁰⁸; a stemma for L₁ that argues for three branches in the tradition¹⁰⁹; and indications of external contamination.¹¹⁰ This significant contribution to the field is assessed below.

8.4.1.1 Manuscript witness

Nine manuscripts preserve the L₁ version of *Jos. Asen.*. *Biosca i Bas* provides manuscript descriptions and a list of works contained in each manuscript,¹¹¹ although sometimes without reference to

104. Burchard 1985:198; 1987a:366

105. Summarised in *Biosca i Bas* 2012:30-2.

106. *Biosca i Bas* 2012:35-42

107. *Biosca i Bas* 2012:45-8

108. *Biosca i Bas* 2012:49-57

109. *Biosca i Bas* 2012:77-80, 83

110. *Biosca i Bas* 2012:81-2

111. *Biosca i Bas* 2012:63-76

the latest catalogues (421 432 442). Manuscripts are listed below with Burchard's numerical indicators, together with additional information from the author.¹¹²

Three daughter versions from L1 are also known: an abridgement found in three manuscripts, Vincent of Beauvais' abbreviation, and a Middle English verse-redaction.¹¹³ These are not referred to in *Biosca i Bas'* apparatus and are beyond the scope of this survey.

421 (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 424, f.42r-59v) is a miscellaneous codex on paper and parchment. A recent scholar notes: "The manuscript material proper is a jumble of medical, astrological and spiritual treatises..."¹¹⁴ James (1911), unseen by *Biosca i Bas*, describes it as made up of six volumes, the first three of which are printed texts, that have been bound together. *Jos. Asen.* is the only work in the fifth volume, which James assigns to the twelfth century, in a hand "like that of Christ Church, Canterbury",¹¹⁵ *contra Biosca i Bas.*¹¹⁶ Other manuscript materials were copied between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. Both 421 and 431 are part of the Parker collection at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. This collection was amassed by Archbishop Parker in the sixteenth century and left to the college. Unfortunately very few indications are preserved about the way he acquired them or their state at that time.¹¹⁷

422 (Cambridge, Trinity College, B. 1. 30, f.11r-23v) is a mid-thirteenth century parchment codex. It was donated to the college by Thomas Nevile, who held appointments as Master of Trinity College (1593-1615) and Dean of Canterbury (1597-1615). Of particular interest is that *Jos. Asen.* is followed by a short account of the history of Joseph from Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, Genesis, 86-7.¹¹⁸

423 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson G. 38, f.90r-96v) is a parchment codex formed from six manuscripts, each in a different hand, from the late twelfth to early thirteenth century. Its contents are a miscellaneous collection of Latin classics and translations from Greek.

112. *Biosca i Bas'* sigla are not used in order to avoid confusion with Greek manuscripts. The present author only consulted Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson G. 38 for his research.

113. Burchard 2003a:6; *Biosca i Bas* 2012:59-61

114. https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/actions/summary.do?ms_no=424 Last accessed 22 January 2016.

115. James 1911:329-30

116. *Biosca i Bas* 2012:66 does not differentiate the volumes and lists the material of volumes V and VI as thirteenth century following earlier catalogues.

117. James 1912:xxi bemoans "the deplorable re-binding which almost the whole collection underwent at some time in the eighteenth century" which removed the opportunity to investigate their origins.

118. *Biosca i Bas* 2012:67-8 prints the text.

424 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 14656, f.151r-162v) is a parchment manuscript dating from the late twelfth century, written in a single hand, containing three works: *Barlaam and Joshaphat*; *Liber pastoris nuncii penitencie*; and *Jos. Asen.*. Its origin is unknown but it came into the possession of the monastery of St Victor, Paris in the fifteenth century.¹¹⁹

431 (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 288, f.88r-97r) is a miscellaneous parchment codex with sections dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. James notes that sections of the manuscript belonged at some time to Nicholas of Sandwich, Prior of Christ Church, Canterbury 1255-80.¹²⁰ Other works were subsequently brought together with to it.¹²¹

432 (London, British Library, Egerton 2676, f.53r-65r) is a miscellaneous parchment codex formed from two manuscripts. The first part is a fourteenth-century copy of *Secretum secretorum*. *Jos. Asen.* and *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* are found in the second part, dating from the second-half of the thirteenth-century.

433 (London, British Library, Additional 18210, f.49v-54v) is a miscellaneous parchment codex from the thirteenth and fourteenth century. *Jos. Asen.* is followed by a fragment of Robert Grosseteste's translation of *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, without division. The manuscript also contains medical and astrological works, as well as a French text on palmistry.

441 (Cambridge, Trinity College, O. 9. 28, f.47r-54r) is a miscellaneous parchment codex written in several hands from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. James notes that the manuscript may come from the Collegiate Church of Warwick.¹²²

442 (Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth 335A, f.166r-182v) receives only brief mention in Davies (1943) and additional research is needed. Davies dates the manuscript to the fourteenth-century,¹²³ Biosca i Bas to the first half of fifteenth-century without reference to Davies (1943).¹²⁴ The Peniarth collection was gathered by the antiquarian Robert Vaughan of Hengwrt (d.1667), who spent much of his time and resources tracking down manuscripts and transcribing them. He was in communication with significant figures of his day, such as Archbishop James

119. Biosca i Bas 2012:69-70

120. James 1911:58-63

121. Nisse (2006) and Barrau (2015) provide contrasting perspectives on the whole manuscript.

122. See the digitised catalogue entry <http://trin-sites-pub.trin.cam.ac.uk/james/viewpage.php?index=974> (Last viewed 20 January 2017).

123. Davies 1943:2

124. Biosca i Bas 2012:75

Ussher of Armagh.¹²⁵ Burchard suggests the manuscript may have originated in the north of England,¹²⁶ though no firm indication of provenance is available.

The relationship of the manuscripts is broadly agreed. Burchard divided the extant manuscripts of L1 into two branches: 424 433 441, Vincent of Beauvais' abbreviation and the exemplar of the Middle English version; and 421 422 423 431 432 442 and the epitome. Burchard thought that the second group might be further divided with 423 432, and possibly 421 and 431, forming a sub-group.¹²⁷ Biosca i Bas argued that the postulated sub-group should be seen as a separate branch giving: group α (421 431 422 442); group β (433 441 424), 'Oxford' (423 432).¹²⁸ Further, he states that 432 is a copy of 423, and 441 is a copy of 433. He found no evidence of any manuscript having readings from more than one branch as a result of access to more than one model.¹²⁹

The L1 version of *Jos. Asen.* is found alongside a wide variety of works. Of interest, *Jos. Asen.* is transmitted with *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* in 432 and 441, and a fragment without title following *Jos. Asen.* in 433. This suggests that the two works, translated at different times, were seen to complement each other by manuscript compilers from an early point. *LJos* is not extant in any L1 manuscript.

The relationship of L1 to other versions is still not settled. Burchard's earlier investigation into the textual tradition of *Jos. Asen.* identified that L1 was part of his textually broad family *b* along with Greek manuscripts FWGE, and translated versions apart from the Slavonic.¹³⁰ In his reappraisal of the textual history, L1 was placed within the new family *f*, with FWRum G and what he described as 'early modern Greek' (Ngr).¹³¹ Burchard concluded that L1 and FWRum GNgr shared a common ancestor, but beyond that he was not sure.¹³²

Fink (2008) sought to clarify the relationships within family *f*.¹³³ L1 was shown to have a common ancestor with FWRum (μ) that was separate from the common ancestor of GNgr (π). Fink con-

125. Davies 1943:iii-v

126. Burchard 2003a:6

127. e.g., Burchard 1987a:367

128. Biosca i Bas 2012:77-80

129. Biosca i Bas 2012:81

130. e.g., Burchard 1985a:180

131. Burchard 2003a:19. See argumentation in Burchard (2003b).

132. Burchard 2003b:239

133. A summary is shown in her stemma, Fink 2008:17; 2009:39.

cluded that whilst the Greek *Vorlage* of L1 was probably close to μ , FW and Rum developed through intermediaries and the *Vorlage* may have undergone some change.¹³⁴

8.4.1.2 The contribution of Antoni Biosca i Bas

Whilst Biosca i Bas (2012) marks a step forward in scholarship, the edition has faults and the arguments made need careful evaluation. Four points should be considered. First, it strays from Burchard's versification without explanation.¹³⁵ Secondly, some parts of the apparatus are imprecise.¹³⁶ Thirdly, his argument for external 'contamination' is not compelling. Biosca i Bas postulates that a scribe incorporated readings from different Greek versions into group β , citing three examples:¹³⁷

(a) In 2.7, the majority reading is *et erant fenestre magno thalamo Aseneth*. 424 has a marginal note *tres* ('three'), indicated to be read after *magno*, a reading found in Greek manuscripts apart from FWGE. This, he argues, could only have occurred through the influence of another model text. However, this reading is marginal and could just reflect the scribe counting the windows mentioned in the text.

(b) In 10.8, 433 and 441 (copied from 433) read *frater eius maior* rather than the majority witness *frater eius iunior*. Biosca i Bas considers this reading to have been included under the influence of BD δ ἀδελφὸς αὐτῆς ὁ πρωτότοκος.¹³⁸ But on other occasions where the underlying text is probably *πρωτότοκος*, L1 unanimously has *primogenitus*, and 433 441 never read *maior*. It is more likely that the scribe of 433 misread his Latin exemplar: *iun-* could be confused with *mai-* in particular hands.

(c) In 6.8 groups α and Oxford read *det me pater meus Ioseph in ancillam*. 433 441 of group β read *det me pater meus in ancillam Ioseph*. Without citing Greek textual support Biosca i Bas

134. Fink 2008:28-30

135. 4.12 *cum subito...* is 5.1; 11.1 is not divided into 11.1, 1x, 1y; 11.2 is really part of 11.3; 11.9 *que surda dicuntur* appears a corruption of the opening of 11.10; 12.4[5] is 12.4; 15.13 should start before 15.12 *et dixit Aseneth:*; 19.1 is really 18.1 with the cut happening after the first verse; 24.10[19] is incorrectly labelled and should read: v15 *Et dixerunt...* v17 *Precipiat ergo dominus...* v19 *et procedamus nocte...*; in 26.5, 26.6 should commence *Et euasit unus*; 27.4[10] should be labelled 28.8-9 (rewritten and condensed); 28.9 is the start of 28.10; 28.10 is 28.14 from *quoniam fratres uestri...*

136. For example, a comparison of the textual mistakes of 423 was made with the Biosca i Bas' edition. In the apparatus for 15.1-2, Biosca i Bas makes the note "Et - suo marg. O". This should read "Et³ - virgo es marg. O". The bottom margin has been trimmed and some text lost. From the three up-strokes visible the text cannot be recreated after *virgo es*.

137. Biosca i Bas 2012:81-2

138. This reading is also found in family *a*.

says that group α and Oxford may have been influenced by a Greek model with this alternative reading. However, this small change could easily have come about through a copying mistake. With the proper name *Ioseph* undeclined, the copyist could have taken it either a dative indirect object or an oddly placed genitive.

In summary, there is no compelling case to regard any manuscript of L1 giving evidence for the copyist having access to more than one model.

Fourthly, his argument for identifying the Greek manuscript within family *f* (which Biosca i Bas refers to as *b* throughout) is unconvincing.¹³⁹ Whilst citing Fink (2008), Biosca i Bas does not engage with Fink's argument. Instead he provides a few remarks on the correlation of L1 with FW and E G, mainly focused on the text not preserved that is shared by L1 and those versions. On the basis of these absent readings between L1 and G in 7.8, Biosca i Bas surmised that there is a special relationship between L1 and G.

The proposal is problematic for two reasons: (a) Only a few isolated examples are provided, all from the first half of *Jos. Asen.* which are unrepresentative and unconvincing; (b) There is no comment about the nature of the Greek manuscripts referred to, which seriously undermines the conclusions. Biosca i Bas is apparently unaware that E is an abridgement with distinctive features, that G contains a drastic paraphrase of 2.3-10.1, which does not include several passages to which the reader is referred, or the nature of the rewriting of the text in G in comparison to FW.

To test Biosca i Bas' suggestion, a sample of *Jos. Asen.* 17 was made, comparing L1 with F W G E. Chapter 17 was chosen because it is extant in all versions, is of a useful length for comparison, and it is from the second half of the story. L1 is markedly different to all four Greek manuscripts. Analysis of the comparison offers no convincing reason, or value, to postulating a close connection between L1 and any of the four Greek manuscripts of family *f*.

Biosca i Bas' introduction does not sufficiently deal with three points that have an important bearing on the way L1 is perceived. First, the effect of the Reformation on the present distribution of manuscripts. The extant witnesses and their location owes a lot to the interests and opportunities of powerful figures at and following the dissolution of the monasteries, or the collections they were within. Whilst scholars can trace the contents of significant collections such as Robert Grosse-

139. Biosca i Bas 2012:45-8

teste,¹⁴⁰ many other equally rich libraries cannot be traced. For example, in 1396, the library of the Cistercian abbey of Meaux in Yorkshire recorded about 400 books; only 5 have been traced.¹⁴¹ Consequently, it is difficult to know how widely *Jos. Asen.* was read. There is, for example, no extant manuscript of *Jos. Asen.* associated with an English convent, yet it would have provided pious reading for nuns. Several nunneries had sufficient wealth and knowledge of Latin to have owned and read *Jos. Asen.*. A smaller proportion of manuscripts can be attributed to nunneries than monasteries largely because of differences in the ownership of goods.¹⁴²

Secondly, more may be said on the probable date of translation. In contrast to Robert Grosseteste's translation of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*,¹⁴³ the translator and translation date of *Jos. Asen.* is unknown. A variety of suggestions have been made: Robert Grosseteste;¹⁴⁴ a twelfth-century abbot of St Denis;¹⁴⁵ a monk at Canterbury, where three manuscripts were once kept;¹⁴⁶ or, more broadly, either England or France, if not an import from Southern Italy or Constantinople.¹⁴⁷

Four copies of *Jos. Asen.* survive from the twelfth-century, which pre-date Robert Grosseteste. The text-form within them is remarkably stable suggesting that there were few intermediaries between the common ancestor and the extant copies.¹⁴⁸ Other factors make a twelfth-century date of origin more plausible than any earlier period: (a) the text of L1 appears to be translated from a minuscule exemplar, giving a rough *terminus post quem* of the tenth century; (b) the monastic culture which supported scribal activity only revived in the late eleventh and early twelfth century.¹⁴⁹ As scribal culture at this time was wedded to monasteries and early schools, they are the probable location for the story's translation and transmission; (c) there is minimal evidence for writers using Greek in England in the eleventh and twelfth century.¹⁵⁰ Explaining the examples that are extant requires postulating hitherto unknown individuals¹⁵¹—*Jos. Asen.* would be the first-known medieval trans-

140. Hunt 1955:131

141. Bell 1995:21

142. See Bell (1995), especially chapter 2.

143. de Jonge (1991)

144. Batiffol 1889:3

145. James 1927:340-1

146. Nisse 2006:735

147. Burchard 1987a:368

148. Burchard 1987a:367; 2003b:240 was unsure if the archetype of the extant manuscripts was also the translation itself.

149. van Liere 2011:166-7

150. James 1927:340; Haskins 1927:278-80 and 291-300; Weiss 1951:209-10. On the factors leading to this situation see Lobrichon (2012).

151. Coates 1999:109

lation from Greek to Latin in England if it is dated earlier than the twelfth-century; (d) the twelfth century was a period of renewed interest in the history of the Bible with the rise of the culture of the schools,¹⁵² and the boundaries of Scripture were still fluid, at least in the minds of theologians. This is seen by: the lack of a formally binding canon of Scripture for the Catholic Church before 1442¹⁵³; the Bible rarely being contained in a single volume, but usually represented by a collection of volumes¹⁵⁴; the different approaches of ancient authorities to numbering the canon, for example by Jerome and Augustine.¹⁵⁵

Thirdly, the way that *Jos. Asen.* was read was probably determined by its manuscript context. In only 2 of the 9 extant L1 manuscripts is *Jos. Asen.* within a manuscript copied at one time (424 442). In the other 7 manuscripts, it was compiled with portions of manuscripts copied by different people at different times then rebound.¹⁵⁶ With no surviving colophons to explain the translation, or even to link in the text of *Jos. Asen.* to the story being a translation from Greek, its function to transmitters of the story must be evaluated in the context in which they survive. A comparison of 424, 431 and Vincent of Beauvais' work highlights the possible different explicitly Christian contexts in which the story is found.

424 was copied by a single scribe and contains three works: *Barlaam and Josaphat*; the Latin version of the *Shepherd of Hermas*; and *Jos. Asen.*. A unifying theme in these works is repentance. Although the works are an eclectic trio, the first two were considered works of antiquity, with *Shepherd of Hermas* even being thought scriptural by some Church Fathers. It is possible that *Jos. Asen.* was viewed similarly.

431 was donated to Canterbury Cathedral Priory by its Abbot, Nicholas of Sandwich in the mid-thirteenth century. It is a diverse compilation of Latin works. Barrau 2015:119 writes: "There is no unifying theme to this Canterbury miscellany." But Nisse argues that there is a clear theme:

The collection represents a monastic anthologist's attempt to use these disparate legendary narratives to respond to the challenge posed by the pseudo-Augustinian sermon [within the manuscript] on the refusal of Jews to convert... the compiler speaks for the "lost" Jews of his own time by supplying other possible narratives of conversion

152.Parkes 1976:115; van Liere 2011:167

153.Linde 2015:7

154.van Liere 2011:157

155.Linde 2015:8ff. For a useful introduction to all the issues above, see Smalley (1983).

156.On anthologies see Boffey and Thompson (1989) and Hanna (1996).

from traditions outside the authority of canonical scripture.¹⁵⁷

The context for reading *Jos. Asen.* will be determined by a view of the manuscript. In particular, whether the reader accepts Nisse's proposed context of discontinuity between eschatological views about the conversion of Jews in England and the practice of forced baptism and violence against Jews of the time.¹⁵⁸

Vincent of Beauvais (d.1264) has been called "the most monumental encyclopedist of the Middle Ages; his *Speculum maius* was an attempt to put the whole sum of knowledge into one corpus."¹⁵⁹ An abbreviation of L1 was compiled within the *Speculum historiale*, part of his greater work. In it, *Jos. Asen.* became a link in the history of the world from Creation.¹⁶⁰

L1 shows that once *Jos. Asen.* entered the Latin world it could be readily reinterpreted in different Christian contexts: repentance, true conversion, history.

8.4.2 Methodology

Biosca i Bas (2012) was used as the edition for L1. To make remarks on the translation technique and to consider the redaction technique, *KritHer* was used for comparison. Whilst the *Vorlage* for L1 was not identical to *KritHer*, text-critical investigation indicates that its Greek *Vorlage* was probably not far removed from the version Burchard produced, even if the *Vorlage* manuscript was not a particularly good copy.¹⁶¹ The similarity of *KritHer* and the *Vorlage* of L1 cannot be known with certainty, although it is probably closer than any extant Greek manuscript, and thus provides the best available comparison. To conduct the investigation, *KritHer* and L1 were read alongside each other. The differences were noted and cross-referenced with Burchard's apparatus to check for support in other versions. The two versions were then compared from a literary perspective.

157.Nisse 2006:735

158.Nisse 2006:739

159.Reynolds and Wilson 1991:115

160.Burchard 1987a:370. Nisse 2006:746 quotes from Vincent's preface to the *Speculum maior* that "unless openly heretical, [the apocrypha] illuminate historical and scriptural moments otherwise obscured..."

161.Burchard 1987a:589

8.4.3 Translation and redaction technique

8.4.3.1 Comment on the translation

Comparison of L1 with *KritHer* indicates a close style of translation was used, with a short unit of translation. This is seen, for example, in the regular copying of Greek word order, even within abridged passages. The effect was a text in a similar style to biblical translations such as found in the Vulgate. This was probably a desired result for the translator as it gives a feel of antiquity to the translation. There is no explicit indication in the text that L1 is a translation, but the presence of transliterated Greek words probably made its origin clear to readers.

Two remarks are worth making on the method and skill of the translator. First, Biosca i Bas notes the use of transliteration in 8.5 (ἀγχόνης = *anchonis*; σπονδῆς = *spondis*; ἐνέδρας = *anedras*) and 11.7 (ζηλωτής = *zelotis*).¹⁶² To these can be added: 10.10 (κίδαριν = *cidarim*) and 19.2, 4 (τῷ προδρόμῳ = *prodromo*). Biosca i Bas suggests that the words were either seen as technical terms that could be left untranslated, or that the translator did not understand them. Considering the skill of the translator in other parts of the work, it is unlikely that he did not know the meaning of the words. Possibly *cidaris* and *zelotis* could be seen as technical terms as they are found in medieval Latin. But for *anchonis*, *spondis*, *anedras* and *prodromo*, an alternative is simpler. In 21.14, Latin translations are found for ἀγχόνης and ἐνέδρας: *suffocans* and *defectus*. Perhaps the translator intended to make a gloss translation at 8.5 and never returned to it.

Secondly, whilst the translator often followed the Greek text closely, even adhering to word order, he was not mechanical in his translation. In some instances, he used different Latin words to translate the same Greek word. From many examples, in 3.1, τῆς εὐθηνίας ('plenty') is rendered both *plenitudinis* and *ubertatis*— also used in 1.1 to translate the same phrase. θάρσει ('take courage') is the repeated instruction in 15.2, 4, 6. L1 renders it with *Confortare*, *Gaude*, *Letare* respectively. Only occasionally does L1 appear to use the same word for two different Greek terms. In 3.4, εὐτρέπισον and ἐτοίμασον are both rendered *prepara*. And in 12.8-9, *rapio* is used to translate both καταδιώκει and ἄρπασόν.

162. Biosca i Bas 2012:52

L1 has few mistakes that can be attributed to the translator. Homoioarcton could be the reason for loss of the description of where the bed stands in 2.8, with the scribe's eye passing from ἐστῶσα to ἐστρωμένη. As relatively little is abbreviated in the opening chapters of the story, this seems a more likely solution than the translator choosing to not include this detail.¹⁶³ A possible phonographic mistake is found in 4.12. *KritHer* has Penetephres refrain from speaking (ἡδέσθη ἔτι λαλῆσαι), whilst in L1 Pentephres continues to speak to his daughter after her outburst (*Et stabat Putiphar locuturus*). Biosca i Bas suggests that either ἡδέσθη was read as ἐστάθη, or the Greek text did not include this event and the translator added this otherwise unattested response.¹⁶⁴ The former seems more likely as the translator show little appetite to add information to the story overall.¹⁶⁵

Orthographic mistakes may be behind some odder passages. For example, in 4.4-5a the widely attested instruction by Pentephres for Aseneth to sit (κάθισον), and Aseneth's subsequent action (εκάθισεν) becomes in L1 'close the door' (*Claude ostium*) and a report of her closing it (*Et clausit Aseneth*). Possibly the translator confused κάθισον ('sit') with κλείσον ('shut'),¹⁶⁶ but this does not explain the reference to the door. Perhaps the door was added to make sense of the verb in mind. In 15.7 the heavenly figure gives Aseneth a new name: City of Refuge (πόλις καταφυγῆς). Whilst this is correctly translated in 19.5 (*Civitas Refugii*), L1 here translates the title as 'Refuge of Many' (*Multis Refugii*). πόλις was apparently read as πολλοῖς.¹⁶⁷

8.4.3.2 Redaction technique

Redactional concerns played a greater role in reshaping L1 than the translation process. The redactor appears to have two main concerns: to shorten the story and to bring it into line with his concerns.

L1 is considerably shorter than *KritHer*. 77 verses are completely absent,¹⁶⁸ and content is only partially preserved in 18 verses.¹⁶⁹ None of these instances occur in the first ten chapters, which appear

163. See also 8.5 and the loss of ἀθανασίας καὶ χρίεται χρίσματι εὐλογημένῳ.

164. Biosca i Bas 2012:111 n.31

165. See also e.g., 7.1 συνήσθηε/*communicabat*.

166. Biosca i Bas 2012:109 n.26

167. Biosca i Bas 2012:143 n.71

168. This is a fuller list than Burchard 1987a:367. 11.2, 16-18; 12.7, 10; 12.13-13.9; 14.5; 16.22-23; 18.2-19.1; 19.11; 23.6-9, 14, 16; 24.4-6, 12-13, 16, 18; 25.2, 5-8; 26.7-8; 27.1, 4; 27.6-28.8a; 28.11-13, 15-17; 29.1-4.

169. 11.1x, 1y, 9, 15; 12.6, 8; 13.15; 16.19; 17.9; 20.7; 22.9, 13; 23.12, 15; 24.3, 20; 28.10, 14.

to be closely translated. From chapter 11 onwards, the redactor did not include blocks of text or even entire scenes. The most significant are: (a) 11.15 καὶ ἀνορθώθη - 11.19 ἐπὶ τὰ γόνατα αὐτῆς, all of Aseneth's second prayer. What is left of the narrator's introduction is rewritten in L1 to say that Aseneth prayed silently. The following prayer is considerably shortened, with 12.13-13.11a not included; (b) 18.2-19.1, which means there is no interaction between Aseneth and her foster-father; (c) 25.5-8, so the reader never learns of Naphtali and Asher confronting their older brothers; (d) 27.6-28.8a, which means the battle scene passes from Pharaoh's son's mounted archers fleeing (unique to L1) to the arrival of Leah's sons. There is no attempt by the sons of the maidservants to kill Aseneth, divine intervention to prevent them, or interaction between Aseneth and the repentant sons of the maidservants; (e) 29.1-4, which means Benjamin makes no attempt to kill Pharaoh's son and Levi does not pronounce an ethical lesson.

L1 also does not include many shorter passages of the text in comparison to *KritHer*. On a few occasions the redactor chose to summarise an event, mainly towards the end of the story. For example, in 24.20 the description of the ambush is abbreviated to the men hiding 'here and there' (*hinc et inde*).¹⁷⁰ There is a tendency to avoid repetitions. For example in 24.8, Pharaoh's son tells the maidservants' sons that Joseph will wait until his father Jacob is dead before he acts against them. In *KritHer* this statement is repeated in 24.9, but not included in L1.¹⁷¹ And L1 often does not include one part of what was probably a two part description in its model.¹⁷²

There are surprisingly few places where the translator may have reordered the text, for example: 1.4-5 where Aseneth's name is brought to the beginning of the description, but this is a common change found in FW *c a*; 17.8-9 where Aseneth's reaction is presented through narration rather than direct speech; 26.5 where the note that Benjamin is in the chariot with her was apparently imported from 27.1. Also, the redactor rarely makes expansions to the text, for example, with his own explanations and interpretations.¹⁷³ Only occasionally does he appear to introduce changes potentially reflecting contemporary practice. For example, Aseneth stands to pray (11.15), and puts on a hair shirt for mourning (10.15; 14.12). However, there are instances where L1 preserves particular

170. See also L1 24.11 which covers 24.11-13.

171. E.g., 4.3 cp 4.6; 10.3-4; 20.4; 24.19

172. E.g., 2.9; 11.3; 17.10; 24.1.

173. e.g., see 19.4 where a reason is supplied for Joseph's gaze; 20.2 where the narrator explains that 'her father was not in the house'; and 23.13 where Levi explains that Pharaoh's son was never entitled to Aseneth.

lines of interpretation that differ from *KritHer*. For example, compared to *KritHer*, Aseneth is never described as a 'holy' virgin,¹⁷⁴ the heavenly figure receives an explicit identity changing from 'man' to 'angel',¹⁷⁵ God is made the central figure for action rather than the angel,¹⁷⁶ physical contact is made less erotic,¹⁷⁷ and Levi's prophetic role is completely removed.

If the translator of L1 saw biblical allusions in *Jos. Asen.*, he shows little interest in making it obvious in Latin. For example, in 7.1, with its statement that Joseph does not eat with the Egyptians, L1 does not draw its expression from Genesis 43.32.¹⁷⁸ Two small possible biblical allusions were added. In 22.2, the narrator says that Jacob "dwelt (*κατῴκησεν*) in the land of Gesen", but in L1 Jacob went down (*descendit*), which could be influenced by the Vulgate's reading of Genesis 45.9. In *KritHer* 23.3, Pharaoh's son makes an offer of "much gold and silver, male and female slaves and houses and great inheritances." Instead of 'houses', L1 offers 'donkeys and camels'. The reading of *ὄνους* (donkeys) for *οἴκους* (houses) is attested in FW G, but not the addition 'and camels'. This could be a Latin development to bring the list into line with lists such as Genesis 24.35 and 30.43 in Latin.

8.4.4 A reshaped story

L1's version of *Jos. Asen.* is recognisably the same story as found in other versions. However, it does have some notable differences compared to *KritHer*, particularly with regard to: characters, the role of God, the Christianisation of the narrative and ethical perspective.

First, L1's presentation of character descriptions focuses the story on the events of transformation and away from extra-biblical details. This can be seen through the depiction of Aseneth and reduced prominence given to supporting characters. Aseneth remains the main character in the story, but her character developed differently. Some of Aseneth's less admirable actions are softened. For example, Aseneth is not reported as spitting in 2.1 and 21.18, her reaction to her fath-

174. See 15.1, 2, 4, 6, 10; 19.9.

175. L1 starts by describing the figure as *vir* (man) in 14.3, 9 and 19.5 ('like a man'). The figure is then described as either an 'angel' (14.12; 15.1 (x2), 15; 16.1, 3, 7, 12, 14, 17x, 20; 17.1, 4, 5, 6 (x2), 7, 8; 19.9), or the 'angel of the Lord' (14.11; 15.2, 11, 12x; 16.10; 17.9; 19.5, 7). L1 often omits reference to the figure (15.14; 16.5, 13, 15, 16, 17; 17.2).

176. See e.g., 15.2, 4, 12; 19.9.

177. e.g., 4.5 has Pentephres kiss Aseneth's **hand**, 8.6 reduces and makes more specific who is kissed, 15.14 Aseneth grasps the angel's cloak rather than knees.

178. See also 7.2 and the loss of a connection with Song of Songs 2.9; 10.2 and the loss of possible reference to the temple curtain; 14.4-6 and allusion to the calling of Samuel from 1 Samuel 3; 27.2 and the loss of any comparison to David slaying Goliath.

er's suggestion that she marry Joseph in 4.9 is not met 'with great anger', and her possibly lustful gaze at the angel in 16.13 is described as 'with modesty'. Whilst Aseneth is often described as 'very beautiful', L1 is not interested in the transformation of Aseneth's appearance. For example, the lack of Aseneth's self-realisation of her transformed body in chapter 18, the expansion in 19.4 that Joseph looked at her "because she was changed from the conversation with the angel and by grace" (*quoniam erat immutata ex collocutione ad angelum et gratia*) rather than her great beauty, and the lack of a description in 20.7 means that her father and the family only express amazement, without any comment on Aseneth's appearance. These all emphasise the importance of Aseneth's religious transformation and ignore her physical transformation. Aseneth's relationship with God is also reduced. For example, the angel in 16.14 does not state that Aseneth has had the unspeakable mysteries of God revealed, but instead narrates again the removal of idols, and in 19.8, there is no eschatological description of Aseneth.

Supporting characters less central to the narrative are not found in L1. Simeon is no longer shown as angry and rash due to the absence 23.6-9. L1's version of chapter 28 no longer has him speak. Asher and Naphtali are never mentioned, and Dan and Gad play a lesser role through the absence of scenes such as 25.5-8. The description of Jacob in chapter 22 is greatly reduced, and Benjamin is almost written out, losing any comparison to David in chapter 27. But the most significant character change is Levi. In 22.13 the narrator just says that "Aseneth loved Levi because he was an intelligent man." A key scene, 23.6-9, where Levi displays his prophetic ability in reading Simeon's thoughts is absent from L1. In 24.1 Pharaoh's son no longer fears to act because of Levi and Simeon but rather to avoid wronging Joseph. It is not Levi's prophetic sight that warns the other brothers of what is happening to Aseneth in 26.6 but a soldier who escaped from the ambush. Levi does not inform the readers of Aseneth's plan in 28.15. And Levi loses his role as ethical instructor in 23.9 and 29.3. Instead, the reader learns in 23.13 that Levi is prepared to die with Simeon defending his brother Joseph!

Secondly, the role of God is made more explicit. For example, in 15.2 it is God that has heard Aseneth's prayer rather than the heavenly figure. In 15.4 it is implied that God has written Aseneth's name in the 'book of life' as L1 does not record the angel's claim to have written her name there. In 19.9, L1's Joseph makes it explicit that God sent the angel to him. Further, the explicit identification of 'the man' as an angel is sometimes further qualified. The heavenly figure is called 'the angel of

the Lord' on 8 occasions.¹⁷⁹ The result of these changes is to give God a more obvious role in the narrative. However, L1 does not include the scene in chapter 27 where Aseneth is saved from the intentions of the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah by a miracle following her prayer to God, which removes actual divine intervention.

Thirdly, L1 makes relatively few changes to the narrative. Some of the changes made can be interpreted as a desire to explain events for a Christian reader. In 11.10, the God of the Hebrews is proclaimed as "not accusing anyone in the time of his penitence (*penitentie*)", rather than "not convicting the lawlessness of an oppressed person in the time of his affliction (θλίψεως)". In 11.11, Aseneth says she will forsake (*deseram*) her sins rather than confess (ἐξομολογήσομαι) them. In 13.15, there is an expansion where Aseneth adds that her entry into Joseph's service means that "I will learn to know you, the true and living God, from him." Other details fit this pattern. For example in 10.15 Aseneth puts on a hair shirt (*Et cumposuit cilicium tristitie*) as part of her self-abasement, referred to again in 14.12. Also 11.15, where it is made clear that Aseneth makes her final prayer standing up with hands open, describing a prayer position.

Fourthly, a notable difference between L1 and *KritHer* is the lack of ethical statements about revenge and violence in L1. That "it does not befit a man who worships God to repay evil for evil" is no longer found in (23.9; 29.3), as well as the interaction between Aseneth and the maidservants' sons in 28.5, 14. Also, there is no longer an instruction not to injure or to aid an injurer (23.12; 29.3). All of these statements were in passages not transmitted by L1. The absence of explicit statements should be weighed against the avoidance in mass killing in L1. The counter-ambushing sons of Leah slay many of Pharaoh's son's soldiers, but "the rest dispersed, and they fled before them" (expansion to 26.6), compared to *KritHer* 27.6 where the sons of Leah kill them all. Also Pharaoh's mounted guard flee when Pharaoh is killed (27.5), rather than being killed by Benjamin. Further, there is no attempt by Benjamin to kill Pharaoh's son whilst he lies on the ground— 29.2 is not preserved in L1. Thus, the translator prefers to use the narrative events in the second part of the story, rather than explicit ethical statements, to convey his message.

179.14.11; 15.2, 11, 12x; 16.10; 17.9; 19.5, 7

8.4.5 Conclusions

The story of *Jos. Asen.* is recognisably the same story in L1 as in *KritHer.* A comparative reading shows that L1's abridgement had particular interests: to shorten the story, to focus on the central characters, and the desire to show God as responsible for the progression of the story. He also was disinterested in some well-known elements: the fighting scenes, the extra-biblical identity of Levi and the transformation of Aseneth's beauty. Whilst L1's *Vorlage* may have removed some elements, the redactor must have played an important role.

No firm conclusion can be made about the reason for the translation. The lack of knowledge of the context of the original translation and what (if any) works it was translated with means suggestions are speculative. Further the variety of manuscript contexts that L1 is extant in show its adaptability, which accounts for its popularity. *Jos. Asen.* was probably far better known in the Middle Ages than can be traced today, a conclusion supported by the allusions to *Jos. Asen.* in Middle English.¹⁸⁰

There is much opportunity for further study of L1, particularly into the extant manuscript context and the relationship of L1 to other twelfth-century translations from Greek into Latin. L1 shows how widely a story can travel. Largely ignored so far,¹⁸¹ it may provide a useful case study for the wider reception of extra-biblical works in Medieval England.

180. Burchard 1985:198-9; 1987a:366, 369-85

181. Especially Murdoch (2003).

8.5 The so-called 'early modern Greek' version

8.5.1 Introduction

Family *d*, E and L₁ preserve the majority of the narrative of *Jos. Asen.*. In general, they tell the story in a similar way as well. The final version considered provides a sharp contrast. Not only is the narrative more heavily condensed in many places, but it also represents the most ambitious attempt at reshaping of story. Both manuscripts also preserve miniatures from a cycle that stems from the same source as the miniatures in G. Yet with the fullest manuscript only published in an obscure nineteenth-century Russian journal and neither manuscript being of great value in establishing the earliest form of the text,¹⁸² these two manuscripts have attracted little attention. This sub-section seeks to bring this version back to scholarship's attention, with a focus on the witness of the shorter manuscript (661). An English translation of 661 is provided in appendix 3.

Secondary literature has long referred to the two manuscripts as the 'early modern Greek'. This is unhelpful. Several features of the Greek found in these two manuscripts are found in other manuscripts of *Jos. Asen.*. Instead, the key feature of this version is not that it is 'translated' into a different sort of Greek, but that the story was heavily revised under the influence of contemporary Greek language of the time. That this was a deliberate decision is seen by the fact that these manuscripts are contemporary with *Jos. Asen.* being copied in unrevised versions of the Greek. Further, that the two manuscripts also tell the story in very different ways whilst using a largely overlapping content suggests the story was being treated with a greater freedom than previously it had been. In this section, the manuscripts will be called the "Turkish period revision".¹⁸³ This term reminds readers that an important consideration in dealing with these manuscripts is the story's reinvention for two new contexts.

Two manuscripts provide evidence for the Turkish period revision. The fullest is 671 (MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Roe 5, f.177v-186v). It was written by a certain Georgios, Rhetor of Ainos (near

182. It is only sporadically cited in Burchard (2003a).

183. The joint ancestor of the manuscripts may have come into existence in the late Byzantine Empire, but their present manuscript presentation was shaped by the context of the Turkish period.

Constantinople), dated to 1614.¹⁸⁴ The story's text includes nineteen complete or partially complete miniatures and two blank spaces, which have undergone some modernisation in style due to Ottoman influences. The scribe left space to add several decorated letters, but never did so.¹⁸⁵ The text was published in Istrin 1898:146-79, with corrections in Burchard 1977:77-9.¹⁸⁶ In 671, *Jos. Asen.* is rewritten in the style of a classical novel. Indeed, 671 could be called a *metaphrasis*¹⁸⁷ of the story as the opening chapters share more in common with Chariton's *Challirhoe* than other versions of the story.¹⁸⁸ As the story progresses less is preserved and nothing of chapters 22, 24-5 and 28 is transmitted. From chapter 16 onward abridgement is the more significant than rewriting and, where preserved, the story stays closer to what is found in other versions. A wealth of interesting details are added in reshaping the story. For example, the introduction of a poetic reflection on Aseneth's beauty in the expansion of 1.6. There is no overt Christianisation in the story.

Cox (1969) col. 461 identifies 671 containing 5 works: a collection of Old Testament prophecies relating to Christ (f.1); an exposition of the Decalogue (f.140); St. Athanasios of Alexandria's *Oration concerning the temple of Athena* (f.149); a work by John of Damascus (f.157b); and *Vita S. Iosephi patriarchae* (f.165), which turns out to be *LJos* followed by *Jos. Asen.*. Only the last work is written in two columns, a detail Vikan suggests was inherited from the exemplar.¹⁸⁹ There are numerous miniatures throughout the manuscript, some of which are beautifully painted,¹⁹⁰ but most of a similar standard to the miniatures in *LJos-Jos. Asen.*. 671 came to Oxford with 25 other manuscripts through the diplomat Sir Thomas Roe who was Ambassador to Constantinople from 1621-9.¹⁹¹ Its provenance is unknown.¹⁹²

184. On the inside of the back cover are two lines written in Ottoman Turkish. The first repeats the owner's identity ("Georgaki"). The second line appears to be a dedication: "My soul, my life, my lord, and my emperor [*pad-i shah*], Ali Shah." The author is grateful to Dr Salam Rassi and colleagues for deciphering this text.

185. Vikan 1976a:3, 611-2; Burchard 1977:68-9, 75

186. The present author consulted this manuscript in person.

187. Codoñer 2014:79

188. The assertion of Vikan 1976a:25 that "For the most part, the Oxford text is a condensation of that recorded in McKell [G]..." is incorrect— not least because 671 preserves so much of chapters 2-10, which are reduced to a single paragraph in G.

189. Vikan 1976a:522

190. See especially f.105r (the crucifixion) and f.117r (Jesus opening the gates of death).

191. Mandelbrote 2006:79-81. Roe's adventurous life is surveyed by Strachan (2004).

192. Vikan 1976:618 fn.25 says that "according to a note in the catalogue of the monastic library of Agia Triada on Chalki, many of that foundation's best manuscripts were taken by Sir Thomas Roe in 1628." However, there is nothing to tie this manuscript to Agia Triada. The seal impression on the binding is damaged and has not been deciphered.

The second manuscript witness is 661 (MS Mount Athos, Koutloumousiou, 100, f.37v-43r), dated to the sixteenth century. The text was published in Burchard 1977:69-73.¹⁹³ There are three miniatures included in *Jos. Asen.*, all also found in 671, but they show ever greater influence from Ottoman fashions.¹⁹⁴ The text is about a quarter of the length of 671 and quite different in genre and style. 661 does not include any material from sections omitted by 671. Burchard thinks 661 presupposes the text of 671 in chapters 22-9,¹⁹⁵ but the present author is less certain. The combination of *LJos* and *Jos. Asen.* opens the manuscript. 18 other works are identified which include martyrdoms, theological treatises, homilies and liturgical instructions, and several of these are described by Lambros as 'vernacular' texts.¹⁹⁶ The manuscript is preserved in the Koutloumousiou Monastery on Mount Athos along with some 660 other manuscripts, and it was probably copied there. This ancient monastery owes its prosperity, particularly in the middle ages and after the fall of Constantinople, to relationships with the rulers of Hungro-Wallachia.¹⁹⁷ Several other manuscripts have connections with this region.¹⁹⁸

The younger 671 is a superior text to 661, but their relationship has not yet been satisfactorily resolved. Vikan has described both manuscripts as preserving a 'vernacular' version,¹⁹⁹ which probably stemmed from a vernacular redaction.²⁰⁰ This is imprecise. 671 represents a basic literary version of the story with some features influenced by the contemporary vernacular language of the early Turkish period. 661 is quite different and represents a colloquial retelling of the story without the attempts to introduce literary features.²⁰¹ Burchard considers that because 661 presupposes a version of the story preserved in 671, a later manuscript, there must be at least one intermediary. This probably originated on Mount Athos, but whether the text was closer to other Greek versions or either 661 or 671 is not clear.²⁰² What is clear is that the ancestor manuscript had little interest in

193. I am grateful to Prof. Marc Lauxtermann for the following corrigenda. 72, 21 [μεταυτήν] μετ αυτήν; 72, 22 μετὸ] με τὸ; 73, 13 χρονῶν (Akzent?)] accent is correct and represents Byzantine practice.

194. Pelekanidis et al. 1974:266-7, descriptions pp.456-8.

195. Burchard 1977:73

196. Lambros 1895:283-4 (*3173); Pelekanidis et al. 1974:456

197. Pelekanidis et al. 1975:236-8.

198. Burchard (2008) surveys the links of FW G, the Rumanian version, and a Slav manuscript with Rumania.

199. Vikan 1976b:197

200. Vikan 1976b:196

201. The author is grateful to Professor Marc Lauxtermann for this observation.

202. Burchard 1987a:615

the devotional elements of the story. Being divorced from even a para-liturgical context may account for the adaption that is found.

On the relationship of the Turkish period revision to other versions, early assumptions led later scholars astray. Istrin thought the witnesses he knew of *Jos. Asen.* could be grouped into a long and a short recension. He included the text of 671 in a parallel column to Q in his edition and saw it as a representative of the longer edition. Burchard initially placed these two manuscripts in family *a* following Istrin's lead,²⁰³ also the position accepted by Vikan (1976a). But Burchard 1977:75-6 provided evidence that 671 has shared readings with family *b* and readings differentiating it from other families. This led him to place it in family *b*, although he noted stylistic connections with family *a*. In his reassessment of the tradition, the two manuscripts became part of family *f* and most closely associated with G.²⁰⁴

Fink 2008:63-71 argues that the Greek *Vorlage* of the Turkish period revision contained readings that derived from the PQ strand of family *a*. Mount Athos is the most likely place for this to have happened as P is found there (Q's origins are unknown). Whilst Fink notes the difficulty of drawing firm conclusions given the abridged and linguistically updated nature of 671, she was satisfied that there sufficient examples to make the case. It is beyond the author's scope to assess Fink's conclusion.

Gary Vikan has made the only major contribution to the analysis of the miniatures and the text.²⁰⁵ Through a study of the picture cycle in *LJos—Jos. Asen.* found in G 661 671, Vikan concluded that the ancestor of the "program of text illustration would be expected in the extraordinarily fecund eleventh century".²⁰⁶ This he considered as having more pictures than are now extant on the basis of the unequal number of miniatures preserved across the text. Vikan's study is of great interest but it is not paired with sufficiently detailed investigation of the texts he surveys. Further, the limited access Vikan had to the textual tradition meant some of his assumptions led him astray and his conclusions about the relationship of text and pictures need re-evaluation. If the picture cycle did

203. Burchard 1965:39

204. Burchard 2003a:17-18

205. Vikan (1976a) provides a compelling rebuttal of the article of Pächt and Pächt (1954).

206. Vikan 1976a:568

come into existence in the eleventh century, the nature of the text transmitted within the original picture cycle remains an open question.²⁰⁷

8.5.2 Methodology

The text of 671 was accessed using Istrin (1898), corrected using Burchard 1977:77-9. The manuscript was consulted to view the miniatures. The text for 661 was the edition of Burchard 1977:69-72.²⁰⁸ The two texts were read comparatively to gain an understanding of their relationship.

As the author's focus on 661 was to consider the general nature of this significantly abridged version, only general comments are made on the redaction technique.

8.5.3 Redaction technique

It is a reasonable assumption that 661 and 671 shared a common ancestor. There is sufficient overlap of text that is common to both and different to the rest of the tradition to support this. However, it is difficult to know how representative either manuscript is of that common ancestor. Further, it cannot be determined how far the wording of the common ancestor was modified. 661 does not witness scenes outside of 671, which suggests that the extent of the common ancestor was similar, or possibly a little longer, than 671. If this is the case, the most prominent feature of the redaction of the ancestor was its considerable abridgement of the story. The ancestor probably did not transmit both whole passages of text (e.g., 21.10-21; all of Pharaoh's son's plotting with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah) and many details of the narrative. In some cases the miniatures preserve details no longer extant in the text.²⁰⁹

661 marks a significant further redaction. The redactor appears to have had two aims in mind: first to make the story more accessible for his audience through using colloquial language and concepts. This can also be seen in his explanation of terms that he thought his audience would not understand, for example *εἰδωλωλάτρισα* in 2.3, and the introduction of many vernacular words. Although this was a trait of the common ancestor,²¹⁰ it was taken much further in 661. Secondly, he abridged the story to its bare narrative elements, focused on important scenes. In general, dialogue

207. e.g., Burchard 2003a:18.

208. The author was unable to access microfilm of 661.

209. E.g., In 671 (f.180v column b, matching 8.5) Joseph is shown placing his hand between Aseneth's breasts, a detail not in the text of 671 but found in other versions.

210. 661 and 671 share several 'updated' words, for example the description of the palace as *σπίτι* (661 *σπήτι*), from the Latin *hospital*.

is not included, and the number of prayers was reduced. This suggests that the redactor was interested in the exegetical possibilities that *Jos. Asen.* brought to the biblical text it relates to, rather than its potential devotional opportunities.

In abridging the story, the narrative of 661 is left with many details that do not make sense. For example, Aseneth never changes into mourning clothes, so the angel's instruction for her to change back into the clothes of her former position is odd if the reader does not already know the story. There are also contradictory details: Aseneth and the virgins go out to meet Joseph, then the reader is told that Aseneth meets Joseph as she comes out of the tower. This suggests that the story was rewritten rather carelessly by a writer lacking an eye for narrative detail. That a copyist was able to undertake this kind of redaction also suggests the importance of shortening the narrative to expected audience.

8.5.4 661: the bare bones of the story

661 is the most stripped down version of *Jos. Asen.* surveyed. Burchard 1977:33 notes that in 661 "one sees how poor the storyline of *JosAs* is". The three miniatures embedded in the story, along with their descriptions in the text, could almost provide the story in three lines: i) Concerning when Aseneth saw Joseph and how he pleased her and her repentance over the words which she spoke to her father; ii) Concerning how Joseph went into the house of Aseneth and how they met each other; iii) Concerning how the son of Pharaoh wished that he would overcome Aseneth and Benjamin killed him. This succinct summary hinges on Aseneth's repentance and the angel's confirmation of her acceptance, although both of these aspects of the narrative receive the sparsest treatment in comparison to 671, let alone other versions. The narrative of 661 almost becomes two linked stories based on overcoming challenges to a new life, with Joseph and Aseneth as the central characters.

The story starts with an introductory passage where the writer sets the story in context. In case there is any confusion over which Pentephres is being referred to, the writer tells the reader that it is not the Pentephres that purchased Joseph from the Ishmaelites, but another. This introduction also presents the three characters involved in most of the action: Joseph, Aseneth and Pentephres. It is a notable feature of this version that other characters are removed or downplayed. Simeon,

Jacob and the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah are absent. The angel, Levi and Aseneth's virgin companions have reduced roles.

Many of the scenes and motifs that have been of interest to scholars are no longer found. A few examples help show the extent of the abridgement: there is no reference to the ethical injunction not to return evil for evil; the estate of Aseneth's inheritance is unmentioned; Aseneth is not given a new name; there is no scene with the bees and the honeycomb; Aseneth never presents her sons to Jacob. Additionally, there is no description of Aseneth's tower, the courtyard or her clothing. All these details prove extraneous to the story's purpose: to explain how Joseph came to marry Aseneth.

Whilst the opening summary makes clear that this story is set in the biblical book of Genesis, other biblical allusions are scant. For example, the allusion common in other versions of Pharaoh's son knowing of the deeds of Simeon and Levi at Shechem is absent. Indeed, apart from a reference to the charge brought by Joseph's master's wife, the only additional biblical reference appears to come in Aseneth's prayer in 6.2, with its possible reference to two New Testament passages: 1 Corinthians 7.14 and Hebrews 4.15.

The lack of internal monologue, prayer and psalms is striking. The words of Aseneth's prayer are only given once, after seeing Joseph for the first time. This comes before she has even met him. When the story includes her speaking the emphasis of the story is on Aseneth as a model of piety. Her wearing 'garments of haircloth', ashing her head and performing all the actions of repentance provide an example of action, rather than an opportunity for spiritual empathy. Without the soliloquies and prayers, the story becomes a fast paced adventure.

The absence of division among Jacob's sons focuses the challenge to Joseph and Aseneth's relationship solely on an external actor (Pharaoh's son). This removes opportunity for reflection on how sinful brothers should be treated and unity restored. The lack of any clear religious significance to what is left of chapters 22-29 perhaps accounts for why it was so drastically shortened.

8.5.5 Conclusions

The redaction of the Turkish period revision, and of 661 in particular, focuses the reader on the narrative events of the story of *Jos. Asen.*, principally the way Aseneth came to be the wife of Joseph. In its adaption, 661 shows that once the prayers and soliloquies are removed, the story can have a

new life as an adventure. Stripped of its potentially devotional elements, it is easy to imagine it took a new function for readers. It showed that *Jos. Asen.* could become a historical novella rather than a story where the reader is called to identify with Aseneth's journey to repentance.

8.6 Summary and Conclusions

Comparison of the four abridged versions surveyed shows 9 common characteristics.

1. The most common method of abridgement was to leave out sections of text. Only occasionally was this text summarised or bridged.
2. In the case of *d*, L1 and E, it appears that the redactor abridged his text as he went along without always taking into account the consequences of his action later on. This is seen in the number of occasions where a later passage becomes incoherent because the reader has not been told something earlier in the story.
3. Redactors felt confident to make minor alterations, for example, using alternative verbs or nouns. Apart from the Turkish period revision, they rarely rewrote or reordered text. This shows a conservatism in the methods of redaction and perhaps more respect for their *Vorlagen* than the redactors are credited with.
4. There is minimal evidence of any attempt to obviously Christianise the story. *Jos. Asen.* clearly had significance to the copyists as a work in itself. This is seen in the expense and trouble taken in copying the story and, in the case of the Turkish period revision, in adding miniatures.
5. In the same way, there is no obvious attempt to increase the level of biblical quotation or allusion in the story. In fact, the redaction method used often led to a considerable reduction in biblical allusion through potential opportunities no longer being included.
6. Abridgement in these versions leads to an increased focus on the central narrative events. The result of this is that secondary characters often lose narrative importance or are no longer found. Levi, Simeon, Aseneth's maiden companions, Jacob, the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, the sons of Leah and even the heavenly visitor are commonly affected. Also, the reduced prominence of Aseneth's soliloquies and prayers in chapters 11-13 and 21 means that the devotional possibilities of the text were often reduced.

7. The agency of God rather than the heavenly visitor is made explicit in all four versions. It is God, not the man (or angel), who hears Aseneth's prayer and responds. It appears that this theological principle had become firmly enshrined in the minds of transmitters.
8. Erotic elements were often not included or brushed over, for example: through lack of reference to where Joseph placed his hand in chapter 8, the redirection of Aseneth's gaze, or the description of Aseneth's transformed body.
9. The specifics of movement and location were of little concern to redactors. The upper room of the tower was easily detached from being a pagan temple, the garden often no longer mirrors Eden, and the back-and-forth between Aseneth's chambers is regularly abandoned.

Whilst several common traits can be identified, the wide variety of contexts in which *Jos. Asen.* was read in these versions points to the diverse possibilities for interpretation. In family *d*, *Jos. Asen.* retains a firmly hagiographical context. In contrast, E places the story within an Old Testament interpretive context, possibly a later addition to an expanded Octateuch. In the Turkish period revision, 671 perhaps supposes an exegetical setting, though the case is more open in 661. L1 provides the most difficult context to decipher as the original context of translation of *Jos. Asen.* is highly uncertain. *Jos. Asen.* is found paired with *LJos* in D and the Turkish period revision, and with *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* in L1. Further, there is evidence of the addition of context in L1's 442 which includes a quotation from Peter Comestor's interpretive work on Genesis directly after the story. Finally, the inclusion of miniatures in the Turkish period revision points to a visual context that brings a new dimension of engagement through updating the clothing and even scenery to contemporary fashion, perhaps suggesting a connection with present circumstances.

In conclusion, the four abridged versions surveyed here highlight the significance of the context *Jos. Asen.* was used in for the work of the redactors and copyists. Suggestions can be made on redaction characteristics but little is known of the context of redaction and transmission. It is worth noting that the original provenance of the majority of the manuscripts surveyed is completely unknown.

Looking across the four versions, it is not their textual fluidity that is significant, but rather their homogeneity. The versions are surprisingly similar, as are the redactional concerns that can be discerned. The common features of redaction found in such wildly different redactions suggests that

these features should be expected in other versions of the story and close attention paid to the how they are used. Particular details that are not found in these versions need to be treated with care if claims are to be made about their centrality to unlocking the story; generations of Christians engaged with the story sufficiently without them and still went on to copy it for a new generation.

Chapter 9

Summary and Conclusions

9.1 Overview

This thesis set out to do two things: first, to consider how the retelling of *Jos. Asen.* in different contexts affected its interpretation; and secondly, what this suggested about the interests of the redactors. To achieve these aims, it focused on the manuscripts wherever possible. It sought to draw attention to both similarities and divergences between versions. But more importantly, it looked at the Christian contexts that influenced transmission. This thesis provides a case study that can be used for comparison with other textual traditions among the Jewish Pseudepigrapha.

In the introduction, the author started by highlighting how scholarship needs to embrace complexity when dealing with a work like *Jos. Asen.*. It noted that as scholars are largely ignorant of the original context of composition and most stages of development, there needs to be caution in categorising the story or making overhasty comparisons. From there, it surveyed the extant witnesses before introducing modern theories of the text's (or better, texts') development and themes in modern research. The key findings of this survey were that: there is an over-reliance on a string of assumptions regarding provenance; scholars are too quick to turn speculative interpretation into conclusions using scanty evidence; there is a tendency to parallelomania; and there is insufficient engagement in secondary literature with recent text-critical work. It finished by outlining how the present author's investigation and methodology seeks to avoid these pitfalls and cast new light on the story.

The first section considered the two most ancient translations of *Jos. Asen.*. Chapter 2 dealt with the Syriac version which, despite preserving the oldest extant witness to the story, has received little attention. Translation technique and transmission context were shown to be important factors for understanding the nature of the textual witness to the story. Whilst the Syriac version is transmitted within two different and explicitly Christian settings, there was no apparent effort to make the story more obviously Christian. The earliest Syriac manuscript from around 600CE,

17,202, also pointed to the particular reasons for why the story was transmitted: as para-biblical interpretation. It provides the only instance where *Jos. Asen.* has prefatory letters relating to its translation and interpretation. Yet 7,190 points to the ease with which *Jos. Asen.* could be read outside this context: it was transmitted in a theological miscellany without reference to it being a translation.

Chapter 3 was devoted to the Armenian version and again highlighted the importance of translation technique when considering the textual witness. In contrast to the Syriac version, for which the translator and approximate date of translation is known, the impetus for and original context of the Armenian version are uncertain. There is good reason to think that it was included in an Armenian biblical manuscript at translation or very soon after. But, as with the Syriac version, its subsequent transmission took it into new contexts. The tendencies identified in the text point to the importance of *Jos. Asen.*'s exegetical role for the Genesis narrative, rather than it transmitting specific doctrinal opinions.

Chapter 4 provided a comparison of the Syriac and Armenian versions. It highlighted the importance of redaction within a translation and the dangers of broad statements about the relative importance of any version in reconstructing the earliest achievable text. Further, chapter 4 reiterated the importance of transmission context within the discussion of versions of the story. Read together, the two versions showed how similar interests could be written into the story in subtle and different ways.

The second section focused on the Greek manuscripts of the three longest families of the story. Chapter 5 considered F, W and G from family *f*. These manuscripts are significant because they are the closest Greek witness to the fullest ancient versions: Syriac, Armenian and Latin 2 (L2). The chapter showed that speaking of the manuscripts as a 'family' is problematic. F and W, including their explicitly Christian exhortatory insertions, are very different to G, with its reshaped opening chapters, often different text and miniatures. Each manuscript reflects the different concerns of their redactors. They point to the way that discussing manuscripts as a family can obscure their considerable diversity.

Chapter 6 considered family *Mc*. It focused on how the story received minor stylistic improvements, most likely within a process to collect together saints' lives. This version was transmitted both within a collection of saints' *Lives*, but also with assorted theological works. It raises interest-

ing questions about how this version was read in those contexts. The revision made some minor stylistic alterations to the text but also many small details that point to the concerns of the redactor. The subsequent incorporation of a new ending, extant in manuscripts H and K, was placed in the context of a redactor who wanted to limit the story to its biblical framework.

In chapter 7, family *a*, the Greek family with the most extant witnesses, was considered. It was argued that this family is also a metaphrastic revision, revised independently of *Mc*. Further, it was redacted under the influence of a desire within the Byzantine empire to gather saints' lives together to be placed in a *menologion*. From this context, the story then became included in what are today called 'miscellaneous' collections. The new ending that was added in family *a* manuscripts points to the story being read as biblical interpretation.

The third section looked at four abridged versions of *Jos. Asen.*: family *d*, E, Latin 1 (L1), and the Turkish period revision. Each of these versions reshaped the story, producing a shorter text with its own distinct messages. The individual versions are of great interest in themselves, for example: the presentation of Aseneth's prayers in family *d*, the recasting of Joseph and Levi in E, the attitude to violence in L1, or the partial recasting of the story in form of the Greek novel in 671. But when they are compared, their significance becomes apparent as shared characteristics appear. In particular, it is notable that the most common method of abridgement was to skip sections of text, and it was relatively unusual for passages to be rewritten or expanded. This fact was also found in section 2, and is a useful consideration for editing *Jos. Asen.*. Redactors tended to content themselves with minor alterations and only the redactor of 671 set out to completely re-envision the story.

None of these conclusions are ground-breaking. Instead, they focus attention on how the context of transmission influenced redactional decisions. This remains a blind spot for much secondary literature on *Jos. Asen.* and the wider field. Despite studies such as Burchard (1987a) on *Jos. Asen.*, Bergren (1996) looking at Christian influence on daughter versions of *4 Ezra*, or Harlow (1996)'s chapter considering *3 Baruch* as a Christian text, insufficient attention has been paid to transmission. The present writer hopes that this study will stimulate fresh engagement with all the extant tradition, not just what is perceived as the earliest achievable form.

9.2 Themes

Whilst investigating how different versions adapted *Jos. Asen.*, common themes became apparent across the study. Four are of particular interest in thinking about the transmission and reception of *Jos. Asen.*: how the story ends; the portrayal of Levi; how potentially erotic details were dealt with; and evidence of explicit Christianisation.

First, where and how the story was brought to a close. Modern readers are used to the story finishing at 29.9 with the report of Joseph's forty-eight year rule over Egypt before he passed the royal diadem to Pharaoh's grandson. However, some redactors or copyists chose an earlier point in the story. The most popular alternative endpoint was 21.9. This is found in the new ending to HK, within the Armenian tradition (Armenian family *g* and part of *b*), and one side of the L2 tradition (435&).¹ 21.9 comes after the report of the wedding of Joseph and Aseneth and announces the birth of Manasseh and Ephraim. It is an end point that limits the story to the biblical events of Aseneth's life and suggests *Jos. Asen.* was principally associated with biblical interpretation in the mind of redactors. The importance of this is supported by 661 importing 21.9 to the end of the story and using it as a closing remark after 29.9.

Another obvious point to finish the story was 22.10, as found in Armenian family *c*. Here Aseneth has been received by Jacob in a scene with strong parallels to Genesis 48, where Jacob accepts Joseph's sons. But the reason for other end points to *Jos. Asen.* is not always as clear. No Armenian manuscript goes beyond 29.7. Thus the story ends with the announcement of Pharaoh's son's death, but no report of Joseph's regency. The single manuscript representing one side of the Armenian tradition, 332 (Armenian family *f*), ends at 28.13, which is unsatisfactory. Other endpoints seem to be the result of damage to the manuscript (e.g., J finishes mid-word at the end of a folio (16.10)), or the disinterest of the scribe (e.g., the single manuscript of Armenian family *h* breaks off at 23.6; C finishes in 10.5 and R at 5.1).

The desire to help readers see *Jos. Asen.* in terms of biblical interpretation is also found in what was appended after the final verses. HK have summary comments on the example of Joseph's trust in God. FW have an exhortatory passage that reminds readers of the example of the biblical Joseph.

1. Fink 2008:198

APQ include a slightly altered quotation from Genesis 50.22b-26 followed by a report of Aseneth's death and burial.

Secondly, the portrayal of Levi. In the fuller versions of the story, Levi has an extra-biblical persona as a prophet and ethical teacher. This is seen especially in Syriac, Armenian and family *a*. But in other versions Levi has a reduced role. In FW much is preserved, but not all. For instance, at 22.13 the narrator no longer reports that Levi reveals the heavenly mysteries to Aseneth, and at 26.6 the means by which Levi knows that Aseneth is in trouble is not explained. Levi's role is further restricted in E where he is only compared to a prophet and loses his special relationship with Aseneth. But the most systematic attempt at excising the extra-biblical character of Levi comes in L1, where he is no longer a prophet. Instead, in 23.13, Levi instructs Pharaoh's son that he was never entitled to Aseneth, whatever Pharaoh's son may claim. The explanation for the reduction in Levi's character and importance could be a loss of interest in a figure that held little importance for the redactor or his audience. It could also be to avoid having Levi take attention away from Aseneth as the central character.

Thirdly, *Jos. Asen.* contains a number of details and actions that could be erotically construed. Two examples help demonstrate how different events were dealt with. In 7.3 the narrator tells how the women of Egypt desired to sleep with Joseph. Redactors either included it (L1 E *a d* 671, and 332 alone in the Armenian tradition), or did not (Syriac, the remainder of the Armenian tradition, FW *c*).² This binary approach to including an event is seen particularly in relation to kissing (e.g.: 4.5; 19.11; 20.5; 21.7; 22.9; 28.14).

In 8.5, Joseph halts Aseneth's advance as she goes to kiss him by placing his hand on her chest. A range of reactions are found that can only be reactions against what redactors and copyists found. *KritHer* follows manuscripts APQ of family *a* which reads: "Joseph stretched out his right hand and put it on her chest between her two breasts, and her breasts were already standing upright like handsome apples."³ But whether this was the original simile or a literary addition by the redactor of *a* is uncertain. The Syriac has Joseph place his hands "between her two young breasts". L1 has

2. G and 661 do not preserve the passage in which this stands.

3. Burchard's translation.

the narrator remark that "her breasts were visibly standing out." E notes "and they were already present."

The presence of a description of Aseneth's breasts clearly troubled redactors and other versions sought ways to avoid drawing attention to them. The Armenian version and family *d* admits that Joseph placed his hand on Aseneth's chest, but give no description of what he discovers. Family *c* retreats further, merely saying that Joseph placed his hand "on her". And manuscript C (family *a*) has no description at all. Neither 661 or 671 include the passage, and G makes no reference to it in its revised introduction. In contrast, and apparently missing the point of the scene, FW report that Joseph and Aseneth kiss each other!

As with this event from 8.5, copyists were prepared to amend passages that involved potentially erotic description. Similar variations are found in 15.14 (where Aseneth supplicates the angel), 16.16 (where the angel describes how Aseneth will be transformed), 18.9 (where the narrator describes Aseneth's transformed body), and 19.10-11 (where Joseph calls Aseneth to him and imparts spiritual gifts through kisses). Redactors and copyists appear to have accepted that some description was necessary to support the narrative. In some cases they updated a reference, such as in 15.14 where L1 has Aseneth grasp the angel's cloak in supplication rather than knees. In others they adopted less erotic language. For example, in 18.9 family *a* chose a less erotic simile for Aseneth's lips.

The motivation for changes to potentially erotic details is best located in the monastic context in which *Jos. Asen.* was transmitted and used. Redactors and copyists were caught between the desire to preserve a work that was sufficiently spiritually beneficial to copy, whilst avoiding transmitting details that could distract readers from their vocation to prayer and holiness.

Finally, explicit Christianisation of *Jos. Asen.* is minimal. The story appears to have sustained readers' interest largely as it was received. Thus it appears that the religious context that the story was read in was more significant than its assumed religious background. In the Greek tradition, this religious context was strengthened by the regular presence of a lector's request for a blessing at the start of the story and a doxology at the end.⁴ These reinforced a Christian context for the reader, most likely in a monastery, also supported by the works surrounding *Jos. Asen.*

4. Burchard (2003a) does not record the doxologies.

The most explicit Christianisation of the story comes through the insertion of exhortatory passages in FW.⁵ These show how the story was read in at least one context and how the character of Joseph could be used as an example in the monastic life. Aside from these insertions, only occasional words have been changed. For example, in 4.1 Aseneth is described as being adorned "like a bride of God". PQ changes this to "of Christ". This suggests that context of transmission rather than explicit Christianisation should be regarded as the key feature of a Christian text.

9.3 Extensions to present research

Jos. Asen. is a popular work among scholars, yet a good deal of basic textual work remains to be undertaken. Ten projects are proposed that would assist in understanding the development of *Jos. Asen.*:

1. The similar textual witness of the Syriac, Armenian and L2 versions are fundamental to the Burchard-Fink theory of textual development. To date there is no extended investigation into the shared witness of the three and due to the restrictions of this project, the present author was not able to undertake it. Editions are available for all three versions to make this possible without preparatory manuscript work. Chapter 4 provided a tentative step in this direction.
2. The Armenian tradition is the broadest and richest of the different versions of *Jos. Asen.*. Burchard (2010) was a huge step forward in comparison to what was available before. But further research will unearth many treasures. For example, the Armenian miniature tradition, independent of the Greek tradition, has not been studied. Little work has been done on the context of *Jos. Asen.*'s transmission. And plenty of scope remains in investigating the redactional interests in the different families of the Armenian tradition.
3. Further investigation is needed to establish the likely nature of the common ancestor of families *a* and *d*. To do this, a new edition of family *d* is needed. This will require an evaluation of the relationship of B to DSlav, and to assessing whether the copyist of B (or an ancestor) wrote their version of the story under the influence of a second model text, from family *a*, as Fink has argued.

5. The Rumanian version shares a common ancestor with FW and includes an abridged form of them. See Burchard 2008:543.

4. More work is needed into how the abridged versions of *Jos. Asen.* interpreted the story. Section 3 was only able to cover the more interesting features. The results from the present writer's investigation would be enhanced by comparison with the Slavonic version.
5. With some notable exceptions, surprisingly little is known about the majority of the manuscripts of *Jos. Asen.*. Greater study of individual manuscripts would help provide clues for comparing the influence of copyists and the links between other works and *Jos. Asen.*.
6. A Latin abridgement of L1 has been identified in three manuscripts but remains unedited. An edition of these is needed together with an investigation of its contents. The results will provide useful insight into the reception of Latin 1, especially in comparison to Vincent of Beauvais' abridgement.
7. The picture cycle found in G, 661 and 671 needs to be revisited. Vikan (1976a) remains an important contribution to the field. However, knowledge of the textual tradition has improved considerably in the last forty years and with it the opportunity to consider the relationship of the miniatures to the text.
8. Fink's reinvestigation of the second half of the palimpsest M enabled considerably more text to be read. A similar reinvestigation is needed for the extant text of 1.1-16.12. This would allow a better comparison of M with the three family *c* manuscripts, and would help to better understand the relationship of M to HJK.
9. 671 witnesses a fascinating attempt to recast *Jos. Asen.* in the style of a Greek novel. This points to the way that altering the genre of a work can profoundly reshape its interpretation. Whilst 671 is an extreme case, it highlights the need to be aware of what redactors conceive themselves to be doing. A useful investigation could be carried out comparing the Turkish period revision, family *a* and the Syriac, for example.
10. The Greek manuscripts preserve differing punctuation, which was largely ignored in this project. The punctuation provided by a copyist can assist both in shaping the sense of a passage and in indicating the place for pauses and breathing when reading the text aloud.⁶ An investig-

6. On the importance of punctuation, see Bourgain (2011).

ation of the punctuation of individual manuscripts could give further clues with regard to the way the story was read and the intended audience.

Three other projects would assist in understanding how the broad swath of literature Bovon describes as 'useful to the soul',⁷ that between canonical Scripture and the profane, was transmitted, redacted and reused. These projects hold out the hope of recovering another piece of the jigsaw for understanding how Christians, and monks in particular, interpreted the Bible and sought to apply it in their lives.

1. An investigation into the textual tradition of *Life of Joseph (LJos)* and the relationship of its transmission to that of *Jos. Asen.*. As yet there has been no detailed investigation into the textual tradition of *LJos*. It would be useful to investigate: whether *LJos* supplies any evidence for when the coupling of the works took place; whether *LJos* provides evidence for there being two transliterations, as proposed by Burchard; and whether the same version of it is found, for example, in C and R. These are two closely related manuscripts of family *a*. Was *LJos* transmitted from the same ancestor as *Jos. Asen.*? Further, the Burchard-Fink model of textual development proposes that *Mc* and *ad* share a common ancestor. It would be interesting, for example, to know the relationship of *LJos* in M and CR to see whether it underwent a redaction process similar to *Jos. Asen.* in each case.
2. This thesis did not consider the impact of reading *LJos* and *Jos. Asen.* together. By placing the two works together, the redactor or copyist decided to influence the reader's understanding of the events and/or characters. It is conceivable that readers would bring certain concepts from the reading of one text to the other.⁸ This is an important factor that deserves further consideration, both in what the original coupling may have looked like, and how it is found in the extant tradition. One reading that is explicit in *LJos* that could easily have been transferred to *Jos. Asen.* is Joseph as a type of Christ.⁹ This would have helped influence an explicitly Christian reading of *Jos. Asen.*.

7. Bovon 2012:128; 2015:185

8. For a comparative example, see Burris (2007) on the placement of the *History of Thecla* within the Syriac *Book of Women*.

9. This is a common identification in Early Christian literature. See, for example: Dulaey (1989); Heal (2002); Hollander 1998:259-60.

3. Beside *LJos*, a number of hagiographical and theological works are found in more than one manuscript containing *Jos. Asen.* across the tradition. It would be interesting to correlate the textual developments of these works with *Jos. Asen.*¹⁰

9.4 Concluding Remarks

Secondary literature on *Jos. Asen.* has long assumed, at least implicitly, that text-critical work on the story has been completed. Further, interest in the transmission history has been minimal. For too long the manuscript witnesses have been ignored. As a result, scholarship has become fixated on issues that will not be resolved with the present evidence, or has turned to increasingly speculative proposals. Hubbard sums up the problem well:

While these 'ineffable mysteries' (16.14) may have been revealed to Aseneth, modern scholarship, barring a similar angelic visitation, will probably have to content itself with conjecture.¹¹

The manuscript witness to *Jos. Asen.* still holds many opportunities for understanding how the story was treated after antiquity. A good case can be made for the story being used to enrich readers' appreciation of the Genesis narrative. It could be seen to support orthodox practices of repentance and uphold the place of the Sacraments. Further, it posed little threat of fostering heretical opinions. Tentatively grasping how *Jos. Asen.* was read in the contexts it was actually received in may shed light on those it is assumed to come from, and reveal something more of the mysteries scholars seek to resolve.

10. This would provide a useful case-study to compare with the conclusions Ehrhard (1936-52) reached in his monumental study into the transmission of hagiographic and homiletic literature in the Greek Church.

11. Hubbard 1997:110

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