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Preface

Jómsvíkinga saga (henceforth JS) is preserved in manuscripts dating from the thirteenth century onwards and was probably written around 1200, and may very well have been one of the first epic prose texts to have been composed in Old Icelandic as it contains material from earlier sources. It is an important work in several respects, not least as regards the history of Denmark and the West Slavic area on the southern Baltic coast.

As far as genre is concerned, the saga stands outside the conventional division between ‘historical’ and ‘literary’ texts that is used in discussions of Icelandic sagas; JS blends historical material, such as the genealogy of the early kings of Denmark, with a strong element of fantasy. This is relevant not only in evaluating the status of the saga as a historical source, but also in considering its transmission, since it was mined at an early stage of its genesis as a source for texts of a more serious historical intent. Most of the characters and events in the narrative are historically attested, yet the narrative seems intended largely for entertainment. It is thus important to evaluate not only the degree of historical authenticity in the text, but also the attitudes it reveals among its intended (Icelandic) audience towards the issue of Scandinavian-Slavic contact.

Confidence in Old Norse sagas as historical sources has been declining ever since the beginning of the twentieth century. The saga-historicity debate has deprived sagas of most of their historical value, and modern historical research often prefers to ignore these sources. Yet archaeological finds suggest that relations between the West Slavic areas on the southern Baltic shore and Scandinavia were extensive in the late Viking Age and High Middle Ages, something that is supported by the evidence of the saga. Moreover, archaeological research seems to indicate that JS might contain a nucleus of some historical value. The need for interdisciplinary research on JS and its historical background as well as an evaluation of the available interdisciplinary data is therefore pressing.

One of the main topics for discussion concerning the saga's description of events as compared with modern archaeological findings is the state of relations in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries between the Danish and Norwegian kings on the one hand and Pomerania and Jómshorg, the Jómshorgs' legendary stronghold, on the other. We clearly need to reassess what we thought we knew about JS and its usefulness as a historical source in light of new data. Furthermore, JS is an important source for the period when it was written, viz. c. 1200. A closer study of its versions might show how the legend of the Jómshorgs continued its existence in oral and written traditions even after the Danish expansion into Rügen and Pomerania in the late twelfth century, and what place the Jómshorgs and the area around Jómshorg had in the Scandinavians' worldview.

The identification and localization of Jómshorg is a central problem in archaeological research related to JS. The town of Wolin in Polish Pomerania has for a long time been considered one of the most probable candidates, which has resulted in extensive archaeological excavations being undertaken there since the 1930s. These excavations have led researchers to the discouraging conclusion that looking for the legendary stronghold of the Jómshorgs on the Dziwna River is futile.

However, recent archaeological excavations undertaken in the town seem to have opened up new perspectives for linking the Jómshorg legend with early medieval Wolin. A substantial quantity of various high status objects related to Scandinavia (tools, pendants, game pieces, weapons) has been found. All of these objects are dated to the period c. 970/980–c. 1020, the time when, according to JS, the Jómshorgs were active in the region. The objects' ornamentation suggests that they were manufactured in Wolin by Scandinavian craftsmen for Scandinavian customers. Recipients of these precious and exclusive objects could have constituted a close group of high-ranking warriors coming from Scandinavia.

A presentation and evaluation of the new archaeological data from Wolin is vital. If the preliminary interpretation of the data that suggests the presence of a Scandinavian warrior group in Wolin in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries is plausible, then there is definite potential for a breakthrough in JS research especially with regard to the saga's historicity. The main topics for discussion are the possible presence, status and function of a Scandinavian warrior group in tenth–eleventh-century Wolin as well as this group's influence on the oral and written saga tradition. The onomastic perspective is also to be taken into account

since it has the potential to elucidate the problems of the identification, localization, and etymology of Jónsborg.

More recent research on the relations between West Slavs and Scandinavians as depicted in JS is not generally known or available to the scholarly or general audience in a row of European countries, where such a source might be of interest, including Finland, the Czech Republic, Poland, Russia, and Sweden. This situation could be improved by translating JS from Old Norse into a number of European languages to make the text more widely available and thus stimulate future research on the saga and related philological, literary, historical, and archaeological problems. Furthermore, this could even open up new fields of study in the countries where the saga was not available before.

Translating JS implies understanding and interpreting the text and its different contexts, while transferring them into the target language. The interpretation of the saga and thus the credibility of the finished translations are ultimately dependent on the available research findings, making it necessary to combine translation work with research. Important aspects include the choice of the original text for translation among the available versions and manuscripts as well as a scholarly justification for such a choice; the interdependence of JS translation and research; the choice of appropriate target groups and the consequences of this for the translation process, and the rendering of Old Norse proper names into the target languages.

New investigations of JS would change the existing, sometimes mono-disciplinary approach to studying Old Norse sagas in general and JS in particular, and moreover, renewed work might challenge the existing saga-research ‘axioms’. This is the common theme of this year’s issue of *Scripta Islandica*. It contains ten contributions that analyse the saga from the angles described above. Some of the contributions are accompanied by brief reactions and comments by other scholars. This volume is not a conference report, but it is the result of a workshop entitled “West Slavic-Scandinavian relations and *Jónsvíkinga saga*”, organized at Uppsala University 27–28 April 2012. Some of the speakers were encouraged to submit reworked versions of their papers that would be suitable for publication as articles and that were subject to the journal’s usual referee process. The editing has been carried out by Jonathan Adams, Alexandra Petrulevich (the main organizer of the workshop) and Henrik Williams, in collaboration with the main editors of *Scripta Islandica*. This preface includes contributions by Sirpa Aalto, Alison Finlay, Jakub Morawiec and Marie Novotná.

It is my hope that the published contributions will show what kind of JS-related research is still needed to fill in the gaps in our knowledge about this saga and its textual, literary, historical and archaeological context, and that it will moreover provide an interdisciplinary perspective in order to identify potential opportunities for further research on *Jómsvíkinga saga*.

Alexandra Petrusevich

The Manuscripts of *Jómsvíkinga Saga* A Survey

PÓRDÍS EDDA JÓHANNESDÓTTIR & VETURLIÐI ÓSKARSSON

1 Introduction

Jómsvíkinga saga (JS) exists in five different redactions, four in Icelandic and one in a Latin translation.¹ Furthermore, accounts of events and persons in JS are found in the kings' saga collections *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla*, as well as in the so-called *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason*. JS itself may be divided thematically into three parts. The first part consists of tales of the Danish kings until King Haraldr Bluetooth Gormsson († c. 985/986) (this part is lacking in one of the redactions, see § 2.5). The second part focuses mainly on the Danish chieftains Vagn Ákason and Pálnatóki, who, according to the saga, founded Jómsborg.² The third part is dedicated to the Jómsvíkings' battle at Hjørungavágr, where they were defeated. Overviews of the saga can be found, for example, in Jakob Benediktsson 1962 and Ólafur Halldórsson 1993: 343–44 (with a very good bibliography).

The following survey aims to present an overview of the preservation of the saga and all its manuscripts, including paper manuscripts. The text tradition of the saga is complicated, “among the most complex in the

¹ We may not be fully consistent in our use of the terms *redaction* and *version* in this article. A short but informative discussion of these two terms can be found in Kalinke 1985: 346–47.

² We base our division of JS into a first and second part on the distinction made between the two parts in AM 291 4to at the beginning of chapter 8, where it reads that “Nú hefst upp annar þáttur sögunnar” ‘now starts the second part of the story’ (Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 100).

history of Icelandic literature” according to Ólafur Halldórsson (1993: 343), and will only be touched on superficially.

It is generally assumed that a large number of Icelandic manuscripts have been lost over time, and it is entirely unknown how many manuscripts of JS existed in the (late) Middle Ages. What has been preserved to the present are three pre-Reformation vellum manuscripts, one vellum manuscript from the mid-sixteenth century, the Latin translation also from the sixteenth century (preserved in younger copies), and more than twenty copies of these. This is in itself not a small number, but what is interesting to note is how many of these younger copies were made in Denmark and Sweden, rather than in Iceland.

The following survey will hopefully assist readers of the other articles in this issue of *Scripta Islandica* as well as others interested in this saga to navigate its complex manuscript tradition.

2 Different versions

It seems that tales of the Jómsvíkings originally existed in two versions — or split into two versions at an early stage. In order to simplify things, we will call these versions Primary version I and Primary version II. The difference between the preserved versions lies principally in the phrasing and style, rather than in significant changes in the saga’s course of events.

Primary version I has not been preserved in its entirety, but is represented by the accounts of the Jómsvíkings found in *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* and also partly in JS in AM 510 4to and the Latin translation.

The text of *Fagrskinna* was compiled around 1220 in Norway, supposedly by an Icelander (see, for example, Finnur Jónsson 1902–03: 80–113; Bjarni Einarsson 1985: lxxxvi, and Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir 1994; for a recent discussion, see Sigurjón Páll Ísaksson 2012). Accounts related to JS are mainly found in the part of *Fagrskinna* that deals with Hákon jarl Sigurðarson (c. 937–95), more specifically in chapters 17–20 in the text critical edition from 1902–03 (Finnur Jónsson), and chapters 19–22 in the (half-popularized) Íslenzk fornrit edition from 1985 (Bjarni Einarsson). The two medieval manuscripts of the *Fagrskinna* text, which are known to have existed, fell prey to the fire of Copenhagen in 1728, and the text is only preserved in seventeenth-century copies (Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir 1994).

In Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla*, the Jómsvíkings make their entrance in the saga of King Óláfr Tryggvason, that is in chapters 34–42 of Íslenzk fornrit 26 (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 1941). As is well-known, *Heimskringla* is also mainly preserved in late paper manuscripts and not in medieval vellum manuscripts (see, for example, Louis-Jensen 1977: 16 ff.; *Heimskringla* — Lykilbók, lxxxii ff.).

Furthermore, in the *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason* (*Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta*, edited by Ólafur Halldórsson 1958; compare Ólafur Halldórsson 2000), a compilation from the early fourteenth century, the chapters corresponding to 34–42 in *Heimskringla* (84–90 in the *Greatest saga*) seem to reflect a redaction of JS related to the one preserved in AM 291 4to (Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 15). The text is on pp. 172–200 in the 1958 edition and on pp. 11–33 in the 2000 edition (normalized text); see further Ólafur Halldórsson's comments in the 2000 edition on pp. [4], 75–84, and 92.

The version, which is here called Primary version II, is represented by the closely related texts in AM 291 4to and Flateyjarbók (GKS 1005 fol.), as well as the shortened redaction in the manuscript Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7.

These two primary versions, I and II, are believed to have led to a hybrid version represented by the text in AM 510 4to and a Latin translation by the sixteenth–seventeenth-century scholar Arngrímur Jónsson the Learned. Each version has developed in a somewhat different way, as will be discussed better below.

We will now turn our focus to the manuscripts containing each of the five main redactions of JS. First, in § 2.1, we discuss the version preserved in AM 291 4to, the oldest manuscript containing the saga (c. 1275–1300). This text is possibly closest to the original. After a short discussion in § 2.2 of two sections of JS in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* by Oddr Snorrason (c. 1190), we turn in § 2.3 to the JS version in Flateyjarbók (late fourteenth century) and its copies. This version is closely related to the text in AM 291 4to. In § 2.4 we discuss a third and shorter redaction of the saga which is preserved in the Stockholm manuscript, Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7, from the beginning of the fourteenth century, and in various copies of it. In § 2.5 we discuss the manuscripts of the fourth and last version of JS in Icelandic, the hybrid text preserved in AM 510 4to (mid-sixteenth century), and in copies of that manuscript. Finally, in § 2.6, we turn shortly to the Latin translation of JS from the late sixteenth century. This translation is thought to have been made from the text in an otherwise unknown thirteenth-century manuscript, closely related to the text in the oldest manuscript, AM 291 4to.

2.1 *Jómsvíkinga saga* in AM 291 4to

The main manuscript representing Primary version II is AM 291 4to, a vellum manuscript measuring approx. 21.1×13.2 cm and comprising thirty-eight folios. It dates from the last quarter of the thirteenth century (Kålund 1905, nr. 30; Hreinn Benediktsson 1965: L; ONP, Registre).

Peter Foote (1959: 29) argued that AM 291 4to is a copy of a manuscript that dates from before c. 1230. Professor Árni Magnússon obtained the manuscript from Sveinn Torfason (c. 1662–1725) in Gaulverjabær, southern Iceland (see Kålund 1889: 538), probably before 1709. Sveinn Torfason's father was the Reverend Torfi Jónsson, the nephew of the manuscript collector Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson of Skálholt (1605–75). The bishop left much of his manuscript collection to Torfi, and it is not unlikely that AM 291 4to was part of that gift. (Compare footnote 3.) It is possible that the manuscript derives from northern Iceland, as Ólafur Halldórsson has suggested (1969: 8–9). Sveinn Torfason was the intendant of the old monastery of Munkaþverá in northern Iceland from 1695 until his death, and it is known that he obtained some manuscripts there. A probable northern Icelandic origin is also supported by a marginalium in the manuscript, apparently from the second half of the fourteenth century, that comprises a certain personal name which Ólafur Halldórsson believes may refer to the same person as is mentioned in two charters from the last decades of the fourteenth century, both written in central northern Iceland. (See references in Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 8.)

The manuscript had thus been in Iceland for at least four hundred years before it eventually ended up in Árni Magnússon's collection in Copenhagen. As Rasmus Rask and Carl Christian Rafn pointed out in 1828 (FMS 11), no copies of it are known to exist. In light of how old AM 291 4to is, and how many copies exist of manuscripts with other versions of the saga, it is interesting, and perhaps a bit surprising, that this redaction of JS remains accessible to us in just one single manuscript.

The JS redaction that is preserved in AM 291 4to is generally considered to be the closest to the lost original text. This is a reasonable assumption since AM 291 4to is the oldest manuscript containing the saga, and the redaction in it is complete and contains the entire text of the saga (see, for example, Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 1937: 203; Blake 1962: xix, and Ólafur Halldórsson 1993: 343). Not all scholars have, however, agreed upon this and it has been argued that other redactions are closer to the original. Thus, Lee M. Hollander (1917: 210) and Finnur Jónsson (1923: 655–56)

believed that the text in Sthm. Perg. 4:o nr 7 (see § 2.4) better reflected the original text, while Sofus Larsen (1928: 57–58) argued that this was true of AM 510 4to (see § 2.5). Gustav A. Gjessing (1877: xvii) and Gustav Storm (1883: 244–45), on the other hand, claimed that the text in the (now lost) manuscript that Arngrímur Jónsson the Learned used for his translation was closest to the original. (On the translation, see § 2.6.)

The text of AM 291 4to was first edited by Rasmus Rask and Carl Christian Rafn in 1828 in the eleventh volume of the Fornmanna sögur series, then again by Carl af Petersens in 1882 in an excellent text critical edition, and lastly by Ólafur Halldórsson 1969 in a trustworthy half-popularized edition. The first page of the manuscript is unreadable because of wear, and Ólafur Halldórsson supplements it in his edition with the corresponding text in Flateyjarbók. The last page is also difficult to read and Ólafur fills in unreadable words with text from Flateyjarbók or with his own emendations, while af Petersens' edition only reproduces what he was able to make out. One folio has been lost from the end of the manuscript, corresponding to 1½ to 2 pages of text (af Petersens 1882: iii).

A fairly good description of AM 291 4to and its orthography is found in af Petersens' edition (1882) and also in an article by Peter G. Foote (1959). Ólafur Halldórsson (1969: 7–9) has a short description of the manuscript in his edition with an account of its provenance in Iceland. The 1828 edition (FMS 11) has a short but interesting description of some orthographic peculiarities and is worth looking at. A full glossary of the manuscript was published 1956, *Glossar till codex AM 291, 4:to*, prepared by Ludvig Larsson before 1908 and edited by Sture Hast.

2.2 Intermezzo: AM 310 4to

Use has been made of two sections from the Primary version II of JS in the saga of King Óláfr Tryggvason which is ascribed to the Benedictine monk Oddr Snorrason. Oddr is supposed to have composed the saga in Latin in the last decades of the twelfth century, perhaps around 1190 (*Íslensk bókmenntasaga* 1: 454, and Andersson 2004: 139). The Latin text is not extant and the saga has only been preserved in vernacular translations. The main manuscripts of this *Óláfs saga* are AM 310 4to, from c. 1250–75, and Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 18, from c. 1300 (Finnur Jónsson 1932: III–VII; Ólafur Halldórsson 2006: cxliii–clii). These manuscripts contain different redactions of Oddr's saga and the two JS sections in question are only found in AM 310 4to.

Oddr Snorrason's *Óláfs saga* was edited by Finnur Jónsson in 1932 and more recently by Ólafur Halldórsson in the Íslenzk fornrit series as volume 25 (2006). The JS sections are on pp. 47–53 and 109–12 in the older edition and pp. 169–75 and 228–30 in the more recent one. In the first section, King Haraldr Gormsson and Hákon jarl Sigurðarson fight King Óláfr Tryggvason and the Emperor Otto II, when the latter two forced Christianity upon Denmark, and the second section relates how Sigvaldi jarl tricks King Sveinn Haraldsson Forkbeard of Denmark into marriage with the daughter of King Búrizleifr of Wendland.

Ólafur Halldórsson pointed out, in his introduction to JS (1969: 12), that these two sections in *Óláfs saga* must derive from a version closely related to the JS text in AM 291 4to (pp. 85–98 and 125–59 in his edition). These sections have been considerably shortened in AM 310 4to but now and then we find wording very similar to that of AM 291 4to. However, in between these two sections (pp. 60–62 in the old edition of *Óláfs saga* and pp. 181–83 in the more recent one) there is a short account of the Battle of Hjörungavágr, which in JS comes at the end of the saga. In *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* by Oddr Snorrason the course of events is therefore not the same as in JS, where Sigvaldi jarl tricks King Sveinn Haraldsson before the battle. Ólafur Halldórsson (2006: xcii–xciii) points out that the account of the battle does not conform to any of the other preserved sources. A case in point is the length of the battle, which takes place in one day in all the other sources but over three whole days in Oddr's *Óláfs saga*. Ólafur Halldórsson (op.cit.) remarks that the chapter must be based on a source that in all main points deals with the same material as the preserved redactions of JS, as well as *Fagrskinna*, *Heimskringla* and the *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason*, but because of the inconsistency in the length of the battle and how short the account of the battle is, the text in this chapter of Oddr's *Óláfs saga* could derive from a lost poem.

It seems, therefore, that Oddr Snorrason himself did not have access to any JS text when he originally wrote the saga, but that the scribe or translator at work when the saga version of AM 310 4to was written, added the two sections in question that resemble Primary version II. (The *Óláfs saga* version of AM 310 4to has in general been supplemented with material from other texts; see Ólafur Halldórsson 2006: cxlvii.)

A comparison between AM 291 4to and AM 310 4to is not within the scope of this survey, but it is, however, an interesting example of how the story was used in another context and gives a tantalizing, albeit small, glimpse into the manuscript tradition of *Jómsvíkinga saga*.

2.3 The Flateyjarbók redaction

The same version of the saga as the one we find in AM 291 4to was used when Flateyjarbók, GKS 1005 fol., was compiled in the years 1387–94. The text that was used in Flateyjarbók must have been closely related to that of AM 291 4to; in many cases it is more or less the same, in particular in the second part of the saga (Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 18–19). The scribes of Flateyjarbók seem also to have had access to another redaction as well, close to the one in Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7.

The text of JS in Flateyjarbók is somewhat shorter than the corresponding text in AM 291 4to. The saga is not inserted in its entirety in one place in Flateyjarbók, but rather adapted to the story that revolves around King Óláfr Tryggvason (the *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason*). The JS text is on fols 13r–14r and 20v–27r in the saga of King Óláfr, that is on pp. 96–106 and 153–203 in volume 1 of the Flateyjarbók edition from 1860–68 (Unger & Guðbrandr Vigfusson 1860). The text on pp. 203–05, chapters 164 and 165, does not belong to JS even if these chapters are connected to the preceding text (see further the editors' comments in the Flateyjarbók edition from 1860, p. VII). The first part of the JS text begins where the point of view in King Óláfs saga has shifted from the warfare of King Óláfr to his part in converting Denmark to Christianity. Between the two parts of JS we find short passages about King Óláfr and a part of *Færeyinga saga*, *Þáttir Prándar ok Sigmundar*. The *þáttir* corresponds to the first twenty-six chapters of *Færeyinga saga* in the Íslenzk fornrit edition (Ólafur Halldórsson 2006).

Only a few copies exist of the Flateyjarbók text of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, four according to the catalogues of Icelandic manuscripts in Denmark and Iceland (Kålund 1889–94, 1900; Páll Eggert Ólason 1918–37, 1947; Lárus H. Blöndal 1959, and Grímur M. Helgason & Lárus H. Blöndal 1970). At least one of them, AM 57 fol., was copied for Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson by his professional scribe; AM 15 fol. may also have been copied for the bishop.³

- AM 14 fol., from 1675–1725 (the first part of the saga), copied in Copenhagen;

³ Árni Magnússon acquired the manuscript from Jón Torfason (c. 1657–1716) of Breiðabólstaður, southern Iceland. Jón's father was Torfi Jónsson, mentioned in §2.1 above, Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson's nephew, who inherited many of the bishops possessions (see Kålund 1889: 12).

- AM 15 fol., from the seventeenth century (the second part of the saga), copied in Iceland before 1656;
- AM 57 fol., from the seventeenth century (*Óláfs saga*), a copy made in Iceland by Jón Erlendsson of Villingaholt, southern Iceland († 1673);⁴
- AM 292 4to, from the seventeenth century (the second part of the saga) (FMS 11: 7).⁵

Even though the manuscripts are few, these four copies show that the saga has in its Flateyjarbók version not been utterly overlooked in Iceland, as seems to be the case with the text in AM 291 4to. It is worth noting, however, that in three of these four manuscripts only one part of the saga has been copied and in the fourth manuscript the saga is a part of *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*. Thus, there are no preserved manuscripts where an attempt has been made to create a complete *Jómsvíkinga saga* from the text in Flateyjarbók. It should be kept in mind that Flateyjarbók left Iceland for Denmark quite early (1656). The copies, on the other hand, remained somewhat longer in Iceland, that is until Árni Magnússon obtained them in the early seventeenth century. No younger, secondary copies of those have been preserved.

2.4 The redaction in Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7 and copies

The manuscript Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7 is from the beginning of the fourteenth century (c. 1300–25, see ONP, Registre: 308). It is a vellum manuscript measuring 22.5 × 16 cm and it consists of fifty-eight folios, all of them original. According to Gödel (1897–1900: 45) the manuscript is written by three scribes, where one scribe is responsible for most of the text, including JS. The manuscript contains six texts with JS on fols 27v–39r. Other texts are the indigenous knights' tale (*Märchensaga*) *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*, the fornaldarsagas *Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar*, *Ásmundar saga kappabana*, and *Qrvar-Odds saga*, and the beginning of *Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar*.

The manuscript was originally part of a considerably larger book, and

⁴ The book is the second volume of two containing *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* copied from Flateyjarbók (AM 56 fol. and AM 57 fol.).

⁵ The book also contains the following texts, copied from Flateyjarbók: *Þáttur af Sigmundi Brestissyni*, *Þáttur af Þrándi í Gøtu ok Færeyingum*, *Þáttur af Hróa hinum heimiska eða slysa Hróa*, and *Vølsa þáttur*.

a part of that book is now preserved under the manuscript siglum AM 580 4to, which contains four texts. These are the translated knights' tales *Elís saga ok Rósamundu* (fragmentary) and *Flóventu saga* (fragmentary), and the indigenous knights' tales *Bærings saga* and *Mágus saga*. After *Mágus saga* came the fornaldarsaga *Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar*, now in Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7. The page numbers in AM 580 4to suggest that the first nineteen folios of the original manuscript have disappeared as well as the last section of unknown length. AM 580 4to came into Árni Magnússon's possession in 1706 (Kålund 1889: 743) from Bishop Christen Worm.⁶ The other part of the original manuscript, Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7, came to Sweden as a part of the book collection belonging to the member of the Danish council of state, Jørgen Seefeld, which was seized by the Swedish army in 1657–58 and has been in Stockholm since 1661 (Gödel 1897: 105 ff., 111; Blake 1962: xx).

The text of this manuscript has been published a number of times, first in Copenhagen 1824 (*Jomsvikinga saga 1824*), with a short codicological epilogue. It was edited from a secondary copy by Rasmus Rask as an introduction to the Fornmanna sögur series. In this edition, the first part of the saga is left out; it is a part of the text in the manuscript, but in the opinion of the editors, it did not fit the narrative about the Jómsvíkings. In 1875, the whole text was published in an accurate text critical edition by Gustaf Cederschiöld that included a thorough description of the manuscript and its orthography. In 1962, the text was published by N.F. Blake in a bilingual Old Norse-English edition. Blake's edition has normalized text and comes with a thorough introduction.⁷ Ólafur Halldórsson (1969: 10–11) has a short description of the manuscript in his edition of AM 291 4to.

Not much is known about the history of Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7 before the manuscript came into Seefeld's possession. Ólafur Halldórsson (1969: 10–11) suggested connections to northern Iceland. On the one hand, it seems that at some point the Icelandic scholar Reverend Magnús Ólafsson (c. 1573–1636) from Laufás in Eyjafjörður, northern Iceland, has had access to the manuscript and cited three stanzas from it in a letter to the Danish antiquarian Ole Worm. On the other hand, a marginalium in the

⁶ “Þessa bok feck eg 1706. af Domino Christiano Wormio, og var hun þä innbundin” ‘I acquired this book in 1706 from [the Danish bishop] Christen Worm and it was then bound’ (written on a note accompanying the manuscript, see Kålund 1889: 743).

⁷ The text of Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7 is the only version of JS that has been translated into English (Hollander 1955, and Blake 1962).

manuscript has a personal name also found in a charter from 1486, written in Saurbær in Eyjafjörður, northern Iceland. It is possible that the same person is referred to in the charter and in the marginalium.

The JS text in this redaction is shorter than the one in AM 291 4to and is generally thought to have been abridged and restructured (see, for example, Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 11 and 20 ff.). According to Blake (1962: xxi) the saga benefits from this, as “[t]he other versions tend to be longwinded and verbose, whereas the redactor of *H* [Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7] has compressed everything and has created a crisp, pithy saga style.” Ólafur Halldórsson (1969: 20–22), on the other hand, points out that the tone and style of the saga in Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7 has been altered substantially in many places, for example in a way that softens the mischievous (and entertaining) attitude towards Danish kings.

Eight copies of this manuscript have been preserved, and as far as one can tell all of them originate in Denmark or Sweden. The same applies to this manuscript as to AM 291 4to; no copies are preserved in Iceland. The manuscripts are:

- NKS 1414 fol., the work of an unknown writer in the seventeenth century (Kålund 1900: 164);⁸
- Rask 26, a copy made by Rasmus Rask early in the nineteenth century;
- Sthm. papp. fol. nr 17,⁹ together with a Danish translation (fols 141–84), copied in Denmark by Páll Hallsson († 1663), Jørgen Seefeld’s Icelandic assistant from 1653 (Gödel 1897–1900: 132–33; Gödel 1897: 107, 112, and Páll Eggert Ólason 1951: 120);
- Sthm. papp. fol. nr 85, containing two copies of the text, both made in 1713 by the Swede Johan Fredrik Peringskiöld (1689–1725, son of Johan Peringskiöld, 1654–1720), a “translator antiquitatum” at the Archive of Antiquities (Antikvitetsarkivet) in Stockholm; both copies with an interlinear Swedish translation;
- Sthm. papp. fol. nr 86, also this copy was made by Johan Fredrik

⁸ Kålund dates the manuscript to the second half of the seventeenth century but it seems likely that it was written in Denmark before Seefeld’s book collection was brought to Sweden in 1657–58.

⁹ Other texts in this manuscript are the fornaldarsagas *Ásmundar saga kappabana*, *Eiríks saga víðfjörðla*, *Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar*, and *Qrvar-Odds saga*, and the indigenous knights’ tale *Mírmants saga*. Of those, *Ásmundar saga* and *Hrólfs saga* are copies of the texts in Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7.

Peringskiöld, probably before 1719 when he was appointed secretary and antiquarian of the Archive of Antiquities;

- Sthm. papp. fol. nr 87, the work of an unknown writer, with a Swedish translation in the beginning;
- Sthm. papp. fol. nr 104, presumably copied by the Swedish translator S.G. Wilskman (1716–97; see *Biographiskt Lexicon öfver namnkunnige Svenska Män* 22: 218¹⁰) in the first half of the eighteenth century.
- Sthm. papp. 4:o nr 55, from 1786; the first part is a copy of the text in Sthm. papp. fol. nr 85, the second part is a copy of AM 510 4to (Gödel 1897–1900: 327, see below, § 2.5).

Presumably, Sthm. papp. fol. nr 111, from the second half of the seventeenth century, also belongs here. It contains a Latin translation of JS by the Swedish Northern Antiquities scholar Olof Verelius (1618–82).

2.5 The redaction in AM 510 4to and copies

The JS text of AM 510 4to is believed to represent a hybrid text, a text where elements from both Primary version I and Primary version II have been combined. Stefán Karlsson (1970: 139) dated the manuscript to c. 1550 (Jón Helgason 1932; ONP, Registre). It had previously been considered a little older, or from 1475–1500 (Kålund 1889: 670). It is a vellum manuscript that measures 19.5×13.5 cm and consists now of ninety-six folios (three are lost). The manuscript contains seven other texts: *Víglundar saga*, the fornaldarsagas *Finnboga saga ramma*, *Friðþjófs saga ins frækna*, *Herrauðs saga ok Bósa*, and *Þorsteins saga bæjarmagns*, and the indigenous knights' tales *Drauma-Jóns saga*, and *Jarlmanns saga ok Hermanns*. It was in Iceland until it came into Árni Magnússon's possession.¹¹

The first part of JS (approx. twenty per cent of the text in other

¹⁰ Sven Wilskman is there referred to as “Vice Translator i K. Antiquitetsarchivet, på förslag af Assessor Bioerner, i dennes ställe” (‘vice translator in the Royal Archive of Antiquities, proposed by Assessor Björner, in his place’), and said to be the translator of the fornaldarsaga *Orvar-Odds saga*.

¹¹ “Bokina hefi eg feinged af Mag. Jone Thorkelsyne [that is Bishop Jón Vídalín of Skálholt, 1666–1720] enn hann af Ingibiörgu Pals dottur ä Eyri i Seidisfirde [1654–1740, daughter of Reverend Páll í Selárdal]” ‘I acquired the book from J.Th. and he got it from I.P. on Eyri in Seyðisfjörður’ (Kålund 1889: 670; compare Jón Helgason 1932: 165).

redactions) has been omitted, and the text begins where Pálnatóki's family is introduced for the first time, corresponding to chapter 8 in AM 291 4to (p. 36 in the 1882 edition, p. 100 in the 1969 edition) and chapter 7 in Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7 (p. 8 in the 1962 edition).

The text of AM 510 4to derives more or less from the same sources as the text in other primary manuscripts of the saga as well as the chapters in the *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason*. Carl af Petersens, who edited the saga in 1879 (pp. xi ff.), listed the sources that he assumed were used in the redaction in AM 510 4to, which include *Fagrskinna*, a text corresponding to the one in AM 310 4to, some undefined work by Sæmundr fróði, *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, and skaldic poetry by Tindr Hallkelsson. According to Jakob Benediktsson, AM 510 4to “has various interpolations, some of them from the same older version of JS as was used in [*Fagrskinna*] and [*Heimskringla*]” (1957: 118 and compare p. 119; see further Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 11–12, and Storm 1883: 242–43). Gustav Indrebø (1917: 59–80) compared common features in *Fagrskinna* and JS in AM 510 4to and concluded, on the contrary, that the two texts did not derive from the same original text.

A description of the manuscript and its orthography can be found in af Petersens' edition. Jón Helgason gave an account of its history in *Skírnir* 1932, where he also discusses the manuscripts AM 604 4to and AM 713 4to, which seem to have the same handwriting as AM 510 4to (see Stefán Karlsson 2008: 7–16).

The following are copies of AM 510 4to, as well as secondary copies of these:

- AM 13 fol., from the seventeenth century, a copy made by Jón Erlendsson of Villingaholt († 1673) (af Petersens 1879: xxviii, and FMS 11: 7);¹²
- AM 288 4to,¹³ from c. 1675–1725, copied by Jón Hákonarson in Vatnshorn, western Iceland († 1748),¹⁴ collated with the text in AM 13 fol. (af Petersens 1879: xxviii);

¹² Apparently the copy was from a book owned by a certain Þorbjörg Vigfúsdóttir: “ur bok Þorbiargar Vigfússdóttur” [...] ”fra S' Þorde Jonssyne [1672–1720] a Stadarstad” ‘from a book owned by P.V. from Reverend P.J. in Staðarstaður’ (Kålund 1889: 11).

¹³ According to Árni Magnússon, AM 288 4to was copied from a paper manuscript which he had seen ‘in his younger days’ (compare Kålund 1889: 537). In FMS 11, p. 7, this manuscript is said to be a copy of JS in *Flateyjarbók*, but as af Petersens (1879: xxviii) notes, the text stems from AM 510 4to.

¹⁴ On Jón Hákonarson, see Páll Eggert Ólason 1950: 140.

- AM 289 4to, from c. 1650–1700 (af Petersens 1879: xxviii, and FMS 11: 7);
- AM 290 4to, from c. 1675–1725 (af Petersens 1879: xxix, and FMS 11: 7);
- AM 293 4to, from c. 1675–1725, copied by Árni Magnússon (FMS 11: 7); the manuscript has not been completed and the text finishes mid-sentence in chapter 18;¹⁵
- Ericssbergsarkivet, Manuskript- och avskriftssamlingen 74, from 1757, a copy of AM 288 4to;¹⁶
- NKS 1199 fol., from 1750–1800, a copy of AM 290 4to;
- NKS 1200 fol., from 1750–1800, a copy of AM 289 4to;
- Sthm. papp. 4:o nr 55, from 1786 (see above, § 2.4), second part, stems from AM 510 4to (Gödel 1897–1900: 327).

Nothing is known about the origins of AM 289 4to, AM 290 4to, NKS 1199 fol., NKS 1200 fol., and Sthm. papp. 4:o nr 55, but it can be assumed that they were copied in Denmark.

2.6 The Latin translation of *Jómsvíkinga saga*

The Icelandic scholar Arngrímur Jónsson the Learned (1568–1648) translated *Jómsvíkinga saga* in the years 1592–93 for the Danish historian Arild Huitfeldt (Jakob Benediktsson 1957: 171). The manuscript from which Arngrímur translated the story was destroyed in the fire of Copenhagen in 1728 and its text is now only preserved in his translation. The manuscript was in Huitfeldt's possession (op.cit.: 172). Nothing is known about it, neither its origins nor its age (op.cit.: 139), but presumably it was “not much younger than from the middle of the thirteenth century, since it was a version parallel to the original of the 291-group” (loc.cit.). Ólafur Halldórsson (1969: 12) believes, however, that it may date from the fourteenth century. It is thought to have contained a mixed text, and that the text was shorter than the text in AM 291 4to, but longer than the one in Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7. A detailed description of the differences between

¹⁵ The manuscript ends with: “Sigualldi het son þeirra; annar Þorkell kallaður Þorkell [...]” (corresponding to af Petersens 1879: 31^{23–24}).

¹⁶ The Ericssberg Archive (Ericssbergsarkivet) is preserved in the National Archives (Riksarkivet) in Stockholm. The copy was made in Copenhagen in January 1757, according to a note on the title page (Jón Samsonarson 1969: 192).

this redaction and the others can be found in Gjessing's introduction to his edition (1877: xi–xvii; see also Jakob Benediktsson 1957: 117–40).

Copies of Arngrímur's text can be found in following manuscripts:

- AM 1022 4to, from 1725–50, a copy made by Jón Ólafsson from Grunnavík (1705–79) (Kålund 1894: 296);
- GKS 2434 4to, an extract of the text from the late sixteenth century, probably copied by the Saxo translator Anders Sørensen Vedel (1542–1616) (Kålund 1900: 48; compare Akhøj Nielsen 2004: 233–34);
- NKS 1778 a 4to, from the eighteenth century, by Christian Rasch (born 1734, see Gjessing 1877: VII) (Kålund 1900: 225).

Gustav A. Gjessing edited the text in 1877 and then Jakob Benediktsson again in 1950 (pp. 87–140).

3 Stemmata

In his edition from 1962 of JS in Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7, Blake shows the presumed relationship between redactions with this stemma (Fig. 1).

Blake assumes an archetype *Z, from which the text in AM 291, Flateyjarbók and the Stockholm manuscript (H) are all derived, through one or more intermediate stages (*X). Furthermore, he assumes that AM 291 and Flateyjarbók go back to a common source (*x). However, Blake supposes that the text in Arngrímur Jónsson's translation, the redaction found in the manuscript AM 510 4to, and the chapters in the *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason*, derive independently from the archetype *Z (the manuscript behind Arngrímur's translation through one or more intermediate stages).

The stemma is, of course, a simplified picture of the relationship between the manuscripts; thus it does not show that the texts on the right (AJ and 510) have interpolations from Primary version I. Nor does it indicate that AM 510 4to lacks the first part of the saga (Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 16–17). It also disregards the fact that JS in Flateyjarbók contains some influences from Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7.

Another stemma worth looking at is in John Mearns's rich study of the textual relations of JS (2000: 179), where he suggests that there are connections between existing primary manuscripts and all other texts about

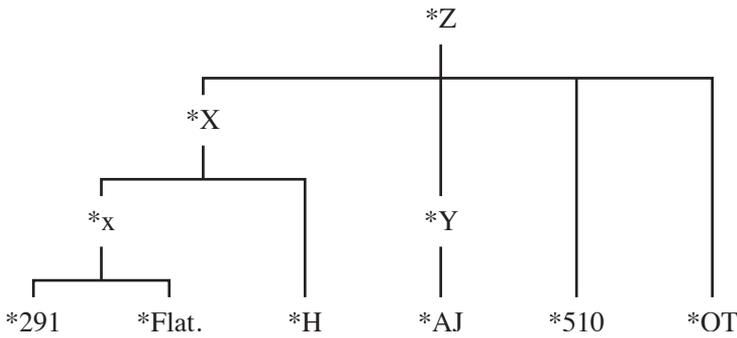


Fig. 1. Blake's stemma. (291 = AM 291 4to, Flat. = Flateyjarbók, H = Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7, AJ = the translation, 510 = AM 510 4to, OT = the text in the *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason*.)

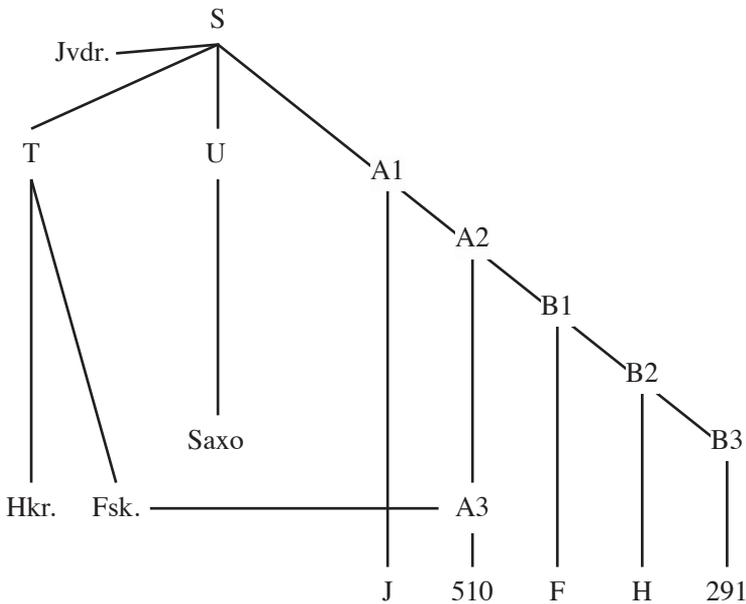


Fig. 2. Megaard's stemma. (Hkr. = *Heimskringla*, Fsk. = *Fagrskinna*, Saxo = *Gesta Danorum*, J = the translation, F = Flateyjarbók, H = Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7, 291 = AM 291 4to.)

the Jónsvíking's, including parts of Saxo Grammaticus' *Gesta Danorum* and the skaldic poem *Jónsvíkingadrápa*, from c. 1220 (Fig. 2).¹⁷

¹⁷ *Jónsvíkingadrápa* is printed with comments in af Petersens' edition of AM 510 4to

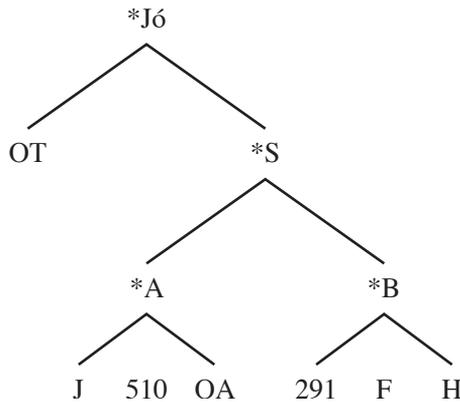


Fig. 3. Hempel's stemma. (*J6 = All common sources about the Jómsvíkings, OT = those parts of the *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason* that differ from JS redactions, *S = The original *Jómsvíkingsa saga* which splits into *A and *B, J = The Latin translation, 510 = AM 510 4to, OA = AM 310 4to, 291 = AM 291 4to, F = Flateyjarbók, H = Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7.)

Megaard partly bases his study on earlier research by Heinrich Hempel (1923). Hempel's stemma shows a third way of presenting the relationship between preserved JS texts (Fig. 3).¹⁸

Both Hempel and Megaard reach their conclusions by comparing selected paragraphs. According to their findings, the text of group *A has in most cases a more complete text than group *B.¹⁹ According to Megaard, some details, for example a certain person, a name or a part of a sentence, that can be found in group *A, are missing in their relative place in group *B. There are a total of twenty-nine paragraphs used in the comparison, and in fourteen cases group *A shows a more complete text than group *B, but in four cases it is the other way round. Megaard's results differ, however, from Hempel's in one principal aspect because Megaard argues that the text of the manuscripts of group *B derives from a redaction that belongs to group *A. Megaard also excludes the two sagas of Óláfr Tryggvason but, as mentioned above, includes Saxo, *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, *Heimskringla*, and *Fagrskinna*. Nonetheless, his stemma is more detailed

(1879). The *drápa* deals with the events from just before the Jómsvíkings come to King Sveinn's banquet and make the famous oaths until the end of the battle at Hjørungavágr.

¹⁸ Hempel's study is to some extent based on an earlier study by Krijn (1914).

¹⁹ In Megaard's words: "den mest fullstendige teksten" (Megaard 2000: 141).

and does take into account the relationship between *Fagrskinna* and AM 510 4to, which the other two stemmata do not.

Hempel, Blake and Megaard's three different stemmata reflect how difficult it is to map out the relationship between the preserved redactions of JS, and reveal how many missing pieces there are to the puzzle. The stemmata do, however, help us to envisage the development of JS, but the complete picture will probably always be clouded in mystery.

4. Conclusion

Much has been written about *Jómsvíkinga saga* since its first editions in the nineteenth century. All its main redactions have been edited with descriptions of manuscripts, language, text, preservation, history as well as discussions on its historical accuracy and textual relations. The aim of this survey is to give an overview of the preserved manuscripts of JS, both the primary ones and the secondary paper manuscripts; hitherto all information on paper manuscripts has been scattered in different manuscript catalogues.

The preservation of JS in Iceland is somewhat unsuspected. There is no doubt that accounts of the Jómsvíkings were well-known in the Middle Ages, and apart from the medieval manuscripts discussed here, accounts of them are found in Saxo's works as well as in *Snorra-Edda*. In addition, there is the skaldic poem *Jómsvíkingadrápa* by the Orkney Bishop Bjarni Kolbeinsson († 1222/1223), of Norwegian origins, and *Búadrápa* by the unknown Þorkell Gíslason. The Jómsvíkings have thus been a topic of interest both in Denmark, Iceland, and Norway. However, of the three existing pre-Reformation Icelandic manuscripts, no copy exists of the oldest one, AM 291 4to, which contains the text that is usually considered to be the best text of the saga; and over more than half a millennium, there are no signs of interest on the part of the otherwise very active manuscript copyists in Iceland to reproduce its text for new generations. It may be noted that a general lack of paper manuscripts also applies to the preservation of kings' sagas in Iceland. It has long been a subject of debate what kind of a saga JS actually is, and scholarly consensus on the matter has never been fully established. Sometimes it is grouped together with the kings' sagas, but this is in many ways problematic. JS is for one thing much shorter than most of the kings' sagas. Its tone is

playful, sometimes grotesque, and the death of King Haraldr Gormsson (in AM 291 4to, AM 510 4to, and Flateyjarbók) and the execution of the Jómsvíkings at the end could even be considered vulgar. A more likely explanation on the absence of copies is, in our opinion, the fact that hardly any Icelanders take part in the saga. The main characters are Danish and Norwegian and the few Icelanders that appear in the saga do not play a major role in any of the events. This fact alone could be the reason for a general lack of interest in the saga in post-Reformation Iceland. Not many sagas are preserved in so many vellum manuscripts and in such different redactions from before 1550 as JS, and this preservation in its entirety is therefore an interesting example of how interests and tastes changed during the centuries.

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Summary

This a survey of all the preserved manuscripts of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, serving as a background to the articles of the volume. The saga is preserved in four pre-Reformation vellum manuscripts, one sixteenth-century Latin translation by Arngrímur Jónsson the Learned, and in about twenty paper manuscripts. None of the vellum manuscripts contains exactly the same text, and the Latin translation does not derive directly from the text found in any of the preserved manuscripts. Moreover, accounts of the Jómsvíkings can be found in the kings' sagas *Fagrskinna*, *Heimskringla*, and the so-called *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason*. The text tradition is therefore very complex. No copies exist of the oldest manuscript, AM 291 4to, and only a few of the paper manuscripts were copied in Iceland. As far as scholarly discussion on the manuscripts is concerned, the article deals with researchers' ideas about the text tradition and preservation. No agreement has been established on the origins of the saga and the article reflects these different opinions.

Keywords: Jómsvíkinga saga, manuscript studies

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Workshop Articles

Jómsvíkinga Saga as a Part of Old Norse Historiography

SIRPA AALTO

Introduction

“But as a whole, the [Jómsvíkinga] saga is far from being a historical work. It must be classified as an entertaining fiction, and as such, it is one of the highlights of medieval Icelandic saga literature” (Halldórsson 1993: 344). This statement, which was published twenty years ago, is very clear: *Jómsvíkinga saga* is fiction. Halldórsson crystallizes the problem of *Jómsvíkinga saga*: its entertaining style. However, recent studies of saga genres have pointed out that several sagas show mixed modality (for example Lassen et al. 2012; Clunies Ross 2010; O’Connor 2005; Lönnroth 2003). This observation gives reason to reconsider *Jómsvíkinga saga*: Is the saga to be considered as part of Old Norse historiography, or is it just entertainment?

Jómsvíkinga saga is among the sagas that have been and still seem to be heavily debated. There are two main reasons for this: 1) The literary style of the saga makes it difficult to place it in a specific genre, and 2) its relatively early date of writing (c. 1200; Halldórsson 1993: 343) makes it even more difficult to assess its source value, compared with, for instance, the kings’ sagas which have been considered as historiography because of their content. It is thus the style of the saga that has been problematic for scholars. *Jómsvíkinga saga* has been classified as a “political saga”, “not quite [a] kings’ saga”, “a cross between a kings’ saga and a legendary saga” and even a “colonial saga” (Jakobsson 1997; Berman 1985; Chesnutt 1993: 456–57; Rowe 2005: 17). In fact, *Jómsvíkinga saga* is easily forgotten when sagas are categorized (Nordal et al. 1992: 291, 387).

The genre division made by scholars has affected views as to which of the sagas can be considered as history or used as sources for history. I argue that in spite of the fact that the genre division may be helpful for

scholars, it should not be regarded as an inflexible framework that defines the starting point for research. Therefore, the sagas' value as historiographical works should be considered separately.

As the available written sources from the Middle Ages are limited, we are faced with the reality that we have to use all the pieces of information we have for research. It cannot be denied, for instance, that the scarce information about the Christianization of the Icelanders is largely based on later saga evidence (Friðriksson & Vésteinsson 2003). This evidence may be misleading or biased, but is still to be understood as a source for history. This is the way *Jómsvíkinga saga* should be used as well: as a source that explains what happened in the past and thus reflects its time of writing.

The purpose of this article is to examine those features in *Jómsvíkinga saga* that connect it to Old Norse historiography, by comparing it with the kings' sagas, with the other sagas written around the same time such as *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga*, and with *Yngvars saga víðförla*, which as an example of a *fornaldarsaga* seems to show many similarities to *Jómsvíkinga saga*. These comparisons shed light on how difficult it is, in spite of the active discourse on saga genres during the last few decades, to evaluate sagas, on the one hand, as historical writing, and, on the other hand, as historical sources.

Defining Old Norse historiography

It is claimed that “medieval historiography, by all critical odds, is inauthentic, unscientific, unreliable, irrational, borderline illiterate, and, worse yet, unprofessional” (Spiegel 1983: 43–44). The above mentioned features of medieval historiography can be found in *Jómsvíkinga saga*, too. Whether the saga can cast light on those events that it describes (that is provide factual information about past events), is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it can reveal something about Old Norse views of history and history-writing.

The term historiography refers generally to works that were thought to record past events. Today historiography means scientific history-writing, but very generally it covers all history-related writing in the past. In the medieval context this usually means chronicles and annals. According to medieval understanding, history was written in order to show God's

will, and it also had a didactic purpose: People were supposed to learn from mistakes made by past generations. In the Middle Ages, history was considered part of literature, and as such the purpose of historiographical works was not to give an objective and truthful account of past events. We can detect underlying biases in these texts, which may be, for instance, religious or political. Some texts are openly propagandistic.

In the Old Norse context, historiography usually refers to Ari fróði's and Sæmundr Sigfússon's works and to the kings' sagas, which are considered to be the closest equivalent to chronicles. In addition, those Latin works that were written by Scandinavians, such as *Historia Norwegiae*, could be included in Old Norse historiography in the broadest sense. Nevertheless, in this article, the discussion of Old Norse historiography is confined to works written in Old Norse. All in all, defining Old Norse historiography is difficult because it overlaps with almost all other genres in its use of historical sources such as genealogies (Würth 2005: 156).

Telling about the past was not invented when the art of writing was adopted in Scandinavia and Iceland: History existed in the form of oral tradition. There must have been several factors contributing to why history was written down, first in Latin and then in the vernacular (about "the Norse renaissance", Johansson 2007). Christianity with its teleological orientation transformed the Scandinavian pagan view of history and time (Harris 2008: 235). One theory holds that ecclesiastical literature such as hagiographies must have provided the impetus for written culture in Scandinavia, although this view has been questioned (Andersson 1985: 213–14). Ian Beuermann has suggested that after the middle of the twelfth century there was a need to adapt new European ideas to native conditions as well as to establish the place of Scandinavian peoples as part of Christendom (Beuermann 2011: 377), which would have encouraged the writing of histories. This must apply especially to the Latin historiographies (Kersken 2003: 198). In other words, behind this history-writing was a need to prove and show that Scandinavians belonged to Christendom. However, Christianity may not have been the only factor behind this phenomenon: There must have been several influences that brought about Old Norse historiography. For instance, it is possible that Anglo-Norman historiography influenced Old Norse historiography, although this has not yet been studied thoroughly (Ghosh 2011: 111–30).

In addition to the aforementioned vernacular works, there are other sagas that would deserve to be categorized as part of Old Norse histori-

ography. However, this is a difficult task due to the nature of saga entertainment. It does not fit into the classical categorization of Latin literature, which distinguishes fiction (*fabula*) from history and which affected medieval European written culture. It was typical of medieval historiography that truth-value was not the primary objective; rather, texts were biased and distorted. The texts themselves passed among different modes so much so that they often seem more reminiscent of fiction to modern readers, which shows the flexibility of historiographical practice. On top of this, the idea of authorship was obscure when the texts remained anonymous; compilers or authors copied long passages from other works and were often influenced by authorities who had commissioned the texts to be written (O'Connor 2005: 109–16). It is not even possible to define Old Norse historiographical works by saying that they exclude fantasy, because this is not the case; this again reveals how blurred the whole concept is.

How do we then define the concept of historiography? As pointed out above, definitions of medieval historiography are vague. Nonetheless, a few points of departure could be mentioned. Historiographical texts differ from fiction in at least three points, according to Ármann Jakobsson: 1) They have interests in mentioning names of people and places; 2) they demonstrate “an historical and critical attitude”, meaning that information that is insufficient regarding for instance eye-witness accounts has to be validated somehow or else it is questioned, and 3) the events and the dialogue must be plausible for the audience (Jakobsson 1998: 56). These points become clearer if we add definitions of fiction by Ralph O'Connor: 1) Fiction is made up by the imagination of an individual author (although it could be argued that there is also fiction without individual authors such as wonder tales); 2) it contains events that did not really happen, and 3) the author does not intend the audience to understand all the events narrated as having really happened (O'Connor 2005: 108).

This last point relates to the reception of the sagas: What was considered history by contemporaries, by the audience of the sagas? For instance, are those *fornaldarsögur* or *riddarasögur* that have any connection to the past (real characters or events) historiographical works? Were they considered history by the audience or by their authors? There was a thin line between the real and the fantastic in the medieval mentality, but we have very little means of evaluating the reception of the sagas in the Middle Ages. There is a lot of speculation about the reception of the sagas but little concrete evidence, which leaves us with educated

guesses (O'Connor 2005: 118). Lars Boje Mortensen has examined the status of the distant past in Nordic Latin historiography, concluding that readers had different expectations of the stories set in ancient times. He argues, for instance, that there was “no contract of make-believe between Saxo [Grammaticus] and his intended audience”, but that Saxo’s patrons trusted him to be able to represent the Danish past (Mortensen 2012: 133–34). Saxo’s example cannot be applied directly to the sagas because it was first and foremost Saxo’s own representation of the Danish past that followed stylistically Latin literary models, whereas the saga authors — at least the writers of those sagas that were meant to be history — could not neglect the reaction of the audience. This is perceptible for instance in Snorri Sturluson’s prologue to *Heimskringla*, in which he declares that no one would dare to exaggerate the deeds of great men in poems that were performed in their presence, because this would be mockery and not praise (Heimskringla I: 5). In other words, the saga authors who wanted their stories to be credible could not invent fantastic stories about the past because that would have been considered mockery or possibly even insulting. Therefore, saga authors added comments such as “some say” when they want to point out that there are perhaps several versions of the account and which may all not be reliable.

It must be stressed that the distinction (or connection) between history and fiction is only a problem for modern readers. In the medieval context, when there was no scientific history-writing, the past consisted of several stories and the perception of them was subjective. This is perceptible in the sagas: They contain many levels and they can be interpreted in several ways. It is possible that the same saga could be understood differently depending on the educational level of the audience (Clunies Ross 2012: 318; O'Connor 2005: 166).

The entertainment value of history cannot be disregarded. Joseph Harris has stated that even if the sagas are not historical novels, they have features that can be connected to much later historical novels (Harris 2008: 259–60). It could be argued that entertainment became the impetus for writing down sagas because they were read and told especially in the long winter evenings in Iceland (Driscoll 2005: 203). The writing of history also served the purpose of defining an Icelandic identity (Jakobsson 1997). These features already show that history had manifold purposes in the Old Norse cultural sphere. Especially in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there was a need to bring native views of the past into alignment with Christian past, which meant that in a way the sagas were

a re-“writing” of history, and at the same time contemporary ideas were projected into the past (Harris 2008: 241).

The medieval historiographies thus contain more or less fictive elements, which have to be seen as part of the medieval worldview in which the fantastic was present. This applies also to the sagas. Yet it does not mean that the audience was not able to distinguish between a truthful and an untruthful story. One indication that the saga audience made a distinction between more and less reliable sagas is that some sagas are referred to as *lygisögur* ‘lying sagas’. The most famous passage in this connection is in *Porgils saga ok Hafliða*, where it is mentioned that King Sverrir thought that a story about Hrómundr Gripsson was an amusing *lygisaga* (*Porgils saga ok Hafliða*: 38). In fact, the same word is used in the version of *Jómsvíkinga saga* that is included in *Flateyjarbók* (*Flateyjarbók* I: 184). In this passage the word is not used for telling a saga but lie. According to Terje Spurkland, these two occurrences of the term *lygisaga* are not sufficient to demonstrate its use as a common denominator for legendary sagas. Spurkland adds that the term *stjúpmæðrasögur* ‘stepmothers’ stories’ (compare ‘old wives’ tales’) denotes the same type of story as *lygisögur* and *skröksögur*, but that it is important to see the different frequency between these terms. He argues that the general term in the thirteenth century was *skröksaga*, which is based on word *skrökva*, meaning ‘to tell or invent a story’; his argument is well-grounded because this word has by far the most occurrences of the three (Spurkland 2012: 174–82). The point is that the existence of such a term (or terms) indicates that people in the Old Norse cultural sphere were aware of the varying truth-value of stories.

It is impossible to say whether *Jómsvíkinga saga* was considered a *skröksaga* by contemporaries. This is due to the presence of two kinds of literary elements in the saga: On the one hand, some parts of the saga are comparable to accounts in the kings’ sagas (or *jarlasögur*), because they tell about historical events and characters. On the other hand, some parts that include fantastic elements connect the saga stylistically more to *fornaldarsögur*, which makes the saga resemble fiction.

Jómsvíkinga saga tells of events and characters that belonged essentially to the history of the Norwegians and Danes, and these stories were repeated in other sagas. Interestingly, some of the kings’ sagas seem to have used *Jómsvíkinga saga* as a source; I will return to this point later. Some supernatural events in *Jómsvíkinga saga* are connected to the story of the battle of Hjørungavágr, in which the goddess Þorgerðr Hølgabrúðr

and her sister Irpa intervene in favour of Earl Hákon. It is difficult to determine whether this incident was invented (by the author/s) for the sake of telling a good story or whether it stems from oral tradition. How fictional is the story of Búi digri, who leaps from his ship with a chest of gold? Or those Jómsvíkings who are beheaded after the battle of Hjørungavágr? However, it is these fantastic or “fictional” elements that make the saga stand out from other sagas. Admittedly, the division into “factual” and “fictional” elements is subjective and not wholly consistent. It reflects modern views of literary genres. Nonetheless, these features in *Jómsvíkinga saga* reveal its mixed modality.

The mixed modality of *Jómsvíkinga saga*

A combination of two different literary modes in the sagas is rather common, although scholars have tended — or preferred — to see sagas as belonging to a single literary genre. *Jómsvíkinga saga* is a good example of mixed modality — so mixed that one wonders where the mixture stems from. On the one hand, *Jómsvíkinga saga* derives its background from history and perhaps from other sagas (the lost **Skjöldunga saga* and Gunnlaugr Leifsson’s *Vita Olavi*, possibly **Hlaðajarla saga*), but, on the other hand, the purpose was to write down the great heroic story of the Jómsvíkings. Theodore Andersson has argued that modes must have been intermixed in the oral stories (Andersson 2006: 18; also Clunies Ross 2010), but we can only guess what kind of oral background *Jómsvíkinga saga* has. The mixed modality could be due to the development of the saga in written saga culture. As Torfi Tulinius has suggested, *Jómsvíkinga saga* may represent some kind of transitional phase in literature (Tulinius 2002). I will discuss this further in connection with *Fareyinga saga* and *Orkneyinga saga*.

Hans Robert Jauss has argued that people in the Middle Ages classified literature according to styles, not genres (Jauss 1997: 45). Considering *Jómsvíkinga saga*’s mixed modality, Jauss’s argument does not really help to solve how the saga was perceived by contemporaries. The heroism of the Jómsvíkings could be taken as an example of how difficult it is to evaluate the reliability of details in the saga. Where does this ideal of a warrior community or brotherhood with its laws stem from? Interestingly, this picture of the warrior community is reminiscent of

certain contemporary or near contemporary phenomena. The closest analogues are retinues of kings and other noblemen in Scandinavia. As an example could be mentioned the *Vederlov*, imposed by the Danish King Knut VI in c. 1182 (Kroman 1982: 611–14) for his *hirð* (court), which is almost contemporary with *Jómsvíkinga saga*. Nor can one ignore the resemblances between the knightly orders and the Jómsvíkings. There is, for instance, information about a brotherhood that was active in the crusade against the pagan West Slavs in the mid-1150s (Bysted et al. 2012; Gelting 2007: 99). This background would suggest that the laws of the Jómsvíkings had models in real life (Bandlien 2005: 177).

It is obvious that *Jómsvíkinga saga* contains great praise for heroic deeds and a warrior ethos. The main characters are presented according to conventions and it is easy to see which of the characters are heroes: If their heroism is not revealed by their looks, it is revealed by their deeds. Else Mundal has pointed out that many of the *fornaldarsögur* may be understood as parody (Mundal 2003: 33; see also Willson 2009). The idea that the sagas can easily combine two (or more) genres would also support this hypothesis. What if the heroic deeds of the Jómsvíkings were intended to be parody, so that the saga would in fact make fun of the warrior ethos? Looking at the Jómsvíkings and their deeds as parody would also put their laws in a different perspective. However, the interpretation of *Jómsvíkinga saga* as parody must be hypothetical because we have no certainty as to how the saga was perceived by its audience. It is probably better to examine *Jómsvíkinga saga* as a generic hybrid, which means that the saga combines elements from at least two different genres. Elisabeth Ashman Rowe has argued that the function of the generic hybrids was to articulate certain political themes and perspectives which would not have been possible in the purer saga genres (Rowe 1993: 545; Kalinke 2012: 201). She speaks especially of texts that combine features of Icelandic family sagas and legendary sagas, but it could be applied as well to *Jómsvíkinga saga*, which seems to be a combination of a kings' saga and a legendary saga. I will come back to this point when comparing *Jómsvíkinga saga* with *Orkneyinga saga*, *Færeyinga saga*, and *Yngvars saga*.

In the Middle Ages it was sufficient to state that a story was reliable because it was told by “wise old men”. It was up to the listener to decide whether he believed it or not (Nordal et al. 1992: 305). As it is impossible to say whether the audience perceived certain parts or details of *Jómsvíkinga saga* as more reliable than others, we can look at other sagas

that are close to it thematically, temporarily, and physically (meaning that they can be found in the same manuscript). If we look at the manuscript context, we find *Jómsvíkinga saga* standing alone in the oldest extant manuscript AM 291 4to (dated to the end of the thirteenth century). In the manuscripts Sthm. perg 4:o nr 7 (dated to the early fourteenth century) and AM 510 4to (dated to the mid-sixteenth century) we notice that the saga is included with some legendary sagas, which could imply that the saga was there because of its entertaining side. On the other hand, *Jómsvíkinga saga* is incorporated into Flateyjarbók (dated to the latter half of the fourteenth century) and in this context it is part of King Óláfr Tryggvason's saga, which emphasizes its historiographic role. This evidence only confirms that the saga could be included in different contexts, meaning that its content could then be interpreted differently depending on its physical environment.

Comparison with *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga*

In order to study the mixed style of *Jómsvíkinga saga* it is relevant to compare it to other sagas from around the same time. This makes it possible to look at how much *Jómsvíkinga saga* has in common with them when it comes to themes.

Orkneyinga saga and *Færeyinga saga* have not survived in their original forms, but it is assumed that they were written c. 1200, which makes them contemporary with *Jómsvíkinga saga*. Despite later interpolations, which have in some cases affected the unity of the sagas negatively, it is argued that these three belong to the so called seminal "school" of narrative technique (Foote 1993: 222). Stylistically they are not as polished as the kings' sagas, but if the dating of the sagas is accurate, that is the turn of the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, it is understandable that the Old Norse way of telling about the past in written form was just developing.

All these three sagas have been classified, more or less, as kings' sagas (Jakobsson 1997; Chesnutt 1993: 456–57). This is evident because they all are interlacing with sagas of Norwegian kings in Flateyjarbók. Stylistically, *Færeyinga saga* and *Orkneyinga saga* are not as entertaining as *Jómsvíkinga saga*. If we look at what these sagas have in common, it is

generally their way of telling a detailed story on a local level, which is then combined with the “big picture”, namely a kings’ saga. Therefore, these independent traditions — as we usually assume they were — were easy to incorporate into compilations of kings’ sagas. Incorporation must have been rather easy because the sagas are closely connected to the histories of kings in Denmark and Norway. This relates to the concept of the immanent saga, introduced by Carol J. Clover (Clover 1985: 293). The concept of immanent saga would suggest that there was no one original saga, but several traditions. In the case of *Jómsvíkinga saga* the tradition was repeated in connection with the saga of King Óláfr Tryggvason.

If we look at the three sagas on a thematical level, the main theme of *Orkneyinga saga* is the strife between the Orcadian earls and the Norwegian kings. It could be claimed that *Jómsvíkinga saga* shows a similar tendency, as the Danish nobleman Pálnatóki does not get along with King Haraldr Bluetooth. He has to flee from the Danish realm when King Sveinn Forkbeard finds out that Pálnatóki had killed Sveinn’s father, King Haraldr. *Jómsvíkinga saga* does not, however, try to claim authority over a certain geographical area in the way *Orkneyinga saga* does; nonetheless, one can see some similarities in the way both these sagas show disapproval of royal dominance: The noblemen fight against the royal authorities and challenge them. The earls of Orkney and leaders of the Jómsvíkings show that they want to act independently, but they are confronted by kings.

Of these three sagas, *Færeyinga saga* gives the most positive picture of royal power, because it does not emphasize the friction between the leaders or upper class in the Faroe Islands and the Norwegian king. The time span in the saga is rather short (the events in *Færeyinga saga* take place during the reign of King Óláfr Tryggvason), and in this respect it differs from the other two sagas, but it could be pointed out that in fact the time span of *Jómsvíkinga saga* is fairly short as well, if we exclude the beginning of the saga, with the introduction to the history of the Danish kings. *Færeyinga saga* relates how the king claimed the overlordship in the Faroe Islands, so the friction between the subjects and the king is actually an underlying theme in the saga.

We can therefore conclude that all three sagas deal with relationships between kings and their chieftains/earls in one way or another. They also show significant differences and unique features which could be listed:

- *Orkneyinga saga* concentrates on the earls of Orkney; at least one of the purposes of the saga seems to have been to challenge the Hár-fagri royal lineage by referring to the ancestors of the Orcadian earls as the first inhabitants of the northern mainland (Steinsland 2011: 50).
- *Færeyinga saga* is exceptional because it concentrates on only one chieftain — a feature that is rare even in the Icelandic family sagas.
- The Jómsvíkings as a group are pivotal in *Jómsvíkinga saga*: This group of warriors with their strict laws make the saga stand out from others. The other feature that makes the saga different from other (kings') sagas is its anti-Danish stance, which may be a result of the emphasis placed on the conflict between the Danish King Haraldr and Pálnatóki. Perhaps the anti-Danish element should be interpreted more generally as an anti-royal tendency, which would then be the feature that unites *Jómsvíkinga saga*, *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga*, as mentioned above.

It would be too bold to assume that these three sagas would have stemmed from some common initiative, but in my opinion it is worth noting that they were all written down at approximately the same time and they all reflect anti-royal tendencies. This could be interpreted as a sign that around the year 1200 there must have existed tension between the upper class and the king, at least in Norway. The Icelanders also shared this anxiety regarding the increasing power of the Norwegian king, and these tendencies are reflected in other sagas written around the same time (Jakobsson 1997).

This conclusion, in my opinion, strengthens the hypothesis that these three sagas were not written down just for entertainment, but that they contain a message that reflects the contemporary political situation, in which the kings were strengthening their positions at the expense of the upper class. On the part of the kings this was manifested in the *rex iustus* ideology (Beurman 2011: 152). Elisabeth Ashman Rowe's argument that sagas that represent generic hybrids could better articulate contemporary political themes could also explain why *Jómsvíkinga saga* combines features of kings' sagas and legendary sagas: It expresses the underlying political tension between the upper class and the kings. At any rate this hypothesis would fit into the overall picture that we have of the political situation in Denmark and Norway at the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth century.

Comparison with the kings' sagas

In comparisons of different saga genres, it has been pointed out that the kings' sagas, the *fornaldarsögur* and the *riddarasögur* share the same narrative structures (Clunies Ross 2010: 133). Therefore, narrative structure cannot be the criterion for differentiating saga genres. *Jómsvíkinga saga* has the same narrative structure as the kings' sagas and the *riddarasögur*: The adventures of the Jómsvíkings are presented in chronological order and the main narrative structure is rather simple.

Both *Fagrskinna* (c. 1220) and *Heimskringla* (c. 1230–35) include *Jómsvíkinga saga* (Fagrskinna 1979: 121–41; Heimskringla I: 272–86). There seem to have been two different versions of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, the so-called A- and B-versions, which may have differed from each other (Megaard 2000a). It is assumed that the information about the Jómsvíkings in *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* is based on the B-version, and that the A- and B-versions would have come about independently, which would indicate a strong oral background for the saga.

Jómsvíkinga saga is historically important because the Jómsvíkings play a role in Óláfr Tryggvason's life — especially in the end of it. This indicates, in my opinion, that the events were considered to be “history” by contemporaries and that *Jómsvíkinga saga* overlaps general historical events in Scandinavia. Also the way the events are represented shows that the authors expected the Jómsvíkings to be known to the audience. For example, Snorri Sturluson does not bother to introduce them or their background to the audience in *Heimskringla*. Here, again, Clover's idea of the immanent saga, mentioned above, could provide an answer as to why the Jómsvíkings appear in *Heimskringla* without introduction (Anderson 2006: 4; Clover 1985: 293). The relevance of the saga for the history of kings Haraldr Bluetooth, Sveinn Forkbeard and Óláfr Tryggvason is clear because it is repeated later on in such sagas or collections of sagas as *Knýtlinga saga*, *Ágrip af sögu Danakonunga*, and *Flateyjarbók*. *Jómsvíkinga saga* is connected to *Danakonunga sögur* because it is essentially part of Danish history, although stylistically it differs from them (Nordal et al. 1992: 387). It is also part of the lore of King Óláfr Tryggvason, but the saga's relevance in this tradition depends on the source. This is understandable because the tradition concerning King Óláfr is not consistent and his image and significance vary from one source to another (Rafnsson 1999: 107–08).

The story of the Jómsvíkings does not thus appear in a similar form in

all sources: As mentioned above, Snorri did not bother to tell the story in detail. Sources give contradictory details, for example, as to who was the founder of the fortress Jómsborg. Even *Ágrip af Nóregskonunga sögum*, which is very sparse in detail in all matters and which does not mention the Jómsvíking, mentions Jómsborg as a place where King Óláfr Tryggvason stayed. This piece of information seems to be a very old part of the tradition attached to King Óláfr Tryggvason (Rafnsson 2005: 17). *Ágrip* mentions, for instance, that King Óláfr Tryggvason travelled to Wendland to gather support among his “true friends”, who had accompanied him on his Viking expeditions, against King Sveinn Forkbeard (*Ágrip*: 23; Driscoll 1995: 28, 32). Similarly, Saxo Grammaticus does not mention the Jómsvíking, but he does speak of Julin situated in the Wendish land, which King Haraldr Bluetooth conquered and which was manned by “pirates” (*Gesta Danorum* X, 2,1). Despite differences in the way the story is told, the tradition about the Jómsvíking or more generally about King Haraldr’s and King Óláfr’s connections to Wendland seems to have been an integral part of past of the Jómsvíking, and Wolin/Julin/Jómsborg is remembered in these stories.

The first part of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, which tells about the history of the Danish kings, creates the historical background for the saga. It is assumed that the first part is to some extent based on two now lost sources, that is **Skjöldunga saga* and Gunnlaugr Leifsson’s **Vita Olavi*. It could be argued that by beginning the saga with this introduction to the history of the Danish kings, the author/s of the saga may have wanted to follow some ideal of how to write about the past. The history of the Danish kings can be seen as a kind of introduction to the saga as a whole. *Ynglinga saga* in *Heimskringla*, in which the history of the Æsir and the Ynglingar functions as an introduction to the history of the kings of Norway, could be mentioned as a *comparandum*.

The history of the Danish kings may have been an essential part of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, although stylistically it seems as if it was separate. Einar Ól. Sveinsson has argued that the Oddaverjar were the patrons behind **Skjöldunga saga*, and that they may have also had a connection to *Orkneyinga saga* because of their relations with a number of prominent Orkney Islanders (Sveinsson 1937: 16–39; Nordal et al. 1992: 386–87). If sagas such as **Skjöldunga saga* and *Orkneyinga saga* were important for an Icelandic family, would *Jómsvíkinga saga* have had a similar connection to some patron or family? (On descendants of Jómsvíking, see Megaard 2000b.) There may not be a direct connection to any

particular family or person, but the saga may be just one more example of how Icelanders had acquired the role of writing histories for Scandinavian rulers (Bjarni Guðnason 1982: vii). The author of *Jómsvíkinga saga* was probably an Icelander, and the Icelandic presence is clear in the decisive battle of Hjørungavágr (Hollander 1997: 22).

As Ólafur Halldórsson has pointed out, it is not easy to show how, for example, the traditions concerning King Óláfr Tryggvason, the Jómsvíkings and the Danish kings stand in relation to one another (Halldórsson 1969). The life of King Óláfr Tryggvason is intertwined with the story of the Jómsvíkings and with the history of King Sveinn Forkbeard, but how did this tradition survive in Iceland? This kind of question is relevant not only for *Jómsvíkinga saga* but also for other literary sources that survive in Icelandic manuscripts. In order to survive in either oral or written form, these sagas must have had a certain relevance for their audiences.

As far as we know, the first written versions of those sagas that deal with this tradition (the *vita* of Óláfr Tryggvason and the Jómsvíkings) came about at the end of the twelfth century (Rafnsson 2005). In the case of Oddr Snorrason's *vita* of King Óláfr Tryggvason, which was written at the end of the twelfth century in Latin, it is most probable that its background lies in the hagiographical tradition and that there was a need or desire to construct the same kind of saintly persona for Óláfr Tryggvason as Óláfr Haraldsson already had. However, *Jómsvíkinga saga* must have had a very mundane purpose. Here we return to the question posed at the beginning of this article: the relevance of *Jómsvíkinga saga* during its time of writing.

Comparison with *Yngvars saga víðförla*

The comparison between *Jómsvíkinga saga* and the contemporary *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga* showed that these sagas share some thematic similarities; namely, they all deal with relationships between chieftains and kings. When *Jómsvíkinga saga* is compared with the kings' sagas, which are thought to represent "proper" Old Norse historiography, it becomes evident that the core of *Jómsvíkinga saga* was probably considered to be true, because it was incorporated into the kings' sagas.

In order to evaluate the saga's resemblance to *fornaldarsögur*, I have chosen to compare *Jómsvíkinga saga* with *Yngvars saga víðförla*. This

saga, too, has been difficult to assign to a single saga genre. It survives in incomplete form in two fifteenth-century manuscripts and in full in paper manuscripts from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The saga is usually associated with the *fornaldarsögur*, even though it is not set in the legendary past, but in the early eleventh century, and it lacks poetry; however, the prominence of fantastic beasts and monsters aligns it with other *fornaldarsögur* (Phelpstead 2008: 331, 336). *Yngvars saga* also contains elements that show connections to contemporary learned literature, which makes it stand out, at least from many other *fornaldarsögur* (Antonsson 2012: 74, 80–82). Thus, “it stands on the margin between *konungasögur* and *fornaldarsögur*” (Wolf 1993: 740) in the same way as *Jómsvíkinga saga* does. Dietrich Hofmann has suggested that *Yngvars saga víðfjrla* is an Icelandic translation of a now-lost Latin original by Oddr Snorrason written at the end of the twelfth century (Wolf 1993: 740; Hofmann 1981). Even if Hofmann’s overall interpretation of *Yngvars saga* has been rejected, his attribution of the saga to Oddr Snorrason has been upheld (Antonsson 2012: 77). This means that *Yngvars saga* could be contemporary with *Jómsvíkinga saga*.

It is difficult to find a thematically close comparison to the Jómsvíkinga in the saga literature, because as a group they are an extraordinary phenomenon. Other sagas show warrior groups, too, but none of them have strict rules that are given in such detail as in *Jómsvíkinga saga*. Therefore, the closest comparison may be with *Yngvars saga víðfjrla*, in which Yngvarr sets out for an expedition in the east with his crew. When Yngvarr Eymundsson starts his travel to the east he has plenty of ships and selected men to crew them, but only four men are mentioned by name (Hjálmvigi, Sóti, Garða-Ketill, and Valdimarr. *Yngvars saga*: 435). These four characters are not introduced in detail to the audience, although they play a part in the saga. The saga describes the protagonist Yngvarr, while the other characters are left aside. *Jómsvíkinga saga*, on the other hand, introduces several characters with information about their background and even gives details about the appearances of the heroes. These descriptions cannot be seen as unique, because they follow literary conventions. Of all the main characters in the *Jómsvíkinga saga*, the character of Vagn Ákason in particular shows some similarities with Yngvarr, although Vagn seems to be more hot-tempered. Nevertheless, they both share features typical of aristocratic men; they are described as fearless, fair-minded, and skilful warriors.

If *Jómsvíkinga saga*, *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga* all reflect

the political situation around the year 1200, when the relationship between the kings and the chieftains in Scandinavia was topical, this seems to apply to some extent to *Yngvars saga* as well. The saga begins with a detailed account of his father Eymundr, who was not on good terms with King Óláfr Svíakonungr. This pattern is reminiscent of the setting in *Jómsvíkinga saga*, in which the Danish nobleman Pálnatóki ends up in a conflict with King Sveinn Forkbeard and leaves Denmark. On the one hand, it could be argued that this pattern may be a literary convention, especially in *Yngvars saga*, which is set in the past, but, on the other hand, tensions between the upper class and kings were current in the thirteenth century.

The Jómsvíkings had a detailed code of their own, which gave instructions as to how to divide booty; the members of the community were supposed to be between eighteen and fifty years old; they had to leave their family ties behind and consider each other as brothers; women were not tolerated in the fortress, and so on. All in all, the code more closely resembles an order for a religious brotherhood than for a fierce band of Viking warriors (Bandlien 2005: 177). In *Yngvars saga*, Yngvarr makes only one rule: No one should go ashore without his leave when they were travelling in the east with their ships. If anyone did, he would lose a hand or a foot. This rule is not consistently enforced because Yngvarr does not maim Ketill when he disobeys. Yngvarr's rule is very simple compared to the code of the Jómsvíkings, but they share the same purpose: to keep the warriors under control.

This ability to control one's men is connected to the qualities of the leader. A leader had to have the respect of his men. When Pálnatóki, the leader of the Jómsvíkings, dies, he chooses Sigvaldi to take over. But Sigvaldi turns out to be a bad leader, with the consequence that the code of the Jómsvíkings was not followed strictly. The saga tells that breaches in discipline began to occur: Women stayed at the fortress two or three nights at a time; there were maimings and even occasional killings (Petersens 1882: 85). Yngvarr faces similar challenges when his rule is not obeyed and men go ashore without permission.

In a good adventurous saga there is also a treasure. In *Jómsvíkinga saga* the treasure is owned by Búi digri, who does not want to give up his chests of gold when the battle of Hjørungavágr is lost. Instead, he leaps overboard with the chests. In *Yngvars saga*, Yngvarr and his companions find gold in a dragon's lair. *Jómsvíkinga saga* also combines the golden treasure with a dragon. Búi digri is said to have become a dragon, who brooded on his gold in Hjørungavágr (Flateyjarbók I: 203). It is clear that

there are many more fantastic elements in *Yngvars saga* than in *Jómsvíkinga saga*. In fact, the most fantastic element in *Jómsvíkinga saga* is when Earl Hákon summons his protecting goddess Þorgerðr Hølgabrúðr to help him win the battle at Hjörungavágr. This does not differ from episodes in, for instance, the saga of Óláfr Tryggvason in *Heimskringla* in which Óláfr fights against heathen magic. The fantastic elements in *Yngvars saga* can also be explained through connections to contemporary learned literature. Yngvarr's travel also has a spiritual dimension, because it combines an adventure with a search for the Earthly Paradise (Antonsson 2012: 81).

Neither *Jómsvíkinga saga* nor *Yngvars saga* has enjoyed respect as a historical source (Würth 2005: 162). Understanding the nature of the source is important for historical studies because it is necessary in order to evaluate how the source can be used. The sagas are not to be relied on as trustworthy sources as such, but they cannot be neglected either. *Jómsvíkinga saga* and *Yngvars saga* are excellent examples of this.

The historical background of *Jómsvíkinga saga* has come to seem more plausible since the excavations in Wolin, Poland. The site of Jómsborg has been debated; the island of Wolin in Poland has been the primary candidate. Even if it is not possible to pinpoint the exact location of Jómsborg, the excavations show a strong Scandinavian presence on the island at the end of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh century. However, toponymic data do not support this (Stanisławski 2003; Petrulevich 2009).

It has also been suggested that Yngvarr could be a historical character because of the so-called Yngvarr runestones in Sweden (around thirty of them) which mention an expedition to the east that was led by a certain Yngvarr. Yngvarr's travels have been investigated in several scholarly works, which confirm that it is plausible that such a journey was made (for example Shepard 1982–85: 222–92). *Yngvars saga* as such is not included in the kings' sagas, which could weaken its value as a historical source. But just to demonstrate that a source should not be evaluated on the basis of its style, a few details concerning *Yngvars saga* should be mentioned. A certain Yngvarr is mentioned in the entries for 1041 in *Konungsannáll* and *Lögmannsannáll* ("Yngvarr the far-traveller dies", *Annálar og nafnaskrá* 1962: 7, 80). To point out another comparison: In *Ynglinga saga* a certain king Yngvarr makes a similar expedition to Eistland (Estonia) as the other Yngvarr does before leaving for his longer journey to the east (*Heimskringla* I: 61–62). Two ship burials containing a total of 40 warriors were found in archaeological excavations in

Saaremaa, Estonia, a few years ago. These ships have been dated to pre-Viking Age, that is the eighth century, which would fit with the possible expedition of the Yngvarr mentioned in *Ynglinga saga* (Allmäe 2011). It would be tempting to speculate that these two traditions concerning two Yngvarrs would have affected one another somehow. For instance, could it be that the earlier Estonian expedition was “attracted to” the figure of the eleventh-century Yngvarr?

If we consider the medieval way of looking at the past and try to ignore the traditional genre division in the sagas, I think it is worth reconsidering the meaning of these sagas. First of all, these two sagas are not based on totally invented characters or events. In the case of *Jómsvíkinga saga* it is impossible to prove that such characters as Pálnatóki or Sigvaldi existed, but the saga contains a lot of other characters that did, such as King Haraldr Bluetooth, King Sveinn Forkbeard and possibly even Þorkell the Tall, one of the Jómsvíkings. *Yngvars saga* mentions King Óláfr Svíakonungr and Prince Jarizleifr (Jaroslav) of Russia, who are real historical figures.

Considering the above, we can ask whether there is a difference between *Jómsvíkinga saga* and *Yngvars saga* with respect to historicity. Where is the line between a historically reliable and an unreliable story? Ralph O’Connor has pointed out that some legendary sagas contain *apologiae*, which can be seen as evidence that the *apologiae* were composed in order to silence noisy skeptics. His conclusion is that if sagas were routinely accepted as fiction, *apologiae* would not have been needed (O’Connor 2005: 167–68). *Jómsvíkinga saga* and *Yngvars saga* do not contain *apologiae*, but presumably they were considered to be historical and entertaining stories by their audiences. In a similar way, Ármann Jakobsson has argued that *Bárðar saga Snæfellsáss* (dated to 1280–1390) has a historical perspective, and it was a historical work of its own period (Jakobsson 1998). Annette Lassen has pointed out that *fornaldarsögur* are in fact historiographical works and that they can be viewed as “an Icelandic off-shoot of the European chronicles of the *origo gentis*-kind” (Lassen 2012: 54).

Concluding remarks

The evidence suggests strongly that *Jómsvíkinga saga* deserves a place in Old Norse historiography. The underlying conflict between the king and the chieftains in Norwegian (and Icelandic) society at the turn of the

thirteenth century is reflected in *Jómsvíkinga saga* as in *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga*, which makes them all topical and even political. Judith Jesch has suggested that *Orkneyinga saga* was an attempt to write historical scholarship, but when it was incorporated into *Flateyjarbók*, many of the features that reveal the original historiographical intentions of the saga were worn away (Jesch 2010: 171–73). This could apply as well to *Færeyinga saga* and *Jómsvíkinga saga*, which were also incorporated into the same compilation.

If *Jómsvíkinga saga* can be considered as part of Old Norse historiography, what are the ramifications? It shows at any rate that saga genres cannot be seen as disjoint categories. It is possible that a saga may belong to two categories. As Lars Lönnroth has pointed out, it may be difficult to say to which category a saga belongs, because it may have features of two or more genres (Lönnroth 2003). Defining a genre for a saga may be important for scholars because it helps finding common features in the texts, but we should keep in mind Jauss’s argument that in the Middle Ages literature was categorized according to its style, not according to its genre (Jauss 1997: 45). The concept of cultural memory also shows affinities to this interpretation of presentations of the past. It contrasts with our modern understanding of “historical tradition”, which has to be scientific and objective, whereas cultural memory is understood as “a means of interpreting and selectively presenting the past” (Ghosh 2011: 62–63; see also Hermann 2013).

In *Jómsvíkinga saga*, we can see similarities which connect the saga to the kings’ sagas — namely the historical setting, place names and historical characters that form part of the saga plot. Thematic connections can be found with the contemporary *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga* and with the possibly contemporary *Yngvars saga víðfjörla*. At this stage it is difficult to say how the saga was perceived by the contemporary audience, but further research on the different genre features, that is, literary modes, in *Jómsvíkinga saga* could shed more light on this matter. A closer study of *Jómsvíkinga saga*’s possible oral background could also yield new insights into the saga itself. For example, is *Jómsvíkinga saga* a scripted saga or a textualized saga (Oesterreicher 1998)? In other words, it should be investigated further whether the saga was oral tradition that was written down (scripted) around year 1200, and whether it soon after that became textualized by the literary tradition that it was bound to — meaning what kind of contacts the saga may have had to other written sagas. This article has not addressed, for example, the poem *Jómsvíkinga drápa*, which certainly bears essentially on this question. It was

most probably composed by Bishop Bjarni Kolbeinsson in the latter half of the twelfth century, which means that it is the earliest or at least one of the earliest versions of the story of the Jómsvíkings, although the oldest manuscript version of the poem (GKS 2367 4to) dates from the early fourteenth century.

The language of the saga reveals something about its reception. Latin histories such as Theodoricus Monachus' *Historia de antiquitate regum Norvagiensium*, *Historia Norwegiae* or Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* were definitely aimed at a much smaller audience than vernacular texts. The kings' sagas were most probably read aloud in the courtly milieu or in upper class households but also read or recited among the common people. It could be assumed that the vernacular *Jómsvíkinga saga* with its entertaining elements was probably meant for a broad audience. This is very possible considering that the two oldest manuscripts — AM 291 4to and Sthm. perg 4:o nr 7 — are very modest-looking and were probably not produced for courtly milieux.

One theme that has not been addressed in this article is the post-medieval reception of *Jómsvíkinga saga*. Theodore Andersson has claimed that the way the sagas were perceived by their audience changed over time:

[W]e can surmise that entertainment value came to overshadow historicity as the stories were passed down from generation to generation. It is quite uncertain how much history survived in the process, but it seems clear the thirteenth-century Icelanders thought they were in possession of a historical tradition. (Andersson 2006: 7)

This could further cast light on how the content of *Jómsvíkinga saga* was perceived later. The saga is preserved both in post-medieval manuscripts and in two *rímur* versions. Although the post-medieval versions of the saga are not numerous, it would still be worthwhile to examine which parts of the saga were transmitted and how. Presumably the entertaining elements of the saga were the reason to continue the tradition, but this is by no means self-evident without further research (on overall changes in narrative strategies, see Johansson 2012: 351–69).

We can only speculate as to the purposes of the original author/s of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, but probably the saga was supposed to combine a good story and an account of past events. All in all, this shows that we should be aware that the sagas may have been perceived differently at different times and also in different environments. It is worth noting, for instance, that the first part of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, dealing with the history

of the Danish kings, is omitted in AM 510 4to, which is dated to the sixteenth century. It is possible to posit different explanations for this. For instance, it is possible that the version reflected in AM 510 4to originally also contained the first part, but it was omitted (Megaard 2000a: 178), or that it should be seen as a copy of a more authentic and original version of the saga than other manuscript versions (Petersens 1879: ix). I suggest we should also consider the possibility that the saga's anti-Danish or anti-royal attitude was not considered relevant by later copyists/authors.

Even if *Jómsvíkinga saga* may have been intended to be a historical work, it later became entertainment. This information helps the historian to understand the nature of the source. However, it does not help to decide whether the content of the saga is based on historical facts, characters, and places. Finding the facts in the saga still remains to be done using comparative, interdisciplinary analysis and methods.

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Summary

The article argues that *Jómsvíkinga saga*, despite its mixed modality, should be included in Old Norse historiography. A comparison with kings' sagas and legendary sagas — in this case *Yngvars saga víðförla* — shows how these modes were used in *Jómsvíkinga saga*. The saga is often grouped with *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga*, which were also written around the year 1200; all deal in some way with the relationship between kings and aristocrats. The reason for this may be found in contemporary events: The Scandinavian kings were strengthening their position, while the aristocracy was trying to maintain its influence. Therefore, the sagas have also been called political sagas. The oldest extant versions of *Jómsvíkinga saga* contain the first part of the saga, which deals with the history of the Danish Kings; this shows that the saga was intended to be perceived as history. However, a later version (AM 510 4to) omits this part, which suggests that the historicity of the saga had eroded. The fact that *Jómsvíkinga*

saga was incorporated into manuscripts containing legendary sagas also shows that the saga may have been valued for its entertaining plot and not because of its connections to real events and historical characters.

Keywords: Historiography, political sagas, genre

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Comments on Sirpa Aalto's Paper

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Sirpa Aalto begins her paper with the question of whether *Jómsvíkinga saga* belongs to medieval historiography at all, to which she answers yes. This is true — but perhaps she should stress more strongly that *Jómsvíkinga saga* undoubtedly belongs to the written sources for medieval history. As such, it is of course first and foremost (as Aalto stresses) a source for the time when it was written and not for the time when the legendary Jómsvíkings were believed to be real historical figures. Information about the time of the Jómsvíkings (but not about the Jómsvíkings themselves as they belong to the world of legend!) is to be carefully extracted and interpreted first and foremost from other sources, but that was not the aim of Aalto's paper. However, information about the circumstances in which the saga was created can help us to understand its background and — finally — say something new (although not very much) about the real history of the time in which the narration of the saga is placed — the time of the Jómsvíkings.

Aalto rightly notes — as does the existing secondary literature — that *Jómsvíkinga saga* has some features typical of both Kings' sagas and *fornaldarsögur*, but that it seems to be especially close to *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga*. What those three sagas seem to have in common is an aristocratic, yet anti-royal flavour. So those three sagas form a group of, what we might call, anti-royal Kings' sagas; this may sound like a paradox, but it is quite true. How far such a tendency was already present in the supposed sources of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, such as **Skjöldunga saga* or **Hlaðajarla saga*, is difficult to say, as both are so-called lost sagas; it is, of course, dangerous to explain *ignotum per ignotum*. What seems to be very important here, however, is Aalto's question: for which Icelandic family was *Jómsvíkinga saga* (or rather the story of the Jómsvíkings) so important, that they (probably) sponsored the writing of the saga. If such an assumption is correct (and I believe it is!), there arises another question,

namely, how to identify such a family. The simplest way is to check who in Iceland claims family relations to some of the people believed to have belonged to the brotherhood of Jómsvíkings (Jómsborg story is a legend, but the characters described there are not totally fictitious persons, as has been proved elsewhere (Śtupecki 2006: 911–12; Morawiec 2009: 96–112)).

The focus of the story is in Jóm (as skaldic poetry calls it) but in the text of the saga it is already called the more modern-sounding Jómsborg! For the Old Icelandic author of the saga the place seems to be rather remote. But it is important to remember that from Wolin to Sjælland there is a distance short enough to cross in one day by boat! And generally the southern coast of the Baltic Sea was not very distant from Scandinavia, especially at the time of the Danish King Valdemar the Great (who conquered Arcona), when *Jómsvíkinga saga* was possibly written down — but the situation was not very different at the times of King Magnus who burned down Wolin and King Haraldr Gormsson who escaped to Wolin to save himself when he was defeated by his son Sven (but unfortunately died there shortly afterwards). Of course, to place the scene of this adventure story outside of Scandinavia (in Russia, Bjarmaland and so on) is a common trope in *fornaldarsögur*. But there is something else important to stress here — when events in sagas were located on the southern (“Polish” or “Pomeranian”) coast of the Baltic, they were almost always located in Jómsborg. In that way Jómsborg is the standard, most important and in fact almost the only location from that area mentioned in sagas.

Heroic ideal is obviously very important for the narration of the saga and Aalto correctly states that at the time of its writing such an ethos appears in other sources too (*Vederlov* is perhaps the earliest but not the only example, another could be *Hirðskrá*, based on *Hirðlög*, a more distinct model could here be *Königsspiegel*). The rules of knightly orders are also worth mentioning as a possible model — Aalto did of course do this. It seems that in order to understand the intellectual European trends that eventually influence the way in which *Jómsvíkinga saga* was written, it is also important to explore more contemporary Latin sources. The sources used in Aalto’s investigation are in fact limited to Old Norse material. As Icelanders at that time were always open to the outer world it may be fruitful (although not easy) to make the field of comparisons and the search for models a little bit broader.

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Jómsvíkinga Saga and Genre

ALISON FINLAY

Discussions of genre in Old Norse literature have largely passed *Jómsvíkinga saga* by. In 1985 Melissa Berman placed it, alongside *Færeyinga saga* and *Orkneyinga saga*, in a group for which she coined the term “political sagas”; while this categorization has not been found to be altogether convincing, it brought into focus the fact that these early texts, versions of which are believed to have existed as early as 1200, at least have in common their anomalous status outside the major generic groups that developed with the burgeoning of saga writing later in the thirteenth century. Recent discussions of genre, concentrating on issues of historicity, fiction and authorial intention in the sagas, have attempted to reposition at least one anomalous text, *Yngvars saga víðfjrla*, within the category of *fornaldarsaga*. Can a fresh examination of the generic associations of *Jómsvíkinga saga* throw fresh light on the text?

Our understanding of the literary genre of Old Norse texts is modern and imperfect. The term *saga* itself is a generic term and a very non-committal one, meaning nothing more specific than “narrative”. A modern convention applies it to narratives in prose (the norm in Iceland, although most other medieval European literatures tend to favour verse, at least for fictional and/or entertaining narratives), and those that are long enough not to be described as *þættir* — though that still allows, of course, for significant variation in length. We tend to apply “saga” to written texts, although the etymology of the word, and its application in some medieval contexts, tantalizingly suggest an origin in oral storytelling. The texts identified as sagas break down into a number of categories, increasingly recognized as porous — leaving aside those, such as the translated *riddarasögur*, that are directly translated from European sources. The *konungasögur* are perhaps too varied a group to be classed as a genre, including legendary material such as *Ynglingasaga*, the prelude to the otherwise comparatively rationalistic *Heimskringla*, and the hagiographical material associated

mainly with the two King Óláfrs, alongside the historical intent revealed, for instance, in Snorri's preface, a rare example of an author's evaluation of his sources: "þótt vér vitim eigi sannendi á því, þá vitum vér dæmi til, at gamlir fræðimenn hafi slíkt fyrir satt haft" ("although we do not know how true they are, we know of cases where learned men of old have taken such things to be true") (*Heimskringla* I, 1941: 3–4; Finlay & Faulkes 2011: 3). The *Íslendingasögur* are often categorized as fiction, but intersect, for instance, with the *konungasögur* (as in the early chapters of *Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar*, dealing with the clashes of Skalla-Grímr and his sons with the king of Norway), and the more fantastical *fornaldarsögur* (as when the hero of *Bjarnar saga Hítðælakappa* earns the title of *kappi* in a duel on behalf of the king of Garðaríki, and later kills a dragon while in the service of King Knútr in England).

As long ago as 1964, Lars Lönnroth instigated a critique of conventionally employed generic terms such as *Íslendingasögur* and *konungasögur*, partly on the grounds of anachronism, since such usage is rare in medieval texts, particularly those of early date (Lönnroth 1964; see also Lönnroth 1975). Joseph Harris responded with a defence of the use of these conventional terms, and indeed metaphorical description in terms of other modern critical categories, on the score of their analytical functionality in modern scholarship: "'Saga as historical novel' is a more revealing formulation than 'saga as saga', and the 'as' prevents it from being considered [...] simply a lie" (Harris 1975: 429). Recent evaluation of genre in Old Norse texts has turned to the *fornaldarsögur*, a genre at "the more fantastic end of the saga spectrum" (O'Connor 2009), in a reconsideration of the borderline between history and fiction in saga texts. In two important articles, Ralph O'Connor has analysed truth-claims in *fornaldarsögur* and some *riddarasögur* to suggest complex rhetorical motivations for the claims to historicity made by the self-conscious compilers of texts that modern readers have identified as frankly fictional, and consequently dismiss such claims as ironical or parodic (O'Connor 2005; 2009). As a corollary he makes the observation that the medieval concept of history was a capacious one; "it was perfectly acceptable for a historian to take a bare narrative and fill it out with dialogue and dramatic details [...] *historia* could embrace wonder-tales, parody and slapstick humour [...] [the distinction between entertainment and history] is a false opposition, because entertainment is one of the chief functions of historical writing in the Middle Ages" (O'Connor 2009: 366; 373). A related line of thought is pursued by two scholars writing in the same

volume as one of O'Connor's articles, arguing for the alignment of the anomalous text *Yngvars saga víðfjrla* with the *fornaldarsögur*. This is a discussion with considerable relevance for how *Jómsvíkinga saga* might be perceived, since *Yngvars saga* is a text whose narrated events take place within recent historical time (the early eleventh century) but with a considerable admixture of fantastic material. Gottskálk Jensson places *Yngvars saga* as part of a proposed evolution of the genre of *fornaldarsögur* from Latin works such as the *Gesta Danorum* of Saxo Grammaticus (Gottskálk Jensson 2009) while Carl Phelpstead puts the literary case for “an understanding of the *fornaldarsögur* that accommodates *Yngvars saga* and also has broader significance as a way of conceptualizing the relationship between fantasy and realism in saga narrative” (Phelpstead 2009: 332; see also Phelpstead 2012). Both approaches take seriously the argument of Dietrich Hofmann (1981) that the reference in *Yngvars saga* itself asserting that it was originally written by Oddr Snorrason, author of the early Latin biography of Óláfr Tryggvason, is to be given credence, giving support to the claimed affinity of *Yngvars saga* with both historical and hagiographical genres.

Jómsvíkinga saga has an intricate two-way relationship with the *konungasögur*. A version of the text was in existence by 1200, and material was extracted from this and inserted in both *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla*. Chapters 19–22 of *Fagrskinna*, detailing the establishment of Jónsborg, the forming of the fellowship of heroic warriors, their invasion of Norway and defeat by Jarl Hákon at the battle of Hjørungavágr derive from this early version of the saga (Indrebø 1917: 58–80). The same version was used independently in *Heimskringla* (I: 14–15). The later, surviving, versions of *Jómsvíkinga saga* have in turn been influenced by those historical texts. Melissa Berman ranked it alongside two other probably early texts, *Færeyinga saga* and *Orkneyinga saga*, as an “outgrowth” of the *konungasögur*, possibly a misleading term if these texts are taken to pre-date the interest in royal biography that powered the development of the *konungasögur*. Berman offered the generic classification of “political sagas” for them, defining them as “historical works devoted to small settlements in Norway’s sphere of influence: Jónsborg, the Orkney Islands, and the Faroe Islands. In each saga, Norwegian power proves too much for the young colony, which loses its independence” (Berman 1985: 113). The oddity of lumping the legendary fortress at Jónsborg as a “settlement” together with Orkney and the Faroes reveals the awkwardness of this classification, but Berman’s analysis does identify

a major difference between *Jómsvíkinga saga* and the generality of the kings' sagas, its hostility to kings: "*Jómsvíkinga saga* dismisses kings as corrupt, vicious and unjust" (Berman 1985: 114; see also *Heimskringla* I: 53). It has been objected that Berman is too wholesale in dubbing the saga as an "anti-kings' saga", and that criticism of individual kings does not amount to a critique of the institution of monarchy; but a recent survey by Ármann Jakobsson confirms that the attitude to kings can be a marker of genre: "It seems to be the general tendency in the Family Sagas to regard amiable relations with the king as a source of good fortune, regardless of the virtues of the king in question. The Family Sagas may thus even be said to be less critical of individual kings than the Kings' Sagas. The Kings' Sagas are concerned with the idea of kingship. This makes their authors critical of individual kings, who clearly fall short of the ideal" (Ármann Jakobsson 2002: 157).

Theodore Andersson asserts a more fictional quality in *Jómsvíkinga saga* by describing it, along with the no longer extant *Skjöldunga saga* which was probably a source for it, as "a cross between a kings' saga and a legendary saga" (Andersson 1985: 215), a blend that has also been observed, as noted above, in another early text, *Yngvars saga víðfjara*, from about 1200. The fact that *Skjöldunga saga* also seems to have originated in the period around 1200 — as early as 1180, in the view of Bjarni Guðnason (1982: li–lii) — may remind us that our conception of the historicity of the *konungasögur* is overwhelmingly moulded by the comparatively critical and rational approach to his material developed by Snorri Sturluson in *Heimskringla*, and in particular his use of earlier verse as sources and corroboration of his narrative. In his Prologue to *Heimskringla* he acknowledges the mixed nature of the sources, ultimately oral, that he drew upon for his history of the kings of Norway. He claims to have used "langfeðgatali, þar er konungar eða aðrir stórættaðir menn hafa rakit kyn sitt" ("records of paternal descent in which kings and other men of high rank have traced their ancestry") as well as "fornum kvæðum eða söguljóðum er menn hafa haft til skemmtanar sér" ("old poems or narrative songs which people used to use for their entertainment") (*Heimskringla* I, 1941: 3–4; Finlay & Faulkes 2011: 3). As noted by Ralph O'Connor, the function of historical texts to entertain was a medieval commonplace; the fact that it is oral, verse sources to which Snorri particularly attributes entertainment value perhaps represents a developing tendency for written texts to be assigned value over oral tradition (O'Connor 2009: 367). It would be anachronistic to impose on medieval writers such as Snorri

Sturluson the standards of rationalistic enquiry of the modern historian, and it can readily be conceded that the sober kings' sagas include much that strikes the modern eye as frankly fictional. But the *konungasögur* are founded on what can, broadly speaking, be acknowledged as fact: the biographies of kings who (after the legendary preamble of *Ynglinga saga*) are known to have existed. Snorri's Prologue details his sources for this hard fact: the genealogies used by the kings themselves to justify and support their claims to authority, reports of *fróðir menn*, and skaldic verse composed during the lifetimes of the kings themselves (or their sons) and recited in their presence. A recent book has taken a sceptical view of the reliability of skaldic verse in the *konungasögur* as historical evidence for the events they purport to describe (Ghosh 2011), but this is irrelevant to the issue of the value that medieval authors placed on them. Snorri's Prologue by no means accepts the truthfulness of the verses at face value; he acknowledges that some verses are likely to be more reliable than others, and he accepts as a principle the value of recording material that *fræðimenn* of the past have believed to be true, even if he cannot demonstrate it himself — in other words, the value of tradition.

It is at the peripheries of the *konungasögur* genre that less historically trustworthy material seeps in. One boundary is that of hagiography, which not only authorizes a supernatural element in the guise of the miracles marking the status of the two missionary kings, Óláfr Tryggvason and Óláfr Haraldsson, even in Snorri's comparatively rationalistic account, but also encourages the polarization that, for example, demonizes Jarl Hákon Sigurðarson as arch-pagan.

Jómsvíkinga saga is set against a background of historical events — the involvement of the Danish king in defensive military activity along the Baltic coast in the tenth century, and a historical Danish incursion into the realm of their subject but rebellious subordinate in charge of Norway — and the existence of the main Jómsvíking heroes (Sigvaldi Strút-Haraldsson and his brother Porkell, Búi and Vagn) is attested in skaldic verses referring to the battle of Hjørungavágr, cited in *Jómsvíkinga saga* but also in other texts. But the saga's emphasis is distinctively anti-historical. These named characters are made to undertake the fight against the Norwegian aggressors, the Hlaðjarlar, not out of allegiance to the Danish king Sveinn but because he has tricked them into making extravagant vows while they were drunk, so that the encounter is seen in the light of the impossible quest of a folktale or romance. Rather than representing an outlying and potentially vulnerable settlement, as Berman implies, these

heroes are bound together within the apparently legendary brotherhood of the Jómsvíkings, which she herself identifies with the “noble viking covenant so common in legendary sagas”, in seven of which she instances codes comparable to the rules governing Jómsborg according to the saga (Berman 1985: 115).¹ Like a medieval order of knighthood, or even a monastic order, this group is defined by its oaths, testing procedures and the bonds between its members, rather than by loyalty to a historically verifiable entity, such as a sovereign state; the members of the group are measured, not only against their enemies, but also against each other. The ideology of this warrior band depends, as might be expected, on values of extreme heroism and loyalty, but the repeated plot element of duplicity lays stress as well on self-reliance and individualism.

This feature extends beyond the saga’s main protagonists; the early part of the saga tells of the struggles of the dispossessed King Sveinn, born illegitimate, to succeed to the kingdom of his father Haraldr Gormsson, which he achieves by a prolonged campaign of harrying, culminating in the secret killing of King Haraldr by Sveinn’s foster-father Pálma-Tóki, later the founder of Jómsborg. The involvement of the Jómsvíkings in the battle of Hjörungavágr, at the climax of the saga, is motivated by Sveinn’s duplicity: He exploits their boasts to force them into attacking Jarl Hákon; this in itself is presented as Sveinn’s vengeance for the treachery of Sigvaldi, who has kidnapped Sveinn and tricked him into marriage with a daughter of King Burisleifr of the Wends. The closest parallel to this reinvention of historical material to make it dependent on the character traits and personal motivations of individual characters is the treatment of the interactions of historical peoples, such as the Huns and Burgundians, in the heroic poems of the *Poetic Edda*.

Some indication of how *Jómsvíkinga saga* was received by its medieval audience can be gleaned by differences between the versions that show how it developed over time. For instance, the first part of the saga dealing with the early kings of Denmark is heavy with fantastic elements, and is contrasted by Berman with what she considers the “political” content of the text proper: “The early history of Denmark that opens the saga is [...] the stuff of legend: a foundling prince, prophetic dreams, and ominous visions fill this section” (Berman 1985: 115). There is some evidence, indeed, that this preamble was not original to the saga: A stylistic analysis

¹ *Orvar-Odds saga*, *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar*, *Friðjófs saga*, *Hervarar saga*, *Hálfs saga*, *Sturlaugs saga* and *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*.

by Peter Foote led him to conclude that it was not as old as the rest, though it is found in all but one of the surviving versions (AM 510 4to is the exception), and must therefore have existed in the version from which all the surviving manuscripts descend (Foote 1959). If we speculate on why such an addition may have been made, it is, ironically, likely that it was modelled on the precedent of such texts as *Heimskringla*, which opens with the legendary *Ynglinga saga*, or *Skjöldunga saga*: Thus an element that, to modern eyes, seems blatantly unhistorical may have been added in order to bring the saga into line with texts of more sober historical intent.

Snorri's Prologue to *Heimskringla* gives priority to poetic sources as the nearest possible thing to eyewitness evidence, while acknowledging that the evidence of skalds, particularly those present in battles on one side or the other, self-evidently privileges one side of the story: "En þat er hátt skálda at lofa þann mest, er þá eru þeir fyrir" ("It is indeed the habit of poets to praise most highly the one in whose presence they are at the time") (*Heimskringla* I, 1941: 5; Finlay & Faulkes 2011: 3–4). The late (sixteenth-century) version of *Jómsvíkinga saga* in AM 510 4to cites a number of skaldic verses, two by Þórðr Kolbeinsson and nine whole and two half stanzas by Tindr Hallkelsson, not preserved in other manuscripts of the saga. The fact that some of these verses are also cited in *Heimskringla* and *Fagrskinna* suggests that the scribe of AM 510 4to interpolated them into his text from the now lost version of *Jómsvíkinga saga* which was used as a source for those historical texts. Judith Jesch has seen in this use of verse "attempts at historical narrative" likely to derive from the early stage of the literary history of the saga represented by this lost version (Jesch 1993: 215). Jesch cites examples in the saga of unevenness in perspective, arising from "the incomplete integration of sources which basically concentrate on the Hlaðajarls [...] into a text that is otherwise primarily interested in the deeds of the Jómsvíkings" (215). She sees the later history of the saga, resulting in the texts that now survive, as a process of fictionalization, diverting attention from the historical kernel of the story — which is contained in verses honouring not the Jómsvíkings but their Norwegian enemies. Norman Blake too calls the saga "the end product of many years of literary accretion" (Blake 1962: vii). The reintroduction of verse into this late version of the saga may have come from an impulse to give the saga a more historical gloss, in the style of Snorri; on the other hand, Jesch shows that the process of fictionalization must have begun very early, since comparison with the evidence of *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* shows that even in the lost

earliest version of the saga verses seem to have been used in contexts that make them serve literary rather than authenticating purposes.

Analysing the saga's use of verse sources is one means of measuring it against external reality. Another is its treatment of topography. Extensive efforts have been made to establish the geographical basis for the two central locations of the saga, Jónsborg and Hjørungavágr. It is widely accepted that Jónsborg, mentioned in various historical sources predating the saga, can be identified with the town of Wollin, now in Poland; the northern affiliations of Wollin are well-attested by archaeological evidence but it "was principally a market town, although there must have been a garrison in the citadel [...] Jónsborg can never have been the home of an isolated viking community" (Blake 1962: xi). The location of the great battle of Hjørungavágr has been the subject of attempts to match up the physical details specified by the saga with the contours of the west coast of Norway (see Megaard 1999); it is most commonly associated with the bay now called Liavåg (Blake 1962: 49–50). But as Halldór Laxness aptly remarked, Hjørungavágr — like Svǫldr, the equally shadowy location of Óláfr Tryggvason's fall — is a place created not by God but by Icelanders: "Hjørungavåg er et sted som Svolder, hvor Olav Tryggvason faldt, og som ikke blev skabt av Gud, men lavet af islændere. Ikke engang filologerne ved hvor disse steder ligger" (Halldór Laxness 1971: 179). By this he meant that the physical features of these literary scenes are shaped by the needs of the traditional story; Svǫldr becomes an island rather than a river, as it is said to be in a verse by Skúli Þorsteinsson (*Heimskringla* I, 1941: 358), in order to accommodate the scene (probably derived from a literary model) of Óláfr's enemies observing his passing fleet, and failing to recognize the magnificent Ormr inn langi. Ólafur Halldórsson takes a sceptical view of the identification of Hjørungavágr with Liavåg, pointing out that the features described in the text differ from the location in almost every respect, and implying that the landscape of the saga is dictated by the needs of the story: the island PrímSIGÐ as the location for Jarl Hákon's invocation of his pagan goddesses, and the skerry behind which Vagn's ships lie concealed (Ólafur Halldórsson 1990: 408–09).

More significant in the saga than the topography of Jónsborg is its status as an enclosed community, defining the heroic ideals of the tested warriors admitted within its fortified walls. The warrior credentials of the Jónsvíkings are established, not by any detail of their deeds before the battle of Hjørungavágr, but by their collective identification with their brotherhood (Jónsvíkinga saga 1969: 130):

Og sitja þeir nú í borginni við þetta í góðum friði og halda vel lög sín. Þeir fara hvert sumar úr borginni og herjar á ýmsi lönd og fá sér ágætis mikils, og þykja vera hinir mestu hermenn, og öngvir þóttu vera nálega þeirra jafningjar í þenna tíma. Og eru nú kallaðir Jómsvíkingar héðan í frá allar stundir.

[And now with that they remain peacefully in the fortress and keep their laws well. Every summer they go out of the fortress and raid in various lands and win themselves great fame, and are considered to be the greatest warriors, and had almost no equals at that time. And now ever since they have always been called Jómsvíkings.]

A chapter of the saga is devoted to the discipline imposed on the band by their laws, which combine definition of the heroic demands they are expected to fulfil — not running from equally well-armed men, avenging each other as brothers, speaking no word of fear — with pseudo-monastic disciplines which subordinate individual assertiveness to the common good — pooling the goods they win by raiding, being absent for no more than three days, submitting to their leader, Pálna-Tóki, to settle their disputes. Although there is no historical evidence of warrior bands adopting such complex ordinances, some of the requirements can be paralleled, for instance, in the Norwegian *Hirðskrá*. The stipulation that no one can join the band “er ellri væri en fimmtugur að aldri og engi yngri en átján vetra gamall” (“who was older than fifty, and no one younger than eighteen”) (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 129) is reminiscent of the restrictions on the crew of Óláfr Tryggvason’s great vessel, the Ormr inn langi: “engi maðr skyldi vera á Orminum langa ellri en sextøgr eða yngri en tvítøgr, en valdir mjök at afli ok hreysti” (“no man was to be on Ormr inn langi older than sixty or younger than twenty, and they were to be chosen mainly for strength and valour”) (*Heimskringla* I, 1941: 344; Finlay & Faulkes 2011: 215). Strikingly, though, the code of the Jómsvíkings emphasizes submission not to a ruler, but to the group. The leader’s dominance is vital in maintaining the group dynamic, but is not an end in itself. Thus when Sigvaldi takes over after Pálna-Tóki’s death, “þá er það frá sagt, að nökkvað breyttist háttur laganna í borginni, og verða lögín haldin eigi með jafnmikilli freku sem þá er Pálnatóki stýrði” (“then it is related that the nature of the laws in the fortress changed somewhat, and the laws were not observed with as much keenness as when Pálna-Tóki was in charge”) (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 152). The relaxation of discipline has no particular narrative consequence in the saga, but the observance of the code is used as a mechanism for the measuring of one character against

another. This foreshadows the events of the battle of Hjørungavágr, where the solidarity of the Jómsvíkings as a unit is a vital factor — and Sigvaldi is again found wanting.

In proposing the category of “political sagas”, Melissa Berman hoped that “the term may help rescue these sagas from neglect and allow us to assess their importance to the history of Icelandic literature, especially the development of the family saga” (Berman 1985: 113). The family saga she finds most relevant to this group is *Egils saga*, in which she notes a comparable representation of the subsuming of an outlying community by a larger political entity through the confrontation between individual and ruler. I have already expressed some scepticism about the applicability of this description to *Jómsvíkinga saga*, for this text is striking in that the conflict between political entities (Denmark and Norway) is mediated not by an individual but by a group, and the emphasis is on maintaining the collectivity within this group. Nevertheless, there is common ground between *Jómsvíkinga saga* and the sagas of Icelanders in their representation of individual character, as comparisons and tensions between these individuals are explored. The enclosed nature and stringent exclusiveness of Jómsborg function to introduce the main players in the forthcoming battle and establish their heroic credentials. The saga narrates the arrival of individuals — Sigvaldi and Þorkell, Búi and Sigurðr kápa — at the gates of the fortress, where they are tested before being admitted; to emphasize the element of exclusivity, some followers of each are turned away. The (apparently fictional) pairing of these warriors as brothers² sets up a tension between family solidarity and that which the laws of the Jómsvíkings impose on the group, a tension that plays its part too in the vows of the Jómsvíkings and the fulfilment of these oaths in the course of the battle, which nevertheless allow the band to fragment.

Where the laws of the Jómsvíkings test these arrivals, the advent of Vagn, by contrast, puts the laws themselves to the test. The superiority of Vagn is established in a duel with Sigvaldi, and is such as to force the fellowship to lay its age restrictions aside to admit Vagn at the age of twelve. Despite the overtones of knightly combat in the duel and the subsequent praise of Vagn’s expertise in *riðdaraskap* “knightliness” (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 150), all the leading Jómsvíkings are represented

² Skaldic verses testify to the presence of Sigvaldi and Búi at Hjørungavágr. Þorkell was certainly a historical figure who participated in the viking conquest of England in the eleventh century, but his presence at Hjørungavágr is more doubtful. Sigurðr kápa is not known elsewhere and may be an invention (Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 48–50).

anti-heroically in ways familiar from the *Íslendingasögur*. Vagn is a precocious, difficult youth after the fashion of Egill Skalla-Grímsson, who finds his place among the Jómsvíkings when his family is unable to control him: “Hann er nú heima þar til er hann er tólf vetra gamall, og er þá svo komið að menn þóttust trautt mega umb hræfa hans skaplyndi og ofsa” (“Now he stays there at home until he is twelve years old, and then it has reached the point where people seemed hardly able to tolerate his temperament and pride”) (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 143). Búi is portrayed as notoriously miserly, his determination to hold on even in death to the two chests of gold acquired in a settlement early in the saga, and which he takes overboard with him in the course of the battle, again reminiscent of a story told of Egill: “En það skorar Búi í sættina, að hann læzt aldri mundu lausar láta gullkisturnar þær er hann hafði fingið af jarli” (“But Búi stipulates as part of the settlement that he would never let go of the chests of gold that he had got from the jarl”) (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 140). Sigvaldi, as already suggested, is an equivocal character more noted for shrewdness than his observance of the laws; his later defection from the battle foreshadows his more historically significant betrayal of Óláfr Tryggvason at Svøldr.

Whereas in Oddr Snorrason’s saga of Óláfr Tryggvason and its later derivatives Sigvaldi is a clear villain, his status in *Jómsvíkinga saga* is more ambivalent; he does desert his comrades, but in doing so fulfills the letter of his boast, since Jarl Hákon has enlisted the aid of two troll-women in the battle, and “ekki strengdu vér þess heit að berjast við tröll” (“we did not swear an oath to fight against trolls”) (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 187). Walter Baetke (1970) argued that Sigvaldi’s treacherous nature was an invention of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, borrowed and adapted by Oddr Snorrason to demonize the betrayer of Óláfr Tryggvason on the model of Judas, the betrayer of Jesus. But Theodore Andersson (2003: 20–25) considers, surely rightly, that Oddr’s source for Sigvaldi’s treachery was the verse attributed to Stefnir Þorgilsson which Oddr cites (translated into Latin), and which is also cited in *Fagrskinna* and *Kristni saga*, in which Sigvaldi is denounced for his double treachery: the tricking of Sveinn alluded to above, and the betrayal of Óláfr Tryggvason (*Fagrskinna*: 151; Finlay 2004: 121):

Munkat nefna,	[I shall not name
nær munk stefna:	though near I aim:
niðrbjúgt es nef	downward bends
á níðingi, —	the dastard’s nose —

þanns Svein konung	the one who lured
sveik ór landi,	King Sveinn from his land,
en Tryggvason	and drew Tryggvason
á talar dró.	into a trap.]

Whether or not the word *níðingr*, and Sigvaldi's down-turned nose, represent allusions to the Judas tradition already present in the verse, as Andersson argues, the verse clearly establishes Sigvaldi as the type of a traitor, referring to his betrayals of the two opposing rulers. This tradition underlies his characterization in *Jómsvíkinga saga*, where the description of him as “maður nefljótur” (“an ugly-nosed man”) suggests knowledge of the verse, but the portrayal is not consistently negative; indeed, Sigvaldi's tricking of Sveinn, referred to in Stefnir's verse, is one of the incidents that establishes him as a resourceful and successful leader, in a saga that sets a premium on duplicitous cunning.

In Oddr's saga, and indeed in Stefnir's verse, the emphasis is on Sigvaldi as a betrayer of kings; that one of these kings is presented in a saga that some at least have represented as a saint's life (Sverrir Tómasson 1984: 261–79) adds a hagiographical dimension that identifies Sigvaldi with the forces of evil. In *Jómsvíkinga saga* the issue is his abandonment of the group, and of his own special duties as its leader. His betrayal is measured, first, in the context of the oaths sworn by all the Jómsvíkings; and second, through comparison with the more truly heroic Vagn. Egged on by the deviousness of King Sveinn, Sigvaldi had sworn “að eg skal [...] hafa eltan Hákon jarl úr landi eða drepið hann ella; að þriðja kosti skal eg þar eftir liggja” (“that I must [...] have driven Jarl Hákon from the land, or else have killed him; as a third alternative I must stay lying dead there”) (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 162). This uncompromising boast compares poorly with Sigvaldi's behaviour in the event; to fail to fulfil his vow because the enemy had called on superhuman help looks like seeking refuge in a technicality, and Sigvaldi's failing is highlighted by Vagn's overt condemnation: “Þá mælti hann til Sigvalda, at hann skyldi fara manna armastur” (“Then he told Sigvaldi that he went as the most despicable of men”), followed by a derogatory verse (188). It is contrasted too with the conventional stoicism of Búi, who quips as his lips and teeth are hewn off, “Versna mun hinni dönsku þykja að kyssa oss [...] í Borgundarhólmi, þótt vér kæmim enn þangað þessu næst” (“The Danish woman in Borgundarhólm will think kissing me is getting worse [...] if I get there after this”). It is presumably not for this reason that Búi

soon after seizes his two chests of gold and jumps overboard, fulfilling the boast made not in Sveinn's presence, but earlier in the saga.

More significantly, the vows of the other Jómsvíkings, reflecting their familial relationships, are framed to show that the defection of Sigvaldi, as leader, has consequences for the strength of the fellowship as a whole. For the vow of Sigvaldi's brother Þorkell had been "að eg mun fylgja Sigvalda bróður mínum og flýja eigi fyrr en eg séig á skutstafn skipi hans" ("that I will follow my brother Sigvaldi and not flee before I see the stern of his ship") (162). Þorkell's commitment to the battle is contingent on Sigvaldi's, and therefore he and Sigurðr kápa, who has made a similar vow in relation to his brother Búi, feel free to leave the scene, "og þykist nú hvorumtveggi þeirra hafa efnt sína heitstrenging, Þorkels og Sigurðar" ("and now both of them, Þorkell and Sigurðr, feel they have fulfilled their vow") (188–89).

The final testing of the heroic mettle of the Jómsvíkings takes place in the execution scene, where the reactions of each of a series of ten survivors are passed under review as they are put to death. It may not be going too far to suggest that the closest generic comparison with this sequence is hagiography, since these are demonstrations of exemplary behaviour where narrative improbability is sanctioned by the special power — in this case heroic self-control — commanded by exceptional individuals. The construction of the scene is anecdotal, with evidence in the different versions of confusion and embroidery as new postures and witticisms are devised to showcase the heroes' stoicism. The motivation is explicitly that of testing the reputation of the Jómsvíkings (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 195):

Og nú ætla þeir Hákon jarl og Þorkell að spyrja hvern þeirra áður þeir sé höggvir, hvern veg þeir hygði til banans, og reyna svo liðið, hvort svo hart væri sem sagt var, og þykir reynt ef engi þeirra mælir æðruorð þegar þeir sjá banann opinn fyrir sér [...] En í öðru lagi þá þótti þeim gaman að heyra á orð þeirra, hvort sem upp kæmi.

[And now Jarl Hákon and Þorkell intend to ask each of them before they are beheaded what they thought about death, and so to test the company, whether it was as tough as was said, and think it will be proved if none of them speaks a word of fear when they see death waiting for them [...] And on the other hand it seemed entertaining to them to listen to their words, however it turned out.]

The final sentence, typically, warns us not to take the saga's heroic attitudes too seriously; its prime purpose is to entertain. An interesting feature of

the scene is that it delineates, among the more predictable displays of stoicism and gallows witticisms at the expense of the executioners, a strain of meditation on the nature of death, apparently a popular topic of philosophical investigation among the mead-cups of Jónsborg (or, more likely, among the literary associates of a bookish saga author) (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 196):

En það vilda eg að þú veittir mér, að þú hyggir sem skjótast af mér höfuðið, en eg helda á einum tigilknífi, þvíáð vér Jómsvíkingar höfum oft rætt um það, hvort maður vissi nokkuð þá er af færi höfuðið, ef maðr væri sem skjótast högginn, og nú skal það til marks, að eg mun fram vísa knífinum ef eg veit nokkuð frá mér, ellegar mun hann falla þegar niður úr hendi mér.

[I would like you to grant it to me that you chop off my head as quickly as possible, while I hold on to a belt-knife, for we Jómsvíkings have often discussed whether a man is aware of anything when the head goes off if he is struck as quickly as possible, and the sign of it will be that I will point the knife forward if I am aware of anything, or else it will fall down at once out of my hand.]

The author's sardonic comment punctures the heroic posturing:

Ög nú höggur Porkell svo að þegar fauk höfuðið af bolnum, en knífurinn féll á jörð niður, sem líklegt var.

[And now Porkell strikes so that the head at once flew off the trunk, but the knife fell to the ground, as was likely.]

Jómsvíkinga saga has been described as a series of colourful set pieces. Some, such as the account of Jarl Hákon's sacrifice of his son to his patron goddesses and the magical storm that ensues, and that of Sigvaldi's betrayal, exploiting his reputation — established in texts of historical intent, whether or not it had a basis in reality — as a traitor, can be seen as rationalizations of the outcome of a battle which probably in some form or another actually happened, though its location and most of what we are told about it are fictionalized. The execution scene, though, is an entirely literary creation, designed to exemplify, in as many ways as possible, the stoicism of the viking hero facing the supreme challenge. After the heroic defeat of Hjörungavágr it re-establishes the cohesion of the warrior band, as one after another calls on traditional heroic resignation in the name of the collective values of the Jómsvíkings: "Eigi man eg lög vor Jómsvíkinga ef eg hygg illt til eða kvíða eg við bana mínum eða mæla eg

æðruorð, þvíað eitt sinn skal hver deyja” (“I am not remembering the laws of us Jómsvíkingas if I think ill of it or fear my death or speak words of fear, for everyone must die once”) (*Jómsvíkinga saga*: 195).

The most obvious generic associations of *Jómsvíkinga saga* are with the kings' sagas. But this is already a very capacious genre; as I have shown, the saga incorporates elements of fantasy such as prophecy, portents and dreams, to an extent that confirms the origin of the text to be too early to be influenced by the critical and rationalizing developments in the genre fostered by Snorri. At the same time other generic connections can be made. The interpretation of history in terms of the character and motivations of individuals is characteristic of the heroic poems of the *Poetic Edda*. The conception of the viking fellowship and laws of Jómsborg can be paralleled in the *fornaldarsögur*. There are hagiographical elements in the demonization of Jarl Hákon, and the defection of Sigvaldi, though these are presented without overt Christian moralization. The interest in the characterization of non-royal individuals is reminiscent of the *Íslendinga-sögur*. While it can be shown that material from the saga went towards the shaping of the *konungasögur*, it does not share their preoccupations and emphasis. That much it has in common with the other early texts, *Færeyinga saga* and *Orkneyinga saga*; but this is not to say that they should be forced together into classification as a genre. In its focus on the communal relationships among a group of warriors, set against a broadly historical conflict between states that drives the narrative but never takes centre stage, *Jómsvíkinga saga* defies genre classification.

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Summary

Jómsvíkinga saga is difficult to classify generically. Modern conceptions of history and fiction in any case rely on different assumptions from those of medieval authors. Recent attempts to relocate another anomalous text, *Yngvars saga víðförla*, within the *fornaldarsögur* has implications for *Jómsvíkinga saga*. The saga has an intricate two-way relationship with the *konungasögur*, and is set against a background of historical events, but its narrative is ahistorical, particularly in its personalization of events. The saga shows a development over time, with later versions including more fantastic elements; the inclusion of verse, on the model of the *konungasögur*, was also a later development. The saga shows a particular interest in the dynamics of relationships within a warrior group, rather than singling out an individual hero. There is a polarity between the heroic Vagn and the treacherous Sigvaldi, whose defection brings about the downfall of the group. Despite sharing material with the *konungasögur*, the saga's preoccupations are distinctive and defy genre classification.

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Jómsvíkinga Sögur and Jómsvíkinga Drápur Texts, Contexts and Intertexts

JUDITH JESCH

Texts of *Jómsvíkinga saga*

If we take the term ‘intertextuality’ to refer to ‘a vision [...] of authorship and reading [...] resistant to ingrained notions of originality, uniqueness, singularity and autonomy’ (Allen 2000: 6), then it seems to be a most appropriate concept for understanding *Jómsvíkinga saga*, with its multiple manuscripts, versions and cross-references to its various narrative elements in other texts. Of course medievalists have never been quite as surprised as modern theorists by Roland Barthes’ insight that ‘the origin of the text is not a unified authorial consciousness but a plurality of voices, of other words, other utterances and other texts’ (Allen 2000: 72). Particularly useful in a practical way is Gérard Genette’s refiguring of the term ‘intertextuality’ to indicate ‘a relationship of copresence between two texts or among several texts’ and to reflect ‘the actual presence of one text within another’ (Allen 2000: 101). This takes us away from ‘semiotic processes of cultural and textual signification’ towards ‘a very pragmatic and determinable intertextual relationship between specific elements of individual texts’ (Allen 2000: 101). It has been a criticism of Genette that his approach ‘divides up what is indivisible within the work, its textual structure and its intertextual relations’ (Allen 2000: 114). But this criticism comes from the study of modern literary texts with, on the whole, a fixed form, not from something like *Jómsvíkinga saga*, where the opposite is the case: rather, the existence of other versions keeps interrupting the desire of critics to interpret a singular text. Thus, both Ólafur Halldórsson (2009: 292) and Torfi Tulinius (2002: 29) have to justify restricting their aesthetic or social interpretations of the saga to the version in AM 291 4to (henceforth 291) by declaring this to be the oldest or ‘best’ manuscript of the saga, whereas Norman Blake (1962: xxi–xxv) argues for the literary

superiority of Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7 (henceforth Sth. 7). They have made the choice which was defined by Genette as ‘reading the text *for itself*’, rather than ‘in terms of its intertextual relations’ (Allen 2000: 114), but this then also depends on having defined one manuscript text as ‘the’ text of the saga.

With such redefinitions, attempts to grasp intertextuality founder in the end on the problem that the term ‘is in danger of meaning nothing more than whatever each particular critic wishes it to mean’ (Allen 2000: 2). But this brief and derivative consideration of the history of the term has at least reminded us that ‘all texts are potentially plural, reversible, [...] lacking in clear and defined boundaries, and always involved in the expression or repression of the dialogic “voices” which exist within society’ (Allen 2000: 209). Such insights from intertextuality theory are relevant to understanding the textual contexts and literary interrelations of *Jómsvíkinga saga*. They also serve to question the unitary concept implied in the designation *Jómsvíkinga saga*. The hypothesis presented here is that there is no *Jómsvíkinga saga*, at least not one about which we can generalize with confidence. Rather, there are multiple narratives (in both prose and poetry) about the Jómsvíkings which have an interesting variety of relationships to each other. A further hypothesis is that the best way of understanding the significance of the Jómsvíkings, whether in a literary or a historical sense, is to understand this variety of textual relationships.

If there is not one *Jómsvíkinga saga*, then how many are there? Although critics write of *Jómsvíkinga saga* in the singular, scholarly wisdom has generally accepted that it survives in five independent versions (e.g. Jakob Benediktsson 1957: 117; Megaard 2000). In conjunction with this, there is a theory going back at least to Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (1937: 214), and endorsed by Jakob Benediktsson (1957: 116–17), that AM 510 4to (henceforth 510) has interpolations from an older version of *Jómsvíkinga saga* which has ‘no written connection’ to the common source of the five surviving versions, implying that there were in fact once two saga-texts about the Jómsvíkings. Ólafur Halldórsson (2009: 289–90) agrees with this, but outlines a slightly more complex relationship between the surviving versions.¹ In his view, the two saga-texts are represented by

¹ This is a rather different inflection of the relationships than that envisaged in Ólafur Halldórsson 1993: 343, where Sth. 7 is said to belong to the same redaction as 291 and Flateyjarbók.

(1) the version found in 291, but also extracted in Flateyjarbók and the AM 310 4to manuscript of Oddr munkr's saga of Óláfr Tryggvason, and (2) a lost version which was used as a source in both *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla*. The other three versions, namely Sth. 7, 510, and the lost manuscript translated into Latin by Arngrímur Jónsson, are mixed versions, deriving from both of these sagas. This proposed reduction of the five 'independent' versions to two underlying saga-texts, one of which is lost, poses as many questions as it answers. It can for instance be difficult to pin down the 'mixed' quality of a version when one of the ingredients in that mix is lost. Further work with the manuscripts is certainly needed (see Þórdís Edda Jóhannesdóttir and Veturliði G. Óskarsson's article in this volume). But at least this outline reminds us of the complexities of the textual relationships. An important aspect of Ólafur Halldórsson's argument (1969: 23; 2009: 291) is that it operates with the assumption that the two original saga-texts were so different that there was no written connection, or *rittengsl*, between them, and that they were therefore both derived from oral traditions. Even with the number of versions reduced from the five surviving ones to two fundamental saga-texts, these two cannot therefore be reconciled into one originary *Jómsvíkinga saga*.

The extent of this prose narrative which once existed in two independent texts is also questionable (and it goes without saying that the two texts might have been substantially different). Although Ólafur does not say so explicitly, he implies (2009: 294) that the two parts of the saga had separate origins, by drawing attention to the beginning of ch. 8 (in 291, cf. Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 100) which states that:

Nú hefst upp annar þáttur sögunnar, sá er fyrr hefir verið en þetta væri fram komið, og má eigi einum munnnum allt senn segja. Maður er nefndur Tóki; hann var í Danmörku í héraði því er á Fjóni heitir.

While the first seven chapters of 291 deal with the kings of Denmark, this narratorial intrusion in the first sentence of ch. 8 clearly indicates a shift in the narrative to one focused on the Jómsvíkings. Although Ólafur once stated (1969: 11) that 510 has merely 'omitted' the first part of the saga, more recently (2009: 294) he has implied that 'the actual *Jómsvíkinga saga*' ('hin eiginlega Jómsvíkinga saga') starts in ch. 8. In another study (2000: 85, 91), he has admitted that it is not possible to distinguish between two possible sources, a lost saga of the Danish kings, or a version of *Jómsvíkinga saga* that derives from it. We might note that 510 starts in the same saga-like way (af Petersens 1879: 3):

Madur er nefndur Toki; hann uar i Danmark i hieradi þui, er aa Fione hiet. Toki var rikur madur og mikill firer sier; [...]

and ch. 7 of Sth. 7 is similar (Blake 1962: 8), as is the second separate extract in Flateyjarbók (Guðbrandur Vigfússon and Unger 1860–1868: I, 153). All of this is compatible with an earlier text of *Jómsvíkinga saga* which focused on the Jómsvíkings and the battle, without all the preliminaries about the kings of Denmark that are characteristic of most of the surviving saga-versions. The Jómsvíkings narrative is certainly the part of the saga that was of interest to Oddr munkr and the authors or compilers of *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla*. Gjessing (1877: i) suggested that a version of the text beginning ‘Maðr er nefndr Toki’ was ‘den oprindeligeste’. He also (1877: ii) sees further evidence for the secondary nature of the Danish introduction in Arngrímr’s text which introduces Harald Bluetooth as ‘Daniae præsidentem’ in Sect. III, c. XI, even though he has frequently been mentioned before. Megaard also analyses only the second part of the saga when attempting to sort out its stemma (2000). Similarly, the following discussion will concentrate on what we might call the story-complex about the Jómsvíkings, and especially the battle of Hjörungavágr.

The poetical intertexts

Another reason for concentrating on this story-complex is that the poetical intertexts which are of primary interest here relate to the Jómsvíkings, and not to the preliminaries about the Danish kings. Most previous commentators do not consider the skaldic stanzas in the various versions of the saga as independent witnesses to the story-complex of the Jómsvíkings, but only as elements of the saga, or at best, as sources for it. Yet this material is very important precisely because it indicates the multiplicity and complexity of narratives about the Jómsvíkings that not only lie behind the surviving manuscript versions, but also, in many cases, existed independently of them. Considered in their own right, rather than merely as quotations in, or sources for, the relevant prose texts, the poetry about the Jómsvíkings provides further evidence for the story-complex about them that is largely independent of, and generally predates, the surviving prose versions.

Table 1 shows the distribution and preservation contexts of surviving poems (both free-standing individual stanzas, and stanzas from longer poems) about the Jómsvíkings and the battle of Hjörungavágr (see Whaley 2013 for further detail and recent editions of all).

The following discussion will concentrate on the *drápur*, the last four items in Table 1, since these longer poems can give a better idea of the nature of pre-saga narratives about the Jómsvíkings than the *lausavísur*, or the one or two relevant stanzas of the longer poems *Vellekla* and *Háleygjatal*. The *lausavísur* are on the whole ‘diegetic events’ (Jesch 1993: 214), and are thus, regardless of their historicity, less reliable as evidence for possible extended narratives about the Jómsvíkings which were independent of, or preceded, the surviving saga-narratives. Two of these four longer poems, Tindr’s *Hákonardrápa* and Þórðr’s *Eiríksdrápa*, seem to be contemporary praise poems in *dróttkvætt*. Þorkell’s *Búadrápa* and Bjarni’s *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, on the other hand, are retrospective poems, what Fidjestøl (1991) called ‘sogekvaede’, an early form of historical narrative in skaldic form (see also Lindow 1982: 109), and are composed in simpler metres. The original long poems have to be reconstructed from their various manuscript contexts, and these reconstructed versions can provide some insights into ways in which narratives about the events at Hjörungavágr and the Jómsvíkings could be presented other than as a saga.

Hákonardrápa

Eleven stanzas or part-stanzas survive of Tindr Hallkelsson’s poem conventionally known as *Hákonardrápa* (all references and quotations below are from Poole 2013). This title is based on *Fagrskinna*’s identification of the poem as a *drápa*, even though that text does not cite any of it. 510, on the other hand, calls it a *flokkr*, and there is no surviving evidence for a refrain which would confirm its status as a *drápa*. The preserved stanzas appear all to be about a single military event in Hákon’s life, and there are several clues within the text (as well as in its prose contexts) which indicate that this event was the battle of Hjörungavágr, although Poole (2013: 338) draws attention to ‘the generic, non-specific content of the extant stanzas’. It is conceivable that the poem was a *flokkr* focused on this one event, but if it was a *drápa* it may have covered other events of Hákon’s life. However, the poem is very poorly preserved and

Tab. 1. The distribution and preservation contexts of surviving poems about the Jömsvíking and the battle of Hjörungavágr

	AM 291 4to	Perg. 4:o nr 7	Flat	AM 510 4to	Fsk	Hkr	ÓsTm	SnE	Other
Eyvindr skálda- spillir Finnsson, <i>Háleygjatal</i>						st 11			
Einarr Helgason skálaglamm, <i>Vellekla</i>								sts 33–34	
Einarr Helgason skálaglamm, <i>Lausavísur</i>	sts 1–3	sts 2–3	sts 1–3	sts 1–3	st 3				sts 1–2 in <i>Egils saga</i> ; st. 3 in <i>Laufás Edda</i>
Porleifr skúma, <i>Lausavísa</i>	st 1	st 1	st 1	st 1	st 1				AM 242 fol. (FoGT)
Vígfúss Víga- Glúmsson, Poem about Hákon jarl				st 1	st 1				
Vígfúss Víga- Glúmsson, <i>Lausavísa</i>		st 1	st 1	st 1	st 1				
Vagn Ákason, <i>Lausavísa</i>	st 1	st 1	st 1	st 1					

	AM 291 4to	Perg. 4:o nr 7	Flat	AM 510 4to	Fsk	Hkr	ÓsTm	SnE	Other
Anonymous, <i>Lausavísa</i>				st 1	st 1				
Tindr Hallkels- son, <i>Hákonar- drápa</i>				sts 1–11	<i>referred to but not cited</i>	sts 1, 3, 4	sts 1, 3, 4	st 1	
Porðr Kolbeins- son, <i>Eiríksdrápa</i>				sts 2–3	sts 2–5	sts 1–4	sts 1–4	st 2	
Þorkell Gíslason, <i>Búadrápa</i>							sts 1–12		
Bjarni byskup Kolbeinsson, <i>Jómsvíkinga- drápa</i>							sts 10–12, 17–18, 20, 26, 29–30, 32–34, 38, 41–45		sts 1–40 in GKS 2367 4to

it is difficult to pronounce on any aspect of it with confidence. The focus in the surviving stanzas on one series of closely-related events might suggest that it was composed shortly after the battle, as assumed by Poole. Although the poem is not narrative in the same way as *Búadrápa* and *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, there is some evidence of an awareness of chronology and the sequence of events, as well as indications of the poet's stance towards these events and his audience.

In st. 2, Hákon is identified only as *þrænzkri jarl* 'the Trøndelag jarl', suggesting an audience who was knowledgeable about the object of praise. Indeed, Hákon is referred to as *jarl* four times (sts 1, 2, 5, 7), by a kenning or circumlocution eight times (sts 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 [twice], 7, 11) and is named only twice, in sts 8 (see further on this below) and 10. Also in st. 2, the poet claims that he heard about some prior raiding of Búi and Sigvaldi in Norway before they encountered Hákon: this is the solitary use of the 'I have heard' (*frák*) formula in the poem. It is important to remember that this word is the result of an editorial emendation, but it is a plausible one, and such a comment would make sense if the poet had been present at the actual battle, but not at the prior skirmishes for which he had some other source. Stanza 6, as interpreted by Poole, similarly suggests that the Danes raided in Norway before the battle. There may also be reference to earlier Danish activity in Norway in st. 11.

Better-attested examples of first-person forms occur in sts 5 and 8. In st. 5, the poet announces that he 'declare[s]' (*ræsik*)² his topic (which in this stanza is general martial praise of Hákon) in poetry. Stanza 8 alludes to something that 'people will know' (*veit öld*). Again, this rests on an editorial emendation, but the comment is plausibly related to 'the life' (*ævi*) of Hákon. In the second half of the same stanza, the poet twice says 'I think' (*hykk*), though what the poet thought is now impossible to reconstruct, as the stanza is too corrupt.

Based on Poole's emendations and interpretations of these stanzas, we seem in summary to have a poet who may have been present at the battle, but who had to be informed of Danish activities prior to the battle, and who composed a poem of conventional praise of Hákon directed at an audience of his followers, most likely fairly soon after the event. The focus is entirely on the Norwegian camp, from which the poem seems to derive.

² This reading is not in doubt, though the meaning of the word in this context is 'posited uniquely for this instance' by Poole (2013: 348).

Eiríksdrápa

Þórðr Kolbeinsson's *Eiríksdrápa* (all references and quotations below are from Carroll 2013) is rather different: a sweeping poem in praise of Eiríkr jarl Hákonarson, in which only the first five stanzas (of seventeen surviving ones) are relevant to the Jómsvíkings, as the poem then goes on to celebrate other events in his life. The identification of the poem as a *drápa* is well-attested in the prose contexts, although again no refrain survives to confirm this. The chronological sweep of the poem suggests that the poet had no personal knowledge of the battle of Hjørungavágr (or indeed of any of the other events celebrated) though, as Carroll points out (2013: 489), his 'role as poet (and presumably performer) is frequently foregrounded through first-person forms [...] and present-tense forms'. It may be this distance from the events which led the poet to feel the need to affirm the authority of his information by using the adverb *sannliga* 'in truth' in his very first stanza, and by drawing attention to his own poem in st. 2. As in Tindr's poem, the jarl is referred to simply as *jarl* in st. 3 (also st. 4), where his opponent Sigvaldi is named, or by kennings or circumlocutions (in sts 2 and 5). That his opponents were 'Danes' is identified already in st. 1 and repeated in sts 4 and 5. Eiríkr is not named until st. 7, when the poet has changed topic to Eiríkr's exile in Sweden on the death of his father. This reticence by the poet about naming his hero in this part of the poem (he is named more frequently later on) could be suggestive of an original context similar to that of *Hákonardrápa* (i.e. an audience knowledgeable about the object of praise), or even influence from that poem.

Carroll (2013: 492–93, 511) has noted that sts 2 and 15 of *Eiríksdrápa* show parallels with *Hákonardrápa* sts 9 and 4. There are also possible echoes of *Hákonardrápa*'s difficult st. 8 in *Eiríksdrápa* st. 6, which is concerned with the murder of Hákon. In the context of a longer poem about Eiríkr, covering several of his life-events, it is conceivable that Þórðr not only borrowed some of Tindr's expressions and general approach, but also that his knowledge of the battle against the Jómsvíkings came from Tindr's poem. Thus, although *Hákonardrápa* and *Eiríksdrápa* were praise poems contemporary with the events surrounding Hjørungavágr, or at least with the lifetimes of some of the actors at Hjørungavágr, it is clear that they had a different relationship to those events. By virtue of composing about the younger generation, namely Eiríkr, son of Hákon, and by virtue of composing a poem with a longer biographical spread, Þórðr is already

at one remove from the events involving the Jómsvíkings, and his poem was possibly already dependent on Tindr's somewhat earlier account.

Búadrápa

At an even further remove is Porkell Gíslason's *Búadrápa* (all references and quotations below are from Lethbridge and Whaley 2013), which is conventionally thought to date from some two centuries after the battle, by a poet of whom nothing is known but his name. With twelve whole or part-stanzas, the poem is incomplete, although the narrative sequence of the surviving stanzas is coherent, focusing on the Jómsvíkings from when they approach the battle-site to when they are defeated. Again, the fact that it is a *drápa* is given by the prose source, though no refrain survives. As Lethbridge and Whaley note (2013: 941), the poem is 'fairly general and stereotyped', but does at times focus on named individuals, Búi (sts 8, 11) and Vagn (st. 12) on the side of the Jómsvíkings, and Eiríkr (st. 12) on the Norwegian side, but this interest in individuals comes only after a lot of vague battle-description. Unlike Tindr and Þórðr, who might have named their hero's opponents, but nevertheless very clearly took sides, Porkell seems to be more neutral: in many of the stanzas it is impossible to tell which group of warriors is shown in action; the passive verb form in st. 3 *nýtt nest gafsk hrofnun* 'fresh provisions were given to ravens' is indicative of this refusal to take sides. In st. 8, which is about Búi, the plural pronoun in *lið þeira* 'their troop', referring to his opponents, suggests both Hákon and Eiríkr as leaders of the troop.

The poet's presence is not intrusive. Twice he uses the formulaic *frák* 'I have heard' (sts 1, 8) and once the equally formulaic *hykk* 'I think' (st. 11). All three of these refer to the Jómsvíkings: st. 1 is about them preparing their ships for the voyage north, st. 8 refers to Búi's bold advance through the enemy troop, and st. 11 describes Búi leaping overboard with his two chests before the poet sententiously concludes *hykk ferð misstu friðar* 'I think men missed out on peace'. In the following stanza (12), Eiríkr has cleared Vagn's ship and the Jómsvíkings are defeated. This might suggest a separate source for the Jómsvíkings, though the evidence is hardly conclusive.

Porkell's dependence on his sources is suggested by several aspects of the poem. There are a few parallels with Tindr's *Hákonardrápa*, which

might not be significant on their own, but which collectively conjure up a faint echo of that poem (for details, see Table 2). But the very conventionality of *Búadrápa*, while suggesting its derivative nature, at the same time makes it rather difficult to pin down any particular source. Depending on the date of the poem, a saga source is possible: the reference to the troll-wife shooting arrows from her fingers in st. 10 is the first poetic reference to this marvel, and it has been suggested that it derives from a version of the saga (Ólafur Halldórsson 2000: 81). At any rate, it is included in Fidjestøl's category of 'sogekvæde', as noted above.

Jómsvíkingadrápa

The final poem in this survey is *Jómsvíkingadrápa* by Bjarni Kolbeinson, bishop of Orkney (all references and quotations below are from Lethbridge 2013; see also Jesch 1998). Forty-five complete and partial stanzas of this poem survive, with five or more now missing. It is the first of the four poems which has preserved the structure of a standard *drápa*, with a central *stefjabálkr* 'refrain section' marked by repetition of the *klofastef* 'split refrain' in six stanzas. Indeed the refrain is one aspect of this poem which has made it interesting to scholars (e.g. Sävborg 2007: 278), since with this Bjarni 'weaves the theme of love into the battle narrative he presents', and each of the refrain stanzas 'offers a fresh variant on the contrast between the love theme and the bloody clash between the Jómsvíkingar and the Norwegian jarls' (Lethbridge 2013: 957). The romantic content of the refrain is of literary-historical importance, but much less relevant to the Jómsvíkings and the battle. However, the structure of the poem which depends on this refrain is relevant to an understanding of its narrative mode.

The poet spends the first six stanzas establishing the metatextual fact that it is a poem which he has composed, using a variety of synonyms for 'poem' and the act of composition. While the Jómsvíkings are introduced in st. 6, the story proper begins in st. 7, with *Hvervetna frá k heyja / Harald bardaga stóra* 'I have heard that Haraldr fought great battles everywhere'. This emphasis on the poet's secondhand information is a constant throughout the poem. In the remaining text, formulas such as *frák/frágum* 'I/we have heard', *geta skal* 'mention shall be made', *sagt var* 'it was said', *hykk* 'I think' occur in 18 stanzas. There are also some

less formulaic but equally revealing comments. In st. 11, the poet refers to his *yrkisefni* ‘material for a poem’ and in st. 34 *era þorð at segja þann þátt* ‘there is no need to relate that episode’. These formulas and comments do not occur in the refrain stanzas, but are so frequent in the narrative stanzas that only six of these have no reference to the poem or other formulaic comment. The cumulative effect of all this is to suggest a poet explicitly reworking some kind of literary material. For Lethbridge (2013: 954), ‘the poem relates historical and legendary traditions about the famous sea-battle of Hjørungavágr’, but she does not express a view on whether these traditions were oral or written, poetry or prose.

Although the narrative focuses on the Jómsvíkings, the poet, like Porkell, is fairly even-handed in his treatment of individuals. Seven Jómsvíkings are named, as are six in the Norwegian troop. Lethbridge (2013: 969, 972) notes the following echoes of *Búadrápa*:

- st. 16, describing the ships of the Jómsvíkings heading north in cold waters, is reminiscent of st. 2 of *Búadrápa*
- sts 12, 26 and 41 contain the adverb *fíkjum* ‘extremely’, also found in *Búadrápa* st. 10

Links between the *drápur*

There are in fact verbal and conceptual echoes between all four poems, as set out in Table 2. These parallels are noted as comprehensively as possible, while acknowledging that many of the parallels derive from well-established skaldic conventions which individually have little or no significance in demonstrating relationships between different poems. Nevertheless, when there are many of these, the overall pattern may be significant. Numbers refer to stanzas in the editions cited.

Undoubtedly, many of these echoes are rather faint, and much of the vocabulary is so conventional that no great emphasis should be placed on individual similarities. Yet there are some concatenations worth noting:

- The extremely problematic st. 8 of *Hákonardrápa* seems to have influenced both *Eiríksdrápa* st. 6 and *Jómsvíkingadrápa* st. 1, though in rather different ways. In *Eiríksdrápa*, a reference to the death of Hákon, at a pivotal moment in the poem, harks back to the

earlier poem about Hákon. In *Jómsvíkingadrápa* the jocose introductory stanza picks up on the Odinic imagery and the vocabulary of *Hákonardrápa*, and Óðinn (or rather Yggr) gets a few more mentions. Otherwise, as Holtsmark (1937: 5) points out, *Jómsvíkingadrápa* is ‘nesten fritt for mytologi’. All three stanzas have a metatextual function, drawing attention to the poem, the poet and/or the audience.

- There are numerous repetitions of vocabulary between sts 6–11 of *Búadrápa* and 24–37 of *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, both describing the battle itself. The vocabulary is conventional, and is not always used in the same way, but its concentration within these stanza sequences seems significant. Unfortunately, *Hákonardrápa* ends more or less at this point, though the occurrence there (st. 10) of both *hjørvar* (as in both poems) and *fyr borð* (as in *Jómsvíkingadrápa*) suggests that there might have been more extensive correspondences if only we had further stanzas of *Hákonardrápa*.
- There are some correspondences between the earliest poem, *Hákonardrápa*, and the latest, *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, which do not appear in the intermediate poems. The Odinic reference already noted appears in the use of *Hangi* (*Hákonardrápa* sts 1, 7) or *hangi* (*Jómsvíkingadrápa* st. 4), and the reference to the heathenness of the warriors (though using different words) in *Hákonardrápa* st. 7 and *Jómsvíkingadrápa* st. 7 is also notable. More stereotypical are the gaping wolf in *Hákonardrápa* st. 3 and *Jómsvíkingadrápa* st. 31, and the concept of battle as an assembly of weapons in *Hákonardrápa* sts 2, 7, and *Jómsvíkingadrápa* st. 6.

Despite the poor, or at least incomplete, preservation of all four poems, it seems probable that they were composed in a tradition in which the later poets were aware of the work of their predecessors, in some cases using it as a source, or providing deliberate echoes of it.

In addition to these similarities with other poetry on the Jómsvíkings, it has to be recognized that *Jómsvíkingadrápa* is a patchwork of influences from a variety of earlier poetry, not all of it about the Jómsvíkings (Holtsmark 1937: 10). Yet the basic story must have come from somewhere, and the question is, was it from a saga, or from the poetic tradition? Here, the date of its composition, if only it could be determined, would be of great significance. Bjarni had a long life, he died in 1223, having become bishop of Orkney in 1188. Previous scholars have considered *Jómsvíkingadrápa* to be inappropriate to a bishop (‘óbyskupslega kveðið’, Ólafur Halldórs-

Tab. 2. Verbal and conceptual echoes between the four poems

<i>Hákonardrápa</i>	<i>Eiríksdrápa</i>	<i>Búadrápa</i>	<i>Jómsvíkingadrápa</i>
1: <i>Hangi</i> [= Óðinn, in a warrior-kenning] 7: <i>Hangi</i> ^a [= Óðinn, in a raven-kenning]			4: <i>hangi</i> [= 'the hanged one'] ^b
2: <i>þrænzkr jarl</i>	7: <i>þrænzkr jarl</i>		
2: <i>sverða þing</i> 7: <i>odda ofþing</i>			6: <i>málmþing</i>
		2, 10: <i>hregg</i> [= storm]	20, 30, 36: <i>hregg</i> [= storm, in a warrior-kenning] 32: <i>hregg</i> [= storm]
3: <i>vargr gleypiti</i>	6: <i>vargr</i>	5: <i>vargr</i>	31: <i>gein vargr</i>
3: <i>Sqrli</i> [in a mail- shirt kenning, with <i>serkr</i>]		14: <i>Hamðir</i> [in a helmet- kenning]	4: <i>Hamðir</i> [in a mail-shirt kenning, with <i>serkr</i>]
4: <i>ferð</i> [= flock, in a raven-kenning]		11: <i>ferð</i> [= men]	
4, 9, 10: <i>skeið</i>	1, 2, 4: <i>skeið</i>		15, 40: <i>skeið</i>
4, 5, 9: <i>hrjóðal</i> <i>hrauð skeiðar</i>	4: <i>hrauð</i> [skeiða]	12: <i>skip hrjóða</i>	38: <i>skip hroðin</i>
5: <i>víkingr</i>			22: <i>víkingr</i>
6: <i>grimmr</i>		3, 4, 10: <i>grimmr</i>	12, 15, 19, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 35: <i>grimmr</i>
7: <i>heiðinn dómr</i>			7: <i>siðfornir</i>
8: <i>öld, aldir</i>			1: <i>öld</i>

^a N.B. this is an emendation.^b N.B. this is editorial conjecture.

<i>Hákonardrápa</i>	<i>Eiríksdrápa</i>	<i>Búadrápa</i>	<i>Jómsvíkingadrápa</i>
8: <i>Yggr</i>			1, 4: <i>Yggr</i> [= Óðinn, in poetry-kennings] 26, 37: <i>Yggr</i> [= Óðinn, in a sword-kenning] 29: <i>Yggr</i> [= Óðinn, in a battle-kenning] 43: <i>Yggr</i> [= Óðinn, in a warrior-kenning]
8: <i>Hóðkunar ævi</i>	6: <i>Hóðkunar ævi</i>		
8: first-person forms	6: first-person forms		1: first-person forms
9: <i>þar vas lind fyr landi</i>	2: <i>mörg vas lind fyr landi</i> [°]		
10: <i>fyr borð</i>			36, 37: <i>fyr borð</i>
10: <i>hjørvar</i> [= swords, in a battle-kenning]		6: <i>hjørvar</i> [= swords]	30, 36: <i>hjørvar</i> [= swords, in battle-kennings]
		6: <i>orvar</i> [= arrows]	30: <i>orvar</i> [= arrows, in a battle-kenning]
		7: <i>gengu í sundr hjálmur</i>	24, 26: <i>klauf hjálma</i>
3: <i>hagl</i> [= hail, in an arrow-kenning]		9: <i>hagl</i> [= hailstone]	32: <i>hagl</i> [= hail]
		9: <i>ben</i> [= wound, in a sword-kenning] 11: <i>ben</i> [= wound, in a blood-kenning]	32: <i>ben</i> [= wounds]
		10: <i>snarpr</i> [sc. arrows]	28: <i>snarpr</i> [sc. swords]
		10: <i>fíkjum</i>	12, 26, 41: <i>fíkjum</i>
		10: <i>hlíf</i> [= shields, in a battle-kenning]	32: <i>hlíf</i> [= shields]
		11: <i>kista</i>	36, 37: <i>kista</i>

[°] N.B. this is an emendation from *linds*.

son 1969: 27; also af Petersens 1879: 120), implying that he composed it before he became a bishop, in which case a saga-source is less likely, simply because of the early date. Perhaps more relevant than whether or not the subject-matter is appropriate to a bishop is whether a conscientious bishop would have had the time to engage in this kind of literary activity, and even more so what kind of literary milieu would be needed to produce this text. It is usually assumed that the story was available to him in Orkney (Holtsmark 1937: 10), but Bjarni had Norwegian connections and indeed spent quite a bit of time there (Holtsmark 1937: 2–3), though the recorded trips were all during his episcopate. There is in fact nothing to preclude a variety of influences on Bjarni's poem, and both Norwegian and Danish sources seem likely, the Norwegian from his connections there, and the Danish from the well-attested interest in Danish legends in Orkney, resulting from the archiepiscopal rule of the islands by Lund from 1104 to 1152 (Nordal 2001: 48). While multiple sources seem the most likely explanation for the poem, these complicate the question of its date. Mogaard (2000: 171–72) speculates that a satirical poem about a Norwegian defeat of the Danes would not have been politically possible in a Norwegian/Orcadian context after 1194 and returns to a pre-1188 date, but this seems to stretch a political interpretation of the poem too far.

In considering possible sources for *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, it is important to acknowledge the explicitly narrative nature of the poem. While this might suggest a saga source, *Jómsvíkingadrápa* is, as has already been noted, highly innovative, and there is no reason to suppose the poet could not also innovate by turning the skaldic form to narrative purposes; he does not need to have had a saga as a direct model. The narrative mode of the poem has already been analysed by Lindow (1982: 109–14), and some further points can be added. Unlike previous poetical versions of the story, this one abounds in names, the poet positively glories in telling a collective story of individual Jómsvíkings and their opponents. It is, as has already been noted, relatively neutral between the two sides, though of course the heroics of the Jómsvíkings at their execution inevitably creates a literary high-point, which is exploited by the poet with gusto, even making use of dialogue (a rarity in skaldic verse) in st. 43. The valiant Jómsvíkings are juxtaposed with Hákon's evil pagan sacrifice (sts 30, 32), of which a bishop would of course have to disapprove. But the poet is also critical of Búi, for being stingy by taking his chests with him as he leaps overboard, in st. 36, and this contrasts with the generosity for which Eiríkr is praised in st. 44. The overall impression is relatively even-handed.

On balance, it seems most likely that *Jómsvíkingadrápa* had as its main source a rich poetical tradition about the battle of Hjörungavágr. The discussion above has demonstrated the ways in which this tradition could be realized through time, in poems that found new ways of telling the same story, but which were also dependent on their poetical predecessors. *Eiríksdrápa* is however the odd one out. It is clearly dependent in some way on *Hákonardrápa*, but seems to have had no further influence itself, possibly because in it the battle of Hjörungavágr was just one incident in Eiríkr's rich life, the main achievements of which were elsewhere and later. *Búadrápa* also drew from *Hákonardrápa*, and *Jómsvíkingadrápa* drew not only on its near predecessor *Búadrápa*, but Bjarni also seems to have been familiar with *Hákonardrápa*, and to allude to it quite consciously. This evolving poetical tradition appears to have been relatively independent of the saga-tradition until the thirteenth century.

Conclusion

The discussion above has suggested the following literary-historical outline that is at the very least worth further consideration:

- There is strong evidence for a long-lasting poetical tradition about the jarls of Hlaðir and their exploits in defeating the Jómsvíkings at Hjörungavágr. This tradition can be traced from the late tenth century into the late twelfth or early thirteenth. Poems are composed about these exploits at different points in time and for different audiences, but normally with an awareness of previous poems on the same subject.
- As this tradition develops, it becomes less focused on the Norwegian protagonists, and more even-handed, but with a growing interest in the literary possibilities of the colourful heroism of the Jómsvíkings.
- This tendency develops further in a prose narrative tradition about the Jómsvíkings, which is provisionally traceable to around 1200. This saga-tradition appropriates the poetical texts to support the narrative, but also develops the narrative through additional anecdotes about the Jómsvíkings, and adds a link to the more general history of the kings of Denmark.
- The poetical tradition undoubtedly has its origins in Norway. By

the time Bjarni Kolbeinsson composes in it, it may be that literary interest in this story has shifted to Orkney. This may have happened through Bjarni himself, who had connections in Norway. The relative even-handedness of the two later *drápur* suggests audiences that did not have any national pride invested in the story, whether through geographical or temporal distance from the events.

- The expansion of the story with Danish material may also have had its origins in Orkney, where there is evidence for an interest in Danish legends in the twelfth century.
- The connections between Orkney and Iceland, particularly at Oddi, provide the final link in the chain by which the poetical traditions are conveyed to Iceland where they are both preserved and appropriated for the saga-tradition about the Jómsvíkings and the kings of Denmark that is developed there (cf. Nordal 2001: 311–19).

This model thus enables the reconstruction of some of the ‘plurality of voices’ that Barthes identified as the ‘origin of the text’ and that continue to speak in the long-lived traditions about the Jómsvíkings, as reflected in both poetry and saga-prose. Even if this model is not correct in every detail, the analysis has shown how the story of the battle of Hjörungavágr could be narrated in both verse and prose, and revealed the complex intertextual relationships between at least some of these narratives, not to mention other narratives to which they became attached in the saga-tradition.

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Summary

Using theories of intertextuality the paper explores the implications of the complex transmission of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, with its multiple manuscripts, versions and cross-references in other texts. It then concentrates on the story-complex about the Jomsvikings and the battle of Hjørungavágr, rather than the first part of the saga with its focus on Danish kings. The paper explores how this story-complex was realized in skaldic poetry, ostensibly a major source for the prose accounts. Following a survey of all the relevant poetry, the four *drápur* which treat the Jomsvikings are analysed in detail. Two of these are roughly contemporary with the events, while two are retrospective, narrative accounts, and there is some evidence of influence from the earlier poems to the later ones. Overall, the

analysis show how the story of the battle of Hjørungavágr was narrated in both verse and prose, and reveals the complex intertextual relationships between these narratives.

Keywords: Jómsvíkinga saga, skaldic poetry, intertextuality

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Búi the Dragon

Some Intertexts of *Jómsvíkinga Saga*

DANIEL SÄVBORG

Most readers of *Jómsvíkinga saga* remember Búi digri leaping over board with his chests full of gold during the battle of Hjørungavágr. Very few readers remember what happens to him afterwards. But the saga does return to him. Close to the end we read:

En þat er sögn manna sidan at Bui hafui at ormi ordit ok lagizst a gullkistur sinar. en ver hyggium þat til þess haft vera at þar hafui ormrinn setzst a Hiorungauogi ok kann vera at nökkur ill uætrr hafui lagizst a fet ok synnzst þar sidan. en æigi kunnum uær at segia huort helldr er. ma ok vera at huorki se satt þuiat marga uega ma synazst. (*Jómsvíkinga saga*, ed. Flateyjarbók, 1860: 203)¹

In this article I will discuss this part of the saga by focusing on some Old Norse texts which have relation to this episode. I will partly use them to throw light on *Jómsvíkinga saga*, but I will also use the episode to throw light on other texts and scholarly problems in Old Norse literature. In particular I will attempt to increase our knowledge about the presence, role, and contemporary view of supernatural events. The texts concerned are *Þorskfirðinga saga*, *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, Arngrímr ábóti's *Guðmundar saga*, and Árni Jónsson's *Guðmundardrápa*.

*

Þorskfirðinga saga, also known as *Gull-Þóris saga*, is one of the less well-known Icelandic sagas. It tells the story of the Icelander Þórir and his

¹ This is the text of the longer version, here represented by Flateyjarbók. The text in the shorter version in Sthm. perg 4:o nr 7, is in this case quite similar: "En þat er margra manna saugn at Bui hafi orðit at ormi ok lagz a gull sítt. er þat til þess haft at menn hafa seð orm a Hiaurunga uági kann þat ok uera at nockur uánnd uétrr hafi lagz a þat fe ok syniz þar siðan" (*Jómsvíkinga saga*, ed. Gustaf Cederschiöld, 1875: 35).

adventures. In his youth he steals a treasure in a dragon's lair in Norway, an act that gives him the name Gull-Þórir. Back on Iceland he is involved in conflicts with his neighbours, which leads to feuds of the kind typical for the family saga as a genre. But at the very end of the saga something new happens. We read:

Þóri brá svá illa við þessi tíðindi [the message about his son Guðmundr's death], er hann frétti, at hann hvarf á brott frá búi sínu, ok vissi engi maðr, hvat af honum væri orðit eðr hann kom niðr, en þat hafa menn fyrir satt, at hann hafi at dreka orðit ok hafi lagizt á gullkistur sínar. Helzt þat ok lengi síðan, at menn sá dreka fljúga ofan um þeim megin frá Þórisstöðum ok Gullfors er kallaðr ok yfir fjörðinn í fjall þat, er stendr yfir bænum í Hlíð.²

After this there are just a few lines about Þórir's son Atli before the saga ends (227).

Þorskfirðinga saga is a family saga and, as one would expect, it is included among them in the Íslenzk fornrit series, of which volumes 1–14 comprise the family sagas. However, *Þorskfirðinga saga* is absent in Theodore M. Andersson's *The Icelandic Family Saga: An Analytic Reading*. Ever since it was published in 1967, this work has influenced the view of the distinctive character of the genre as a whole, the idea of how a family saga is structured, and what its typical plot looks like. The work claims to describe the whole genre — *The Icelandic Family Saga*. But in fact Andersson excludes several sagas from his analyses and structural schemes. His material consists of the sagas included in Íslenzk fornrit up to volume 12, and consequently *Þorskfirðinga saga* and several other sagas are lacking.³ Volumes 13–14 do not follow the geographical order used in the rest of the series (where the sagas are ordered according to their geographical setting: moving clockwise around Iceland); instead they are presented without any order. The explanation in the preface of Íslenzk fornrit for the separate grouping of these sagas is their alleged later date of composition compared to the other sagas; they are dated to the time after 1300, while the “classical” sagas are dated to the thirteenth

² Quoted from the edition in *Harðar saga etc.*, ed. Þórhallur Vilmundarson & Bjarni Vilhjálmsson (Íslenzk fornrit 13), Reykjavík 1991, p. 226.

³ For reasons of clarity it should be noted that volume 14, containing only “post-classical” sagas, had already been published by 1959 and was thus available for Andersson to consult. Volume 13 was not published until 1991, but all the sagas in that volume were available in good editions elsewhere long before.

century. Scholars have often referred to the sagas dated to the fourteenth century as “post-classical”.⁴

The “post-classical” family sagas are frequently described as a separate category. This implies a particular view concerning both their age, usually the year 1300 is mentioned as the border-line, and their thematic and fundamental individual character, which supposedly represents a change compared to the character of the “classical” saga. Primarily a preoccupation with fantastic/supernatural motifs and a non-realistic character are mentioned among the peculiarities of these “post-classical” family sagas.⁵

The assumption that this interest in the fantastic/supernatural is a post-classical feature and belongs to a late period of saga-writing has frequently been used as a clear criterion for dating sagas. *Yngvars saga víðfjörta*, with its depiction of a member of the Swedish royal family in the late Viking Age, is related to the *konungasögur*, and in the text of the saga itself is attributed to Oddr Snorrason, fl. c. 1200. In the plot of this saga there are a great many monsters. The hero encounters a giant (*rísi*; *Yngvars saga*: 12–13), later he and his men kill another *rísi* (19–20), and even later they meet some more giants (34), and in all three cases they steal treasure from the giants; they fight dragons (*drekar*) several times (14, 21, and 42) — one of the dragons (21) lies on a golden treasure-ward which is stolen by the heroes, just as in *Þorskfirðinga saga*. In his edition of the saga Emil Olson rejects the attribution to Oddr (Olson 1912: xcix). From the context it is clear that his reason for doing so is the fact that he dates the saga to a later period, and this dating, in turn, is based on his opinion that the saga has an “efterklassisk prægell” (lxxxii) and is full of “efterklassiska motiv”, and then he lists the encounters with giants and dragons mentioned above (lxxvii). The assumption that such motifs in Icelandic sagas must be late and “post-classical” is for Olson obvious, so obvious that he does not need to argue for it.

Another alleged difference between “classical” and “post-classical” sagas is partly related to the perception of this fantastic tendency. The “post-classical” sagas are, to a large degree, supposed to have been written as pure fiction, and thus not be based on historical tradition like the “classical” ones. The “classical” sagas are supposed to transmit an oral tradition, while the authors of the “post-classical” sagas are described as

⁴ For example in Vésteinn Ólason 2005: 334. For discussion, see Sävborg 2012b: 28–29.

⁵ See, for example, Vésteinn Ólason 2007: 15. The description is the standard view; cf. for example Sigurður Nordal 1953: 261.

creative authors who invented their stories. This has long been described as a fundamental characteristic of the group. Finnur Jónsson claimed that in the fourteenth century, family sagas were written with completely invented characters, they are “sagaromaner”. An important model was, according to Finnur, the *fornaldarsögur*, in which a great part was “bevidst digtning” (1924: 77). Vésteinn Ólason has expressed a similar view. In the “post-classical” sagas the authors invent large parts of the story, while the “classical” sagas transmit an existing tradition (Vésteinn Ólason 1998: 20–21). Similarly, Einar Ólafur Sveinsson wrote: “people cease to concern themselves with history, and sagas in the end become pure fiction, like *Víglundar Saga* and *Finnboga Saga*” (1958: 126). Paul Schach has described the “post-classical” sagas as “escape literature” (1989: 417), and it is precisely this escapism that is seen as their distinctive feature in contrast to the foundation of reality in the “classical” saga.

The change is usually explained as a fundamental shift in taste at the end of the thirteenth century. Often the loss of independence in 1262–64 is pointed out as the cause of this change; the political upheaval is supposed to have transformed the Icelanders’ mentality and literary taste.⁶ As a parallel expression of this alleged change in taste, the origin of the written *fornaldarsaga* genre is frequently mentioned; it, too, is supposed to have originated relatively late, in the second part of the thirteenth century.⁷ The *fornaldarsaga* is a genre which also puts emphasis on fantastic/supernatural, non-realistic motifs. When scholars try to describe and explain the distinctive character of the “post-classical” family saga the *fornaldarsaga* is usually pointed out as the closest model.⁸ The principal similarity

⁶ See, for example, Einar Ólafur Sveinsson 1958: 125, Vésteinn Ólason 1998: 180 and 185–86, and Arnold 2003: 233.

⁷ The exact dating of the written *fornaldarsaga* as a genre differs slightly between the scholars. Jónas Kristjánsson notes that most scholars agree that “the oldest heroic sagas were written down about the middle of the thirteenth century or soon after”. But he also adds: “it is worth considering whether they might not be altogether younger than has been supposed” (1997: 342). Stephen Mitchell writes: “The extant *fornaldarsögur* date largely from the Icelandic fourteenth and fifteenth centuries” (1993: 207). A different opinion is, however, expressed by Torfi Tulinius, who dates the origin of the genre to early thirteenth century (2002: 63).

⁸ The “post-classical” *Íslendingasögur* are usually claimed to have originated under the influence of the written *fornaldarsögur*. This view is clearly expressed by several scholars. Sigurður Nordal, writing about the family sagas from the time after 1300, says: “de efterhaanden blev mindre realistiske, stærkere paavirket af de flittigt dyrkede oldtidssagaers smag” (1953: 261). Jan de Vries also discusses the family sagas from the fourteenth century; one of their typical features is that they “zeigen besonders stark den Einfluß der zur Vor-

highlighted by these scholars is the occurrence of fantastic/supernatural motifs. The relation between the two genres has played an important role in shaping the standard view of the origin and distinctive character of the “post-classical” saga. The idea that fantastic/supernatural motifs, monsters and ogres of different kinds, constitute a late feature and bear witness to an emphasis on fiction rather than history, is a central part of the standard view of both these saga categories.

Because of its section on the hero’s adventures and confrontations with monsters, *Porskfirðinga saga* appears to be quite a typical “post-classical” saga. This has been claimed by many scholars.⁹ The element in *Porskfirðinga saga* that is most reminiscent of the standard view of a “post-classical” saga and which is described most clearly as a late feature is the dragon motif. But is it reasonable to see the dragon motif as typically late? And as having originated under the influence of the written fornaldarsaga genre? And as an expression of a fundamental change in taste in the Old Norse literature? I return to the end of *Porskfirðinga saga*, to the transformation of the protagonist into a dragon.

There are very few, if any, similar episodes in the fornaldarsögur or in other family sagas which could reasonably be the source of this episode.¹⁰

herrschaft gelangten Fornaldarsaga” (1967: 529). Einar Ólafur Sveinsson describes one of the most typical features of the saga literature after 1300: “the influence of Heroic Sagas on Family Sagas” (1958: 124–25). The same view is still expressed in Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: 285 and 219.

⁹ Some examples: Paul Schach claimed that the saga “shows influence from the *fornaldarsögur* and the *ridðarasögur*” (1985: 27). Sigurður Nordal mentions “Gull-Þóris æventyr í Porskf. s.” as a typical example of how “post-classical” family sagas are influenced by the fornaldarsögur (1953: 262). Also according to Björn Sigfússon *Porskfirðinga saga* has “assimilerat icke så litet fornaldarsagostoff” (1960: 595). The same opinion is expressed by Jan de Vries: “Das ist also ganz wie in der Fornaldarsaga”. The stories about Þórir’s encounters with an un-dead mound dweller and about Vikings transformed into dragons lead de Vries to date the saga to the fourteenth century (1967: 533).

¹⁰ The most similar episode within saga literature is found earlier in *Porskfirðinga saga* itself, where Þórir steals the gold from dragons, who also are transformed humans, and these two dragon episodes are certainly related (Sävborg 2012a: 331). The fornaldarsaga *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnsonar* includes a story about men transformed into dragons, but in this saga there is a reference to Gull-Þórir’s adventure. This fornaldarsaga is obviously influenced by *Porskfirðinga saga* and can thus not be the source of it (see Sävborg 2012a: 326). In *Völsunga saga* we hear about Fáfnir’s transformation into a dragon, but the differences between this story and the end of *Porskfirðinga saga* will be discussed later. For a general discussion of the dragon motif in Old Norse literature and of the other occurrences of the motif, see Sävborg 2012a: 329–32.

But that does not mean that the episode is without parallels in the world of Old Norse literature. There is a story with many remarkable similarities with the current episode. It is the story about Búi digri after the Jómsvíking battle at Hjörungavágr, which I mentioned at the beginning of this article.

The Búi story in the Jómsvíking tradition has several important elements in common with the episode in *Porskfirðinga saga*. In both cases the dragon is a transformed human.¹¹ In both cases it is also a great hero, a relatively positive character in the story, who, after an impressive career, is transformed into a dragon; on this point the two sagas differ totally from, for example, the Fáfnir story in *Völsunga saga*. In both the case of Búi and of Þórir the events take place in “historical” time, the saga age, the tenth century, and not in a distant, more or less mythical, past. In both cases the dragon lies on his gold, and in both cases the hero was famous especially for the chests full of gold which he ends up lying down on. In both cases the hero’s name is prefixed with “Gull-”; Þórir is called Gull-Þórir in *Porskfirðinga saga* (175) as well as in *Landnámabók* (154) and *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar* (248 and 285), and Búi is called Gull-Búi several times in *Jómsvíkingadrápa* (sts 26 and 37; Skj B2: 6 and 8).¹² The similarities are obvious. A connection between Gull-Þórir’s transformation into a dragon and the story about Búi appears to be very likely.

The “story about Búi” is, however, a somewhat vague description of the origin. It actually does seem possible to point out a direct model for the concluding episode of *Porskfirðinga saga*. This is *Jómsvíkinga saga* itself. Exactly as in *Porskfirðinga saga* we are dealing with information right at the end of the saga, immediately after extensive descriptions of purely human conflicts and violence, which means that there is a remarkable structural similarity between the two sagas regarding the treatment of this similar motif. The episode has the same narrative position in both cases. But there are further correspondences. Several elements in *Porskfirðinga saga*, even precise details, have parallels in *Jómsvíkinga saga*. Just like in *Porskfirðinga saga*, the hero in *Jómsvíkinga saga* disappears

¹¹ The fact that the dragon is called *ormr* in *Jómsvíkinga saga* and *dreki* in *Porskfirðinga saga* is not of fundamental importance, since these two concepts (originally probably distinct) in the thirteenth century seem to have fused (cf. Acker 2013: 54–57 and 63).

¹² The similarities between the names Gull-Þórir and Gull-Búi are noted also by Strömbäck 1954: 385 and 387. Strömbäck, too, puts the two dragon stories in the same tradition. It is not clear if he imagines a direct connection between the texts.

voluntarily; it is not clear where to.¹³ Just like in *Porskfirðinga saga*, the concluding episode in *Jómsvíkinga saga* mentions that people claimed that the hero was transformed into a dragon and that he laid down on his treasure, a treasure that in both cases is famous and strongly linked with the hero. Just like in *Porskfirðinga saga*, the treasure in *Jómsvíkinga saga* is specifically mentioned as being kept in chests of gold (the word “gullkistur” is used by both sagas). Just like in *Porskfirðinga saga*, the people in *Jómsvíkinga saga* have seen this dragon at a specified location (“[...] at þar hafui ormrinn setzst a Hiorungauogi”, *Jómsvíkinga saga*, ed. Flateyjarbók, 1860: 203; cf.: “[...] at menn sá dreka fljúga ofan um þeim megin frá Þórisstöðum ok Gullfors er kallaðr”, *Porskfirðinga saga*: 226). Just like in *Porskfirðinga saga*, the author of *Jómsvíkinga saga* distances himself from the information that the hero is transformed into a dragon on his gold — the saga refers at this point to what people say (“þat er sögn manna”) — while he describes as more of a fact that people have seen a dragon in the area (“ver hyggium þat til þess haft vera at þar hafui ormrinn setzst a Hiorungauogi”; *Jómsvíkinga saga*, ed. Flateyjarbók, 1860: 203). The same distinction is found in *Porskfirðinga saga*. Þórir’s transformation into a dragon on his gold is described as something that people say (“þat hafa menn fyrir satt”), but it is described as a fact that people saw a dragon (“Helzt þat ok lengi síðan, at menn sá dreka fljúga ofan”; *Porskfirðinga saga*: 226). Finally, and possibly most importantly, there are also verbal correspondences in the description: In *Porskfirðinga saga* we read: “en þat hafa menn fyrir satt, at hann hafu at dreka orðit ok hafu lagizt á gullkistur sínar”. And in *Jómsvíkinga saga*: “En þat er sögn manna sidan at Bui hafui at ormi ordit ok lagizst a gullkistur sínar” (203; italics by me in both quotes). The correspondences are so many, so close and so detailed that there can be hardly any doubt that they are due to a direct influence from *Jómsvíkinga saga* on *Porskfirðinga saga*.

Indeed, *Porskfirðinga saga* thus seems to be influenced by another saga. But it is not from a fornaldarsaga it has borrowed its dragon story — *Jómsvíkinga saga* is difficult to classify in terms of genre, but with its description of events during the Viking Age in an environment of kings and jarls it is most closely related to the *konungasögur*. It is not

¹³ The following references and quotes from *Jómsvíkinga saga* follow the long version, here represented by Flateyjarbók, because this version is considered the most original by all scholars (see, for example, Blake 1962: xvi, Degnbol 1986: 145, and Degnbol & Jensen 1978: 10). It should, however, be noted that the shorter version of the saga (primarily represented by Sthm. perg 4:o nr 7), has a very similar text in these cases.

a late saga at all that has influenced *Porskfirðinga saga* on this point. *Jómsvíkinga saga* is certainly not post-classical. It is one of the oldest Norse sagas we have. It is considered to have been written c. 1200 or even somewhat earlier.¹⁴ If my hypothesis is correct, the dragon episode at the end of *Porskfirðinga saga* is thus not a fornaldarsaga influence and cannot be described as a post-classical influence.

But the manuscripts themselves are clearly from after the time about 1200. Could the episode in *Jómsvíkinga saga* not be a late, post-classical, interpolation in a basically old saga? This is the type of argument Emil Olson used in the case of *Yngvars saga* (described above). It should, however, be noted that Emil Olson's view of *Yngvars saga* has now generally been rejected, and most scholars today consider the existing *Yngvars saga*, with all its strange beings, to be a work from the end of the twelfth century.¹⁵ And there is good reason to believe that the same is true of *Jómsvíkinga saga*. The story about Búi transforming into a dragon after leaping overboard does not occur only in the two (usually rather different) versions of the saga, it also appears in Bjarni Kolbeinsson's *Jómsvíkingadrápa*. In stanza 37 we read:

Nam eldbroti Yggjar
 ýgr fyr borð at stíga;
 út bar hann af húfum,
 hraustr Gullbúi, kistur;
 ok optliga eptir
 óblauðir þar síðan
 kneigu lýðir líta
 langan orm á hringum. (Skj B2: 8)

Jómsvíkingadrápa was composed c. 1200.¹⁶ It proves that the motif of Búi's transformation into a dragon was old and that it already belonged to the story about him and his participation in the battle of Hjörungavágr by about 1200. There is every indication that this element in *Jómsvíkinga saga* has been there since the beginning, from the same time as Bjarni

¹⁴ Ólafur Halldórsson claims that *Jómsvíkinga saga* is written "around or possibly before 1200" (1993: 343). Blake 1962 dates it to c. 1200 (1962: xviii). Jakob Benediktsson dates it to not later than "begyndelsen af 1200-tallet, måske ca. 1200" (1962: 608). Jónas Kristjánsson claims that the saga was written "shortly after 1200" (1997: 165). Helle Degnbol claims that the saga was written "about 1200, certainly not later than 1230" (1986: 144).

¹⁵ See, for example, Hofmann 1981; see also Cormack 2000: 308 ff.

¹⁶ For the dating, see Fidjestøl 1993: 48.

Kolbeinsson's poem. The motif with the hero who is transformed into a dragon can be regarded neither as late nor post-classical.

What about *Þorskfirðinga saga* then? It is, as already mentioned, seen as a late and post-classical saga, written after 1300. Its dragon episode is, as already mentioned, considered to be influenced by the *fornaldarsögur*, and they, in turn, are claimed not to have originated as a literary genre until the end of the thirteenth century. But as I have shown, the dragon episode in *Þorskfirðinga saga* has a different origin than the *fornaldarsögur* and it cannot be regarded as influenced by them. The dating of *Þorskfirðinga saga* to the fourteenth century is problematic for another reason as well. The saga is explicitly mentioned in *Landnámabók*, the Sturlubók redaction, generally dated to 1260–80; Sturla Þórðarson's death in 1284 is thus the *terminus ante quem*. “[A]f því gerðisk Þorskfirðinga saga” (154), Sturla says after relating the episode about Gull-Þórir's treasure from Finnmark (“hann fekk gull mikit á Finnmark”) and about the conflicts evolving around this treasure. Scholarship has usually tried to harmonize this reference with the traditional dating by assuming that Sturla's reference is to an earlier, “classical”, version of the saga, a version which would thus have lacked the typical “post-classical” motifs of dragons and haugbúar.¹⁷ But the idea of such a fundamental revision is primarily based on the presumption that such motifs are loans from the *fornaldarsögur*, and thus have to be late, and as I have shown this idea is untenable. I have argued elsewhere that the existing *Þorskfirðinga saga* is the saga with that name mentioned by Sturla in *Landnámabók*.¹⁸ The saga can therefore be supposed to have existed in the middle of the thirteenth century.

All of this calls into question the traditional picture of the development of saga literature and of the occurrence and role of the fantastic/supernatural motifs within it. Furthermore, there is no reason to regard such motifs as expressions of a shift in literary taste brought about by political changes and the rise of new literary genres at the end of the thirteenth century. Such motifs were already essential by 1200 in stories about heroes during the Viking Age, the period where most family sagas and kings' sagas take place. These were motifs that were popular and used during the “classical” age of saga writing as well as later.¹⁹ This conclusion is important for our

¹⁷ So for example Sigurður Nordal 1953: 262, Jónas Kristjánsson 1997: 288, and Björn Sigfússon 1960: 230.

¹⁸ For an examination of this, see Sävborg 2012b: 43–45 and 49–53.

¹⁹ For a more extensive discussion about dragons in Old Norse literature, see Sävborg 2012a: 329–32.

understanding of the alleged post-classical sagas in general, those sagas which are grouped together in volumes 13–14 of Íslenzk fornrit and are rarely examined.

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But maybe the story about the dragon in Hjórunjavágr can throw light on another issue too.

One of the characteristics that has been ascribed to the “post-classical” saga in contrast to the “classical” is, as mentioned, that the former is supposed to have been written as fiction and the latter is supposed to have been based on oral tradition. The “classical” sagas are supposed to have been regarded as basically historical by the contemporary Icelanders. This does of course not mean that they *were* historically correct (in the modern sense), but they pretended to relate real events and were perceived true by the contemporary audience. In contrast, the “post-classical” sagas are not thought to have had any other pretensions than being fiction created by the individual authors, either from their imagination or as a result of borrowing from other fictitious works.

Generally it is difficult to test how medieval authors understood their material. It seems, however, clear that the medieval authors had a different view on the existence of dragons, trolls etc. than modern philologists do. This does not mean that people believed all stories about such beings. How can we decide which monster stories were perceived as true and which were perceived as pure fiction?

Here we may turn to folkloristic theory for help. In folkloristic theory there is an important distinction between folk legend and folktale (*Sage* and *Märchen* in German), which seems useful here. Both folktale and legend are deeply concerned with people’s encounters with supernatural beings, beings from the Otherworld, but in many ways the differences between the two categories are more important. One difference is that the legend is often tied to specific locations in the narrator’s vicinity, while the folktale is set in a diffuse location. The main difference is, however, that the legend generally was regarded as fundamentally *true*, while the folktale was not perceived as true but as pure ‘entertainment’, that is: not as history.²⁰ This in no way means that the legend really *was* true, but rather that it was told with a claim to veracity and appears to have been perceived as true by its intended audience.

²⁰ For a definition and description, see for example Lüthi 1961: 23–24.

This means that stories about encounters with the Otherworld were not seen in a uniform manner by people who did after all believe in the existence of monsters and supernatural events. There were both stories perceived as true and stories perceived as fiction. And more importantly: it was possible for a contemporary audience to distinguish between the two types.

How then was the story about Búi and his transformation into a dragon perceived? This is difficult to judge merely on the basis of the saga and the drápa. They certainly take place in “historical time” and include several undoubtedly historical persons, which could speak for the story being perceived as true, as a historical event. But at the same time we are dealing with genres where we have relatively limited knowledge about how the contemporary audience viewed the historicity or fictitiousness of the motif. Anyway, it seems possible that we are dealing with a genre where history and fiction could be mixed, and where the audience would perceive it as such a mixture.

But the dragon in Hjørungavágr occurs in some further texts. Arngrímur abóti’s version of *Guðmundar saga Arasonar* from the first part of the fourteenth century relates several of bishop Guðmundr’s deeds, deeds showing him to be a holy man. As part of his career Guðmundr travels to Norway and comes to Hjørungavágr, and Arngrímur notes that this was the place where Hákon jarl fought the battle with the Jómsvíkings (“þar barðist forðum Hákon Hlaðajarl við Jómsvíkings”; *Guðmundar saga Arasonar*: 129). Arngrímur continues:

Í þeim stað varð svá mikit undr, at einn ormr með xij lykkjum flotnaði upp ór sjánum, ok lá optsinnis um þveran váginn, en leyndist stundum í kafi, ok kom þá upp er verst gegndi mönnum ok skipum, þvíat inn á váginn var gott lægi; fekk því margr hær fyrir úhagligan steyt. (129)

When Guðmundr and his men arrive, the passage is blocked by the dragon (“þeir sá allir orminn upp liggja þvert yfir váginn”; 129). But Guðmundr sprinkles holy water on the monster, and by the next day a miracle has taken place (they could “sjá mikit verk himnakonúngsins”; 129): “ormrinn var bolaðr sundr í xij stykki ok svá kastaðr á land” (129). The episode concludes with the remark that people were never again harmed by this beast. We are obviously dealing with the same dragon as in *Jómsvíkingsa saga* and *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, although Búi’s name is not mentioned in *Guðmundar saga*.²¹

²¹ This seems to have been first noted by Dag Strömbäck (Strömbäck 1954).

The story about bishop Guðmundr defeating the dragon in Hjørungavágr also occurs in Árni Jónsson's *Guðmundardrápa* from the second half of the fourteenth century. It says:

Beimum vann í byskupsdómi
 bæði holds ok andar græðir
 fleiri tákn, en ferðum reiknist,
 fagr ok merkr, í litlum verka;
 sundur sprakk fyr signan handar
 sjóvar grímr, er langan tíma
 prúða gat með prettum lýði
 plágat mest á Hjørungavági. (Skj BII: 455)

Árni, too, stresses that the bishop's victory over the monster was a result of his holy act, he too stresses how the dragon burst into pieces, and he too stresses the fact that Guðmundr saved the people from harm through his deed.

As mentioned, *Jómsvíkinga saga* and *Jómsvíkingadrápa* belong to genres where it is difficult for us to assess the contemporary perception and pretension of truth/historicity. In the case of *Guðmundar saga* we are, however, dealing with literature where we, at least partly, have a better knowledge about the pretensions of reality/truth/history. In Arngrímr's case the purpose of his version of the saga is usually claimed to be the canonization of bishop Guðmundr (see, for example, Strömbäck 1954: 387), and all the deeds he performs are meant to support this objective. Defeating the dragon in Hjørungavágr is one of these holy acts, and it could thus be seen as an indication that the episode is presented as a story about an event from real life, as a historical fact. Regardless of what really happened and regardless of what Arngrímr himself believed, the story is probably not intended to be perceived as made-up fiction of the kind that many scholars have described in connection with the "post-classical" family sagas and their stories about encounters with Otherworldly beings. We should, however, not overstate this argument, since the saints lives' relation to historical reality is debatable and stories about dragon slayings might be seen as a common element in the genre (cf. Acker 2013: 55–56), possibly a symbolic defeating of the devil (cf. Mundal 2006: 718).

More important, however, is the relation between the dragon story and the surrounding stories in the saga.

Somewhat earlier in *Guðmundar saga* there is a story about Guðmundr defeating another malicious being. It is the story of Selkolla, a monstrous

woman who occasionally appeared with a seal's head, and she seduced and destroyed men who crossed her path (77–82). This story belonged to the essence of the stories about Guðmundr and is already told or mentioned in the earliest versions of his saga. Selkolla's terror and the bishop's confrontation with her were undoubtedly perceived as an historical event from thirteenth-century Iceland, equally as real as the civil wars on Iceland during the Sturlung era. Selkolla's acts of terror and defeat are also mentioned, as a well-known event, in *Sturlunga saga* (Sturla Þórðarson's *Íslendinga saga*).²²

In the case of Selkolla both the type of story and the type of supernatural being are well-known. Stories about erotic female beings that seduce and destroy men are also common in records from later times. In Sweden during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries these stories were told about *skogsrå*.²³ Most of the features in the Selkolla story are also found in recently recorded folk legends, *Sagen*, even the switching between the appearance of a beautiful female and a monstrous, animal-like, appearance,²⁴ and the confusion between the *skogsrå* and a man's wife (Granberg 1935: 249). And we know that these kinds of *Sagen* were generally perceived as basically true; in several cases the transmitters themselves comment and discuss this matter (see, for example, Nilsson & Bergstrand 1962: 57–59). We also know from court records from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that these kinds of monsters were viewed as realities (see Häll 2013).

Therefore it is interesting to see how the story about the dragon in Hjørungavágr is presented in Árni Jónsson's *Guðmundardrápa*. The stanza about the dragon (st. 58) is immediately followed by a stanza about Selkolla (st. 59). Together these two stanzas constitute a "monster section" in the poem. This coupling suggests that Árni treats the two episodes in the same way. He obviously seems to view the dragon in Hjørungavágr and Selkolla on Iceland as monsters of basically the same kind. If we use the folkloristic notions *Märchen* and *Sage*, we may say that both of them belong to the *Sage*, to a type of stories which were perceived as depictions of reality, not as fiction.

It thus seems likely that the dragon in Hjørungavágr during the fourteenth century was considered to belong to the realm of history. This is

²² Sturlunga saga 1, 255. Cf. Heller 1968: 35.

²³ For the traditions about *skogsrå*, see, for example, Granberg 1935, Klintberg 2002, and Häll 2013.

²⁴ See, for example, Granberg 1935: 90, Klintberg 2002: 96.

an indication of how the story about the same dragon, about Búi and his transformation, was already perceived during the thirteenth century. The story about the dragon has not been perceived in the way the scholars have claimed in connection with the “post-classical” family sagas. It has not been perceived as fiction made up by creative authors for the purpose of pure entertainment. It is not a *Märchen*, but is generically closer to the *Sage*. With the *Sage* it shares the general pretension of telling stories about real events from the historical past. The existence of the dragon in Hjørungavágr was probably viewed in the same way as the existence of Hákon jarl. Both belonged to reality.

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Summary

The article discusses the information given at the end of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, where Búi digri after the battle of Hjørungavágr is said to have transformed into a dragon. This story is analysed in the light of some other sources which might elucidate the episode: *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, which confirms that the story of Búi's transformation is essential in the Jómsvíking story, *Porskfirðinga saga*, which ends in a similar way with the hero transforming into a dragon, Árnrímr abóti's *Guðmundar saga byskups*, and Árni Jónsson's *Guðmundardrápa*, which both relate bishop Guðmundr's encounter with the dragon in Hjørungavágr. The article argues for a direct connection between *Jómsvíkinga saga* and *Porskfirðinga saga* and uses this connection to question the standard picture of *Porskfirðinga saga* as a late, "post-classical" saga influenced by fornaldarsögur. The treatment of the dragon story in the two works about bishop Guðmundr is used to interpret how the story about Búi was perceived by the contemporary audience.

Keywords: Jómsvíkinga saga, Jómsvíkingadrápa, Guðmundar saga Arasonar,

Guðmundardrápa, Þorsfirðinga saga, post-classical sagas, fornaldarsögur, Old Norse-Icelandic literature, dragons, Scandinavian folklore

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Comments on Daniel Sävborg's Paper

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In commenting on Daniel Sävborg's very interesting paper, I will reverse the order of the two topics he has presented us with: dealing first with that which relates more directly to *Jómsvíkinga saga*, the parallel between Búi turning into a dragon at the end of that saga, and the similar epilogue to *Þorskfirðinga saga*; and second, with the conclusion he draws from this for the generic classification of the sagas in general and the so-called "post-classical" sagas in particular.

At first sight the parallel between Búi and Gull-Þórir is striking, and I should emphasize that I would like to refine Sävborg's proposition rather than dismiss it. The verbal parallel is clear: people say that Búi "hafi að ormi orðið ok lagizt á gullkistur sínar" ("has turned into a serpent and lain down on his chests of gold") (*Jómsvíkinga saga* 1969, 205); Þórir "hafi at dreka orðit ok hafi lagizt á gullkistur sínar" ("has turned into a dragon and has lain down on his chests of gold") (*Þorskfirðinga saga* 1991, 226). But are they really so similar? Búi turns into an *ormr*, which may not be identical to the flying *dreki* of *Þorskfirðinga saga* — the saga goes on to give the evidence of sightings of the dragon flying around Þórisstaðir and Gullfors. Búi as dragon seems to be more earthbound, since the emphasis is on his lying on the money — or perhaps sea-bound, since the dragon demolished by Bishop Guðmundr in the fourteenth-century hagiographical text cited by Sävborg is covering Hjørungavágr and constituting an obstruction to sea-traffic.

The word *dreki* derives, of course, from Latin, which may be significant to Sävborg's argument that fantastic or non-realistic elements in sagas do not necessarily derive from late influence. I will return to this later, just noting it for the present as a difference between the two texts. To extend this difference, Búi as dragon is located in the sea because Búi and his treasure had disappeared into the sea. This is not all that similar to

Þórir's mysterious disappearance, and the equally mysterious but separate disappearance of his chests of treasure a chapter earlier.

How unusual are dragons in sagas anyway? In his famous lecture "Beowulf, the Monsters and the Critics", J. R. R. Tolkien took exception to the slighting reference by R. W. Chambers to "A wilderness of dragons", which implied they were two a penny in northern mythology and folklore. Tolkien retorted that

dragons, real dragons, essential both to the machinery and the ideas of a poem or tale, are actually rare. In northern literature there are only *two* that are significant. If we omit from consideration the vast and vague Encircler of the World, Miðgarðsormr ... we have but the dragon of the Volsungs: Fafnir, and Beowulf's bane. (Tolkien 1936, 4)

If Tolkien is right about the rarity of significant dragons in northern literature, then we need to take seriously their appearance in both *Jómsvíkinga saga* and *Þorskrifðinga saga*. In fact, however, Boberg's *Motif-Index of Early Icelandic Literature* includes nearly two pages of examples, largely drawn from the *fornaldarsögur* and the *riddarasögur* (Boberg 1966, 38–39). This gives some support to Chambers's assertion of the ubiquity of the species, though Tolkien would no doubt have dismissed most of these examples as inessential to their literary contexts. Nevertheless, the fact that there are dragons in both texts is not significant in itself, nor does it disprove the possibility that *Þorskrifðinga saga* drew its inspiration from the *fornaldarsögur*. We need to make a more specific examination of the nature of the dragons in the two sources. I have already mentioned one dissimilarity, the distinction between *ormr* (*Jómsvíkinga saga*) and *dreki* (*Þorskrifðinga saga*). It is true, though, that the two sagas share the much rarer conception of a man who is transformed into a dragon in order to guard his treasure. The most famous analogue is, of course, Fáfnir, the dwarf in the *Poetic Edda* who kills his father Hreiðmarr to get possession of his treasure and then turns into a dragon to guard it. It is also true that the accounts of Búi's and Þórir's transformation into dragons come at the very ends of their respective sagas, a device that allows the saga authors to make a link between the heroic events of the distant past and the present day, when the dragons, it is said, can still be seen.

Similar though these circumstances are, we need to take account of the origin of Þórir's fabulous treasure, which is recounted in the early part of *Þorskrifðinga saga* dealing with Þórir's adventures abroad. He wins his treasure in Finnmark, in a fight against a viking called Valr, "er átti gull

mikit; hann bar féit undir helli einn norðr við Dumbshaf ok lagðist á síðan ok synir hans með honum ok urðu allir at flugdrekum. Þeir hafa hjálma á höfðum ok sverð undir bæglum” (“who had a lot of gold. He carried it into a cave up north at the Giant’s sea and afterwards lay down on it with his sons, and they all turned into dragons. They wear helmets on their heads and swords under their wings”) (*Þorskfirðinga saga* 1991, 185). The fight takes place in a cave behind a waterfall, which has led critics to speculate on a link with the story of the troll fight in *Grettis saga*, itself often thought to be related to the story of Beowulf’s underwater fight with Grendel’s mother. Such a link in itself, of course, would support the supposition that this dragon-fight story is an old rather than a young one. But if we take the story of Þórir turning into a dragon at the end of the saga to be a direct borrowing from *Jómsvíkinga saga*, we have also to account for this story of transformation into dragons (*flugdrekur* ‘flying dragons’, apparently rather unlike the *ormr* that Búi turned into) earlier in the same saga. The fact that the story of Þórir’s dragon fight conformed to a taste typical of the *fornaldarsögur* is shown by its being told also in *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar*, though the consensus is that this was borrowed from *Þorskfirðinga saga* rather than the other way round.

Another difference in detail is that although, as Sävborg has pointed out, Búi and Þórir are both represented quite positively as characters, in fact the kind of avarice suggested by transformation into a dragon is highlighted throughout the saga in Þórir’s character, but not in Búi’s. When Þórir wins the treasure he divides it among his companions so that his share is far larger than theirs, and is said to be very happy when they agree to this. And just before his mysterious disappearance at the end of the saga, it is said that “tók Þórir skapskipti; gerðist hann þá mjök illr viðfangs ... Hann gerðist illr ok ódæll viðskiptis æ því meir, er hann eldist meir” (“Þórir’s mood changed. He became very hard to deal with ... He became meaner and harder to deal with the older he grew”) (*Þorskfirðinga saga* 1991, 223; 226). Búi’s jumping overboard with his two chests of treasure in *Jómsvíkinga saga* is not motivated in this way. It could be compared with the avariciousness of Egill Skalla-Grímsson which ends in his making his own jealously hoarded treasure disappear in an equally mysterious way, so that people are left speculating as to its whereabouts, but if this is a motif that is meant to suggest a certain kind of individualism proper to the heroic character the reader is left to deduce it.

Supposing we do accept a direct influence from *Jómsvíkinga saga* on *Þorskfirðinga saga*, is it safe to assume that the dragon motif was

in the earliest version of the saga? Its position at the very end of the saga means that it is easily detachable, rather than integral to the text. As Sävborg has pointed out, the motif is assumed to have appeared in the longest and earliest version, AM 291 4to (late thirteenth century), although that manuscript is fragmentary at this point and is represented by the closely related *Flateyjarbók* text in Ólafur Halldórsson's edition. It is also found in the shorter Codex Holmiensis 7 text. This confirms that it must have been in the intermediary version from which both these texts are descended. But that could still have been considerably later than the original saga composed, it is supposed, around 1200. It does not exist in the AM 510 4to version. Sävborg argues that it must have been original since it is also found in *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, probably composed about the same time as the original saga (*Jómsvíkingadrápa* 37; Den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning B 2, 8):

Nam eldbroti Yggjar
 ýgr fyr borð at stíga;
 út bar hann af húfum,
 hraustr Gullbúi, kistur;
 ok optliga eptir
 óblauðir þar síðan
 kneigu lýðir líta
 langan orm á hringum.

[The fierce (breaker of Óðinn's fire (swords)) warrior climbed overboard; bold Gold-Búi carried his chests out from the ship's sides. And often since then fearless men have been able to see a long serpent on the rings.]

It is quite likely that the idea of Búi becoming a dragon lying on his treasure originated in poetic form. Numerous skaldic kennings represent gold or treasure as “the serpent's bed” or “the land of the snake”, which would encourage this connection. It is possible that this element in the story was introduced by *Jómsvíkingadrápa* and transposed from there into the intermediary version of the saga, without necessarily having been in the original.

Moving on to the issue of the generic classification of sagas, I quite agree that many distinctions made between “classical” and “post-classical” sagas, and between historical and fictional texts, are tendentious, and need urgent revision. I would point out, though, that this revision is currently under way, notably in three volumes based on recent conferences on the *fornaldarsögur* (Ney, Ármann Jakobsson and Lassen, eds, 2003, 2009 and

2012). The difficulty goes back, I think, to assumptions made by some of the older critics cited by Sävborg, writing at a time when the historicity of the so-called “classical” sagas of Icelanders was more confidently asserted, who saw the writing of the *fornaldarsögur* as a process of continuation and indeed decline from the high point of the writing of the classical saga (the so-called *Verfall* theory; see Gottskálk Jensson 2009, 80). From this point of view the taste for the fantastic and for exotic locations evidenced in the *fornaldarsögur* represented a kind of decadence. Moreover, those sagas set in Iceland in the saga age that introduced such elements were thereby classified as “post-classical” and therefore late. This view is now outmoded, and most literary historians would be willing to concede that both kinds of texts were likely to have been written concurrently throughout the thirteenth century, and though few “classical” sagas were written after that point they continued to be copied, and therefore read, alongside the more newly fashionable *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur*. The problem has been compounded by the fact that this general devaluing of the *fornaldarsögur* has led to a critical neglect of these texts: the existing editions have little critical commentary and we are still a long way from a proper typology of a genre that includes quite a range of different types: *Völsunga saga* and *Hervarar saga*, for example, which are made up of undeniably ancient material, alongside many more fantastic and frivolous works; and presumably works of varying ages as well.

The case of *Yngvars saga víðforla* is indeed very important. It has long been an embarrassment to the stereotypical view of the *fornaldarsögur*, since it is unequivocally attributed to the authorship of Oddr Snorrason, who wrote a Latin life of Óláfr Tryggvason at the end of the twelfth century. It includes a wealth of fantastical materials, including — since we are focusing here on dragons — a poisonous flying dragon and another dragon guarding a hoard of gold, but is not set in the distant past as the *fornaldarsögur* are said to be. It could profitably be compared to *Jómsvíkinga saga*, another text that is difficult to classify generically, and it may be that its location in Russia might be comparable to that of the Baltic in *Jómsvíkinga saga* — just exotic enough to make the inclusion of fantastic material more allowable than for stories set in Iceland or mainland Scandinavia. Dietrich Hofmann's defence of the attribution of *Yngvars saga* to Oddr, and his suggestion that the work, like Oddr's saga of Óláfr Tryggvason, was originally written in Latin, though received sceptically at first, is now given much more credence (Hofmann 1981). Thus we have something very like a *fornaldarsaga* written considerably

before the *Íslendingasögur* or their decadent descendants, proving that fantastic elements were available to saga writers long before they became the prevailing fashion.

But of course we already knew that. If *Yngvars saga* was originally in Latin it can be set alongside the works of Saxo Grammaticus, also in Latin and also relying heavily on fantastic and legendary elements. Saxo's major sources were poetic, and this of course was also a conduit in its own right for legendary and fantastic material into the writing of saga texts, as I have suggested may have been the case with *Búi the dragon and Jómsvíkingadrápa*.

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Danish Kings and the Foundation of Jónsborg

JAKUB MORAWIEC

Jónsborg, the great stronghold and residence of that famous warrior band the Jónsvíkings, is closely related in the Old Norse tradition to numerous Scandinavian rulers and is also associated with several Danish kings (Morawiec 2009). The various literary accounts analysed below indicate that members of the Jelling dynasty influenced the historiography of the place and its heroes.

The colourful and inarguably dramatic narrative of the legend is intertwined with the history of the town. Jónsborg was the Scandinavian name for Wolin (Wollin), the early Slavic urban complex located on the Odra (Oder) estuary. Its development was based, among other things, on direct economic, cultural, and political connections with the North (Stanisławski & Filipowiak 2013). Moreover, the location of the urban complex and its character meant that its history was to some extent a history of the Danish kings as well.

The aim of this paper is to consider the extent to which the legend of Jónsborg and the Jónsvíkings could have been influenced by the memory of more distant and recent political affairs in the region, marked by constant Slavic-Scandinavian encounters. In other words, this study suggests that there is a need to look for potential historical events and circumstances that encouraged saga authors to associate a story of a famous warrior band with Slavic territories and Jelling kings in a very specific manner.

Medieval Scandinavian tradition points first of all to King Haraldr Gormsson as the individual responsible for founding Jónsborg and establishing a viking *hirð* there. The stronghold was located in Wendland, the land of Slavs, which had just been conquered by Haraldr. Consequently, the Jónsvíkings were, in theory, dependent on royal authority.

Such a view is taken by Sven Aggesen in his *Gesta Regum Danorum*.

Haraldr's rule over Jónsborg is mentioned when Sven refers to the king's escape from Denmark after a rebellion (Christiansen 1992: 14).

Saxo Grammaticus provides us with further details about Haraldr's rule in Wolin in his *Gesta Danorum*:

Ea tempestate Sturbiornus, Suetici regis Biornonis filius, a patruī Olavi filio Erico regno spoliatus, petendī auxilii gratia ad Haraldum, cui Thyra mater exstitit, cum sorore Gyriṭha supplex migravit tantoque apud eum paratiorem amicitiae locum reperit, quanto illi eiusdem sororis suae matrimonium liberalius permisit. Post haec Haraldus, armis Sclavia potitus, apud Iulinum, nobilissimum illius provinciae oppidum, Sturbiorno duce competentia militum praesidia collocavit. Quorum piratica egregio animorum robore celebrata ac finitimis paulatim trophaeis alita eo demum ferocitatis excessit, ut continuis nautarum cladibus septentrionalem repleret Oceanum. Ea res plus Danico imperio quam ullum terrenae militiae negotium attulit. Inter quos fuere Bo, Ulf, Karlshefni, Siwaldus aliique complures, quorum prolixam enumerationem, taedio quam voluptati propinquoem, stilo prosequi supersedeo (Olrík & Ræder 1931: 271).

At that time Styrbjörn, the son of the King of Sweden, Björn, was deprived of his kingdom by Eiríkr, the son of his uncle Óláfr, and he arrived with a begging request to Haraldr, the son of Pyra; and he received from him [Haraldr] such a great tokens of friendship that he let him marry his sister Gyriṭha.

Since Haraldr was the master of Sclavia, he handed down authority over the garrison in Julin, i.e. Wolin, the greatest town of the province, to Styrbjörn. Piratical operations made their bravery famous, encouraged by the victories over neighbours; finally, they became so daring that they covered the waters of the north with the permanent destruction of sea travellers. This, like nothing else, contributed to the Danish rule. Among them were Bo, Úlfr, Karlshefni, Sigvaldi and many others, the longer stories of whom would be rather boring than pleasing

Saxo also indicates that Haraldr used the Jómsvíkings to deal with the rebellious Hákon, *jarl* of Hlaðir after he refused to pay Haraldr a tribute:

Comperta vero Haquini defectione, tanto in Norvagicae iuventutis contumaciam asperius animadvertendum putavit, quanto eam adversum se cervicem insolentius extulisse cognovit. Missa igitur adversus hanc Iulinae piraticae manu, Bo atque Siwaldo ducibus contemptus sui ultionem mandavit (Olrík & Ræder 1931: 272).

When he learnt about Hákon's rebellion, Haraldr decided to treat the young man from Norway more cruelly for the impudence with which they turned

against him. Therefore, he entrusted the punishment for the offence which they committed to the piratical power from Wolin, which he sent under the leadership of Bo and Sigvaldi.

The *longer stories* mentioned by Saxo are supposedly accounts that found their way into later saga narratives focusing on the vikings of Jónsborg (*Jónsvíkinga saga*) and the story of the Swedish prince Styrbjörn (*Styrbjarnar þáttur Svíakappa*) respectively. Saxo does not explain the circumstances in which Haraldr became the overlord of Wendland and founder of Jónsborg. Thus one can assume that he believed that his audience would be familiar with the story of the stronghold and king's actions there. Scholars argue persuasively that reference to Haraldr as the founder of Jónsborg implies Saxo's access to a version of the legend that differed from the texts preserved in the *Jónsvíkinga saga* manuscripts (Megaard 2000). This is, however, also the case for some of the kings' sagas.

The author of *Knýtlinga saga* writes more concisely about Haraldr as a ruler of Jónsborg and a leader the viking *hirð*: “[...] ok hafði hann mikit jarlsríki í Vinðlandi. Hann lét þar gera Jónsborg ok setti þar herlið mikit. Hann setti þeim mála ok rétt, en þeir unnu landit undir hann; á sumrum lágu þeir í hernaði, en sátu heima á vetrum. Þeir váru kallaðir Jónsvíkingar” (Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 93).

Furthermore, *Fagrskinna* depicts Haraldr Gormsson as the founder of Jónsborg and ruler of the surrounding territory:

Haraldr konongr Gorms sunr hæriaðe a Vinlannd, oc let þar gera borg mikla er hæitir at Iome, oc er su borg callað siðan Iomsborgh. Ðar sætti hann ifir hofðingia, oc for sialfr hæim til Danmarkar, oc var þa ufriðr lengi millum Vinnda oc Dana, oc hæriaðu hvarertvæggiu i annara lonnd. En a ofanværdum dagum Harallz konongs Gorms sunar, sætti hann ifir Iomsborgh Sigvallda jarls namn, þa foro marger hofðingiar af Danmorku til Iomsborgar. Ðorkæll hafe broðer Sigvallda iarls. Bui digri, Sigurðr broðer hans. Vagn Akasun, hann var systr sunr Bua digra. Iomsvikingar vunnu mikit af riki Burizleifs konongs ar þa reð firir Vinlannde (Finnur Jónsson 1902–03: 80).

Clear similarities between these three narratives in terms of motif and character suggest that there is a reliance on a common version of the story of the Jónsvíking which placed the Danish king as the originator of the stronghold and its *hirð*, labelling Haraldr as both its founder and overlord.

From this perspective, it is all the more interesting that the preserved

redactions of *Jómsvíkinga saga*¹ provide the reader with a completely different story regarding the foundation of Jómsborg. In the *Jómsvíkinga saga* version, Haraldr Gormsson is replaced by Pálnatóki, the jarl of Fyn, and Búrizleifr, the king of Wendland. As a consequence, the circumstances of the formation of the stronghold differ as well:

En þá er þetta er tíðast, að hann er í herförunum, þá fer hann eitthvert sumar til Vindlands og ætlar að herja þar, og hefir þá við fingið tíu skip og hefir þá fjóra tigu skipa. En í þann tíma réð fyrir konungur sá er Búrizláfur hét, og hugði hann illt til hernaðarins, fyrir því að honum var sagt frá Pálnatóka, að hann hafði nær ávallt sigur, þar sem hann herjaði, og var hann ágæztur víkinga í það mund, og þótti hann vera hverjum manni vitrari og ráðgari, og gengur þungt við hann flestum. Og vonu bráðara, þá er Pálnatóki kömur þar við land og Búrizláfur hefir spurt til hans og hvað hann ætlaðist fyrir, þá sendir konungur menn sína á fund hans og býður Pálnatóka til sín og lézt vildu eiga við hann frið og vinfengi; það lét hann og fylgja þessu heimboði, að hann bauð að gefa honum eitt fylki eða ríki af landi sínu, þar er heitir að Jómi, til þess að hann skyldi þar staðfestast, og mundi hann þetta ríki gefa honum einkum til þess að hann skyldi þá vera skyldbundinn til að verja land og ríki með konunginum. Og þetta þiggur Pálnatóki og allir hans menn, að því er sagt er. Og þar lætur hann gera brálliga í sínu ríki sævarborg eina mikla og ramgjörva, þá er Jómsborg er kölluð síðan (Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 127–28).

It is likely that other Old Norse accounts were derived from these redactions of *Jómsvíkinga saga*. According to *Eyrbyggja saga*, Björn Ásbrandsson stayed in Jómsborg at the time when Pálnatóki was its leader (Einar Ólafur Sveinsson & Matthías Þórðarson 1935: 80). Similarly, the author of *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta* refers to Pálnatóki as the defender of the land of the Slavs (as a representative of King Búrizleifr) and the leader of Jómsvíkings (Ólafur Halldórsson 1958: 172).²

¹ Four redactions of *Jómsvíkinga saga* are preserved. The oldest extant one is found in AM 291 4to, produced in Iceland in the second half of the thirteenth century. Another condensed version of the saga is preserved in Cod. Holm. 7 4to, written in the first half of the fourteenth century. AM 510 4to, dated to the mid-sixteenth century, contains another version of the saga but this is devoted to Danish kings and lacks the first part of the narrative. A now lost medieval redaction of the saga provided the basis for Arngrímr Jónsson's Latin version, composed around 1592–93.

² The whole issue is treated differently by Snorri Sturluson in *Heimskringla*. Snorri does not explain when the Jómsvíkings came into being or how they were established. The information about them appears only when Snorri describes Sveinn tjúguskegg's rebellion against Haraldr. He states that Pálnatóki was among Sveinn's company as one of the Jómsvíkings but does not call him either the founder or the jarl of Jómsborg. According to Snorri, this post was taken by Sigvaldi at that time (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 2002: 272–73).

As we have seen, various accounts present different circumstances surrounding the foundation of Jónsborg and the role that Haraldr Gormsson played in the process. Some (Saxo, *Fagrskinna*, *Knýtlinga saga*, and Sven Aggesen) point to the king of Denmark as the founder. Others (*Jónsvíkinga saga*, *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta*, and *Eyrbyggja saga*) clearly deny this, focusing on Jarl Pálnatóki. All these narratives draw more or less directly on the story of Jónsvíkingas as their frame of reference, a circumstance that suggests the coexistence of different versions of *Jónsvíkinga saga* at a very early stage of its formation. A number of scholars have tried to explain this striking discrepancy and bring the contradicting versions into agreement. With relation to the supposed participation of Danes in the Battle of Fýrisvellir, Ludvig Wimmer postulates that Tóki Gormsson, who appears in the runic inscription from Hällestad, is Gormr gamli's son and Haraldr Gormsson's brother (Wimmer 1893: 76). Lauritz Weibull, in turn, believes that Pálnatóki replaced the king of Denmark in the saga (Weibull 1911: 183). A recent analysis by John Megaard encourages us to assume that the development of the legend and its literary incarnation, *Jónsvíkinga saga*, emerged from two separate traditions, the older and the younger. The former can be observed in Saxo's and *Fagrskinna*'s accounts; the latter is mainly represented by preserved redactions of the saga (Megaard 2000: 125–82). Most significantly, the nature of the founder of Jónsborg is one of the main factors that distinguishes both traditions (Morawiec 2009: 41–48).

Torfi Tulinius's recent study of this issue analyses the account of *Jónsvíkinga saga* from the perspective of a conflict between the king and his vassals. Torfi sees the rebellion of the nobles against royal authority as the main subject of the saga, where the king, jarls and *bændir* remain in constant interaction. In this context, he cites three themes as particularly important: the conflict between Sveinn tjúguskegg and his father, Sigvaldi's encounter with Vagn Ákason, and emperor Otto's missionary pressure on the king of Denmark. All of these are constructed around the leitmotif of the saga: the correct rules of coexistence between particular social groups (Torfi Tulinius 2002: 191–216).

Torfi's arguments certainly warrant further exploration. Several episodes of the saga (for example the circumstances of Haraldr Gormsson's death, the capture of Sveinn tjúguskegg by Jarl Sigvaldi) are pivotal to the anti-royal flavour of the narrative as a whole. Preserved redactions of *Jónsvíkinga saga* present Danish rulers in an unfavourable light. Haraldr and Sveinn are not respected by their subjects, who do not hesitate to rise

against them. Both kings, at moments of direct threat, appear unable to muster enough energy to successfully extricate themselves from trouble. Plots, intrigues and even murder are necessary to achieve any goal but such means are not conducive to attaining respect and a stable position. Moreover, their royal policies led to tension and conflicts.

Haraldr Gormsson is depicted as a coward, deprived of the qualities appropriate to a ruler and success in war. Does such a person deserve to be the founder of Jónsborg? The role passes to Pálnatóki who, unlike his main opponent Haraldr, is the person who possesses all virtues needed to be the founder and leader of the viking *hirð*. The saga emphasizes his resolute actions, for instance in organizing a rebellion against Haraldr and establishing the laws of the Jónsvíkings. Pálnatóki was also a very brave leader and the fame of his achievements in war is said to have encouraged Búrizleifr to view him as an ally rather than an enemy. In this way the saga author achieved his intended purpose: to reveal the weakness of royal authority, the king's dependency on the support of the elite, and his inability to rule successfully.

All accounts seem to indicate that the foundation of Jónsborg was a result of Scandinavian military operations against the Slavs. *Fagrskinna* states directly: “Haraldr konongr Gorms sunr hæriaðe a Vinlandd” (Finnur Jónsson 1902–03: 80). It is presented similarly in *Knýtlinga saga*: “ok hafði hann mikit jarls ríki í Vindlandi” (Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 93). The context of the latter narrative encourages us to assume that its author believed that Haraldr came into possession of the vast jarldom in Wendland through military conquest. In principle, it is the same state of affairs with Pálnatóki. According to *Jónsvíkinga saga*, Jónsborg was given to the jarl by Búrizleifr but the saga author did not forget to mention the military threat which Pálnatóki is believed to have created in this region first. Thus the foundation of Jónsborg was preceded by armed invasions which resulted in the conquest of this part of Wendland. Consequently, it influenced the image of the settlement, which was either founded by Haraldr or Pálnatóki. It was a place profoundly military in character and it was to function as a military camp for the protection of Danish property. This is reflected in descriptions of Jónsborg which is referred to as *praesidium militum* (Saxo), *mikill borg* (*Fagrskinna*, *Jónsvíkinga saga*), where the ruler *setti þar herlið mikit* (*Knýtlinga saga*).

Although these accounts were circulating in Scandinavia, their authors did not feel obliged to give more precise geographic descriptions. The audiences of these stories seem to have known the location of Wendland

and which part (*mikit ríki*) belonged to Danes, and where Jónsborg was founded. Moreover, the authors of these accounts seemed to take stories about Danish invasions of Wendland and the foundation of Jónsborg for granted. In contrast to Danish activity in Norway and conflicts with the Saxons, the circumstances of relations with the Slavs lack any kind of introduction or explanation. For instance, *Fagrskinna* mentions the consequences of Haraldr's action — mutual hostility between Slavs and Danes and their reciprocal invasions (“var þa ufriðr lengi millum Vinnda oc Dana, oc hæriaðu hvarertvæggiu i annara lonnd.” (Finnur Jónsson 1902–03: 80)) — but its author did not develop this subject. We may get the impression that, for both saga authors and their audiences, the reasons for Danish activity in Wendland were either of little interest or so obvious that they did not require additional commentary (Morawiec 2009: 49–51).

As stated above, the development of the Jónsborg legend resulted in the change of the stronghold's founder and the group of warriors. Haraldr Gormsson was substituted for Jarl Pálnatóki. In seeking a potential motivation for this crucial shift, it is worth paying attention to particular moments in the history of medieval Denmark, especially encounters with Slavs. The way they were memorized could have influenced saga authors, who first installed the Danish king as founder of Jónsborg, and subsequently deprived him of this prestigious role.

First of all, it is important to look at the rapid fall of Haraldr Gormsson's reign, caused by his son Sveinn who rebelled against his father. The conflict between father and son made its mark on Old Norse tradition. Haraldr's military inefficiency was highlighted not only by Sveinn but initially by Pálnatóki. Both sides gathered fleets and their confrontation in Ísafjörðr brought about a rather shameful death for Haraldr Gormsson (Ólafur Halldórsson 1969: 111–19). Most saga authors include the Jómsvíkings in this set of events (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 2002: 272; Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 96). However, only the Danish historians (Sven Aggesen and Saxo Grammaticus) report that the defeated king fled to Jónsborg and died there soon afterwards (Christiansen 1992: 16; Orlík & Ræder 1931: 276).

The version in Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* shows that the Jónsborg legend could have been influenced by other accounts concerning Haraldr, especially those referring to his fall. As Adam of Bremen's *Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum* states:

Novissimis archiepiscopi temporibus res nostrae inter barbarous fractae, christianitas in Dania turbata est, pulcrisque divinae religionis initiis invidens

inimicus homo superseminare zizania conatus est. Nam tunc Suein Otto, filius magni Haroldi, regis Danorum, multas in patrem molitus insidias, quomodo eum iam longævum et minus validum regno privaret, consilium habuit et cum his, quos pater eius ad christianitatem coegit invitos. Subito igitur facta conspiratione Dani christianitatem abdicantes Suein regem constituent, Haroldo bellum indicunt. At ille, qui ab initio regni sui tam spem in Deo posuerat, tunc veto et maxime commendans Christo eventum rei, cum bellum execraret, armis se tueri decrevit. Et quasi alter David procedens ad bellum filium lugebat Absalon, magis dolens illius scelus quam sua pericula. In quo miserabili et plus quam civili bello victa est pars Haroldi. Ipse autem vulneratus exacie fugiens ascensanavi elapses est ad civitatem Sclavorum quae Iumne dicitur. A quibus contra spem, quia pagani erant, humane receptus, post aliquot dies ex edodem vulnere deficiens, in Christi confessione migravit (Schmeidler 1917: 87).

In recent years [of the rule] of archbishop Adaldag, our matter among barbarians declined. Christianity in Denmark fell into a great confusion, and burning with jealousy for good beginnings of the faith in the Lord, a bad man tried to sow corn cockle. It was then that Sveinn Otto, the son of eminent Haraldr, the king of Danes, organized plots against his father, taking advice also from those whom his father, against their will, forced to accept Christianity, to see clearly if he would be able to deprive his father of the throne, now that he was old and much less strong. That is why the Danes started making plots to renounce the Christianity, make Sveinn their king and declare war on Haraldr. As the latter from the beginning of his rule trusted the Lord, he then particularly strongly entrusted Christ with this matter and, although he recoiled from the thought of war, he decided to defend himself militarily, and, like another David, who cried over his son Absalon, sad rather about his sin than his own misery, he went to war. In this pitiful and worse than a civil war, Haraldr's supporters were overcome. He, wounded, on a ship escaped from the battlefield and made for town of the Slavs called Jumne. He was friendly welcomed by the Slavs, contrary to his expectations, because they were pagans, and after a few days he died of his wounds and left in the glory of the Lord.

Author of *Encomium Emmæ Reginae* wrote quite similarly about Sveinn's rebellion:

[...] ut etiam puerulus intimo affectu diligeretur ab omnibus tantum patri proprio inuisus, nulla hoc promerente pueruli culpa, sed sola turbante invidia. Qui factus iuuenis in amore cotidie crescebat populi; unde magis magisque invidia augebatur patri, adeo ut eum a patria non iam clanculum sed palam uellet expellere, iurando asserens eum post se regnaturum non esse. Unde dolens exercitus relicto patre herebat filio, et eum defensabat sedulo. Huius rei gratia congregiuntur in praelio; in quo uulneratus fugatusque pater ad Sclavos fugit, et non multo post ibi obiit (Campbell 1949: 8).

[...] even as a boy he enjoyed everybody's love and he was only hated by his father. By no means he had deserved it, it was caused by envy. When he became a lad, the love of the people was even stronger and at the same time his father's envy grew, so that openly, not secretly, he wanted to drive him away, swearing that he would do anything that he would not rule after his death. The army, saddened by it, abandoned the father and joined the son giving its support. Finally they fought a battle, in which the father was wounded and escaped to Slavs, where he died soon afterwards.

Both accounts seem to supplement each other.³ Moreover, both texts point out the twofold significance that Haraldr's fall and escape to Wolin/Jumne/Jónsborg held for the history of the Jelling kings at the turn of the tenth and eleventh centuries and the development of the Jónsborg legend.

Facing a dramatic fate, the king of Denmark undoubtedly looked for shelter in a place he believed to be safe: among the people who supported him, where he could think about the possibility of regaining his lost position. Wolin could have indeed been such a place. Both Adam of Bremen and skalds reference Haraldr's military encounters with Slavs (Morawiec 2009: 51–74). The king of Denmark aimed for a dominant position in the Baltic and his policy led to conflict, for example with Poland. The Polish ruler, Mieszko I, may have considered Haraldr's attempts a real threat, which is why he was eager to make an alliance with Eiríkr, king of Sweden, in 980s. Adam of Bremen leaves us in no doubt that this was an anti-Danish collaboration (Schmeidler 1917: 95; Duczko 2001: 367–78; 2002: 11–27; Słupecki 2000: 49–60).

The economic potential, strategic location and political status of Wolin were probably too important to be ignored by Haraldr. Control over Wolin would have been very profitable for the Danes. It would mean both permanent access to numerous resources and a visible advantage in the whole region. Danish achievements inevitably led to confrontations with other powers. First of all with Saxons and Piasts, who also wanted to play a key role in the region, but also Vieletians and their related Wolinians, who were permanently forced to negotiate skilfully between influential and strong neighbours. Therefore, it seems very likely that the Polish-Swedish alliance mentioned by Adam of Bremen was a response to Haraldr Gormsson's activity. The Danish king could have supported Eiríkr's opponents and aimed to make his influence on the Odra estuary

³ For alternative opinions, see Morawiec 2009: 64–65.

region even stronger. It would seem to explain why Haraldr, expelled from the country by his son, looked for a safe shelter in Wolin.

When could Haraldr Gormsson have gained control of Wolin? It seems that it could not have happened earlier than the beginning of the 980s, and it might have taken place when the Danes were regaining southern Jutland in 983. The temporary weakness of the Ottonian Empire and the commitment of Violetians to fight against Saxon authority were certainly key factors in facilitating such operations. Moreover, archaeological excavations suggest that Scandinavian influences in Wolin during that period were comparatively stronger as well. It implies both a temporary and permanent presence of craftsmen and merchants. More importantly, representatives of the Danish elites resided in various parts of the urban complex. Their role is not definitively specified, but suggestions that a mercenary armed force supported local elites seem very probable (Stanisławski 2007: 28–49; Morawiec 2009: 169–89). This is why the case of Wichman Billung, who supported the inhabitants of Wolin and the Violetians in war against Mieszko I, can be, as Leszek Śtupecki has rightly pointed out (Śtupecki 2005: 47–62), an important and relevant analogue. The motif of Tóki — the jarl of Fyn first connected with the Danish dynasty then later fighting against it and present in Jómsborg — might have resulted from a real presence of the representatives of Danish elites in early medieval Wolin. Employed for their military talents, they might have supported an operation by a potential king of Denmark. Possible Danish control of Wolin, initiated in the 980s, could not have lasted. In fact, it would have ended with Haraldr Gormsson's fall. His son Sveinn met too many conflicts at the very beginning of his reign to be able to mark his authority in the town.

Haraldr's achievements in Wendland, although only lasting a short time, had to be significant since they influenced the development of the Jómsborg legend in a twofold way. On the one hand, later saga authors used it to disgrace and humiliate the king of Denmark. On the other hand, he was labelled conqueror of this part of Wendland and the founder of the stronghold.

This variable status of Haraldr Gormsson could have emerged from another historical perspective: political encounters involving Danish kings in the twelfth century, particularly in the context of their relations with Slavs.

Sveinn Úlfsson's death in 1075 turned out to be the end of Danish activity both in the Baltic region and in England. His sons had to deal first

of all with internal affairs, such as rebellions and the growing importance of the nobles. The decline in royal authority was accompanied by the necessity to give up all ambitious plans against their neighbours, including the Slavs. In this context, it is worth quoting Saxo Grammaticus' opinion on the inactivity of King Olaf (1086–95) against Slavic invasions: “Ea tempestate Sclavorum insolentia, diu Danicae rei miseriis alita, quippe magis otii Olavi provecta quam ullis eius negotiis retusa fuerat, piratica nostros acerrime lacessebat” (Olrik & Ræder 1931: 334; Holmqvist-Larsen 2004: 87).

This situation started to change at the very end of the eleventh century. Eiríkr góði (1095–1103) attempted to impose his supremacy on Rügen, and he probably achieved this around 1100. He also supported Henry, the belligerent son of the Obodrite prince Gotshalk, who at that time attempted to gain the throne of Obodrites. It was just the beginning of complicated Danish-Saxon-Slavic relations that lasted until the 1160s, and ended with the establishment of Saxon domination in the whole Polabian region at the expense of both Slavic tribes and Denmark. Rulers of the latter still sought to play a bigger and more active role in Wendland.

Eiríkr góði's policy — based on taking advantage of internal conflicts among Polabian Slavs — was continued by his successors. The ability to influence political affairs among Obodrites was a vital issue for Denmark, mainly in the context of relations with Germany and Saxon magnates in particular. However, such a policy brought other consequences as well. Obodrites and other Slavic tribes, pressed both by Saxons and Danes, intensified their operations in making the Baltic increasingly arduous for the inhabitants of Danish islands (Eggert 1928: 5).

Tensions culminated in the events of the years 1113–15, when the Obodrites, led by Henry (son of Gotshalk), not only repulsed the Danish attack but also managed to destroy Danish fortifications in Danevirke. The Danish king Níels and his nephew Knútr lávarður had to seek reconciliation. The Danish king needed the support of Emperor Lothar of Supplinburg to conclude an agreement with Henry (Olrik & Ræder 1931: 343–44).

Polabian Slavs proved to be a permanent military threat for the Danes during the twelfth century. The short distance across the Baltic Sea enabled the successful invasion of Danish islands, taking inhabitants completely by surprise so that they were unable to develop fast and effective defences. In *Knýtlinga saga*, the words Emperor Henry V directs to Knútr lávarður can be seen as an expression of the saga author's disapproval of the

monarch's ineffectiveness. The emperor, responding to the Danes' doubts about how to successfully defend their land from attacks and not lose the support of the people, states:

þat er siðr at læsa hafnir fyrir landinu ok taka þar tolla af ok láta engan leggja skip sín í höfnina [...] því at þat er ríkra manna siðr víða í lǫdum at læsa hafnir fyrir landi sínu ok taka men þar stórfé eptir, en þat er þó mikil gæzla ríkisins við ófriði (Bjarni Guðnason 1982: 243).

The obvious intention of the author was to show how a monarch should deal with such an important problem. Sven Aggesen shared a similar view. In the introduction to his *Historia brevis*, he mentions a legendary ancestor of the Danish rulers Skjöldr and explains the origin of his name (*skjöldr* 'shield'), recalling his ability to govern the kingdom with the power of his authority (Christiansen 1992: 3). However, it was members of the Danish elite who, contrary to their inactive king, reacted properly towards this serious threat. Kay S. Nielsen relates a series of defensive initiatives, undertaken by the nobility, who started to build small castles which could efficiently protect small groups of people who were gathered around a local leader (Nielsen 2002: 65–72).

It was a period when royal authority was still based, among other things, on skilful relations with groups of elites who were prepared to support the monarch's authority in exchange for access to resources and key positions. However, individual conflicts or poor alliances may have had a damaging effect on the structure of authority which was immediately taken advantage of by foreign enemies. This situation, so characteristic for the Danish state at the beginning of the twelfth century, seems to correspond to the image of a weak ruler, unable to make decisions important for his *regnum* and torn by bloody conflicts with his relatives for power (as appears in *Jómsvíkinga saga*). The establishment of Jómsborg — the military settlement inhabited by brave warriors — in a way relates to increasingly numerous defensive centres built in the territory of Denmark on the initiative of magnates.

The threat from the Slavs did not decrease during the reign of King Níels (1104–34), who was also thought to be an inefficient ruler. The situation of the Danish monarch was particularly complicated by the "royal" rule of Knútr lávarður among the Obodrites. Níels saw it as a direct threat for his position, concerned that Knútr, who was very popular among Danes and allied with emperors Henry V and Lotar, would try to reach for the Danish crown. This made Níels search for

new allies in case of conflict with Obodrites and Saxons (Hermanson 2004a: 105–06).

For this reason, the king of Denmark decided, at the end of the second decade of the twelfth century, to check on Polish prince Bolesław Wrymouth, who was involved in a conflict with Emperor Lotar and attempted to gain influence in Pomerania. The defeat of Prince Warcisław (by conquering Szczecin (Stettin) in 1121) clearly marked his position not only in Pomerania but also west of the Odra, and it meant a direct confrontation with Saxon and Danish policies. Significantly, the Polish prince subordinated Rügen, a key centre in Polabia which also remained in the sphere of Danish interests. It is uncertain whether Otto of Bamberg had any role in these contacts; however, an alliance was concluded between Níels and Bolesław (probably in the beginning of the year 1129), directed against Emperor Lothar and Knútr lávarður. It was confirmed by the marriage between Níels' son Magnús and Bolesław's daughter Ryksa. First of all, this alliance was realized in Pomerania, where the Polish prince intended to fully subordinate the still restive Warcisław. In effect, a joint Polish-Danish military expedition was organized in the summer of 1129 with the aim of conquering Wolin. The first steps were taken by Magnús, who initially acted on his own. However, his operations did not bring expected results. He did not manage to conquer the castle in Uznam (Usedom). Only when the Polish prince took the lead did his army, supported by Danes, successfully attack and take over Wolin. Warcisław was forced to surrender and make a peace settlement. The Pomeranian prince had to accept Bolesław's superiority over the whole region up to the line of the Odra (Hermanson 2004b: 109).

It was without doubt the Polish prince who benefitted most from the temporary Polish-Danish alliance. Bolesław the Wrymouth's successes in Pomerania and his contacts with the Danish court might have contributed to the development of the legend of Búrizleifr, the mighty ruler of Wendland. According to Old Norse tradition, Búrizleifr maintained his authority over Jónsborg and established marriage links with the Scandinavian (including Danish) elite. Moreover, military cooperation with Magnús, who was both a Danish prince and related to the Piast dynasty through marriage, might have strengthened the legend about contacts between Scandinavian noblemen such as Tóki, Sigvaldi or Óláfr Tryggvason, and Búrizleifr. Thus the persons responsible for the shape of the Jónsborg legend did not have to look far into the past, moving back to the times of Haraldr Gormsson and Sveinn tjúguskegg. An additional — and perhaps

no less important — inspiration was to be found in events that took place at the mouth of the river Odra just a few decades before, forming a stronger presence in the collective memory.

The Danish-Polish alliance did not last long. The Polish prince achieved his aims and both parties probably did not trust each other much. The sense of mutual distrust may have been based on continuing Danish hopes to conquer the region at the mouth of the Odra.

Another reason could be the growing tensions on the Danish-Obodritian border. Since Knútr lávarður, who ruled among Obodrites, seemed to pose a threat to the Danish court, Níels and Magnús decided to solve this issue in a radical way. On 7 January 1131, Knútr and Magnús met in Haraldsted. Knútr was murdered at this meeting which made relations with the Slavs even more complicated and tense. Knútr had enjoyed a great deal of popularity among the Slavs and his brother Eiríkr eimune decided to avenge the fallen king. Although Níels and his son forced Eiríkr to look for shelter in Skåne in 1134, their following attempts to deprive him of the rest of his forces brought them defeat. Níels' army was taken by surprise near Fodevig by a large group of mounted soldiers, who were hurrying to help Eiríkr. Magnús, Bolesław Wrymouth's son-in-law, died in the battle, and Níels escaped south to Schleswig where he was murdered by Knútr lávarður's supporters. Eiríkr eimune seized the opportunity and proclaimed himself king of Denmark (Olrik & Ræder 1931: 364–65; Hermanson 2004a: 106).

The crisis of royal authority in Denmark overlapped with a new wave of Slavic invasions, against which Eiríkr eimune, and his successor Eiríkr lamb, were totally helpless. The most memorable and harmful were the invasions of 1134 and 1135, when the Slavs, led by Warcisław and his successor Ratibor, managed to destroy Danish Roskilde and Norwegian Konungahella. Conflicts between closely related pretenders to the throne of Denmark lasted until 1157. It was long enough to establish the image of weak and inefficient Danish rulers, who were not able to meet the expectations of kingship. This image could be opposed by the Slavic prince, who for a short time succeeded in playing a key role in Pomerania and part of the Polabian territories. The tradition fixed by the preserved redactions of *Jómsvíkinga saga* seems to reflect this situation (Morawiec 2009: 80–82).

Nevertheless, an important part of the tradition concerning the foundation of Jónsborg was also the motive of the Danish ruler, who managed to permanently impose his supremacy by continuously confronting the

Slavs. In this context, the achievements of the Danish king Valdimar I, who began his reign in 1157, seem to be especially important.

His policy towards the Slavs, including around the Odra estuary region, resembled the earlier operations of Haraldr Gormsson as described above. Valdimar's activity directly inspired Sven Aggesen's and Saxo Grammaticus's accounts, who, on the canvas of royal successes, constructed a model of a powerful ruler who could skilfully fight the enemies of his kingdom, especially pagans. The leitmotif in question worked both ways. On the one hand it was reminiscent of Haraldr's military successes, which had resulted in the foundation of Jónsborg and justified the operations undertaken by Valdimar who not only fought the pagans threatening Denmark, but also restored the king's authority over the territory that belonged to him. On the other hand, Valdimar's energy and successes during battles against the Slavs had an impact on Haraldr's image which, as presented by Saxo Grammaticus and probably some of (the oldest) redactions of *Jónsvíkinga saga*, had exactly the same qualities while invading Wendland and founding Jónsborg and the Danish jarldom there.

The events which took place on the Danish-Saxon-Slavic border undoubtedly affected the shape of the legend of Jónsborg and its connections with the kings of Denmark. The particular representatives of the Danish dynasty, especially Haraldr Gormsson and his son, are presented as unable to rule efficiently or sustain their supporters, concentrating only on fighting their relatives in order to acquire power. Their weakness and inefficiency was used by magnates who, competing with one another or making conspiracies against the ruler, contributed to his weakness. The saga account is largely concurrent with the situation of royal authority in Denmark in the first half of the twelfth century. Sveinn Úlfsson's successors, who ruthlessly fought for the authority, were unable to counteract it effectively and protect the country against Slavic raids. The Battle of Fodevig in 1134, the famous "bloody feast of Roskilde" and another encounter, the Battle of Grathe Hede of the same year, significantly discredited the dynasty. The situation was even more dramatic because at the time of both Fodevig and Grathe Hede, Denmark was the target of violent Slavic invasions. In this respect the analogy between Niels, who ended his life and reign in disgrace when he was killed by the hostile inhabitants of Schleswig, and Haraldr Gormsson is even more striking. The Jónsborg legend contrasts the weak and inefficient kings of Denmark with the powerful king of the Slavs, Búrizleifr. The latter seems to have all the virtues lacking in his Danish equivalents. In contrast

to Haraldr, he was able to cope quite well with the threat caused by Tóki. Consequently, Búrizleifr is shown as the undisputed ruler of Wendland and Jónsborg. The way the image of Búrizleifr was completed in the North might have also been influenced by accounts of the Polish prince Bolesław Wrymouth. His temporary achievements in Pomerania made him a prominent figure in the complex and constant power game on the Danish-Slavic border — an important feature that also shaped the legend of Jónsborg and the Jómsvíkings.

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Summary

Jómsborg, the great stronghold and residence of the famous warrior band, the Jómsvíkings, is strongly related to the Danish kings in the Old Norse tradition. Particular accounts differ however in one fundamental respect: the name of the founder of Jómsborg. Some point towards the Danish king Harald Gormsson, who is said to have founded Jómsborg after the conquest of Wendland, the land of the Slavs. Other narratives present very different circumstances: Jómsborg was founded by Pálnatóki, jarl of Fyn, who, as an exile from Denmark, made an agreement with Búrizleifr, the king of the Slavs. This crucial difference is strongly linked with the negative image of kingship in *Jómsvíkinga saga*. The poor representations Danish monarchs earned in the legend were most likely the result of various factors. Memory of both distant and recent Slavic-Scandinavian encounters in the borderlands of Western Pomerania, Denmark and Saxony seems to be among the most decisive ones.

Keywords: Jómsborg, Harald Gormsson, Búrizleifr, royal power, Slavic-Scandinavian encounters

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Viking-Age Wolin (Wollin) in the Norse Context of the Southern Coast of the Baltic Sea

WŁADYSŁAW DUCZKO

Although not nomadic, Scandinavians were a people on the move. Well-documented in both written sources and archaeology, Scandinavian voyaging reached its peak during the Viking Age (between the late eighth and eleventh centuries), when they travelled far and wide to undertake various activities. For three centuries Norsemen sailed on their well-built ships along the coasts of Europe in search of plunder. But raiding was not the sole purpose of their activity. In addition to stealing things and people, Scandinavians also stole land: They took over the North Atlantic islands, parts of Anglo-Saxon Britain, Ireland, Frankia, and various territories in eastern Europe, which everywhere caused short- and long-term changes in the ethnic composition of local populations (Loyn 1994, Byock 2001, Duczko 2004). The Vikings' large-scale looting eventually turned into equally successful economic occupation. When they had had enough of plundering, Scandinavian pirates started to engage in trading goods, specializing in slaves, and commerce became the principal reason for their travels.

The Norsemen were mainly interested in the riches of the West and the East, but they also recognized the opportunities to be found in places that were much closer to home, such as the southern coast of the Baltic Sea, populated by Slavs, Balts, and Finns. From the early eighth century and during the ninth century the Danes and Swedes established several emporia, centres for trade and crafts, along this long coast and increased the circulation of commodities within an already functioning interregional trade network (Jöns 2009).

Among these trading sites, Wolin, known as Jumne, was the most famous. In the 1070s, Adam of Bremen mentioned it in his chronicle of

the archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen as "... a most noble city, affords a very widely known trading centre..." (Tschan 1959: 66). During Adam's time, the glory-days of Wolin were already history, but the memory of Wolin's former greatness was kept alive and used as a theme in Norse literature, especially in *Jómsvíkinga saga* composed by medieval authors living in Iceland.

Wolin was founded on the island of the same name located in the eastern part of the estuary of the river Odra (Oder). The island was part of a larger agglomeration that consisted of another island, Uznam (Usedom), and Kamień Pomorski (Cammin), a settlement on the Pomeranian mainland. Taking advantage of its strategic position deep within the estuary of a great river that connected the Baltic Sea to the Slavic lands in the south, the settlement that appeared on the eastern side of the island of Wolin, close to the river Dziwna (Dievenow), developed in the early ninth century into a centre of thriving trade. Its importance peaked between the mid-tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh century, and it eventually lost its position after year 1043, when King Magnús of Norway and Denmark destroyed the city.

Historians and archaeologists have focused their attention on Viking-Age Wolin for a long time. The Icelandic saga's story about Jómsborg, a fort occupied by a Norse warrior-community that functioned as a kind of secular order, made many scholars, who identified Wolin with this fort, to see it as a purely Scandinavian site. However, archaeological research has changed this once dominant opinion by introducing results that have allowed for a new approach to the early history of the town. It is now clear that the original settlement on the eastern shore of the island of Wolin was Slavic. It was restricted to an area on a hill that lay on one of the islands that originally comprised Wolin before it much later became a part of the mainland (Stanisławski 2013b: 287).

What the initial impulse for founding this site was we do not know. The small size of the first site and its weak contacts with the outer world show that early Wolin had little to offer traders, which meant that the island was left outside of the mainstream of trading in the Baltic (Sindbæk 2006). It is possible that in the beginning people on the island were more interested in agrarian economy than in trading. In the long run, this appears to have been a sensible choice: The production of food attracted the attention of traders and sped up developments on the island. Structural changes introduced during the second part of the ninth century considerably enlarged what was previously a very modest settlement and show that

the opportunities offered by the place were finally being recognized (Stanisławski & Filipowiak 2013: 279).

The serious nature of ongoing changes manifested itself in various ways, mainly through the erection of exclusive houses in the central part of the settlement at Stare Miasto ‘Old Town’, but also through the construction of a harbour on the river Dziwna and, most notably, the building of a wall for defence. This sort of urban unit points to the establishment of an elite who were involved in new kinds of activities — trading and crafts — which exposed them to the dangers of plundering raids. Wolin was becoming a regular port of trade similar to many other pre-existing sites around the Baltic. Further developments that occurred in the first decades of the tenth century also reveal that the town was successful: A new district was built that consisted of houses arranged in a regular way on the Srebrne Wzgórze ‘Silver Hill’, north of the main settlement, which was rebuilt and also surrounded by a much stronger wall. In the same period a chain of forts along the river Dziwna were built that secured the city from the sea.

Wolin was systematically gaining an important position in the network of long-distance trade. Evidence for this includes the building of a new district with a harbour in the Ogrody ‘Gardens’, a district between Stare Miasto and Srebrne Wzgórze, with many houses in which a variety of foreign goods were stored. Another phenomenon that clearly demonstrates the growing wealth of the people of Wolin are the many hoards of silver coins, Islamic dirhams, deposited in and around the town in the middle of the tenth century (Żak 1963). The phenomenon of hoarding is usually connected to Scandinavians, the main actors in the Baltic trade, who were now also making their appearance on the island (Duczko 2005; Stanisławski 2013a: 201). The Norse presence, which had been almost non-existent in the early phases of Viking-Age Wolin, was now taking up more space and exerting more influence. The clearest trace of this can be found in the form of a large house built in the late 960s during the heyday of the main settlement in Stare Miasto. Its central location and the kind of material used for its construction — oak, a tree that was already rare on the island — demonstrate the exceptional nature of the building and its purpose. Finds from this place provide us with the evidence that it was serving people from the North. Artefacts such as twelve wooden knife-handles decorated in Scandinavian manner with plait-work, three miniature swords and five small wooden figures, obviously representations

of gods, tell us about the ethnicity of the people in the house (Stanisławski 2013b: 131 f.).

The site with the oak-house was not the only place in Wolin where Norsemen dwelt from the end of the tenth century to the first decades of the eleventh (Filipowiak 2004). There are at least seven such places, including wooden houses, where typical Norse objects have been discovered: jewellery — silver pendants, two round brooches, and amulets in the shape of Thor's hammer made from silver, iron, and amber — gaming pieces, and again, wooden handles with excellently executed plait-work, a lot of schist whetstones and soap-stones for pots of Norwegian origin, even some weapons, not forgetting to mention lumps of Scandinavian iron ore, and, last but not least, a piece of wood with a runic inscription (Stanisławski 2013b: 162 f.). What we have here is a collection of easily recognizable items of Norse origin far more numerous than was previously believed would be the case in the city.

Not all of the aforementioned artefacts were initially recognized as works by Norsemen. Especially one, a very famous object, is notorious: a little wooden piece with four heads on the top that was identified as a representation of the Slavic god Światowid (Svantovit) uncovered in a building that was subsequently thought to be a Slavic temple (Filipowiak & Gundlach 1992). From my studies it became obvious that this artefact belonged to the Norse religious sphere, not only because of the characteristic element with four faces, but also because of the shape of the elongated part, which is in fact a whetstone with the same decoration as an item found in the Oseberg ship (Duczko 2000: 26).

In the same study I was able to attribute a large number of items found in Wolin to a local Norse workshop. These included the aforementioned wooden and bone knife-handles decorated with plait-work of a type well-known in Insular-Scandinavian art, the one that was especially often employed in the stone-art flourishing among the Norsemen on the Isle of Man (Duczko 2000: 25). The number of items with such decoration and their homogeneity show that artisans who had been trained in Britain were working in Wolin. I have coined a term for this art — “the Pomeranian School of Insular-Scandinavian Art” (Duczko 2000: 29). The use of this art was not restricted to the town of Wolin, we also come across examples of it in Kamień Pomorski and Szczecin (Stettin), which is only to be expected as those places were closely connected with each other, and also beyond. Many of the objects with the typical motifs of this art were discovered in the main centres of the young Polish state of the Piasts: in

Gniezno (Gnesen), Giecz, Santok (Zantoch) and some others; they were also found in Śląsk (Silesia), the south-western territory conquered by the Piasts in the 980s (Jaworski et al. 2013). The distribution of products that are characteristic of the Wolin workshop indicates the existence of a special kind of relation between the city and the rulers of Poland.

What can the aforementioned Norse archaeological source material from Wolin tell us about this site when we compare it with other trading sites on the southern shore of the Baltic? There are several of them — in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: Gross Strömkendorf, Rostock-Dierkow, and Menzlin, on Rügen: Ralswiek, further east in Polish Pomerania: Bardy-Świelubie (Bartin-Zwillipp) near Kołobrzeg (Kolberg), and two sites on the coast of the Balts: Truso in Prussia and Wiskiauten in Sambia (Jöns 2009, Łosiński 1975, Jagodziński 2010, Zur Mühlen 1975). One distinguishing feature is significant: Wolin was founded later than these other emporia which in most cases were established in the early eighth century. Equally important is that they appeared in the regions where a Scandinavian presence had been unbroken since at least sixth century (Duczko 1997; Dulnicz 2001). The other important fact is that — with exception of Truso and Wiskiauten — these sites only existed for a century or two: Gross Strömkendorf (probably known from written sources as Reric) was active until the first decade of the ninth century, Rostock-Dierkow fell into disuse in the middle of the ninth century, Menzlin was gone around 900, and only Ralswiek continued through the tenth and eleventh centuries (Kleingärtner 2011: 185).

The main feature of these sites is their wholly Norse character: families, with a very clear presence of Norse women, and graves with rich inventories, sometimes placed within stone-ship settings, in some cases in real boats, burials of warriors together with weapons and standard Norse material culture, sometimes with exclusive jewellery of Danish type. Menzlin has to be considered as a special site. Located on the river Peene, only about ninety kilometres west from Wolin across the Bay of Szczecin, it was occupied by Danes and comprised a complete Norse society, where the infrastructure with a harbour, stone roads and bridges was standard and where the burial ground with family graves was visible in the landscape in a most impressive way.

How does Wolin look in this context? Different, as we have already been able to see. Wolin was fortified while none of the other aforementioned emporia, with the exception of Truso, was protected by a wall. It appears certain that Norse families did not dwell in Wolin, unlike in Menzlin and

other sites from the coast where evidence for their existence is easy to discover.

The presence of entire families, with women and children, is a necessary prerequisite for the creation of a society with a distinctive culture, as is so well manifested in eastern Europe, where many settlements can be easily recognized as Scandinavian because of family burials with classic Norse elements (Duczko 2004: 9).

The absence of typical oval brooches as well as extremely few finds of female jewellery in Wolin is a revealing feature. It is well-known that Norse women used a lot of ornaments as can be seen from finds not only in their own countries but also abroad. The few finds of Norse ornaments lead us to assume that some Norse women were living in Wolin, but they were not many. Only a pair of very untypical oval brooches have been discovered here, along with another pair of round brooches with a four-volute motif, which are not in an orthodox, standard form. This reinforces the idea that the Norsemen did not constitute a consolidated group acting as a regular society here.

So the presence of so few Norse women can be taken as an indication that the Scandinavian community in Wolin was not functioning as in the other Norse emporia along the Slavic and Baltic coasts. Does this mean that the Jónsborg with its brotherhood of warriors was a reality and not a legend? Not exactly. Contradicting the contents of the saga are the very few finds of weapons and similarly the few burials of warriors, practically none of the kind in the form of chamber-graves known from Birka, Hedeby, Pskov, and Gnezdovo. Alas, we cannot be sure that such elite burials never existed in Wolin because the grave-fields that once existed to the south of the city have since been destroyed and they may have contained special burials, about which we know nothing.

So the weak presence of Norse women is matched by only a few traces of warrior culture, which makes the legendary existence of the Jónsvíkings look even more legendary. However, we have to notice what is special about Wolin, namely the activity of a workshop producing knife-handles with Insular decoration: This is an important indication of the presence of a group of males of Danish origin with Anglo-Saxon connections enjoying the art they were accustomed to.

What usually gives a site outside Scandinavia a distinctive Norse flavour are finds of artefacts with runic inscriptions. Such things — on pieces of wood and bone — were found in West Pomerania, namely in Wolin and Kamień Pomorski, in both cases within settlements. Objects

with runes are so intimately connected with Scandinavian culture that any attempts to see them as neutral things, or trading goods, should be treated as a misunderstanding of Norse civilization (Liestøl 1970). It is worth remembering that Scandinavians had been using writing since the beginning of the first millennium, while West Slavic societies were illiterate, and that the use of runes had many purposes, among which magic was reportedly the most important. It should also be stressed that when objects with runes appear outside Scandinavia, they are usually discovered in places where Norsemen were evidently dwelling, which is also the case in Wolin.

We can be sure that Danes were living in the town, where they played an important, but temporary, leading role in the Slavic community of Wolin. They were traders and warriors, some of them both at the same time, like many other Scandinavians during the Viking Age. It is possible that persons with names like *Pálnatóki*, *Sigvaldi* or *Styrbjörn*, who according to *Jómsvíkinga saga*, were deeply involved in Danish-Norwegian-Swedish conflicts, were staying in Wolin, possibly in the Ogrody district, as is suggested by Błażej Stanisławski (2013b: 288).

However, as their presence there was not recorded in reliable written documents, they have to remain literary heroes.

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Summary

The article discusses archaeological material regarding the Viking-Age settlement of Wolin (Wollin) identified as the Jónsborg of the Icelandic sagas. The study shows that Wolin stands out among other Scandinavian settlements on the southern shore of the Baltic Sea such as Gross Strömkendorf, Rostock-Dierkow, Menzlin, and Ralswiek. Firstly, Wolin was founded later than other emporia in the region. Secondly, the character of the Scandinavian presence is different. Wolin is characterized by a distinct Slavic core and a short-lived presence of a Scandinavian elite with a clear underrepresentation of Norse women. Other emporia bear evidence of a continuous Scandinavian presence and wholly Norse character, including families, with a very clear presence of Norse women, and graves with rich inventories. Thirdly, Wolin was fortified while none of the other aforementioned emporia was protected by a wall. Another striking element of the archaeology of Wolin includes plait-work of “the Pomeranian School of Insular-Scandinavian Art”.

Keywords: Archaeology, Jónsborg, Wolin (Wollin), Slavic-Scandinavian contacts, Southern Baltic, Viking Age

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Runic Inscriptions Reflecting Linguistic Contacts between West Slav Lands and Southern Scandinavia

MICHAEL LERCHE NIELSEN

Introduction

From the perspective of the average Danish school-child the encounters between the Scandinavian-speaking population in southern Scandinavia and West Slav tribes in the late Viking Age and during the medieval period seem to consist of endless combat and pillaging. Whenever one side of the Baltic coast was weakened by civil wars or internal turmoil, invaders from the opposite coast tried to take advantage of the situation. However, Danish schoolchildren are told that in the end the Danes gained the upper hand, unlike in later military campaigns in Danish history. Thus, these events form an important part in the creation of Danish national romantic self-understanding.

The historical annals which deal with this period naturally focus on martial deeds and battles as focal points in the events of history. However, when studying the most learned of these annalists, Saxo Grammaticus, it is evident that the description of the enemy as such is also very negative: Slavs seemingly have bad habits, they are primitive, and — if they do negotiate — they are replete with false words. In all this, of course, they are very unlike their Danish counterparts. This impression of constant hostilities is in turn contradicted by the fact that numerous marriage bonds linked the royal families around the Baltic according to the same historical sources.

Archaeological evidence also demonstrates the large-scale trading and exchange of goods that involved all the populations in the Baltic region. In Scandinavia the presence of Slavic occupation or settlement has been suggested from the island of Als in the west to the island settlement of

Mölleholmen on an inland lake near the south coast of Skåne in the east (Mölleholmen is published by Rüdiger Kelm (2000) but his hypothesis has been questioned by Thorbjörn Brorsson (2004: 233–34)). Between these two locations, place names speak of Slavic settlements on the islands of Lolland, Falster and Møn south of Sjælland (Housted 1994), just as a number of Russian place names have been claimed to witness traces of the Vikings (Vasmer 1931: 649–74).

On the island of Langeland excavations at the medieval fortification Guldborg in 1993 seem to confirm a Slavic onslaught on the Danish defenders (Skaarup 1997). South of the Baltic Sea chamber burials, burial customs, ship tumuli and marketplaces along the inland rivers bear witness to a substantial Scandinavian presence. The majority of the archaeological artefacts, however, suggest trade and the presence of Slavic settlements points in a more peaceful direction.

This forces us to bear in mind that Saxo's literary description of the Slavs not only served to legitimize the crusade against the West Slav tribes, it also presented the Scandinavians as noble heathens who — although bewildered by magicians and tricksters — were of their own free will searching for the truth of God, whereas the Slavs were savage and wicked heathens who required to be enlightened with the aid of the sword. In this respect the historical records are literary texts or political pamphlets rather than neutral records of the events.

To what extent did the two populations interact linguistically? According to Saxo there was no mutual intelligibility between the Scandinavian and Slavic populations. Among the armies there would often be people who could understand a word or two and figure out the intentions of the enemy, but translators seemed to be compulsory when it came to peace negotiations.

The rather great linguistic difference between Slavic and Scandinavian languages provides a good explanation for this but it is not necessarily the only explanation and bilingualism might have been more common than the written sources lead us to believe.

Loan words are also an important subject, and a complex one, especially in this case, because Low German at an early stage and High German at a later stage have been both primary and intermediary sources for the exchange of loan words between Slavic and Scandinavian. Slavic loan-words in Scandinavian are mainly linked to trade activities but it is hard to establish when and how a specific words such as *bismer*(*vægt*) 'steelyard', *silke* 'silk', *torv* 'square/market place' and *tolk* 'interpreter' in

Danish have entered the language without reliable written contemporary documentation (Svane 1989: 26–32, Thörnqvist 1948).

1. Personal names

Another important linguistic source is personal names. It is well-attested that Slavic names were transferred to Scandinavia via royal marriages and later through the landed gentry from Pomerania who were established in Denmark, for instance common first names as *Valdemar* and *Preben* in Denmark, *Svante* and possibly *Gustav* in Sweden from Slavic *Vladimir*, *Pritbor*, *Svatopolk* and *Gostislav*. Similarly, a few Scandinavian names entered the Slavic dialects, most notably *Igor*, *Oleg* and *Olga* from Old Norse *Ingvarr*, *Helgi/Helga* (Svane 1989). Personal names are not, however, identical with ethnicity: Just as modern Danes are called *Brian* or *Ivan* without having the slightest idea as to where these names come from, personal names like *Ketill* and *Magnús* in the Viking Age also demonstrate cultural exchange, although admittedly in a much more limited number than today.

Often, though, a name provides a good starting point for discussing linguistic contact. An example of this is the Slavic name *Gnemer*, which occurs a few times in the Danish Middle Ages (Danmarks gamle Personnavne 1: 374). According to King Valdemar's land register from 1231 a man named *Gnemer* owned a village on the island of Falster. It has been argued quite convincingly that this village must be identical with the present-day village *Sønder Grimmelstrup* not far from a cluster of Slavic place names (Housted 1994: 43 (map 3)). The name of the village goes back to **Gnæmrsthorp*, where the first element *Gnæmr* has been reinterpreted as Scandinavian *Grimar* (Lisse 1974: 124). It is plausible that this *Gnemerus* is the same person who is mentioned in *Knýtlinga saga* as *Guenmarr Ketilsson* who served in Valdemar's army and captured the lookout of the Slavic defending army. Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* also mentions a certain *Guemerus Falstricus*, who served in the Danish coastal defence. According to Saxo, Gnemerus "had too close connections with the Slavs" and Gnemerus reveals the Danish war plans to them.¹

¹ *Gesta Danorum*, liber 14: 44, 9: "Is Guemmerus nimia Sclauorum familiaritate corruptus nostrę gentis consilia latenter eis prodere consueuerat" (vol. 2, p. 414).

Although *Ketill* is a common Viking-Age personal name, its combination with *Gnemer* can hardly be a coincidence. If we assume that it is in fact the same *Gnemer*, he is the son of *Ketill* — a Scandinavian name. Despite the fact that he obviously speaks Slavic as well as Danish, it remains a puzzle to decide his ethnic ties: the written sources disagree about his loyalty.

Another linguistic way of handling the clash of languages is name change. According to a runestone from Sønder Vissing in central Jutland King Harold Bluetooth's wife had the Scandinavian name *Tófa*, although she was the daughter of *Mbstivoj*, “knjaz” or king of the Abotrites. In the runic inscription his name is rendered **mistiuis** in the genitive thus showing a linguistic adaption to the Old Norse masculine *ija*-declension. This, however, does not explain why *Tófa* has a Scandinavian name. One explanation might be that *Tófa*'s mother was Scandinavian but it might also be the case that *Tófa* changed her name as a sign of loyalty when she was accepted into the royal line of Denmark.

A parallel to this is the Christian name that several rulers took after their conversion, for instance Queen Olga of Kiev took the name Yelena (Helen) when she was baptized in the 940s. Name change has contemporary as well as modern parallels. According to *Jómsvíkinga saga* King of the Wends *Búrizlafr*'s three daughters also have Scandinavian names: *Ástríðr*, *Gunnhildr* and *Geira*. The reason for this might be that as a part of the plot in the narrative they all end up marrying Scandinavians.

Apart from the limited number of Slavic personal names which have been borrowed into Scandinavian, inhabitants' names — sometimes used as personal names — occur in Scandinavian place names and runic inscriptions, *vindir* “the West Slav” occurs frequently in Danish place names such as *Vinderup*, and *Vindeboder* in Roskilde. Similarly the inhabitants' name **imbri* ‘person from the island of Fehmarn’ occurs in *Emdrup* (1186 Imbrethorp, see Jørgensen 2006: 65–66). *Imbri* is not as frequent as for instance *saxi* ‘person from Saxony’ or *ænglir* ‘person from England’ in Danish place names.

In runic inscriptions we find inhabitants' names used as forenames, for instance *Æistr/Æisti/Æistmaðr* “person from Estonia” and *Tafæistr* “person from Tavastland (in Finland)”. Henrik Williams deals with an occurrence of *vindr* on the Swedish runestone, Sö 351, in his comment to this paper. Due to the often ambiguous runic orthography other occurrences of *vindr* may well have been listed as spellings of the common male personal name *Øyindr/Øyvindr* (Peterson 2007: 269–70).

There is no doubt that inhabitants' names reflect linguistic contacts, but without circumstantial evidence it is hard to establish the exact kind of linguistic effect and significance of these encounters.

2. Runic inscriptions

In order to establish how the West Slavs and the Scandinavians coexisted in the eleventh and twelfth centuries it is possible to involve further evidence which in my opinion has been both misjudged by previous scholars and overlooked or underestimated in more recent research, namely fifteen runic inscriptions from the West Slavic area. Most of the inscriptions were carved into the concave and convex sides of ribs from cattle while the bone surface was still soft after cooking. Thus, we may assume that they were produced locally at the find spots.

The corpus comes from six find-places, most notably eight pieces of bone with runic inscriptions in Starigard/Oldenburg, which were discovered together with several other objects of Scandinavian origin during the archaeological excavations 1973–87. The runic inscriptions were found in debris layers from an urban settlement close to the royal residence of the Wagrian knjaz on the plateau of the fortified hill-top. The inscriptions are archaeologically dated to the second half of the eleventh century or the first half of the twelfth century. Three similar inscriptions are known from Alt Lübeck plus single bone-finds from Ralswiek and Kamień Pomorski. The remaining list of runic finds includes a soapstone amulet from Alt Lübeck, a wooden stick from Wolin with an uncertain inscription and a gaming piece from debris layers in Kałdus on the banks of the river Vistula. For further bibliographical data I will point to the appendix.

The rune-types in the inscriptions all belong to the typical late Viking-Age type, that is long-branch runes with a variety of dotted runes and short-twig variant forms. There is nothing to suggest specific medieval runological developments (differentiation between **ɑ** and **æ**; **o** and **ø**, as well as the *ýr*-rune, **ᚱ**, for the vowel /y/). One of the inscriptions from Starigard/Oldenburg seems to reflect South Scandinavian linguistic developments, thus pointing to the area from which the rune-carver came. All the legible inscriptions are in Scandinavian and the types of inscriptions can be found elsewhere in similar urban runic finds from Scandinavia. In the following I shall go through the fifteen finds thematically.

Illegible inscriptions

First of all, it should be emphasized that informal inscriptions on bone pieces are often illegible. The people who carved them were probably not intending for us to see them — and in some Norwegian parallels from Tønsberg, Bergen and Trondheim, one may suspect that the rune-carvers were drunk or just having a good time. The thigh bone from Ralswiek **tu** and Starigard/Oldenburg 5 **sikn:** may serve as examples. The scattered runes on the odd soap-stone object, Alt Lübeck 2, probably belong to this group too. It should be noted, however, that the proportion of meaningful inscriptions from the West Slav lands seems to be at the same level or even higher than, for instance, urban finds from Lund, Sigtuna, Gamlebyen in Oslo, and Dublin.

Statements of ownership

Another well-known type of inscription is the statement of ownership: “N.N. owns me” or “N.N. owns this or that object”. The latter type is attested on the gaming piece from Kałdus, which was found in 2002. The object is made of antler and it belongs to a very common type of artefact. The inscription — which I have unfortunately not investigated myself — seems to be worn, and it is not certain that it was carved on the banks of the river Vistula. Kałdus was an important trading centre on this river with finds of chamber graves and other Scandinavian imports. According to the information available, the gaming piece was found in debris layers underneath a Romanesque ecclesiastical building (Lerche Nielsen 2003 [2005]). The inscription reads: **ion a tafł** ‘John owns the gaming piece (or the game)’. As well as being the earliest recording of the Old Norse word *tafl*, the personal name Old Norse *Jón* is interesting. *Jón* is the earliest Christian personal name to become common in Scandinavian (compare the list of recorded occurrences in Peterson 2007: 141).

The first find from the fortified stronghold Alt Lübeck six kilometres down the river from present-day Lübeck carries a similar inscription **baa : knif : kopa...**, *Pā(i) ā knīf gōða[n]*, ‘Pāi “the peacock” owns a good knife (which carved the inscription)’. Johannes Brøndum-Nielsen’s interpretation of the inscription from 1952 was put forward before urban runic inscriptions became well-known. He suggested that the inscription

object was a knife handle and that the inscription consists of a rare genitive-construction plus a lacking nominative ending and a svarabhakti-vowel: *Pāa knīf[r] gōðær*. I mention this because his interpretation occurs quite frequently in the runological literature.

The Wolin stick

Next I shall turn to the Wolin wooden stick which — according to my limited information I have to confess, the Viking og Hvidekrist catalogue no. 258 (Filipowiak 1992) — was found in the foundations of a house in the harbour which was probably owned by a Scandinavian tradesman. Only the top of the incised symbols are visible, and therefore the inscription could be interpreted as either purely ornamental or runic. If the latter, it can be compared to runic finds with the so-called “Puzzle of the thirty counters” or “Ludus Sancti Petri”. However, a dating to the eleventh century seems very early indeed, since the Scandinavian parallels are from the High Middle Ages.

Inscriptions with personal names and the rune-row

A substantial amount of urban rune-finds consists of personal names. Probably it was simply the rune-carver who had fun writing his name. The same type of inscription is very common, for instance the graffiti from the Roman town Pompeii and modern name-tags. Starigard/Oldenburg 2 seems to represent various attempts to write the Old Norse name *Ørn* or the identical noun which means ‘eagle’. No. 3 has the personal name *Faxi*, which is also a word for ‘horse’. Starigard/Oldenburg 1 has on the concave side the inscription **porki**, most probably an unfinished rendering of *Pōrkill* or perhaps *Pōrgæirr*. The opposite side has the beginning of the rune-row **fupo**, the *futhark* plus two runes — **as** — from the middle section **hnias**.

This inscription throws light on another old find, the bone piece from Kamień Pomorski, which was found during excavations on the fortified hill-top of the settlement in 1956. The runes **kur** perhaps reflect a personal name (Larsson 2002: 41 with references), but I find this rather uncertain,

whereas **fup** is most likely to be interpreted as the beginning of a *futhark*-inscription. An alternative explanation — *fuð* also means ‘female genitalia’ — was put forward by the Danish runologist Erik Moltke in his older days (1985: 463–64). Although the ambiguous meaning could be intentional and despite the fact that inscriptions with the naughty meaning of *fuð* do exist, it is most likely that writing down the *futhark* in itself demonstrated the skills of the carver, perhaps in some cases a learning process (Knirk 1994, Seim 1999). The complete *futhark* is to be found on Starigard/Oldenburg 8 and — with a common misspelling — on the Alt-Lübeck 3.

Syllabarium or writing exercise

Starigard/Oldenburg 4 has on the convex side an inscription, which seems to make sense but proves to be pure nonsense: **abi:bataba:iestaba**. In my earlier publication of this inscription I have listed some of the “words” which might be read. However, it now seems more plausible in my opinion that the reoccurring *ba-bi* is a reminiscence of a so-called syllabarium, which is a method of teaching orthography. Several medieval Norwegian examples have been published by Karin Fjellhammer Seim (1998) a much older example from Sigtuna has been published recently by Helmer Gustavson (2007). On the concave side of the rib is the unmistakably naughty inscription: **kukr : kus kutu | kys**, “penis kiss the vulva, kiss”. Most other urban settlements have provided similarly naughty inscriptions which have parallels in the sagas.

Letter

Starigard/Oldenburg 6 is a letter, and the rib has been reshaped so that it resembles a wooden runic stick. Although letters have been found in Bergen, this type of inscription is unfamiliar in other Scandinavian urban settlements with rune-finds. The inscription: **bermin:erinde:þat:ik:ei:hafa:skyrte**, *Bær mīn ærindæ þat ek æi hafa skyrte* “Convey my messages so that I don’t suffer any loss/drawback” could of course also be read as an amulet, but I prefer to see it as a straightforward message. The ending *-æ*

points to Southern Scandinavia, and the form without breaking of the pronoun **ek** “I”, may — but not necessarily so — point to Jutland. We should certainly like to know more about the circumstances behind this inscription!

Riddle

Finally Starigard/Oldenburg 7 bears an inscription which must be interpreted as a proverb:

(-)**ak:eigi:ha:a:hafi:uti:heltr:tak:hu...** [T]ak æigi hā ā hafi ūti. Hældr tak hū[n].

“Don’t find the oarlock out at sea, better use the top of the mast (for hoisting the sail)”

On the opposite side of the bone there is an as yet uninterpreted inscription ...**uran marum**. Similar proverbs are well known in Old Norse literature. Even within the runic corpus there are parallels, for instance from the town of Lund (Moltke 1985: 460): *Bōndi rīsti mālrūnu / ārar ara æru fiaðrar*. ‘Bōndi carved the riddle (?): “The oars of the eagle are the feathers”.’

Discussion

What can be deduced from the corpus of inscriptions found south of the Baltic? First of all, earlier scholars have paid little attention to this find group. In 1968 the German scholar Hans Jürgen Eggers provided a good survey of the runic corpus but apart from the thirty or so runic coins from silver hoards in Pomerania, there were too few rune finds to draw conclusions. Seemingly Eggers’ main interest was to document the mere presence of runes south of the Baltic Sea and to show Iron-Age rune finds and tell anecdotes about runic frauds.

The late Wolfgang Laur includes the runic finds from Alt Lübeck and the first finds from Starigard/Oldenburg in his *Runendenkmäler in Schleswig-Holstein und in Nordschleswig*, but it was not until the latest edition shortly before Laur’s death in 2006 that all inscriptions from Holstein were included.

Today we can in my opinion give a more complete picture: The majority of rune-finds south of the Baltic Sea have been found within an urban setting, namely in the harbours of Wolin and Ralswiek and in the fortified hill-tops at Alt Lübeck, Starigard/Oldenburg and Kamień Pomorski near the Slavic magnates' personal quarters.

Generally speaking, the find history resembles urban finds in Scandinavia: The only runic inscription from Vordingborg in southern Sjælland, for instance, was found in the oldest layers which predate King Valdemar's impressive fortification. Nothing suggests hostilities such as those Brøndum-Nielsen took for granted in 1952 when he suggested that a Danish soldier in King Valdemar's army "lost his knife or even his life" during the siege of Lübeck in 1203. On the contrary, the runic inscriptions both regarding the types of inscriptions and the linguistic competence match other Scandinavian urban finds in Haithaby, Schleswig (Stoklund & Düwel 2001), Lund (Moltke 1985), Lödöse (Svärdström 1982), Sigtuna, Tønsberg (Gosling 1989), Gamlebyen Oslo (Liestøl 1977, Liestøl & Nestor 1987), Bergen (Liestøl 1964), and Trondheim (Hagland 1990, Hagland ms.). The number of legible inscriptions even exceeds the runic finds from the viking colony in Dublin (Barnes, Hagland & Page 1997).

This substantial Scandinavian presence can be interpreted in several ways, however. There may have been Scandinavian prisoners of war or hostages who should secure a peace treaty who could have carved the inscriptions. A Scandinavian royal guard similar to the Varangians might also have been responsible for the messages. Finally — and in my opinion most plausibly — Scandinavian merchants could have had permanent trade missions in the Slavic towns, just like *Vindeboder* in the Royal Danish town of Roskilde.

The main conclusion to be drawn from the runic evidence is that the medieval sources seem to exaggerate the clash between the Scandinavians and their neighbours across the Baltic Sea, probably due to ideological reasons relevant to the age of the crusades. Runestones may tell of sudden death, but this undoubtedly has to express individual bravery and honour rather than a general negative attitude towards foreigners, and in fact other runestones attest peaceful trade activities. Although small pieces of bone may seem boring — they provide a more plausible eyewitness report from the exact time and place of the events.

Postscriptum

It has not been possible to include a new runic find from Poland, a cross-shaped amulet from Kałdus, in this paper due to lack of sufficient information.

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Summary

This article discusses the discrepancy between historical accounts of the contacts between Scandinavians and West Slavs in the late Viking Age and early Middle Ages on the one hand and linguistic evidence — loan words, place-names, personal names, and runic inscriptions — on the other. The main focus is the small corpus of runic inscriptions found in urban contexts along the south coast of the Baltic Sea. The inscriptions were previously seen as signs of hostilities, but the finds from Starigard (Oldenburg) in particular now point in a much more peaceful direction. The runic texts represent a high degree of literacy and the text types are very similar to finds from urban runic finds in mainland Scandinavia. This suggests a state of peaceful co-existence between Scandinavians and West Slavs and a permanent presence in the Slavic Towns, for instance of a diplomatic or mercantile nature or by a band of mercenaries.

Keywords: Runes, Viking Age, contact linguistics in the South Baltic Sea, runic stray finds, urban runic text types, runic literacy

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Appendix: List of runic inscriptions from Slavic settlements

Starigard/Oldenburg 1

Fragmentary rib from cattle (70 mm long, 30 mm wide) found in 1973. Archaeological dating: 2nd half of the eleventh century. Find number: 02 09 009 KA. Bibliography: Buchholz & Gabriel 1976: 162–66; Laur 1990: 53; Laur 2006: 46–47; Lerche Nielsen 1999, Lerche Nielsen 2001: 247–50; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 536.

Concave side (height of the runes: 16–21 mm)

þorki

Þörki[ll]/Þörg[erR]/Þörgī[sl]/Þörgi[ls]

Personal name *Thorkill, Thorgeirr, Thorgisl* or *Thorgils*

Convex side (height of the runes: 5 mm)

fupō | a(s)...

fupō[rk] | as...

The futhark | not interpreted

Starigard/Oldenburg 2

Fragmentary rib from cattle (137 mm long, 38 mm wide) found in 1973. Archaeological dating: end of the eleventh century. Find number: 02 10 019 KA. Bibliography: Buchholz & Gabriel 1976: 164–66; Laur 1990: 53; Laur 2006: 46–47; Lerche Nielsen 1999; Lerche Nielsen 2001: 250–54; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 536.

Concave side (height of the runes: 25–30 mm)

ur(n)

Ørn(?)

Personal name *Ørn(?)*

Convex side (by another rune-carver? height of the runes: approx. 20 mm)

urn + ???

Ørn(?) (+ did he try to write **urn** again?)

Personal name *Ørn(?)*

Starigard/Oldenburg 3

Rib from cattle broken off at both ends (115 mm long, 32 mm wide) found in 1980. Archaeological dating: second half of eleventh century. Find number: 08 11 004 KA. Bibliography: Laur 2006: 46–47; Lerche Nielsen 1999; Lerche Nielsen 2001: 254–55; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 536.

Concave side (height of the runes: 17–25 mm)

faksi

Faksi (Faxi)

Personal name *Faxi (?)*

Starigard/Oldenburg 4

Fragmentary rib from cattle (155 mm long, 28–31 mm wide) found in 1979. Archaeological dating: end of the eleventh century. Find number: 08 09 071 KA. Bibliography: Laur 2006: 46–47; Lerche Nielsen 1999; Lerche Nielsen 2001: 255–69; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 536.

Concave side (height of the runes: 15–20 mm)

kukr:kuskutu | kys

Kūkr kȳss kuntu, kȳss!

“Penis kiss the vulva, kiss!”

Convex side (height of the runes: approx. 15 mm)

abi:bataba:iestaba

Uninterpreted — a so-called syllabarium?

Starigard/Oldenborg 5

Fragmentary rib from cattle (116 mm long, 18–25 mm wide) found in 1985. Archaeological dating: second half of the eleventh century. Find number: 12 15 155 KA. Bibliography: Laur 2006: 46–47; Lerche Nielsen 1999; Lerche Nielsen 2001: 260–61; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 536.

Convex side (height of the runes: approx. 15 mm)

sikn:

No interpretation

Starigard/Oldenborg 6

Fragmentary rib from cattle (151 mm long, 10–17 mm wide) found in 1985. Archaeological dating: first half of the twelfth century. Find number: 12 14 188 KB. Bibliography: Laur 2006: 46–47; Lerche Nielsen 1999; Lerche Nielsen 2001: 261–64; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 536.

Concave side (height of the runes: 13–17 mm)

bermin:erinde:pat:ik:ei:hafa:skyrte

Bær mīn ærindæ þat ek æi hafa skørtæ(?).

“Convey my errands in such a way that I do not come to any disadvantage (?)”

Starigard/Oldenborg 7

Fragmentary rib from cattle broken off at both ends (136 mm long, 16–17 mm wide) found in 1984. Archaeological dating: first half of the twelfth century. Find number: 12 13 057 KA.

Bibliography: Laur 2006: 46–47; Lerche Nielsen 1999; Lerche Nielsen 2001: 264–68; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 536–37

Concave side (height of the runes: 13–17 mm)

(-)ak:eigi:ha:a:hafi:uti:heltr:tak:h(u)...

Tak æigi hā ā hafi ūti, tak heldr hūn (?).

“Don’t grab the oarlock out in the sea; rather hoist the sail (with the *hūnn*)”

Convex side (height of the runes: approx. 15 mm)

...uran:marum

No interpretation

Starigard/Oldenburg 8

Fragmentary rib from cattle (160 mm long, 18–28 mm wide) found in 1984. Archaeological dating: first half of the twelfth century. Find number: 12 13 057 KA. Bibliography: Laur 2006: 46–47; Lerche Nielsen 1999; Lerche Nielsen 2001: 268–70; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 536–36

Concave side (height of the runes: approx. 20 mm)

fuporkhniastbmlr

The complete row of runes

Alt Lübeck 1

Fragmentary rib from cattle (107 mm long, 29 mm wide). Found in 1948. Archaeological dating: second half of the eleventh century or twelfth century. Find number: Ber.Arch. HL 1938.2. Bibliography: Brøndum-Nielsen 1952: 49–52 + unpag. illustration; Eggers 1968: 9; Grabowski 2003: 158; Laur 1964–65: 258–60; Laur 2006: 47; Lerche Nielsen 1999: 28–30; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 537.

Concave side

baa:knif:koþa...

Pā(i) ā knīf gōðan

“Pái owns a good knife”

(Note: Brøndum-Nielsen and Laur give the implausible reading *Pāā knīfr gōðr* “Pái’s good knife”)

Alt Lübeck 2

Soap-stone object (measurements unknown). Find year: unknown. Archaeological dating: unknown. Find number: unknown. Bibliography: Grabowski 2002: 53.

*Inscription***fo | l**

No interpretation

Alt Lübeck 3

Fragmentary rib from cattle (154 mm long, 22–31 mm wide). Found in 2003 (during re-examination of finds from an excavation in 1953). Archaeological dating: eleventh or twelfth century. Find number: Ber. Arch. HL, AL 1953/2098. Bibliography: Tank 2004: 123–24.

*Concave side***fupork:hnins:tbmlr**The complete row of runes with the common misspelling **n** for **a**.

Ralswiek

Thigh bone from cattle (measurements unknown). Find year: unknown. Dating: unknown. Find number: Kulturhistorisches Museum Stralsund Hd 648. Bibliography: Hermann 1992: 297; Lerche Nielsen 1999: 28–30; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 537.

*Inscription***tu...**

No interpretation (perhaps the beginning of a personal name)

Wolin

Wooden stick (yew-tree, 147 mm long). Find year: unknown. Dating: beginning of the eleventh century. Find number: IHKMPAN Warszawa, Wolin 695/79. Bibliography: Filipowiak 1992: 296; Lerche Nielsen 1999: 28–30; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 537.

Inscription:

Repetition of runes or ornament

Kamień Pomorski

Fragmentary rib from cattle (107 mm long). Found in 1956. Dating: First half of the eleventh century. Museum number: unknown. Bibliography: Zak & Salberger 1962–63: 324–35; Eggers 1968: 8; Lerche Nielsen 1999: 28–30; Larsson 2002: 41; Lerche Nielsen 2005: 537.

*Concave side***fuþ**

The beginning of the *futhark* or the obscene word *fuð* “vulva”.

*Convex side***kur**

Perhaps a (by)name **Kūrr* “a stooping person”.

Kařdus

Gaming piece made of antler (approx. 50 mm in diameter and 10 mm thick). Found 2002. Find number: unknown. Bibliography: Lerche Nielsen 2003 [2005]: 18 p.

*Inscription (on the back, height of the runes approx. 10–15 mm)***ionatafl**

Jōn ā tafl

“Jón (Scandinavian form of *John*) owns the gaming piece/the game”

Comments on Michael Lerche Nielsen's Paper

HENRIK WILLIAMS

The most significant results of Michael Lerche Nielsen's contribution are twofold: (1) There is a fair amount of interaction between Scandinavians and Western Slavs in the Late Viking Age and Early Middle Ages — other than that recorded in later medieval texts (and through archaeology), and (2) *This* interaction seems to be quite peaceful, at least. Lerche Nielsen's inventory of runic inscriptions and name material with a West Slavic connection is also good and very useful.

The most important evidence to be studied further is that of the place names, especially *Vinderup* and *Vindeboder*. The former is by Lerche Nielsen (p. 156) interpreted to contain *vindi* 'the western Slav' which would mean a settlement by a member of this group. He compares (p. 156) it to names such as *Saxi* 'person from Saxony', *Æistr/Æisti/Æistmaðr* 'person from Estonia' and *Tafæistr* 'person from Tavastland (in Finland)'. The problem here, of course, is that we do not know for sure if these persons really, as suggested by Lerche Nielsen, stem ethnically from the regions suggested by their names or if they are ethnic Scandinavians having been given names because of some connection with non-Scandinavian areas.¹ Personally, I lean towards the view that names of this sort are of the latter type rather than the former, but that is not crucial here.

The importance of names such as *Æisti* is that it does prove a rather intimate connection on the personal plane between Scandinavians and non-Scandinavians. If *Vinderup* was settled by one person (or several) from the Wendish area it proves that relations between them and the Danes must have been rather peaceful. A Scandinavian given a name connecting him to a non-Scandinavian area, on the other hand, does not

¹ In this connection I discount the possibility of a person being named after an ancestor, in which case the question of onomastic origin is only removed a generation or more.

prove the same. *Æisti* and other name bearers of this type may very well have been engaged in armed conflict, but even so it proves a significant contact link. Hence *Æisti* may equally well mean ‘the “Estish”’ and ‘the Estonian’ just as a hypothetical **Finni* could mean ‘the Finnish’ rather than ‘the Finn’. Lerche Nielsen (p. 157) makes this clear: “There is no doubt that inhabitants’ names reflect linguistic contacts, but without circumstantial evidence it is hard to establish the exact kind of linguistic effect and significance of these encounters.”

A person who does seem to prove a more intimate relationship between Scandinavians and Wends is Gnemer Ketilsson who owned a village on the Danish island of Falster and who, according to Lerche Nielsen, was bilingual. He states (p. 156) that “it remains a puzzle to decide his ethnic ties”.² I would suggest that his father may very well have been Scandinavian, as the name *Ketill* suggests, but his mother Wendish which would explain his “too close connections with the Slavs” (p. 155).

The fifteen Scandinavian runic inscriptions found on West Slavic territory prove that not only did Slavs possibly live in Denmark, but definitely that Scandinavians lived in Wendland. The Scandinavian population cannot have been very small; the number of runic inscriptions is only one less than that stemming from the Nordic settlements on Ireland. Nor are the runic finds from Wendland insignificant. Lerche Nielsen (p. 158) notes that “the proportion of meaningful inscriptions from the West Slav lands seems to be at the same level or even higher than, for instance, urban finds from Lund, Sigtuna, Gamlebyen in Oslo, and Dublin”.

The most important aspect of these texts is that they constitute speaker-generated originals. Here, we hear from the resident Scandinavians themselves, not from much later Danish, German or Icelandic authors. And it is striking how similar the inscriptions from West Slav lands are to those from places within the Scandinavian homelands proper. And even though the West Slavic runic material is limited in quantity, it is quite rich in contents and very interesting, showing a wide range for its size. Here, we find evidence of literature, trade, teaching, self-proclamation, sexuality, and doodling.

Lerche Nielsen (pp. 167–172) presents the texts in full, but I would like to comment on or add to some of his interpretations, and as a conclusion I would like to bring into the discussion two Scandinavian runestones evidencing further contacts with the Wends.

² Saxo calls him *Guemerus*. Clearly we have a case of an *n* being misread as *u* or vice versa.

The Starigard/Oldenburg 1 rib inscription (X StO11) is carved on two sides. On the concave side is found the text **porki** which is interpreted *Pörke*[ll]/*Pörgæi*[RR]/*Pörgī*[sl]/ *Pörgi*[ls], all men's names. Since there is no indication that the runic sequence is damaged at the end, the most likely interpretation is *Pörgæi*RR, since RR sometimes seems to be lost (Larsson 2002: 113–18, Källström 2007: 56–57, but compare Lerche Nielsen 2003: 226–28). On the convex side is found **fuþo a ş...** which has been seen as the beginning of the *futhark*, the runic “alphabet”, followed by a not interpreted sequence. Since the former would in that case be incomplete and this very legend appears in more than half a dozen other runic inscriptions, alternative interpretations should also be considered. The sequence **fuþ** has also been seen as an incomplete *futhark* but is in many if not all cases better interpreted as *fuð* (fem.) ‘cunt’, most probably also found in the Kamień Pomorski inscription (see below). That sexual matters were not far from the minds of rune carvers in Starigard/Oldenburg is shown by another rib inscription from the same place, X StO14, which on its concave side bears an inscription clearly to be interpreted as *Kūkr kÿss kuntu, kÿss!* ‘Prick kiss the cunt, kiss!’ (see also Holm 2013).

On the Starigard/Oldenburg 2 and 3 ribs (X StO12, X StO13) are found inscriptions interpreted as either the personal names *Ørn* and *Faxi* or the homonymous animal designations meaning ‘eagle’ and ‘horse’, respectively. We are dealing with ribs from cattle, not eagles or horses, but in any case I think personal names are the more likely choice for an interpretation.

Another name may be found on the previously not interpreted Starigard/Oldenburg 5 rib inscription (X StO15), reading **sinkn**. In theory, this might constitute two words, the latter being *ā* ‘owns’ (compare Alt Lübeck 3, where in the middle group of the *futhark* the **a** is mistakenly carved **n**: **hnins** instead of **hnias**). The runes **sink** could then be interpreted as the man's name *Sīnk*(R). But who would claim ownership of a cattle rib? It is therefore more likely that the sequence should be interpreted as one word, ending in *-a* with a miscarving of the same type as the one just mentioned. The only word that seems to fit here would be **sīnka* which may be compared to Old Icelandic *sínka* (fem.) ‘greed’ or the weak feminine of the adjective *sínkr* ‘greedy’. The latter would make possible the interpretation of this sequence as *Sīnka*, a personal name meaning ‘the greedy (female) one’. The strong masculine form of this adjective is used in the name formation *Sīnkr* used on a Swedish runestone (Peterson 2007: 196). Female names are sometimes formed from weak adjectives (Stroh-Wollin 2012: 198).

The concave side of the Kamień Pomorski rib has already been mentioned (see above). The convex side also bears a three-rune legend: **kur**. No less than three Old Norse words would be written exactly like this: *kurr* (masc.) ‘squabble, grumbling etc.’, *kúrr* (masc.) ‘Couronian, inhabitant of Courland’, and *kúrr* (adj.) ‘relaxed’. The second alternative may seem tempting (compare note 3 below), given the geographical context, but the third is even more attractive since this word is used as a byname in Old Norse (Larsson 2002: 40–41 note 8).

There is, however, a fourth alternative. It might at first seem less probable from an orthographic point of view, but it is quite possible from a factual perspective. The word for ‘cow’ is *kýr* in Old Icelandic and would be *kūr* in Old East Norse. That *r*, so-called palatal *r*, eventually merged with “regular” *r* and was written with the **r**-rune instead of the **ᚱ**-rune is a well-known process (Larsson 2002: 131–32). That this phenomenon occurred also in the Wendish area is evident from another cattle-bone inscription, that of X StO14 (see above), where the word *kūr* is written **kukr**. To find a word meaning ‘cow’ on a cattle bone would of course not be unexpected, but it should be noted that when an inscription on such a bone does refer to it the word used is *naut* (U Fv1992;168C), not *kūr*. All things considered, a man’s name *Kúrr* meaning ‘relaxed’ is therefore the best interpretation.

The runes **fo l** on the Alt Lübeck 2 soapstone object could conceivably be identical to Old Icelandic *fól* (neut.) ‘fool’, but this is very unlikely considering that the last rune is isolated from the first two. The inscription should rather be grouped with the non-lexical texts, perhaps consisting of doodles, although one or more of those inscriptions may simply be too damaged or just not yet interpreted.

With my new interpretations I have tried to stress the importance of taking the runic texts in Wendland seriously. The level of literacy evidenced through these texts may be seen as proof that the resident Scandinavians had some degree of education and that they practised their runic art under not too belligerent circumstances. This may open up a new perspective on the relationship between Scandinavians and Wends. Perhaps the literary sources do stress conflict more than trade and social interaction. But that not all was peaceful is evident even in more original text sources, as shall soon be seen.

First, however, I should like to stress that Lerche Nielsen’s paper for natural reasons concentrates on the relationship between Wends and

Danes, since most of what we know of relations between Scandinavians and Slavs concerns Danes. Not all Scandinavians are Danes, however, and Lerche Nielsen's use of the term *South Scandinavian* should at least in some cases be replaced with *East Scandinavian* and perhaps even just *Scandinavian*. At least one Swedish family had close ties to Wendland, that of king Ólafr Æiríksson Skotkonungr (Old West Norse *Óláfr Svía-konungr*), who ruled in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. He had a concubine named *Eðla* who was the daughter of the *jarl* of Wendland (Óláfs saga Helga: 130). With her he had three children, of whom the son, Æimundr, later in the eleventh century also became king of Sweden, and a daughter, Æstriðr, became the queen of Norway. Æimundr even grew up in Wendland where he was raised by his mother's relatives (*ibid.*). King Ólafr later married Æstriðr of the Obodrites, another West Slavic tribe. With her he had the son Anundr Jacob who succeeded him as king, and the daughter Ingigærðr who became queen of Kiev.

Evert Salberger (1976) has convincingly identified the name *Eðla* on a Swedish runestone from Viby church in the province of Östergötland (see Jansson 1965). This gives indirect evidence of Wendish contacts, even if the name itself is German (SMP 1: 608).

Another Swede in Wendland was Víkarr from Tiundaland, a district of Uppland, who fought in the prow of Óláfr Tryggvason's ship *Ormr inn langi* (Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar: 344–45), presumably stayed in the area a summer, as well as participated and perished in the battle of Svöldr together with the king.

More ordinary Swedes and Gotlanders also had dealings with people southeast and south of the Baltic, and most of the runestones mentioning this are indeed from Central Sweden, that is the provinces of Uppland and Södermanland (north and south of Stockholm).

On runestones from Viking-Age Sweden certain places along the southern or south-eastern Baltic coastal areas are mentioned: Cape Kolka and Zemgale (Sö 198) in northern Latvia; Haddeby (U 1048, Sö 16, Källström 2009: 63) near Schleswig in Germany; Livonia (Sö 39, U 698†?), the coastal area of Estonia and Latvia; Ventspils (G 135) in Latvia; Vironia (U 346†, U 356, U 533), a province in Estonia, and finally Estonia itself (Vg 181, U 439?).³

Until not too long ago no Swedish runic inscription was seen to mention

³ Hypothetically, the lost runic records Vg 42† [**kur**...] and U 955 [**kura**] might represent names such as *Kūrr* 'Curonian' (masculine) and *Kūra* 'the Curonian' (feminine), respectively. The Curonians (Courians) were settled on the coast of today's Latvia and Lithuania

Slavic areas west of Estonia and Latvia, and indeed there is reason to believe that travellers from the area corresponding to today's Sweden primarily steered their course more towards the east than the south.

Nevertheless, there is at least one certain Viking-Age example of dealings between Swedes and Wends, although it is not as well-known as it should be since the discovery was made known many years after the official publication of the runic inscription and in a popular context where it might easily slip past the attention of scholars. I am referring to the runestone from Överjärna church in the province of Södermanland (Sö 351). It is somewhat damaged, but the memorial message is obviously the usual, in this case someone erecting a stone in memory of a father. The text certainly ends with an obituary notice convincingly interpreted by Sven B. F. Jansson (1967: 38):

... *ræisti stæin þannsi at Vīgæir, faður sinn. Vindr drāpu hann.*⁴

... raised this stone in memory of Vīgæirr, his father. Wends killed him.

The verb *drepa* is used fairly often on Viking-Age runestones in the combination *vera drepinn* 'be killed', but it is also recorded in a more active sense:

U 258 *Hann drāpu norrmaennr ā knærri Āsbiarnar.* 'Norwegians killed him on Āsbiörn's cargo-ship.'

U 954† *En Sassurr drap hann ok gærði nǫðingsverk, svæik felaga sinn.* 'And Sassurr killed him and did a villainous deed, betrayed his partner.'

G 138 ... *æiniga sun þæira drāpu leybika[r]* ... '... people from Lübeck killed their only son.'

It is quite clear that to *drepa* somebody was an action frowned upon, and it is significant that two out of three cases deal with "foreigners" who have killed the dead man. Somehow it is obviously more shameful than when the commemorated themselves have slain strangers. If mentioned at all it is done so euphemistically as on Sö 179 *ærni gāfu* 'gave (food) to the eagle'. Also betrayals were condemned, as seen by the text on U 954†

(Bliujienė 2001: 235), and during the tenth and eleventh centuries they were in close contact with Gotland (p. 241).

⁴ The reading of the runic sequence representing the word *vindr* is evident since it is set off by word dividers on both sides, according to an observation by Magnus Källström, Stockholm (oral communication).

above. Betrayal and the killing by foreigners is united on G 134 *Hann sviku blākumænn ī útfaru* 'Wallachians betrayed him on a voyage'.

The interpretation by Jansson also presupposes that the final consonant cluster *-ndr* is written **nr**, something which at first sight might seem like an arbitrary assumption, especially since this is a word with high communicative load which should have been written with extra care (compare Williams 2010: 36). I suppose Jansson simply assumed that this was another instance of the so-called three consonant rule (Wessén 1968 § 57), where the middle of three consonants is lost (unless it is an *s*). And when you investigate cases of *-ndr* where the middle consonant is certainly lost, they turn out to be almost exclusively restricted to Södermanland; no less than ten out of twelve cases are found there.⁵

Sö 351 **uinr** for *vindr* would thus be in good company orthographically. And as there are no other objections to be made against Jansson's proposed interpretation, we may thus be sure of at least one runestone source that shows the connections between Viking-Age Swedes and Wends.

But I would claim that there is at least one other example, and that possibly of a more peaceful nature. On the runestone (U 667) from Hassla, Häggeby parish in the province of Uppland, is found the following inscription:

Igulbiörn ok Næsbiörn létu ræisa stæin ... æftir uinþa, faður sinn.

Igulbiörn and Næsbiörn had the stone erected ... in memory of **uinþa**, their father.

In another article (Williams ms.) I show that this name may be interpreted as the accusative form of the man's name *Vindi* 'the Wend, the Wendish one, the inhabitant of Wendland'. It ties in with other names derived from peoples and places in Northern Europe, viz. *Danski* 'the Danish one', *Iūti* (also *Iūtski*) 'the Jute, the inhabitant of Jutland' (for this and the following names see Peterson 2007), *Guti* 'the inhabitant of Gotland', possible *Saxi* if it means 'the Saxon one, the inhabitant of Saxony' and *Æisti* meaning 'man from Estonia'. There are also strong forms: *Danr*

⁵ Sö 20 \$...**uþmunr** [*G*]uðmundr, Sö 46 \$ **knauþimanr** *Gnauðimandr*(?), Sö 122 \$ **stanr** *standr*, Sö 137 **stanr** *standr*, Sö 138 **stainr** *stændr*, Sö 170 **agmunr** *Agmundr*, Sö 194 **ekimunr** *Ingimundr*, Sö 299 **onunr** *Anundr*, Sö 367 **hamunr** *Hämundr*, Sö Fv1958;242 **anunr** *Anundr*, U 392 **kermunr** *Gærimundr*, Hs 7 \$ **anunr** *Anundr*. The reason why there is such a concentration of this phenomenon in the province of Södermanland is unknown, but it is possible that an assimilatory process was unusually strong there, at least in this case.

‘Danish’, *Halfdan* ‘half Danish’, *Gautr* ‘inhabitant of Gautland’. See also *Æistr*, *Æistmaðr*, and *Tafæistr* above, as well as *Austmaðr* ‘man from the east’ and *Norðmaðr* ‘man from the north, from a northern country’.

It may of course be that a person called *Vindi* is given this name because he has waged war against Wends or in Wendland. But it is also possible that this type of name may be derived from more peaceful pursuits. Appellations such as *Grikkfari* ‘traveller to Greece’, *Æistfari* ‘traveller to Estonia’, and *Ænglandsfari* ‘traveller to England’ seem to point to voyages to foreign countries, not necessarily with a hostile purpose. Non-belligerent travellers are even more likely when we consider the names *Sumarliði* ‘traveller in the summer’ and *Vinrliði* ‘traveller in the winter’. That people did get named because of commercial activities is certain, compare, for example, *Kaupmaðr* ‘merchant’ (Källström 2008).

We will never know, of course, but it is in my view likelier that *Vindi* got his name from prolonged, more or less peaceful contacts with Wends than solely because of his fighting with them. Possible, too, is that he himself is of Wendish extraction but settled in Sweden. His sons, at least, had quite Swedish names.

In conclusion I note that Scandinavians and Wends had enough intimate contact to affect name-giving, and that the runic inscriptions left behind by the former constitute an important source to their life in Wendland.

Abbreviations and bibliography

§ = Inscription with a new reading or interpretation in SRD.

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On the Etymology of *Jómsborg*

JÜRGEN UDOLPH

The place name *Jómsborg* and all its variants are to be found exclusively in northern and North Germanic sources, by which I mean in Old Norse sagas, such as *Knýtlinga saga* from c. 1250. According to Laur (2005: 14), the place name is further recorded in *Jómsvíkinga saga* (written in the first third of the thirteenth century in Iceland). Additionally, a corrupted form, *Hyumesborg*, is documented in the Danish chronicle, *Historia brevis regum Dacie*, written by Sven Aggesøn c. 1180. A detailed list including all essential historical records of the place name is provided by Petrulovich (2009: 91–96). I will refer to this later in the text.

The place name *Jómsborg* also became known through the Jómsvíkings who are mentioned in *Jómsvíkinga saga*. According to this source, which is not very informative concerning historical events, the Jómsvíkings are said to have fought with a particular contempt for death in the battle against Earl Hákon Sigurðarson near Hjørungavágr (Hjørungavåg).

At an early stage a connection was made that identified *Jómsborg* with the legendary *Vineta* and *Wollin* (for example by Virchow in 1872). For a long time, it was not possible to localize the exact position of the site denoted by these names. Speculation was fuelled through the different accounts of a great and wealthy (harbour) city that were written by by Ibrāhīm Ya‘qūb aṭ-Ṭarṭūši and Adam of Bremen. The speculation about and interpretations of aṭ-Ṭarṭūši and Adam of Bremen’s accounts have resulted in popular English-language websites stating the following: “Jomsborg’s exact location has not yet been established, though it is maintained that Jomsborg was somewhere on the islands of the Oder estuary.”

Following the achievements of Hofmeister (1932, 1932a, 1960), the site is nowadays often identified with the city and island of *Wollin*, Polish *Wolin* (Brather 2007; Schmidt 2000; and others). However, Schmidt (2000: 121) emphasizes:

So ergibt sich, wie Hofmeister dies bereits 1931/32 begründet hat, dass die verschiedenen Autoren mit *Jumne – Jómsborg – Julin – Jumneta – Vineta – Wollin* ein und denselben Ort gemeint haben [So it follows, as Hofmeister already established in 1931/32, that the various authors in using *Jumne – Jómsborg – Julin – Jumneta – Vineta – Wollin* meant one and the same place].

Nevertheless, this statement does not clarify the problem at all. For the place names *Wollin*, *Wolin*, *Jómsborg*, and *Vineta*, numerous different forms are recorded. Some of them show great spelling differences such as *Vimne*, *Uimne*, *Jumneta*, *Juminem*, *Julinum*, *Uineta*, *at Jómi*, and *Vinneta*.

It is therefore evident that uncertainty about the correct place name form already existed in earlier times. Yet, with some probability it can be stated (as summarized by int. al. Rzetelska-Feleszko 1977: 561–64; Rzetelska-Feleszko & Duma 1991: 88–89) that in the course of history, the island and the town *Wollin* were named differently by the inhabitants of the surrounding Baltic rim. This is also supported by several historical records (Brüske 1955: 203–04; Förstemann 1913: 1617; Rzetelska-Feleszko 1977: 561; Pommersches Urkundenbuch 1868–1970; Rzetelska-Feleszko & Duma 1991: 88–89; Rospond 1965: 35 and 1984: 435–36; Słownik Starożytności słowiańskich vol. 6: 561; and most accurately Petrulevich 2009: 91–96). Below are listed the attested forms that I will be discussing in more detail:

1012–1018 (copy fourteenth century; Thietmari) *a civitate magna Liuilni*; c. 1075 (Adam of Bremen) *nobilissima civitas Jumne, vimne, iumne, uimne, jumne* (according to Adam of Bremen [Scholia] the famous *civitas Jumne* is the largest city of Europe); 1088 *urbs Iulin*; 1124 (copy) *Iulin, Vulin* (variant: *Wulin*); 1140 *in civitate Wulinensis; ciuitatem Willin*; twelfth century (copy fourteenth century) *Jumneta* (multiple occurrences), *Vimneta* (Helmold), in copies also recorded as *Vineta* (uncertain spelling); c. 1160 (Herbordi vita Ottonis) *Iulinae, Iulina, Iulin, Vulin*; 1175 *Wolyn*; 1178 *castellano Juliensi*; around 1180 (Sven Aggesøn) *Hyumesborg*, 1184 *de Wolin*; 1188 *castrum Wolyn*; 1195 *Volin; provincia Wolin*; c. 1200 (Saxo Grammaticus) *Julinum*; twelfth/thirteenth centuries *aliud vero Julin quod nunc Volin dicitur*; 1216 *Volin; provincia Volin*; 1217 *Wolin*; first third of the thirteenth century (Jómsvíkinga saga) *Jómsborg*; before 1223 *circa Velen*; 1232 *Wolin*; 1243 *Wolyn*; c. 1250 (Knýtlinga saga) *Jómsborg*; 1260 *Wolin*; 1277 *Wolin*; thirteenth/fourteenth centuries several records of *Wolin, Wolyn, Wollin, Wollyn*, sometimes spelled as *Woltyn*, since the fifteenth century, it is mainly *Wollin*.

According to some scholars (for example Leciejewich 1977), this list should also include *Velunzani*, the name of a tribe that can be found in the document called Bayerischer Geograph (Bavarian Geographer) (written in the mid-ninth century and preserved in a copy from the tenth century). This tribe's name is also documented in the tenth century as *Vulcini*, and Widukind of Corvey writes *Vuolini*. The so-called Großpolnische Chronik from the twelfth century interprets the name as "Welunecz, quod alias Julin dicebatur [Welunecz, also called Julin]".

The relation between the former records and the examples with the name of the Velunzani tribe is most questionable. The authors of the Real- und Sachwörterbuch zum Altrussischen (1995) explain the place name *Velunzani* as the name of the *Volynjane* tribe in Volhynia.

In the following, I will first concentrate on the different name types and then their variants and discuss them in more detail. Later on, I will deal with the Scandinavian forms *Jónsborg*, *Jóm/at Jómi*, and a new interpretation suggested by Alexandra Petrusevich (2009).

However, it is important to note that it will not be possible to combine all the different spelling variants of the place name such as *Liulni*, *Julin*, *Jumne*, *Jumneta*, *Vineta*, *Willin*, *Velin*, *Vulin*, and *Wolin* into one single etymological background (Udolph 2007: 219). Laur (2005: 14) comes to this conclusion as well when he says:

Die Namenformen *Jumne* und *Wollin* werden wohl kaum auf einen Nenner zu bringen sein. Vogel vermutete ein **Vimne* als ursprüngliche Form bei Adam von Bremen, die man dann später als *Jumne* verlesen hätte. Wir werden aber mit zwei eigenständigen Namenformen zu rechnen haben, wobei wir von einer einheimischen **Jumna* ausgehen können [It is unlikely that the name forms *Jumne* and *Wollin* can be taken back to a common denominator. Vogel suspected **Vimne* as the original form in Adam of Bremen, which was later misread as *Jumne*. But we will have to reckon with two separate name forms, for which we can assume a native **Jumna*].

When discussing the various records, one has to bear in mind that the letters *i*, *u*, *m*, and *n* consist of minim strokes (such as *uuu*). Therefore, it is particularly difficult to distinguish between these letters in medieval texts. However, this problem provides an explanation for the spelling differences in forms such as *vimn-e*, *iumn-e*, *uimn-e*. The minims have been interpreted differently by various writers. This phenomenon is apparent in all medieval texts and has to be taken into account when discussing the etymologies of *Vineta*, *Jumneta*, *Jumne*, *Vimne*, and others.

1. *Iulin, Julin*

According to the majority of scholars, the following records are to be considered erroneous forms: 1088 *urbs Iulin*; 1124 (copy) *Iulin*; c. 1160 (Herbordi vita Ottonis) *Iulinae, Iulina, Iulin*; 1178 *castellano Juliensi*; c. 1200 *Julinum* (Saxo Grammaticus); twelfth/thirteenth centuries *aliud vero Julin ... (quod nunc Volin dicitur)*.

Therefore, they are not relevant for the etymological investigation of the place name forms (Udolph 2007: 219). As stated by Rzetelska-Feleszko (1977) and later again by Rzetelska-Feleszko & Duma (1991: 88–89), records such as *Julin, Iulin*, and other similar forms are results of reinterpretations by scholars or popular etymology and are not suitable for the etymological analysis. According to these studies, such forms originate in an alleged stay of Julius Caesar. Laur (2005: 22) comments:

In diesem Zusammenhang müssen wir noch auf eine weitere Namenform für Wollin eingehen, nämlich 1088 *urbs Iulin*, 1124 *Iulina* bei Herbord von Fritzlar, *Iulinum* beim Annalista Saxo um 1160, *Iulin sede in episcopalem* von 1347 in der Genealogia christianitatis ducum Stetiniensium oder *apud Iulinum* im Compendium Saxonis aus dem 14. Jahrhundert. Hieran knüpft sich die unhistorische Überlieferung, daß die Stadt von der Schwester des Julius Cäsar gegründet sei. Wahrscheinlich liegt eine Kontamination vor, eine Vermengung der Namenform *Wollin* mit einer, die mit einem *j* beginnt wie *Jumne* und *Jömsborg* [In this context we have to deal with yet another name form for Wollin, viz. 1088 *urbs Iulin*, 1124 *Iulina* in Herbord of Fritzlar, *Iulinum* in the annalist Saxo c. 1160, *Iulin sede in episcopalem* from 1347 in the Genealogia christianitatis ducum Stetiniensium, or *apud Iulinum* in the Compendium Saxonis from the fourteenth century. Connected to this is the unhistorical tradition that the city was founded by Julius Caesar's sister. It is likely that there is contamination here, a blending of the name form *Wollin* with one that starts with a *j* such as *Jumne* and *Jömsborg*].

Petrulevich (2009: 75) is also sceptical and says that “[...] *Julin* is most likely a spelling variant [...]”. We can therefore disregard these place name forms in the present discussion.

2. *Jumne*

In contrast to the toponyms discussed above, the form *Jumne*, which also appears as *Jomne* in Scandinavian sources, seems to be more reliable (for the

Tab. 1. Forms of *Jumne* etc. in various sources according to Labuda, 1964: 187; cf. also Petrulevich 2009: 93. Lib., c., p. = book/*scholion*, chapter and page, respectively, in Adam of Bremen's *Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae pontificum*. A, A1 etc. = the different text versions.

Lib., c., p.	A, A1 and A2	B, B1 and B2	C, C1 and C2
II, 22 (79)	Uimne	Jumne, Junume, Umme	Jumne, Julinum
II, 22 (80)	Uimne	Iummem, Iumme, Jumnoe	
II, 22 (80)	Uimne	Iummem, Iumme, Iumnem	Iumnem, Iuminem
II, 22 (81)	Uimnem	Iummem, Iummen	Iuminem
II, 27 (87)	Iumne (Uimne?)	Iumme, Iumnoe	Iulinum
schol. 56 (137)		Iummem	Iuminem
schol. 121 (245)		Iuminne, Iumme	Iumine
IV, 20 (249)		Iummem, Iümmen	Iuminem

discussion of *Jomne*, see also Petrulevich 2009: 68). This form can be found in the following records according to Adam of Bremen c. 1075 (Tab. 1):

It is significant when Petrulevich (2009: 69) states:

The form *Hynniburgh* is most likely a result of copyists' mistakes. However, I do not accept the original form *Hyumsburgh* suggested by some scholars. I am convinced that the genuine form was a logical development of *Jumne*, which was seen as an *ia*-stem by the Danish author. Irrespective of the root vowel and the gender, one can expect a form **Jumnesborg/*Jumnisborg* in the circumstances.

Therefore, a possible original form **Jumne* is also supported by the clearly erroneous form *Hynniburgh*. The same also applies for the forms *Jomni* and *Jomune*: "Clearly, *af Jomni* and *ath Jomune* are late orthographical variants of *Jumne*" (Petrulevich 2009: 70).

Laur (2005: 14) regards the spelling variations in the various traditions as follows:

So kennt Adam von Bremen [...] die Namenform *civitas Iumne*, so nach der

Wiener Handschrift, und auch in den anderen ist nach Schmeidler der Name eher so zu lesen als *Uimne* bzw. *Vimne* [Adam of Bremen knows [...] the name form *civitas Iumne*, as in the Viennese manuscript, and according to Schmeidler the name is more likely to be read as *Uimne* or *Vimne* in the other (manuscripts)].

Since Laur refers to historians in this statement, his remark is of a certain significance. Historians are the most reliable scholars when evaluating the problem of how to read the different writings of Adam of Bremen's texts. Laur thus concludes that, the form *Iumne* and its variants are to be preferred to the *Vimne*-forms. Laur (2005: 14) summarizes: "Wir werden [...] von einer einheimischen Form **Jumna* ausgehen können [We can [...] assume a native form **Jumna*]".

The place name variant *Jumne* has already been analysed several times by different scholars. At this point, I wish to provide a brief summary of the main views and discuss them later in the text:

1. Schmid (1979: 266) explains the place name with an underlying base form *Jumna* or *Jumina*. According to him, there are two approaches from which this form may have developed. It can either be traced back to Latvian *jumis* with the meaning 'zwei zu einer Einheit verbundene, zusammengewachsene Dinge [two things grown together into one unit – to be understood in this context as suggesting confluences or branches of rivers located at estuaries]'. This Latvian word is regarded as a pre-Slavic formation of the Indo-European root **ǵem-* 'Zwei aus, in, zu Einem [two things out of, in, into one]'. The second approach for a base form *Jumna* or *Jumina* originates in a participle construction **Iu-mina* with a root **yu-* 'to move'. This root can be observed in Vedic (Sanskrit) *yavya* 'stream', Old Persian *yauviya-* 'channel, waterpassage', Old Indic *ud-yôdhati* 'wallt auf (vom Wasser) [to foam, to bubble (of water)]' and also (mostly) in river names such as *Jūra*, *Jū'ra* in the Baltic States, *Iuras* in Thrace, *Jurata* on the Hel peninsula (northern Poland), *Jühnde* near Göttingen (Germany), *Jona*, *Jouanne* and other examples in France and along Lake Constance as well as in *Iuvavus*, which is the old name of the river Salzach near Salzburg (Austria).

Some years later, Schmid (1982: 64) tried to include the river name *Ina*, German *Ihna* into this discussion by tracing it back to **Jumna*. Yet, I cannot accept his suggestion since initial **ju-* in West Slavic dialects changes to **jb-*, this form, however, would not have developed

- into *I-*, but more likely into *je-* or *jo-* (Udolph 1990: 126). This can be exemplified with place names such as *Jäglin/Jaglino* and *Jizbunken*.
2. In my article (Udolph 2007: 219) about the place name *Wollin*, I considered a possible Indo-European (participle) suffix **-meno-/mono* for the form *Jumne* < **Jumina*, which is also expected in the river name *Ihme* near Hannover (Ohainski & Udolph 1998: 231–33). I will get back to this suggestion at the end of this article. In my opinion, the place name *Wollin* has to be separated from *Jumne*/**Jumina* since it seems to denote the town rather than the river.
 3. Laur (2005: 14–15) has summarized all the different academic discussions up to the year 2005. He rightly rejects unprofessional etymological explanations that make use of Low German *Imme* ‘bee’ (Goldmann & Wermusch 2004), and he mentions the explanations proposed by Wolfgang P. Schmid and Jürgen Udolph. Laur also considers a Baltic interpretation of *Jumne* which was already suggested by Labuda. This approach assumes Latvian *joma* meaning ‘bodden, bay’ or ‘Lachen zurückgebliebenen Wassers am Strande [a pool or puddle of remaining water at the bank]’ or in the meaning of ‘sandbank, shallow water’. Laur points to the problem of *Wollin* not actually being situated within the Baltic language area, but nevertheless assumes Baltic influence in the regions along the lower Oder.

Latvian *joma* was even borrowed into the German dialects of East Prussia. It is found in the usage of fishermen as *Jome* (fem.) and refers to a ‘sumpfige Schlucht zwischen zwei Sanddünen [marshy gorge between two dunes]’ (Polanska 2002: 179). However, this form represents an early borrowing from Livonian *juom* ‘Meerestiefe zwischen zwei Sandbänken [depth between two sand banks]’ (Polanska 2002: 213; she also assumes another origin; compare already existing earlier investigations by Vasmer 1958: 489). The East Prussian *Jome* can therefore not be looked for in the forms *Wollin* or *Jumne*.

3. *Jumneta*

The variant *Jumneta* apparently only occurs in the chronicles of Helmold: “In the Latin tradition, the form *Jumne* was transformed into *Ium(ne)ta* and *Vinneta* in Helmold” (Petrulevich 2009: 68). The origin of *Jumneta* is

uncertain. It is uncertain whether the form represents a younger variant, which is based on *Vineta*, *Uineta*. In a footnote, Petrulevich (2009: 68 n. 3) remarks: “According to R. Schmidt (2000: 121), the oldest manuscript suggests the reading *uineta*, which was changed by a copyist into *iumta* = *iumenta* or *iumneta*” and “*Vinneta* auf einer falschen Lesung oder einem Schreibfehler für *Jumneta* beruht [*Vinneta* is based on a misreading or a scribal error for *Jumneta*]” (Bach 1953: 26).

The statement made by Laur (2005: 15) about the problematic connection between *Vin(n)eta* and *Iumneta* seems to be the most probable explanation:

Diese Namenform begegnet uns in der Slawenchronik des Helmold von Bosau aus der zweiten Hälfte des 12. Jahrhunderts als *Vinneta*, aber auch als *Iumneta*. Seine Ausführungen stützen sich deutlich auf Adam von Bremen, wobei die Form auf *-eta* bei ihm eine Latinisierung darstellt [We encounter this name form in Helmold of Bosau’s *Chronicle of the Slavs* from the second half of the twelfth century as *Vinneta*, but also as *Iumneta*. His comments are strongly based on Adam of Bremen, and here the form in *-eta* represents a Latinization to him].

When discussing the form *Jumneta*, it can therefore be noted that we are dealing with a younger variant, which was most likely derived from the forms *Iumne*, *Jumne*. This also applies for *Vineta*, see below (paragraph 7).

4. *Liuilni*

The variant *Liuilni* only occurs in the tradition of Thietmar of Merseburg. Petrulevich (2009: 91) associates *Livilni* with *Wulinensis civitas*, *Willin*, *Julin*, *Wolyn*, *Wolin*, *Volin*. However, this is most questionable since the forms *Wolyn*, *Wolin*, and *Volin* represent considerably younger forms and *Julin* is not relevant for the investigation. I will refer to *Willin* and *Wulin* in the next paragraph. For the forms *Livilni*, *Liuilni*, I am of the opinion that they are more likely to be due to an incorrect division and reading of the minims. Besides the initial letter *L*, the name form *Liuilni* consists of eight (!) adjoining minims, which results in something like this: *L////////*. One has to be brave when trying to present a definite reading of it. From my point of view, *Liuilni* represents a single reading which therefore must be disregarded as a relevant variant in the etymological discussion. This is also supported by the fact that it represents the only example with initial *L*-.

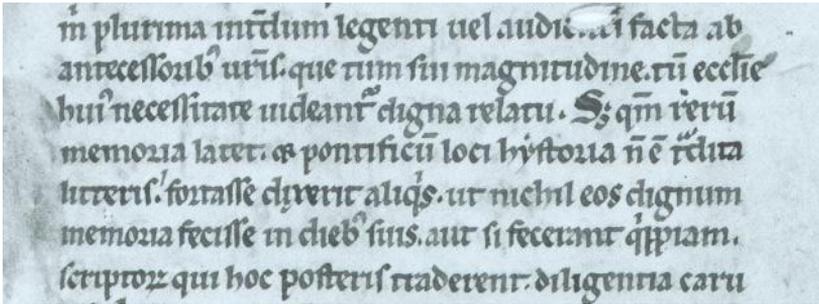


Fig. 1. Illustration taken from a copy of Puhle, Matthias (ed.): *Otto der Große. Magdeburg und Europa*, Bd. II. Katalog, Mainz 2001: 8.

5. *Velin, Wilin*

The spelling variants *Wilin* and *Velin* cause particular difficulties (Rzetelska-Feleszko & Duma 1991: 88–89). Due to their spelling, these recorded forms can hardly be used to explain the place name *Jumne*. Petrulevich (2009: 75–76) comes to a similar conclusion: “I would rather agree with Lehr-Spawiński [...] that *Julin* is most likely a spelling variant (compare the variants of the place name *Wolin* from the decree of Pope Calixtus II, cited by Ekkehard of Aura: *Vulin, Wilin, Ulin*) [...], which became widespread owing to popular etymology”.

Subsequently, the forms *Wilin* and *Velin* represent only occasional examples which should hardly be considered in this investigation.

6. *Vimne, Uimne*

Spelling variants such as *Uimne*, *Uimnem* are only recorded in the tradition of Adam of Bremen; see Tab. 1. When discussing these records, one has to bear in mind that the original text of Adam of Bremen is unknown and only available in copies. Anyone familiar with these texts knows how difficult it is to read them without mistakes. This is exemplified by the following excerpt (Fig. 1).

It is obviously very difficult to separate the letters *i*, *n*, *u*, *m*, *t* and even *l* from each other in the words *magnitudine* (second line, antepenultimate word), *dignum* (last word of the fifth line) or *diligentia* (last line, penultimate word).

In my opinion, this difficulty causes the diverse spellings such as *Jumne*, *vimne* with alternative forms: *iumne*, *uimne*. This variation is most likely explained by the fact that the handwritten manuscripts showed several minims side by side, which may have represented the letters *u*, *i*, *m* or *n*. It appears that the reading of these letters must have led to different results. Therefore, I think the readings for *Uimne* must be variants of *Jumne*, this being the only form — and I will explain this later — for which a reliable etymology can be established.

7. *Vin(n)eta*

In the German-speaking countries, the most popular form of the currently disputed place name is *Vineta*, which has become a synonym for a lost city engulfed by the sea. Nowadays, the name is mainly apparent in northern Germany, for example as part of the name of the Vineta Festival, in names of discos, transport companies, and hotels, and even a student corporation ('Burschenschaft') in Heidelberg bears this name. However, as Laur (2005: 15) rightly points out, the famous place name being used in connection with the legend of the sunken city neither originates in Helmold nor in any work by Kantzow, the German historian and annalist; it is only the form of the name *Vin(n)eta*, and not the legend, that can be found in these authors' works.

However, this form represents a younger formation and is almost certainly without significance for the etymology of the place name in question. Bach (1953: 26) commented briefly that the spelling *Vineta* "beruht auf einer falschen Lesung oder einem Schreibfehler für *Jumneta*" [is based on a misreading or scribal error for *Jumneta*].

The variant *Vineta* can only be encountered in the manuscripts of Helmold of Bosau. However, it is advisable to examine all the different spellings found in the edition (*Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi*, Vol 32, Hannover 1937: 8): *Iumneta*, *iūm̄ta* (*iumenta*), *ūineta* (*vinneta*), *niniueta*, *Immuueta*, *Vimneta*.

Laur (2005: 15) commented on this:

[Helmold stützt] sich deutlich auf Adam von Bremen, wobei die Form auf *-eta* bei ihm eine Latinisierung darstellt, *Vinneta* statt *Jumneta* fasst man meist als eine Verlesung oder Verschreibung auf [Helmold is strongly based on Adam of

Bremen, and here the form in *-eta* is a Latinization to him, *Vinneta* instead of *Jummeta* is mainly considered a misreading or a slip of the pen].

Moreover, Laur tried to find a reason for the initial letter *V*-:

Wir können uns aber auch fragen, ob das *V* als Anfangsbuchstabe in Helmolds Original, das wir ja nicht kennen, oder der späteren Handschrift, auf die wir uns stützen, nicht nur eine Verlesung oder Verschreibung darstellt, sondern aus der hier gebrauchten Form des Volksnamens *Winithi*, d.h. ‘Wenden’, stammt, in deren Bereich die Stadt ja lag. [But we can also ask ourselves whether the *V* as an initial letter in Helmold’s original, which we of course do not have, or in the younger manuscript, which we are relying on, does not just represent a misreading or a slip of the pen, but rather derives from the form of the tribal name *Winithi*, i.e. the ‘Wends’, which is also used in the manuscript and in whose territory the city was after all located.]

It will not be possible to find a final answer to this problem. For the current investigation, it is important that the variants *Vinneta*, *Vin(n)eta* and others are not relevant for the etymological analysis of this difficult name.

8. *Wollin, Wolin*

Petrulevich (2009: 94) provides a comprehensive and detailed list of the forms of *Wollin, Wolin*. See her for the full references. The variation may be listed in the following manner according to year of sources:

- 1175 *Wolyn*
- 1184 *Wolin*
- 1188 *Wolyn*
- before 1223 *Velen (Weylen, Wyelen, Welen, Velyen, Vyelun)*
- 1195 *Wolyn*
- 1195 *Wolin*
- 1216 *Volin*
- 1217 *Wolin*
- 1232 *Wolin*
- 1240 *Woldin*
- 1243 *Wolyn*
- 1243 *Woldin*
- 1260 *Wolin*
- 1263 *Wolin*
- 1265 *Wolin*

1270 *Wolin*
 1277 *Wolin*
 1279 *Wolyn*
 1279 *Wolyn*
 1280 *Wolin*
 1283 *Wolin*
 1286 *Wolin*
 1288 *Wolin*
 1288 *Wolin, Wolyn*
 1293 *Wollin*
 1294 *Wolin*
 1295 *Wolin*

It is not definite whether the *Welen*, *Welyn*- forms should be included here. *Wolin* is not only the name that has been used for the town until today, it also represents the oldest surviving form handed down to us. It was mentioned as *Vuloini* (habitant name) by Widukind of Corvey back in c. 970.

According to the majority of scholars, *Wolin* is seen as a Slavic name. Considering the Slavic settlements on the islands Wollin, Usedom, and Rügen, and also on the mainland at the mouth of the Oder estuary, this is hardly a surprising assumption. Therefore, the repeated occurrence of forms such as *Wolin* in texts or manuscripts written by German annalists is also not surprising.

Ever since the earliest discussions, the place name *Wolin*, *Wollin* has been connected with *Volyn*, *Wolhynien* [*Volhynia*] (Buttmann 1856: 122). However, the etymology of the name has long been disputed:

- a) A connection with the Slavic word *wol* with the meaning ‘Ochse [ox]’ was suggested by Buttmann (1856: 122).
- b) According to Rospond (1965: 35; and similarly in Rospond 1979: 305–07 and Rospond 1984: 435), it is most likely that *Wolin* derives from **Ol-ьno* with a root *ol-*, Indo-European **el-/*ol-* ‘water, damp’, but in the current case with a prosthetic *w-* to a root **vǝl-*, *vel-*, *vol-* ‘dampness, wetness, liquidity, water’. However, since from an Indo-European perspective it is not possible to combine **uīl-*, **uel-*, **uol-* in any ablaut (gradational form), this explanation is not convincing.
- c) A different suggestion was made by Rudnicki (1961: 230). He proposes an old ablaut in the forms *Wolin* ~ (*Julin*) and refers to analogue examples such as *Wonieść* : **Unieść*, *Ulin(ia)* : *Wolin(ia)*,

Wolica : *Ulica* (Rudnicki 1936: 67–73). Yet, it is again impossible to unite this approach with the Indo-European ablaut system and its development in the Slavic languages.

- d) Another approach was used by Lehr-Spławiński (1933–34) and again by Rudnicki (1936: 67–73). They assume a relationship between the name and the shape of the island and suggest Slavic **ovel-* ‘oval, egg-shaped’. However, this view is not convincing at all.
- e) The comparison of a place name with parallel name variants, which represents a basic principle in the field of onomastics, supports the idea of a derivation from a Slavic personal name. A base form **Volynjb*, composed of a personal name *Volynb* and a possessive adjective ending, has long been considered. This approach corresponds with the Slavic form *vol-* ‘wollen [want]’ (Lorentz 1964: 139). The proposal made by Trautmann (1948: 95) is even more convincing. He suggests a derivation with *-in-* from a name *Wola*, which represents a short form of the Slavic personal name *Wolimir* (or similar). This view has generally been accepted by different scholars (see Laur 2005: 14).

A comparison with parallel name variants supports this interpretation:

1. The Polish place name *Wołyń* has been analysed in the same way, namely from an old form **Wolin* as a short form of a dithematic such as *Volimir* (Trautmann 1948: 95; Jeżowa 1961: 43; also approvingly Rzetelska-Feleszko & Duma 1991: 88–89)
2. *Wollin* near Prenzlau, recorded in 1321 *Wollin*, 1354 *Wolyn*, 1472 *Wallin* etc. (Wauer 1996: 261–62)
3. Another place name *Wollin* (district of Uecker-Randow), recorded by Trautmann (1948: 95) as 1354 *Wolyn*, must rather be disregarded here, because since 1240 several records show the form *Woldin* (Niemeyer 2003: 82–83).
4. *Wollin* on the island of Rügen, 1284 *Wolin*, 1318 *Wollyn*, 1507 *Wollin* (Trautmann 1948: 95; Jeżowa 1961: 28).
5. Further name examples are given by Niemeyer (2003: 83).

Due to the numerous different records with *-i-* and *-y-* (*Wolin*, *Wolyn*), it remains debatable whether it is possible to come to the same conclusion as Petrulevich (2009: 74): “It is also suggested that two different forms can be distinguished, one for the island and one for the town of Wolin: **Vol-yn* and **Vol-in*, respectively (Rudnicki 1936, pp. 70 f.)”.

I am afraid I cannot agree with Rudnicki here: The forms *Wolin* and *Wolyn* are solely different graphic versions of the same place name, the old **Wolin*, as opposed to *Volyn/Volhynia* which denotes the name of a region. Moreover, the latter contains the suffix *-yn* which is generally used to form appellatives and names (Dickenmann 1978 and its review by Udolph 1979), and consequently, is not analogous with the name of the island, *Wol(l)in*.

9. *Jóm, Jómsborg*

At this point, we have almost finished the analysis of all the different place name forms. The last variant to discuss, *Jómsborg*, is mainly apparent in Scandinavian sources. Petrulevich (2009: 91–96) provides an excellent summary of the relevant records with full references. They may be listed as follows:

- 1043 at *Jómi*
- c. 1190 *Iómsborg*
- c. 1190 *iómsborg*
- c. 1200 at *Jómi*
- c. 1200 at *Iome, Iomsborgh*
- c. 1200 *Jómsborg, at Jómi*
- 13th cent. *Jómsborg*
- c. 1230 *Jómsborg, at Jómi*
- c. 1260–70 *Jómsborg*
- c. 1270–1300 at *Jómi, Jómsborg*
- 14th cent. a *Jome, af Jomnilath Jomune, Jomsborg*

Traditionally, these variants are viewed as Old Norse name formations. Laur (2005: 14) states:

Die nordgerm. Form *Jomsborg* ist entsprechend dem Ortsnamenpaar slav. *Kammin* (slav. *kamen* „Stein“) – nordgerm. *Steinborg* gebildet. Die Form mit dem Grundwort *borg* = „Burg, Stadt“ stellt dabei eine altnordische Namensbildung für städtische und stadähnliche Siedlungen dar, wie etwa *Bursta-borg* für *Stettin* mit der Übersetzung hier auch des Bestimmungswortes oder *Aldeigjuborg* für *Alt-Ladoga* [The North Germanic form *Jomsborg* is constructed in accordance with the place name pair Slavic *Kammin* (Slavic *kamen* ‘stone’) – North Germanic *Steinborg*. The form of the base word *borg* = ‘castle, town’ represents an Old Norse name formation for urban and

town-like settlements, like, for example, *Burstaborg* for *Szczecin/Stettin* (here with a translation of the determiner) or *Aldeigjuborg* for *Staraya Ladoga/Alt-Ladoga*. (Slavic *szczęć* means ‘bristly reed’ and Scandinavian *burst* means ‘bristle, stiff hair; roof ridge’ (Petrulevic 2013: 168).)

Schmidt (2000: 120) expresses a similar view: “So wie das nord. *Steinborg* dem slaw. *Kammin* entspricht – ein anderes Beispiel ist *Burstaborg* = *Stettin*, so das nord. *Jomsborg* dem slaw. *Julin* [Just as Norse *Steinborg* corresponds to Slavic *Kammin* – another example is *Burstaborg* = *Szczecin/Stettin*, and similarly the Norse *Jomsborg* for Slavic *Julin*]”.

In my opinion, Laur is absolutely right when referring to the inter-relationship of the languages that are responsible for the existence of these name variants. Thus, at this point, it seems necessary to quote Laur (2005: 22) once again:

Ein Beispiel dafür in unserem Zusammenhang stellen *Jóm* und *Jómsborg* mit der Hinzufügung des *eigensprachlichen* Grundwortes *borg* = „Burg“ im Altwestnordischen oder *Jumne* im Altdänischen zu wohl **Jum(i)na* für Wollin dar. Ein weiteres wäre in ähnlicher Weise *Aldeigja* beziehungsweise *Aldeigjuborg* für finn. **Alodejoki* oder *Aaldo-kas* für *Alt-Ladoga*. Bei Übernahmen solcher Art können wir ferner volksetymologische Umdeutungen beobachten, die den ursprünglich fremdsprachlichen Ortsnamen das Aussehen von eigensprachlichen verleihen. [In this context, *Jóm* and *Jómsborg* provide an example of the addition of the native base word *borg* = ‘castle’ in Old West Norse or *Jumne* in Old Danish to a probable **Jum(i)na* for Wollin. Another similar case would be *Aldeigja* or *Aldeigjuborg* for Finnish **Alodejoki* or *Aaldo-kas* for *Staraya Ladoga/Alt-Ladoga*. With acquisitions of this kind we can also observe folk-etymological interpretations that give the originally foreign-language place names the appearance of being native.]

The addition of the North Germanic element *-borg* is not only apparent in *Jómsborg*, *Steinborg* (for *Kammin*), *Burstaborg* (for *Szczecin/Stettin*) and *Aldeigjuborg* (for *Staraya Ladoga/Alt-Ladoga*), but also in Russian place names such as *Izborsk* and *Álaborg* (Schramm 2002: 263, 316) as well as in *Jórsalaborg* (for Jerusalem) (Petrulevich 2009: 67). In the discussion of the forms *Aldeigja* and *Aldeigjuborg* for *Alt-Ladoga*, Schramm’s position (2002: 263) has to be mentioned. He considers it a mistake that researchers prefer the Scandinavian compound in contrast to the earlier testified simplex.

As mentioned earlier, the traditional view used to be to regard the form *Jómsborg* as a “Scandinavization” of the continental form *Jumne* or the

like. This view has now been criticized by Petrulevich (2009) who also provides a new approach to this problem. She attaches more importance to the forms including the vowel *-o-* such as *Jóm* and *Jómsborg* as opposed to the *-u-* forms such as *Jumne*, *Jumine* etc. She points out: “Naturally, the form *Jómsborg* is much more frequent than *at Jómi*” (Petrulevich 2009: 68).

In the following passage, I will try to give an account of her ideas.

Petrulevich (2009: 71) explains: “If it were accepted that *Jumne* was the base form, it would not be possible to derive the form *Jómsborg* from it without forcing the linguistic evidence [...] I would like to add that a derivation in the other direction, i.e. of *Jumne* from the forms *at Jómi*/*Jómsborg*, is also rather problematic, since there is no plausible explanation for where an extra nasal *-n-* comes from. Third, I cannot agree that the original root vowel of the forms *at Jómi* and *Jumne* was *u*”.

Several pages later, Petrulevich (2009: 80) complements her opinion by saying: “In my view, the forms *at Jómi* and *Jumne* share the same root: *at Jómi* is primary, and *Jumne*, which has a suffix *-n-*, secondary”.

For the etymological analysis, she assumes the place name to be Slavic in origin and agrees with both Hennig (1935: 92–94) and Rudnicki (1936: 90) “that the toponym *at Jómi* might be derived from the Slavic *jama* f., ‘pitch; ditch’” (Petrulevich 2009: 82). In the first instance, there is nothing to be said against this theory.

The appellative is certainly well-attested in the Slavic toponymy. It is found throughout the territories settled by Slavs, for example *Jama*, *Jamka*, *Jamna*, *Jamno*, *Jamy* etc. (Petrulevich 2009: 82–83).

However, how should one explain the vowel *-o-* in the Scandinavian forms? Petrulevich (2009: 83) refers to the Pomeranian language in which we encounter the forms *jama* as well as *jōma*. With this approach, she relies on Lorentz who is an excellent scholar in this field of language. Consequently, Petrulevich considers the Scandinavian records with the vowel *-o-* as the reflex of the Polabian equivalent to Slavic *jama*.

Concerning the change between *Jum-* and *Jom-* in the names such as *Jumne*, *Wolin* and others, Petrulevich (2009: 83) mentions the variants of the place name *Rome* attested in northern sources where we can find *Róm* and *Róma* as well as *Rúm*.

Petrulevich (2009: 83) provides a straightforward conclusion: “It seems possible that the Slavic toponym **Jōma* f. was borrowed into Old Norse as **Jóm* (and, possibly, **Júm*) neut., according to the pattern *Rōma* f. > *Róm*, *Rúm* neut.”.

On the basis of this assumption, the following conclusion for *Jumne* can be drawn: The place name is based on a typical Slavic formation with the suffix **-ьn-* as in *Brzeźno*, *Górne*, *Chłodne* and others (discussed in detail by Borek (1968)), thus, finally, Slavic **Jamьno*, **Jamьne* (Petrulevich 2009: 84).

In the following paragraph, I will present my personal opinion about this theory. I have analysed the issue concerning Slavic *jama* and Polabian *jom a* very carefully, and unfortunately, from a Slavic point of view, I have to remark that it is not possible to explain a formation of *Jóm sborg* and *Jóm* from Polabian. I would like to give reasons for this:

When considering Pomeranian and Polish place names which are based on Slavic *jama*, it can be observed that older records — and this is important here (I will refer to younger records later) — show no *-o-* vowel at all.

Trautmann (1950: 69) gives the following examples of place names which he traces back to **Jamno*:

- 1) *Jamene*, as mentioned in 1292, 1406 *Jamen*, now deserted site near Federow (Mecklenburg)
- 2) *Jahmen* near Güstrow, 1235 *Jamin*, 1314 *Jamene*
- 3) *Jamund* near Köslin/Koszalin, until 1945 the German name of today's Polish site *Jamno*, old records supplied by Rzetelska-Feleszko & Duma (1985: 199) 1227 *Jamre* (!; most likely a misprinting or scribal error) 1278 *Jamene*, 1279 *Jamene*, 1300 *Jamen*, *Gamen*, 1313 *Jamele*, 1507 *Yament*, 1780 *Iarmund*. The evidence and analyses in the collective work NMP (Nazwy miejscowe Polski) 5. (2003: 49) should also be compared.

Further examples that belong to Slavic *jama* can be found in NMP 5, p. 50:

- 4) *Jamno* near Płock, 1292 (copy 1603) *Jamno*, 1381 (copy eighteenth century) *Jamno*, 1404 (copy sixteenth century) *Iamno*, see also Borek (1968: 88).
- 5) *Jamno* near Łowicz, 1297 *Jamno*, 1375 (copy 1511–12) *Jamno* etc.
- 6) *Jamno*, until 1945 German *Jamen*, near Bytowo, 1178 *Das Gebiet von Jamen*, 1283 (copy 1303) *Jamno*, 1308 *Jamen*, etc., see also Trautmann (1949: 9), Belchnerowska (1992: 64–65).

From these examples it is evident that the development of Slavic *-a-* into *-o-* cannot be observed in Polabian place names. There is a simple reason for this. The change into *-o-* is a rather young development, which has

been discussed in detail by Lorentz (1925: 36). From Lorentz's description of the phenomenon, we can conclude that in the Pomeranian language a widespread transformation from older *-a-* into *-o-* has indeed occurred. Yet, how old is this sound change? Since when can we observe this development? Lorentz (1925: 36) discusses the dating and makes it clear,

- 1) that *-a-* was still used in the fourteenth century in the Pomeranian dialect as well as in the rest of the West Slavic territories;
- 2) that the change into *-o-* can only have happened after this, at the earliest from 1500 onwards;
- 3) that it is impossible to assume Pomeranian influence for the much earlier recorded place names *Jómsborg*, *Jóm* etc.

This view is supported by the study of Vondrák (1924: 21) in which he states: “Der Übergang des \bar{a} in \bar{o} (geschrieben meist \bar{a} , es ist eine Verengung) ... trat jedoch im Polabischen spät ein: *zobo*, *sjot* (vor dem XVII. Jhd. existierte das *o* noch nicht in historischen Dokumenten) [However, the transition of \bar{a} to \bar{o} (mainly written as \bar{a} ; it is a narrowing) ... occurred later in Polabian: *zobo*, *sjot* (before the seventeenth century the *o* did not yet exist in historical documents)]”.

My conclusion: I cannot agree with the theory that the Scandinavian forms *Jómsborg* and *Jóm* owe their *-o-* to a Polabian predecessor.

10. Reflections about the forms *Jumne*, *Jumme* etc.

To conclude, I will now — as mentioned earlier — get back to the name variants *Jumne*, *Jumme*, *Juminne* etc. To the very good and detailed summary of the records found in the manuscripts of Adam of Bremen provided by Labuda (see Tab. 1) should the following be added:

- 1152–1264 *Jomne* (*Historia Norvegiae*, see Petrulevich 2009: 91)
- c. 1160 *Iunume* (*Annalista Saxo*, see Laur 2005: 14)
- fourteenth century *Iumpne* (*Annales Ludenses*, see Petrulevich 2009: 93)

In a brief remark (Udolph 2005: 219), I suggested an etymology for this name group. Based on the supposition of a base form **Jumina*, I considered dividing the name into **Ju-mina*. The first syllable may be associated with an Indo-European base **jeu-/jou-/ju-*, which according to Pokorny (1959: 507, 511) and others is attested in:

- Old Indic *yáuti*, *yuváti* ‘vermengt [blended, mixed]’, *ud-yôdhati* ‘wallt auf (vom Wasser) [to foam, to bubble (of water)]’;
- Lithuanian *judra* ‘Wirbelwind [whirlwind]’;
- Avestan *yaozaiti* ‘regt sich auf (vom Wasser, von unruhigen Ländern) [to agitate (of water, of unpeaceful countries)]’.

Pokorny assumes an original meaning ‘vermengen, bei der Speisezubereitung [to blend, mix, for food preparation]’, initially perhaps in the meaning ‘in Bewegung setzen [to set sth. in motion, to bestir, actuate sth.]’.

He adds several appellatives which — in connection with different suffixes — may belong to the current analysis:

- Lithuanian *jaunù*, *joviaĩ*, *jaũti* ‘heißes Wasser darüber gießen [to pour hot water over sth.]’;
- Albanian (Gheg) *gjanë* ‘Schmutz, Teich, Schwemme [dirt/mud, pond/pool, watering place]’.

Furthermore an extension **ǰeu-dh-* ‘in heftiger Bewegung sein, kämpfen [to be in vigorous motion, to fight]’ can be found in:

- Old Indic *ud-yôdhati* ‘wallt auf (vom Wasser) [to foam, to bubble (of water)]’;
- as well as in Old Iranian **ǰeuǵ-* ‘aufregen, unruhig [to ruffle, agitated]’, to this Avestan *yaozaiti* ‘regt sich auf (vom Wasser, von unruhigen Ländern) [to agitate (of water, of unpeaceful countries)]’.

In an article (Udolph 2002) about hydronyms of Europe and in a different context, I have mentioned another base form extended with *-n-* and suggested an approach with **ǰeu-n-/*ǰou-n-/*ǰu-n-*. I added names such as *Jonen*, *Jona*, *Jaunbach/La Jogne*, *La Jouanne*, *La Joigne*, *La Jougnez/La Jogne*, *Junica*, *Jühnde* and *Jauntal/Jaunfeld*, *Jaunstein-Podjuna* to this.

It is now possible to associate the *-n-* in such formations with the Indo-European participle system. This was done for the first time by Schmid (1994), who also frequently emphasized it. It can be illustrated as in Tab. 2.

With this it is now possible to regard such *-n-* formations as in *Jonen*, *Jona*, *Jaun* originally as participle constructions from a root **ǰeu*. We can thus connect the approach **Ju-mina* to this.

Schmid (1994, 167–74) has treated corresponding formations at length

Tab. 2. The Indo-European Participle System according to Schmid 1994: 131.

Aktiv	Medium
Präs. -nt- (bariand-,ferent-)	-menol-mono (alumnus,femina)
Perf. -ues-/uos-/us- bër-us-jōs „Eltern“	-to-/no- sta-tu-s, salbō-þ-s

in a different context, but his thoughts have hardly been picked up on. On the basis of river names such as *Limona*, *Limene*, and *Lac Léman* (Lake Geneva), numerous names can be added. Here is a small number of selected examples:

Akmena in Lithuania (Schmid 1994: 167); *Almana*, tributary to the river Lippe (North Rhine-Westphalia), 1075 *Almana* (Schmid 1994: 131; Schmidt 1967: 2, 11–13); *Alme*, tributary to the river Exter, 1359 *Almina* (Schmidt 1967: 12); *Almana* (city along the river Axios); *Almenas* district Utena in Lithuania; *Aumance* in France, < *Almantia* (Schmid 1994: 167); *Almstedt*, place name near Hildesheim, 1151 in *Almenstad*; *Almenstide* etc., located along the river *Alme*, probably developed from **Almana* (Kettner 1972: 13); *Blume*, place name near Hann. Münden, 1329 *Blomena*, 1333 *Blomena* etc. (for details refer to the NOB 4: 55); place name *Salzelmen*, 1124 *Elmen*, 1221 in *villa Elmene*, appears to contain a hydronym, tributary to the river Elbe (Bily 1996: 160); *Falmana*; *Fulmana*; **Galmina*; *Germania*, place name in Thrace, derived from a hydronym **Germana(s)* (Duridanov 1969: 23); *Germona*, hydronym in Lithuania (Duridanov 1969: 23; Vanagas 1981: 113); *Glimina*; **Helmana* in *Helme*, left tributary to the river Unstrut, with *Helmegau*, 749 *Helmana* and so on (Walther 1971: 237); *Ilm*, left tributary to the river Saale, with place names *Ilmenau*, *Dorfilm*, *Stadtilm*, 1114 in *villa ... Ilmine*, 1341 *Ylmena* (Walther 1971: 237); *Ilmenau*, feeder river of the Elbe, < **Elmanal-ina*; *Ilse*, right tributary to the river Oker, with place name *Ilsenburg*, 995 *Elsina*, 1003 *Ilsina* (Walther 1971: 237); **Imina* > *Ihme* (in Hanover) (more detailed NOB 1: 231); *Limene*, *Limonia*, *Lac Léman*, and further names (Schmid 1994: 167); *Swalmana*; *Swulmana*; *Warmana* > *Warmenau*; *Wermana*; *Wulmana*.



Fig. 2. *Jümme*, name of river in Eastern Friesland, top left on map (Fiks 2010: 12).

For further information on these names, historical evidence, the discussion about their origin, and other additional details compare the contributions of Greule (2004) (though he did not consider the possibility of a participle construction), Krahe (1957), Schmidt (1970: 11–13), and Udolph (2004: 146–52).

These numerous name examples, which are clearly derived from a formation with an ablaut suffix *-meno-/mono-*, open up the already mentioned possibility to add *Jumne*, *Jumme*, **Jumna* as a corresponding formation to this and to assume an original form **Jumina* or **Jumana*.

The basic meaning of the root **jeu-* can be considered as ‘fließen, in Bewegung setzen [to flow, to set in motion]’ or the like. Due to this and in reference to the island as being surrounded by waterways, a basic meaning for *Jumne = Wol(l)in* as ‘umflossen, umspült [washed by, surrounded]’ might be proposed.

In order to verify this view, another hydronym, which has not been discussed in this context yet, can be consulted, namely *Jümme*, a river in Eastern Friesland and nowadays also a name of a borough, which is recorded in a map from 1806 (Fig. 2).

Although being sceptical, Remmers (2004: 118) connected this river

name with Old High German *gumpito* ‘Pfuhl, Teich [pool, pond]’, but his suggestion remains very uncertain. It is far more convincing to connect the river name with *Jumne/Wollin* and to assume the word **Jumina* in the East Frisian *Jümme*. This would also serve as an explanation for the umlaut. Upon my suggestion, this view was also included in the internet article by Norbert Fiks “Wie die Jümme zu ihrem Namen kam” (2010). However, this article points to the considerable problem that the river only appears for the first time on the map shown above, namely at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Can we then venture to suppose an old approach with an Indo-European suffix? I shall leave this question unanswered. However, due to the resemblance to the forms of *Jumne/Wollin*, it is very tempting to explain the two names together. At any rate, we can certainly not just omit the East Frisian name.

I will now come to the last point of this article. Which root vowel should be assumed for the analysis of the etymology of the name variants *Jumne*, *Jumme*, *Jóm*, *Jómsborg*, and so on? Traditionally, the *-u-* forms were preferred, and I agree with this choice. Another theory was presented by Petrulevich (2009: 71): “If it were accepted that *Jumne* was the base form, it would not be possible to derive the form *Jómsborg* from it without forcing the linguistic evidence [...] I would like to add that a derivation in the other direction, i.e. of *Jumne* from the forms *at Jómi/Jómsborg*, is also rather problematic, since there is no plausible explanation for where an extra nasal *-n-* comes from. Third, I cannot agree that the original root vowel of the forms *at Jómi* and *Jumne* was *u*.” And she concludes: “In my view, the forms *at Jómi* and *Jumne* share the same root: *at Jómi* is primary, and *Jumne*, which has a suffix *-n-*, secondary.” (Petrulevich 2009: 80)

I have traced this approach once again, and I think to have found arguments for the assumption that the Scandinavian *-o-* forms may possibly go back to old Slavonic contacts. Equivalent examples can be found in the loanwords between Slavic and Germanic languages.

One of the most important cases is the generally acknowledged borrowing of Slavic *duma* ‘Rat, Gedanke, Absicht; episches Volkslied [advice, thought/idea, aim/intention; epic folk song]’ from Gothic *dōms* ‘Urteil [verdict]’ or from Proto-Germanic **dōmaz* (Kiparsky 1934: 171–73). Concerning the discussion of this borrowing, Kiparsky (1934: 172) states:

Got. *ō* und urgerm. *ō* haben stets slavisch *u* ... gegeben, weil das heutige slav. *u* noch in uruss. Zeit (etwa um 900) denselben Lautwert wie das germ. *ō* gehabt hatte (die Ostseefinnen, die sowohl *ū* wie *ō* hatten, wählten zur Wiedergabe des

urru. **u* ihr *ō*: wot. *kōmina* > **gumьno*, weps. *kōma* < *kumь* ... und ebenso taten die Letten, wenn sie slav. *duma* durch *dūoma* < **dōma* wiedergaben) [Gothic *ō* and Proto-Germanic *ō* have also given Slavic *u*, because today's Slavic *u* at the time of Proto-Russian (c. 900) still had the same sound as Germanic *ō* (the Baltic Finns, who had both *ū* and *ō*, chose to reproduce Proto-Russian **u* with their *ō*: Votic *kōmina* > **gumьno*, Veps *kōma* < *kumь* ... and the Letts did likewise when they reproduced Slavic *duma* as *dūoma* < **dōma*)].

Regarding the change between *Jum-* and *Jóm-* in the names of *Jumne*, *Wolin* and others, Petrulevich (2009: 83) refers to the name variants *Róm*, *Róma* as well as *Rúm* of the place name *Rome*, which can be found in Nordic sources. For this, the following remarks by Stender-Petersen (1927: 484) are important: Borrowings such as Gothic *Rūmōneis* for Latin *Rōmāni* support the idea that

der urgerm. Vokal *ō* [...] so offen gewesen sein wird (etwa *ā*), dass der Römer es mit seinem *ā*, der Germane dieses röm. *ā* mit seinem *ō* = *ā* identifizieren konnte. Andererseits finden wir eine Bestätigung für diese Annahme in der Tatsache, dass dem Germanen das lat. *ō* so geschlossen erschien, dass er es mit seinem *ū* (vgl. lat. *Rōma* > germ. *Rūma*) wiedergeben konnte [the Proto-Germanic vowel *ō* [...] had become so open (approximately *ā*), that the Romans could identify it as their *ā*, the Germans could identify this Romance *ā* as their *ō* = *ā*. On the other hand, we find confirmation of this assumption in the fact that the Latin *ō* seemed so closed to the Germans that they could reproduce it using their *ū* (cf. Latin *Rōma* > Germanic *Rūma*)].

Stender-Petersen says further: “Im Gotischen ist das urgerm. *ō* kein offener Laut mehr, sondern ein geschlossener, dem *ū* nahestehender Laut, der oft mit diesem verwechselt wurde [In Gothic, the Proto-Germanic *ō* is not an open sound any longer, but rather a closed one, similar to the *ū* sound, with which it was often confused]”.

The mutual mixing of Germanic *ō* and *ū* is also evident in another passage by Stender-Petersen (1927: 485) when he mentions that the equivalent for Gothic *ō*, *ū*, is not *y* anymore (in an earlier period), but later rather *u*: Gothic *bōks*, *bōka* > Slavic *bukь*, *buky*; Gothic **plōgs* > Slavic *plugь*; Gothic *Rūma*, *rūmisk* > Slavic *Rumь*, *rumьskь*.

From these observations I think we can conclude that, for the Nordic variants *Jómsborg*, *Jóm*, the same linguistic phenomenon has occurred in the reverse direction that is to say the Slavic *-u-* in *Jumne*, **Jumina*, **Jumna* was perceived as the vowel *-o-* by the North Germanic peoples.

For this reason — and with this I want to finish — this approach also

supports the supposition that the difficult name *Jumne*, **Jumina*, **Jumna* consists of a *-u-* vowel in the root syllable. This theory can also be verified by the etymology, which in the approach **Ju-mina*, **Ju-mana* considers a suffix that is attested in the Indo-European participle system. In my opinion, this idea represents a not entirely convincing base form, yet still an acceptable one. After all, the explanation of the place name still remains just as difficult as the quest for the original great city or even greatest city, as some chroniclers thought.

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Summary

The place name *Jómsborg* including its variants appears exclusively in Norse, i.e. Old North Germanic sources. On the contrary, on the Continent the variants *Vineta*, *Jumne*, *Julin*, *Jummeta*, *Vimne*, *Uimne*, *Juminem*, *Julinum*, *Uineta*, *at Jómi* and *Vinneta* are to be found. It is generally understood that these place names denote the island *Wollin*, Polish *Wolin*. The basic problem of onomastics is to ascribe these very diverse forms to one basic form. One has to conclude that this is not possible. Partially, the forms derive from spelling and reading variants. Also, *Jumne*, *Julin* etc. cannot be combined with the apparently Slavic place name *Wolin*.

In my opinion, the only possibility for a reasonable explanation of the most probable form *Jumne* is a comparison to the East Frisian river name *Jümme*. Both forms can most likely be ascribed to an Indo-European basic form **Jumina* or **Jumana*. In this case, an archaic participial construction with the suffix *-meno/-mono-* is present. The basis can be seen in the Indo-European root **ǵeu-* with the basic meaning “to flow, to set in motion”. If the old evidence refers to *Wol(1)in* — and this is not certain — one could assume a basis “flowed around, bathed by water”.

Still, one has to stress that this interpretation is not definite.

Keywords: Etymology, *Jumne*, *Vineta*, *Wollin*, *Jómsborg*, *Jümme*

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Comments on Jürgen Udolph's Paper

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The etymology of *Jómsborg* is a difficult and intricate issue due to above all the heterogeneity of the available place-name evidence. A lot of effort has been made to suggest a well-argued, convincing etymology of the place-name in question and to clarify the links between the different place-name forms attested in the sources, although there is still no consensus on the matter. The conference has provided a chance to discuss the general difficulties in dealing with *Jómsborg* and its etymology as well as two possible hypotheses regarding the place-name's origin, i.e. the etymologies suggested by Prof. Jürgen Udolph and me. Due to the limitations of the present format I will only summarize the discussion of the main linguistic issues of the etymological suggestions in question.

In short, Prof. Udolph's idea is that the place-name form *Jumne* is the key form among the diversity of the attested relevant place-name material. This form is to be derived from **Ju-mina*, a participial form from the Indo-European root **ǵeu-/*ǵou-/*ǵu-*, see Prof. Udolph's paper in this volume p. 200 ff. for details.

Two weak points of this hypothesis were discussed at the conference. The first one concerns the evidence that Prof. Udolph's etymological suggestion is based on. The prioritization of the form *Jumne* which represents the core of this etymology, needs an explanation taking into consideration the first attestation of this place-name, *at Jómi*, from 1043. It is difficult to postulate a uniform etymology for both *Jumne* and *at Jómi/Jómsborg* without explaining the absence of a nasal *-n-* in Scandinavian forms. The second issue concerns vowel length. The participle form **Jumina* contains a short root vowel and is contradicted by the forms *at Jómi* and *Jómsborg* containing long root vowels.

My etymological suggestion can in short be summarized in the following way. The place-name *Jómsborg* is to be derived from the Slavic *jama* 'pit; ditch'. The place-names *at Jómi* and *Jumne* were formed from two

corresponding Slavic forms, **Jama* and **Jamne*. The existence of such parallel forms in Slavic onomastic material is well attested; see Petrulevich 2009 p. 82 ff. for more details.

The weak spot of the hypothesis turned out to be the explanation of the development which led to a change of a root vowel *a* in the Slavic place-names to a root vowel *o* in the corresponding Scandinavian forms. In my paper from 2009 I have suggested that the Scandinavian *o*-forms are based on the corresponding *o*-forms in Pomeranian, i.e. the development of *a* to *o* in Pomeranian was placed before the year 1043. As Prof. Udolph has pointed out the development in question is of a much later date and cannot be used to account for the change of the root vowel from *a* to *o* in this case.

My response to Prof. Udolph's criticism is a modification of the etymological suggestion from 2009. The change of the root vowel is explained by phonological adaptation which in most cases accompanies place-name replication or loan. In this case the root vowel *a* is adapted as an *o* in the same way as e.g. Basel, cf. the form *Basula* from 870, which is attested as *Boslaraborg* in *Leiðarvísir og borgarskipan* by the Icelandic abbot Níkulas of Munkaþverá from the 1150s. I am thus still of the opinion that the *jama*-etymology is the most convincing one, since it allows us to account for several issues including the relation between the Scandinavian forms *at Jómi/Jómsborg* and the German form *Jumne*. I hope to be able to present the final variant of the etymological suggestion in my doctoral thesis.

The general conclusion of the conference discussion is that there is still further work to be done on the subject.

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Rendering Old Norse Nouns and Names in Translation into West-Slavic Languages

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1. Introduction

This article is the result of various discussions that we have had in the translation section of the *Jómsvíkinga saga* project, where we are trying to translate this saga into our mother tongues. Of course, in different languages there are different traditions for solving linguistic issues in translation as well as differences in language policies and in the level of knowledge that we can expect of the reader. However, we believe that by systematizing existing problems in the area of proper names, the advantages of each possible solution may provide fruitful inspiration for translators of any language.

We will focus on the problem of rendering Old Norse proper names into inflected languages, which include all the Slavic languages, during the translation process. The principal problems concerning changes to the stem vowel or nominative endings occur in translations into any Indo-European language. In addition to this (mostly grammatical) area, we will present the main, general problems which a Czech translator of Old Norse has to face.

2. General problems and questions

As a Slavic language, Czech makes use of a high degree of inflection and has no fewer than seven cases and three genders. As syntactic relations are shown by inflection, word order is fairly free and flexible, and it is used to express other linguistic features — the theme of the clause (*thema, topic*) usually stands at the beginning of the clause, whilst the most important

information (*rhema, focus*) usually occupies the end. The relationship between words in a clause is created by the endings of verbs and nouns (which can be sorted into many classes with many exceptions). Although Czech is a synthetic language in which grammatical relationships are conveyed using inflectional morphemes, there are some analytical factors too; for example, auxiliary verbs are used for expressing the future and past tenses. Changes to the stem vowels (*introflexion*) occur very rarely, and, as a null-subject language, subject personal pronouns are omitted more frequently than in analytic languages. Furthermore, there are no articles in Czech.

The high point of syntactic flexibility in Czech was reached in the fourteenth century, after which it lost the dual and simple preterite. Today, the language is slowly developing in the direction of analysis, although by some linguists it is still considered to be the most inflected (fusional) of all known languages because of its developed case system with many different endings to denote the same grammatical role (for example, there exist six different endings for gen. sing. masc.) and numerous personal endings of verbs (Hrbáček 1995: 11).

The general problems that occur when translating Old Norse prose mostly concern verbs. Even in comparison to Russian and other Slavic languages, Czech uses finite verbs rather than participles and infinite constructions, and it makes greater use of subordinate clauses than does Old Norse. This is the reason why the language of the sagas often feels rather primitive and simple — which, of course, it is not — to a Czech reader who has learnt in elementary school that repeating words is one of the most basic stylistic mistakes. So, the question arises: Should we keep the simplicity of the saga language and risk disappointing the reader, or should we change it to suit the rules of Czech literary style?

Another concern is the richness of the Czech verb system and (consequently) the relatively sparse use of phrasal verbs and certain verb phrases. The uniformity of verbs used in sagas (for example, *segja, fara*) forces the translator to substitute a more specific verb in Czech in place of a repeated verb in Old Norse; in other words, the translator uses a single verb to express a concrete meaning that was realized in the source-language text by a commonly used verb in combination with a noun, an adverb, or a preposition.

The third concern is the choice between past and present tenses. The historical present occurs very rarely in Czech texts. In Old Norse literature, on the other hand, it is virtually omnipresent. Therefore, some

translators try to keep the historical present in the Czech translation, and consider it a specific feature of the style or the perception of time in Old Norse. However, most translators disregard it and consequently change it into preterite, feeling it to be more disruptive than, for example, do some translators into Germanic languages.

As regards the translation of poetry, we should mention metric rules, as more than two thirds of the syllables in a skaldic verse are bound together by alliteration and/or *hending*. Alliteration is alien to Czech poetics (Levý 1983: 255–58) since, in Czech, the stress accent is not as strong as, say, the accent in Old Norse or Old English. Translators usually try to maintain alliteration in most places because it is a typical feature of eddic and skaldic poetry, holding together half-verses and often putting emphasis on important elements through the connection of alliterating words. But, this connection will never be as strong after translation due to the weaker, non-dynamic stress accent in Czech. Of course, the original alliteration cannot always be preserved. Sometimes priority has to be given to a more adequate expression but without alliteration. On the other hand, in spite of the freer word order that is natural in Czech, the use of inflectional morphemes to express grammatical relationships helps the Czech reader of skaldic poetry to understand the more complicated sentences, so that identifying the subject, predicate, object and so on is perhaps even easier in the Czech translation than in the original.

The rendering of Old Norse nouns and names is therefore only a small issue in the complex of problems in translating Old Norse poetry and prose into Czech. However, it is not unimportant and might well illustrate the problems faced by speakers of other inflected languages, when trying to interpret Old Norse literature.

This problem is further complicated by the fact that Czech has a relatively long tradition of using Old Norse proper names. It may therefore be useful to sketch out this history first. Generally it can be said that the Czech use of Old Norse names has been formed by three categories of literature:

- 1) the treatment in scholarly literature of Old Norse subjects;
- 2) the translations of Old Norse literary sources;
- 3) modern fiction containing Old Norse myths, heroic stories, and historical events.

It would have been ideal if the history of translating Old Norse names had developed in the order above, but unfortunately the real course of events

unfolded in precisely the opposite direction. While Czech scholarly literature on Old Norse themes does not exist before 1920, the emergence of Old Norse proper names in Czech literary fiction can be traced back to the dawn of Romanticism at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

3. History of rendering of Old Norse names in Czech literature

3.1 The period 1800–1870

We do not have the time or space here to cite all the adventures of the Norse gods, heroes and historical men and women in Czech literature since 1800. But, because many problems connected with rendering Old Norse names and words have not changed much since then, examining two examples from this period may be of use.

The first example is the short story *Skála milenců* (The Lover's Cliff) written by Ludvík Rittersberg (1809–58) probably before 1850 (see Rittersberg 1853, quoted, according to the modern edition, as Rittersberg 2010). The content itself is not very interesting, consisting of a rather sentimental love story set amidst some well-known clichés about blood, reputation and alcohol-thirsty Vikings, and the harsh Norwegian nature. The rendering of Old Norse names in the story is much more interesting, showing a strange double standard. On the one hand, we find some actual Old Norse names adapted to Czech orthography (*Ingolf, Harald, Sigurd, Asa-Thor* and *Valhalla*). On the other hand, there appear some names that point instead to the German-speaking world (*Elfrieda, Oskar*).

This is hardly surprising. We must keep in mind that Czechs became acquainted with Old Norse culture for the first time through the medium of German Romantic literature (especially Gräter 1789). Also, the growing National Movement tended to perceive individual European nations as members of a larger language group (Slavic, Germanic, and Romance). Therefore, even slightly modified German names — in Ritterberg's text for example, *Hilgard* (from German *Hildegard*) — could well contribute to the creation of a 'Norse' feeling for the average reader at the time.

A work of another type is the poem *Idúna* (Iðunn) by Karel Hynek Mácha (1810–36), indisputably the best of the Czech Romantic poets. The poem, which must have been written around 1832, is considered

one of the keys to Mácha's conception of love as an obsessive, life-consuming power. Turning our attention to the name-form *Idūna*, we will not be surprised by the ending -a attached to the original form *Iðunn*, since the forms *Iduna* or *Idunna* – stressing the female gender of the name – may be found in German literature long before Mácha's time, for example as title of *Ein Alterthumszeitung* edited by Gräter (1812–16). More importantly, in Mácha's case we are immediately able to see the reasons for the deliberate use of this form. Firstly, the ending -a works even better in Czech than in Germanic languages since the vast majority of Czech female names end with this suffix. For the poem, the main subject of which is the tension between male and female, it is not without importance. However, there is another reason for its appearance, more subtle and directly connected to the style of the poem. The Old Norse goddess of youth, is identified in the poem by (or symbolized by) the full moon, which functions here as an object of half-mystical, half-erotic devotion, and so the goddess' name appears in the entire poem only in the invocations that repeatedly break its course (Mácha 2002):

Idūno! má Idūno!	(Iðunn, my Iðunn!
pro tebe vždy se soužím,	For you I ever long,
ty jasná noci Lūno,	You clear night's silver Moon,
po světle tvém jen toužím.	For the light of you I mourn.)

In accordance with the character of invocation, the name of the goddess occurs (except in the poem's name) solely in the vocative case, for which the form *Idūna* is very fitting. Had the name remained without the ending -a, in nom. sing., the formation of the voc. sing. would have been much more difficult. There are some uncommon female Czech names ending in a consonant (mostly of biblical origin such as *Rút* or *Támar*), but their vocative usually contains no suffix, thus only distinguishable from the nominative by context alone.

To end, we would add a brief comment on Mácha's use of the ringed 'u' ('ů') in his adaptation of the name *Iðunn*. The reason for this can again be found in the mediation through German which does not mark the length of vowels by using diacritics, instead vowel length is deduced from the number of following consonants. Czech, on the other hand, strictly requires a distinction be made in writing between short vowels (a, e, i, o, u, y) and long vowels (á, é, í, ó, ú, ů, ý). A sequence of two or more short syllables is rather unusual in Czech, and so the Czech reader naturally tends to pronounce stressed syllables of foreign names with

long vowels, even when not marked by an acute accent (for example the German names Wagner and Goethe are regularly pronounced with long ‘a’ and ‘oe’ respectively). The use of long ‘u’ in the name *Idūna* seems therefore to be an attempt to make the name conform to the standards of Czech pronunciation. And the choice of its ringed form shows an attempt to adapt the name to Czech orthography, as an acute or ringed ‘u’ (‘ú’ and ‘ů’) does not differ in sound, but only in use — ‘ú’ is used only in a forward position (cf. *úvod*) and ‘ů’ in other positions (*druhům*).

These, along with other examples, allow some insight into how Old Norse names and words were rendered in Czech literature before 1850. The authors faced some basic problems and they laid some basic foundations for overcoming them. As far as inflection is concerned, the secondary feminization (*Idūna* instead of *Iðunn* and *Brynhilda* instead of *Brynhild*) was used to enable the nominatives to fit Czech declensional patterns. In other cases, when the female names were not suffixed with -a, they were not declined at all (nom. *Gudrún*, gen. *Gudrún*, dat. *Gudrún* etc.). In the masculine, the usual method was to drop the nom. masc. -r and follow the nominal declension and the formation of possessive adjectives in accordance with Czech paradigms; for example: nom. *Harald*, gen. *Haralda*, dat. *Haraldovi* etc. and poss. adj. *Haraldův*. With regard to orthography, the special Old Norse letters ð, þ, ø, æ, œ, ǫ were usually replaced by Czech ones. Lastly, there is the aforementioned problem of German mediation, resulting in similar problems to those already mentioned — the problem of the length of vowels. This problem is (as with many others) in fact a pseudo-problem, since the acute accent in Old Norse functions very similarly in Czech and the loss of the length marker during the change — for example from *Þórr* to *Thor* or from *áss* to *As* — is only a consequence of the secondary transcription from German.

On the other hand, the German influence clearly had some positive effects. The first of these was the arrival of Old Norse themes in Czech literature itself. The second was the emergence of a system of rendering Old Norse names which proved to be relatively consistent and stable. For example, the transcription of the letters ‘ð’ (as ‘d’) and ‘þ’ (as ‘th’) remained fairly consistent until the 1860s.

3.2 The period 1870–1920

This situation — not ideal but at least relatively transparent — was brought to an abrupt end by the rapidly growing interest in modern

Scandinavian literature after the 1850s. The oldest Czech translations of modern Scandinavian languages do not predate 1870 (Kadečková & Vrbová 1993), but their numbers quickly increased. The bibliography compiled by Hugo Kosterka in 1932 lists nearly one thousand works of fiction translated from Scandinavian languages (Kosterka 1932). This shows a relatively high number created in the space of some sixty years. Nevertheless, this number was maintained (if not exceeded) in at least some of the periods that followed. The bibliography of translations from Norwegian to Czech, published in 1993, lists nearly five hundred translations in this single literary field (Kadečková & Vrbová 1993).

Primarily, the beginning of this translation activity happened during the heyday of high and late Romanticism, so there are unsurprisingly many of these works directly elaborating on Old Norse themes. The most influential were probably the early dramas of Henrik Ibsen, *Hærmændene paa Helgeland* and *Kongs-Emnerne* (translated twice during this period and performed many times on stage) or the unbeatable *Frithiofs saga* by Esaias Tegnér translated in 1891 under the title *Píseň o Frithiofovi* (The Lay of Frithiof; Sládek 1891).

It is hardly surprising that this information explosion left an indelible imprint on the ways of perceiving and rendering Old Norse names. The works mentioned above (as well as many others) belonged to the national Romantic period and their aim was to assimilate Old Norse themes into the national history of each of the Scandinavian countries. Thus, their use of Old Norse names was greatly influenced by efforts to make them as similar as possible to the contemporary forms of those names. A good example is the Old Norse name *Hákon* which can be found in various forms — *Haakon*, *Håkon*, *Haakan* and *Hákon* — in Scandinavian literary works of the period, depending on the nationality of the original translator. Furthermore, Czech translators of the period usually kept these forms, causing complete chaos in the system of Old Norse names in Czech.

Another long-term influence was felt by the rapidly developing scholarly fields of the age, especially history and geography. In spite of the fact that each of the scholars was individually influenced by the language of whatever scholarly literature he or she used (German, English, Scandinavian), they were nevertheless able to establish some canonical language phenomena, for example, with some place-names and cognomens. Sometimes the results were good; *Krásnovlasý* is a faultless rendering of the Old Norse *hárfagri*, and *Vidlovous* of *tjúguskegg*. Sometimes the translated cognomens were not completely successful, as in case

of *Harald Krutý* for *Haraldr harðráði* (in established Czech, *Krutý* means ‘cruel’) or *Magnus Bosý* for *Magnús berfættr* (in Czech, *Bosý* describes a person that has no shoes, which was definitely not a problem for the Norwegian king!). In the area of place-names, problems were sometimes caused not only by the form of newly established Czech names but also by some grammatical categories (especially gender). Thus, in Czech, *Reykjavík* or *Sjælland* were canonized as masculine, in spite of both being of other genders in their Old Norse as well as modern forms.

3.3 The period 1920–2013

When the first direct Czech translations of Old Norse works began to appear in the early 1920s, the situation was far from stabilized. Fortunately, the leading personalities of the first generation of translators, Karel Vrátný (1867–1937), Emil Walter (1890–1964), and Leopold Zatočil (1905–92), were not only masters of both Old Norse and Czech (only in case of Karel Vrátný do we sometimes detect an inappropriate favouring of archaic language), but also philologists of merit. Emil Walter was a student of Finnur Jónsson, to whom his translation of Snorri’s *Gylfaginning* is dedicated (Walter 1929), and he was later a lecturer at Uppsala University. Karel Vrátný focused on the Stockholm *Homily Book* in his Old Norse studies (Vrátný 1915–16, 1916–17), and Leopold Zatočil, a student of Gustav Neckel, concentrated his interest on Old Norse heroic poetry and prose (see, for example, Zatočil 1946a and 1946b). These writers were able to reconcile Old Norse names and Czech grammar and produce a number of translations sourced from family sagas (*Egils saga*, *Vatnsdæla saga*, *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu*), *fornaldarsögur* (*Völsunga saga*, *Guta saga*) and mythological texts (*Gylfaginning*), eddic lays and some of the Eddica Minora (*Hlǫðskviða*).

Their solution was strongly influenced by the situation before 1870. For example, they each transcribed ‘ð’ as ‘d’ and ‘þ’ as ‘th’. Nevertheless, in some details they chose different translation solutions. Zatočil, obviously being concerned more with correct pronunciation, renders the Old Norse ‘ǫ’ as the Czech ‘o’ in his translation of *Völsunga saga* (the pronunciation of the Old Norse ‘ǫ’ was relatively close to the contemporary Czech ‘o’), while the others — obviously aiming at the written form inspired by German and Modern Icelandic — use ‘ö’ instead. Even more complicated were the cases of ‘ø’, ‘æ’ and ‘œ’. All three letters were rendered by different combinations of ‘ä’ and ‘ö’. Another (already mentioned) problem

was length. While the conservative Walter keeps the original Old Norse length, even where it conflicts with the established Czech usage (for example *rúna* and *Ísland* instead of the usual *runa* and *Island*), Leopold Zatočil did not restrain from radical shortening — for example *Hjordisa* instead of the Old Norse versions of *Hjǫrdís*.

The nom. sing. masc. in -r endings was another point of conflict. All three shared the opinion that it should be dropped prior to inflecting, but there was no consensus on how far this process should go. Therefore, all of them drop -r if the stem ends in a consonant (*Sigurd*, *Gunnar*) but they parted ways in cases where the stem ends in a vowel (*Fáfni* vs. *Fáfni*) and where -r is assimilated into the preceding consonant (*Egil* vs. *Egill*). We can see further discrepancies in the rendering of non-Scandinavian names (*Miklagard* vs. *Byzanc*); in the policy of keeping or dropping the suffix in the case of plural names *Hlymdalir* vs. *Hlymdaly* (-y being the Czech suffix of masc. nom. pl.); in the acc. sing. of weak names (*Snorra* vs. *Snorriho*), and so on.

Solving those problems fell to the second generation of translators best represented by Ladislav Heger (1902–75), and Helena Kadečková (*1932) and her students. Most of the problems were settled by Ladislav Heger, translator of the entire *Poetic Edda*, *Óláfs saga helga*, and a representative collection of family sagas. But even in his work we find some discrepancies. Heger decided to drop the suffixes -r, -l, -s, -n in masc. nom. sing. but for some unknown reason kept the name *Týr* (see, for example, Heger 1962). He started to use ‘æ’ and ‘œ’ for the corresponding Old Norse sounds, but he kept using not only ‘ö’ for ‘ǫ’ and ‘ø’ (obviously for typographical reasons at that time) but also ‘d’ and ‘t’ for ‘ð’ and ‘þ’. However, the process went further in the work of Helena Kadečková, translator of the *Snorra Edda*, *Ynglinga saga*, a collection of *Íslendingaþættir*, *Volsunga saga*, and *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*. In *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, ‘ð’ and ‘þ’ appear for the first time in a Czech translation of Old Norse text (Kadečková & Dudková 2011). Shortly after, in *Eddica Minora* (a collective work on which many translators had taken part), even ‘ǫ’ and ‘ø’ were present (Starý et al. 2011).

As a result, we can probably speak about some kind of consensus slowly forming. Nevertheless, there are many problems that have not been answered until now, some of them affecting the very core of how Old Norse names and nouns are inflected in Czech. The first of them is the difficult case of the -r in masc. nom. sing. Do we have the right to change the nom. sing. — the basic form of the word and important, for example,

when searching indexes, vocabularies, and so on? To avoid being accused of any gender bias, we mention another problem, primarily concerning female names; the change to the stem, causing the gen. of *Gunnlǫð* to become *Gunnlaðar* and gen. of *Qgn* to become *Agnar*. Should we keep the nominative as the basis for declension (gen. *Qgny*, dat. *Qgně*), committing a kind of linguistic crime — adding a suffix to something which is not the stem of the word? Or should we decide on the ‘harsh’ solution that has been practised in Czech classical philology for many years, that is to keep the original nominative forms and to create oblique cases by adding Czech suffixes to the actual stem (nom. *Ceres*, gen. *Cerery*; nom. *Zeus*, gen. *Dia*)? Up until now, only one experiment of this kind has been carried out — in the translation of *Hervarar saga* (Kozák 2008–09). The reason why this has so rarely been done is clear. Going down this route, we risk in some cases (such as *Qgn* mentioned above) that the reader will not be able to identify the nominative (*Qgn*) with oblique cases (*Agny*, *Agně*) in his or her own language.

Another difficult problem is posed by the already established Czech forms of some names and words, for example *Olaf* and *fjord*. Since the geomorphologic phenomenon is called a *fjord* in Czech, should we use this form in cases where it is included as part of a longer name and speak about *Skagafjord* instead of *Skagafjörðr*? Should we write *Olafsford*, *Óláfsfjord*, *Olafsfjörðr* or *Óláfsfjörðr*?

At the same time, there are problems of another kind. For example, there is the trend towards traditional national historiography among historians. Thus, the most recent Czech standard volumes on the history of Denmark, Norway and Iceland use modern Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic forms of Old Norse names respectively, in spite of the fact that these volumes are at least partially written by the aforementioned translators. The History of Norway (Hroch, Kadečková & Bakke 2005) renders the Old Norse *Óláfr* unanimously as *Olav*, while The History of Denmark (Busck & Poulsen 2007) oscillates between *Olav* and *Oluf*. The History of Iceland (Kadečková 2001) goes even further, calling the Old Norse holders of the name *Óláfr* alternately *Olaf*, *Olav* or *Ólafur* depending on his ethnicity.

Of course, there is a reason for this policy: to simplify the understanding of texts in corresponding languages. Nevertheless, we must ask: Is it justifiable to be inconsistent (not to mention anachronistic by bringing

the concept of ethnos into a period when it clearly did not exist)? And we do not have to think too deeply to conclude that such an approach is very limited. What form should we use for many Norwegian, Swedish and Danish kings, known only from Icelandic sagas? What form should we use for the Norwegians or Swedes who settled Iceland?

Such questions are not easy to answer and many contemporaries would even challenge the necessity of answering them. There exist no statistics on this subject, but we can be fairly certain that most of the fiction based upon Old Norse themes that has appeared recently (for example, the popular Marvel comics or the novels by Johanne Hildebrandt) undergo no real language redaction at all and that their redesign of Old Norse names cannot be influenced by any consensus among philologists, no matter how perfect such redesigns may be.

Despite these discouraging facts, we have dared to attempt to create a new proposal for the rendering of Old Norse names and nouns into Czech. There are numerous reasons for our decision. Firstly, the present situation is extremely unsatisfactory, since historians, literary historians, historians of religion, philologists, archaeologists, and translators of scientific as well as popular books use entirely different ways of rendering Old Norse names, thus preventing many people (and sometimes even university students) from identifying *Sverre Sigurdsson* with *Sverrir Sigurðarson* for example. Secondly, more and more collaborative projects are appearing that publish the work of different translators in a single collected volume, where the authors simply must agree on some consensus if they do not want to risk inconsistency. Thirdly, we believe that by practising a careful and patient language policy in the small field of Old Norse literature, we might be able to change the existing practices of, at least, the larger publishers. And lastly, we have been encouraged by similar attempts in other fields of research, probably the best and most thorough example being Old Hebrew studies (Čech & Sládek 2009).

Most of the answers to the grammatical problems connected with the translation of a book depend upon the aim of the book, viz. the intended readership. How deep an interest and knowledge of Old Norse culture can we expect? Considering there are only ten million Czech speakers, we do not have the option to print one edition for the general reader, and another for academics. This is the reason we want to try to create general rules for *all* translations from Old Norse into Czech.

4. How to deal with Old Norse proper names in translations

4.1 Questions of transcription and translation

We have chosen to keep all the original Old Norse letters. In this way we eliminate the possibility of misunderstandings and the noun can be found easily in dictionaries, in the original text or in other translations. These days technical possibilities make it quite easy for every user or publishing house to reproduce Old Norse letters.

Some personal names of Norse origin (for example *Olaf*, *Valdemar*) as well as some nouns (*viking*, *fjord*, and *skald*) are used so often, that their forms are regulated by common usage (in the case of currently used names this regulation is enshrined in Czech law). So, if a Scandinavian name already has a Czech form, we generally prefer to use that form. Conversely, some Czech forms of names existing in Old Norse feel too domestic to be used in translation from a relatively exotic, medieval Scandinavian language and context. For example, the use of the Czech form *Karel* (instead of *Karl*) inevitably calls to mind a boorish peasant, not a person holding the rank of *Mæra-Karl* from *Óláfs saga helga* and *Færeyinga saga*. The name *Mikuláš* is principally known as a Christmas character similar to Father Christmas or Santa Claus and is, therefore, not very appropriate for denoting *Nikulás Bergsson*.

For the same reasons we suggest the use of the Old Norse forms (*Rín*) for Old Norse names of places or people even if they are generally known outside Scandinavia. The original forms create the atmosphere of the period and help to express the particular perspective that references the well-known place or person. Similarly, we keep to that rule for names of Slavic origin (*Boleslav*) where the Old Norse form (*Búrisleif*) suggests to the Czech reader that the context in which this, familiar, person is being described in a particular text is different to what he or she may expect. Czech is not the only language in which translators face this problem and we would refer to Andreas Heusler's ideas on the subject which are still useful today (Heusler 1943: 357–61) and to the overview by Julia Zernack (Zernack 1994: 280–87), although this is more concerned with the ideological backgrounds to different translation policies than with their applicability today.

We also try to keep the original gender of the Old Norse word even if,

in Czech, a particular suffix might be used more frequently for another gender. The Czech declination system is so rich that there is always a paradigm that can be followed. As the forms of Old Norse are usually written down in different ways to those in the established Czech, we believe that it is not a problem to use another gender (*Rín* - fem.) rather than the current Czech form (*Rýn* - masc.).

Following this, we list all possible variants and under each we suggest the most important pros (marked +) and cons (marked -) and the version we consider to be the most suitable for our needs is always written in **bold type**. Some of the questions we list only occur in inflected languages, but most of the issues would have to be solved by a translator into any language.

4.1.1 Letters

For the specific Old Norse sounds (þ, ð, ę, æ, ø, œ, ǫ) it is possible to use:

- a) **Original signs: *Ogmund, Gunnlǫð, Þór, Sæming, Lophæna, Øxará, Guðrǫð***
 - + no possibility of misunderstanding, easy to identify the noun or name in the original text, dictionaries, indexes as well as in most modern English/German translations
 - pronunciation not clear to the common reader
 - not easy to write for everyone
- b) Signs and their combinations from contemporary alphabets: *Ögmund, Gunnlöð, Þór, Sæming, Lophæna, Øxará, Guðrǫð*
 - + technically easy
 - ǫ becomes ö, thus disguising the difference between some nouns
- c) Exclusively local (Czech) signs: *Ogmund, Gunnlod, Tór, Séming, Lophéna (Lophona?), Exará (Oxará?), Gudred (Gudrod?)*
 - + clear to the common reader or writer
 - + technically the easiest way
 - sometimes quite far from the original form

4.1.2 Forms of Personal Names and some other Nouns

1. If Czech forms (or translations) of Old Norse personal names and other nouns exist, it is possible to use:

- a) **These forms: *Olaf, Erik, Valdemar, viking, galéra, skald***
 - + easier for pronunciation

- + fits declension patterns very well
 - it might be difficult to identify the original form
- b) Old Norse forms: *Ólaf, Eirík, Valdamar, víking, drómund, skáld*
- + closer to the original
 - + creates the atmosphere of the period
 - more difficult for the reader as regards pronunciation, declension, and so on
2. If contemporary Scandinavian forms of Scandinavian personal names exist, it is possible to use:
- a) New forms: *Tore, Sverre, Snorre, Ólöf, Aage*
- + easier to identify
 - often feels too modern
 - not consistent: *Hákon, Håkan* or *Haakon?* *Olaf, Olav, Olof, Olov* or *Ólaf?*
- b) Old Norse forms: *Þóri, Sverri, Snorri, Ólof, Áki*
- + closer to the original
 - + creates the atmosphere of the period
3. If Old Norse forms of non-Scandinavian personal names and nouns exist, it is possible to use:
- a) These Old Norse forms: *Búrisleif, Jón, Karl, Nikulás, Kjaralax, Hlǫðvi, Ótta*
- + closer to the original
 - + creates the atmosphere of the period
 - more difficult for the reader¹
- b) Original forms: *Bolesław, Johannes, Carolus, Nicholas, Alexios, Chlodovech, Otto*
- + easy for searching the person in the historical books
 - not very close to the original
 - not evocative of the atmosphere of the period
- c) Czech forms: *Boleslav, Jan, Karel, Mikuláš, Alexios, Ludvík, Oto*
- + easy for searching the person in the Czech historical books

¹ In the case of patronymics, we use the Czech form of the name (according to 1.a) but keep the Old Norse genitive suffix and the formant, thus we write *Olafsson* (not *Olafson* or *Ólafsson*), *Eriksson* (not *Erikson* nor *Eiriksson*), *Sigurðarson* (not *Sigurðsson* nor *Sigurð-son*), and *Bjarnardóttir* (not *Björnsdóttir*).

- some of the names are too closely associated with the Czech cultural space (*Boleslav, Jan, Karel, Mikuláš, Ludvík*)

4.1.3 Forms of Place-Names, Names of Nations and other Groups

1. In the case of nouns contained in Old Norse place-names, it is possible to use:

a) Czech forms: *Finnmarka, Skagafjord*

- + easier for pronunciation
- + fits very well the declension patterns
- for the common reader it might be difficult to identify the original form²

b) Old Norse forms: *Finnmǫrk, Skagafjörðr*

- + closer to the original
- + creates the atmosphere of the period
- more difficult for the reader as regards pronunciation, declension and so on

2. If contemporary forms of Scandinavian place-names do exist:

a) (Czech forms of) new names: *Lade, Gule, Lejre, Sjælland, Götové*
(inhabitants of Swedish Götaland)

- + easier to identify on contemporary maps and the like
- often feels too modern

b) (Czech forms of) Old Norse names: *Hlaðy, Guli, Hleiðr, Selund, Gautové*

- + closer to the original
- + creates the atmosphere of the period
- necessary to comment
- sometimes feels unnatural for Czech declensional patterns (for example, *Hleiðr* is fem., thus gen. must be *Hleiðry*, which is rather unintuitive in Czech, since there are nearly no Czech fem. names ending in -r)

² In the case of compound words, where parts of the compounds fall under different categories we decided to approach them separately, thus we use *Breiðafjord* (neither *Breidafjord* nor *Breiðafjörðr*) and *Þórsmarka* (neither *Tórsmarka* nor *Þórsmǫrk*).

3. If Old Norse forms of non-Scandinavian place-names exist, it is possible to use:

- a) **These Old Norse forms:** *Hollsetuland, Peitulond, Vínland, Miklagarð, Aldeigjuborg, Rúða, Dyflinn, Rín*
 - + closer to the original
 - + creates the atmosphere of the period
 - difficult to identify
 - necessary to comment
 - sometimes feels unnatural for Czech declensional patterns (for example, *Dyflinn* or *Rín* are fem., thus gen. must be *Dyflinny* and *Ríny*, but contemporary Czech genitives are *Rýna* and *Dublinu*)
- b) Old or modern local forms: *Holstein, Poitou, America, Constantinople (Byzantium?, Istanbul?), Staraja Ladoga, Rouen, Baile Átha Cliath, Rhein*
 - + easier to identify on modern maps
 - not very close to the original
 - not evocative of the atmosphere of the period
- c) Czech form: *Holštýnsko, Poitou, Amerika, Cařihrad, Stará Ladoga, Rouen, Dublin, Rýn*
 - + easy to understand and identify on the Czech maps
 - + fits in well with Czech declensional patterns
 - does not feel Nordic
 - corresponding words often do not exist or are not adequate to the Old Norse ones (*Serkland*)

4.1.4 Translation of Nicknames, Personal Names and Place-Names

As far as the translation of nicknames, personal names and place-names is concerned, we do not have any general consensus and generally both available options — translating or keeping the original form — are used. Remember that according to Czech standards, nicknames and place-names are always written with an initial capital letter.

We suggest that translators translate generally known nicknames that are already in use in translations and in translated history books (typically kings and the best-known heroes of sagas), and occasionally nicknames, place-names and personal names whose meanings are clear and/or necessary to understand the text: *Harald Krásnovlasý (hárfagri)*, *Gorm Starý (hinn gamli)*, *Guðbrand z Dalu (í Dolum)*, *Sigurð Had v oku (ormr í auga)*, *Ívar Bez kostí (beinlauss, inn beinlausí)*, *Šípový Odd (Orvar-Oddr)*, *Zakuklenec (Kufmaðr)*.

We would keep the original form where there is any unclear etymology (double translations are possible as are misunderstandings) and/or the meaning is expressed by a noun or a nominal form and/or a translation is not necessary to better understand the text: *Gull-Harald*, *Hǫrða-Knut*, *Dala-Guðbrand*, *Klakk-Harald*, *Porkel Leira*, *Úlf Stallari*, *Úlf Búandi*, *Hávarð Hoggvandi*, *Þýra Danabót*, and most other personal names and place-names.

4.2 Grammatical issues

As previously mentioned, Czech is an inflected language and it is impossible to translate into it without adding inflectional endings. Thus, the question of rendering of Old Norse nominative endings (-r, -l, -n, -s) and choosing the stem for creating paradigms is unavoidable. In the past, different ways were chosen by different scholars, but unfortunately, none of these led to a general consensus, probably because none of them clearly defined their principles. Here, we use the same method as in the preceding part: We enumerate the issues at dispute, list the possible solutions with pros (+) and cons (-), and highlight our suggestions by using **bold characters**.

We have decided to drop all of the Old Norse nominative endings in all Czech cases. It will naturally — and without any knowledge of Old Norse grammar — lead to a Czech declension without doubling the grammatical endings of the two languages. But, it is a compromise; it is not a correct, grammatically pure solution. As our priority is to make the handling of Old Norse nouns accessible to the common reader, we use the Old Norse nominative and not the stem as a basis for Czech declension. The main Czech translators from Old Norse have traditionally omitted the nom. endings in the sing. masc. We try to apply that solution more systematically to include plural and derivative forms.

4.2.1 Declension and derivation

1. Nominative of the masculine nouns: endings -r, -l, -n, -s should be:

- a) Maintained: *Grettir*, *Egill*, *Þórr*, *Týr*, *Egill*, *Fjörgynn*, compare *Fjörgyn* (fem.)
 - + common in Czech texts when rendering the names from classical antiquity (we have, for example, nom. *Sokratés*, gen. *Sokrata*)
 - + easy identification of the form, no confusion between fem. and masc.

- the common reader tends to create incorrect forms in the Czech declensional system by using the nominative as a stem: gen. *Grettira*, *Þórra*, *Týra*, and so on

b) Dropped: *Gretti*, *Egil*, *Þór*, *Tý*, *Egil*, *Fjörgyn*

- + leads naturally to Czech declensional patterns
- the difference between masculine and feminine might disappear (*Fjörgyn*)
- finding the original form might be problematic

2. For the oblique cases and in derivation, the Czech ending should be added to:

a) The Old Norse nominative ending: loc. *Grettiru*, instr. *Egillem*, gen. *Týra*, dat. *Hervøre*, *Gunnlōðin* [*Gunnlōð's*], *Bjornova* [*Björn's*]

- + easy for the common reader or writer
- contradicts the solution chosen in 1.b
- peculiar from a grammatical point of view — the grammatical endings are doubled

b) The Old Norse stem: loc. *Grettim*, instr. *Egilem*, gen. *Týa*, dat. *Hervaře*, *Gunnlaðin* [*Gunnlōð's*], *Bjarnova* [*Björn's*]

- + common in Czech classical philology – *Ceres*, gen. *Cerery*
- more difficult for the common reader or writer who must know, for example, that the stem of *Gunnlōð* is *Gunnlað-*, the stem of *Björn* is *Bjarn-* etc. Especially the case of *Björn* is difficult, since the modern form *Björn* is well known (from Swedish) and used without the change of stem.

c) The Old Norse nominative without the nominative ending: loc. *Grettim*, instr. *Egilem*, gen. *Týa*, dat. *Hervøre*, *Gunnlōðin* [*Gunnlōð's*], *Bjornova* [*Björn's*]

- + easy for the common reader or writer
- grammatically not entirely satisfactory (the change of stem is ignored)

4. In nominative plural the Czech plural ending should be added to:

a) The Old Norse plural: *Stiklastaðiry* [*Stiklastaðir*], *Hólary* [*Hólar*], *Brávelliry* [*Brávellir*], *Æsirové* [*Æsir*], *Birnirové* [*Björns*]

- + easy for the common reader or writer
- peculiar from a grammatical point of view — the grammatical endings are doubled

- inconsistent according to the treatment of sing. (see 1.b)
- b) The Old Norse stem: *Stiklastaðy* [*Stiklastaðir*], *Hóly* [*Hólar*], *Brávally* [*Brávellir*], *Ásové* [*Æsir*], *Bjarnové* [*Björns*]
 - + common in Czech classical philology, for example, sing. *Aiás* – pl. *Aiantové*
 - more difficult in the case of changes to the stem: *Brávoll*, pl. *Brávally*
 - inconsistent according to the treatment of sing. (see 1.b)
- c) The Old Norse plural without the plural nom. ending: *Stiklastaðy* [*Stiklastaðir*], *Hóly* [*Hólar*], *Brávelly* [*Brávellir*], *Æsové* [*Æsir*], *Birnové* [*Björns*]
 - more difficult in the case of a stem change: *Ás*, pl. *Æsové*
- d) **The Old Norse nom. sing. without the sing. nom. ending: *Stiklastaðy* [*Stiklastaðir*], *Hóly* [*Hólar*], *Brávolly* [*Brávellir*], *Ásové* [*Æsir*], *Björnové* [*Björns*]**
 - + easy to identify the singular
 - + easy for the common reader
 - problems identifying names with a vowel change in original and foreign texts, for example, *Brávellir* vs. *Brávolly*

5. In the genitive and oblique cases in the plural, the Czech plural endings or derivations should be added to:

- a) The Old Norse plural nominative ending: gen. *Stiklastaðirû*, loc. *Hólarech*, loc. *Brávellirech*, instr. *Æsiry*, *Upplond'an* [the inhabitants of Norwegian *Upplond*], *Firdirský* [connected to Norwegian *Firðir*]
 - + easy for the common reader or writer
 - peculiar from a grammatical point of view (doubled endings)
 - inconsistent according to the choice made in 4.d
- b) The Old Norse stem: gen. *Stiklastaðû*, loc. *Hólech*, loc. *Brávallech*, instr. *Ásy*, *Uppland'an*, *Fjordský*
 - + common in Czech classical philology: *Ceres* - *Cereřin*
 - inconsistent treatment of sing. and pl.
- c) The Old Norse plural nominative without the nom. ending: gen. *Stiklastaðû*, loc. *Hólech*, loc. *Brávellech*, instr. *Æsy*, *Upplond'an*, *Firdský*
 - peculiar from a grammatical point of view: the secondary form with a changed stem is used in paradigm and derivation (*Upplond* > *Upplond'an*)
 - inconsistent according to the choice made in 4.d

d) **The Old Norse nom. sing. without the nom. sing. ending: gen. *Stiklastaðū*, loc. *Hólech*, loc. *Brávøllech*, instr. *Ásy*, *Uppland'an*, *Fjordský***

+ consistent treatment of sing. and pl.

- peculiar from a grammatical point of view: the secondary form with a changed stem is used in inflections and derivation (loc. *Brávøllech*)

4.2.2 Duplicate Forms

1. In the case of words and proper names where a vowel has changed from a short to a long one, it is possible to use:

a) short forms: *Ulf*, *Álf*, *Hliðskjálf*

+ short forms are original and sometimes well-known from modern Scandinavian languages (*Ulf*)

b) longer forms: *Úlf*, *Álf*, *Hliðskjálf*

+ they are more common, especially in prose texts

2. Endings oscillating between i/e:

a) forms with i: *Sverri*, *Póri*

+ more common in text editions

b) forms with e: *Sverre*, *Póre*

3. In words oscillating between o/u:

a) forms with o: *Tryggvason*, *Hrafnagoð*

+ o is more common

b) forms with u: *Tryggvasun*, *Hrafnaguð*

5. Conclusion

Czech is an inflected language and creating paradigms for names and other nouns is a necessary precondition for any translation of an Old Norse text. We have simply tried to harmonize these axioms into a system. The goal of our system is to make Old Norse texts and other texts concerning Old Norse issues easier for students, scholars of different fields and lay readers to understand, and our rules may also be followed by, for example, a journalist writing about a topic that he or she does not specialize in. We

have therefore had to compromise on the point of pure linguistics. Many of our solutions are not linguistically correct (we use nom. and not the stem as a basis for declination and we do not keep nom. endings in masc. and so on). On the other hand, we try not to commit crimes against linguistics where no comfort is afforded the Czech reader, as in adding Czech endings to the Old Norse ones (as in English gen. ‘*Grettir*’s’ or Russian locative ‘*Grettire*’) or by using forms that correspond neither to the original form nor to the demands of the target language (as, for example, with modern Scandinavian, English or German translations of nicknames). That is why we do not also suggest using letters whose different pronunciations students learn in more culturally related languages (as ‘ö’ from German) when transcribing Old Norse names and nouns.

As for nicknames, there is no reason not to translate into Czech those names that are obvious to any native speaker of Old Norse, where they do not cause problems with inflection. Certainly, it demands some ‘language imagination’ to see that *Magnús Dobrý* is the same person as *Magnús inn góði* (or even *Magnus den Gode*) and *Harald Krásnovlasý* is *Haraldr hárfagri* (or even *Harald Hårfagre*). We are well aware of the fact that the system we have constructed is not without contradictions and that it might quite often lead to ambiguous results. The meaning of the place-name *Agðanes* is quite important to the discussion between Halli and the king in *Sneglu-Halla þáttur* and it should be translated in that context (*Sneglu-Halla þáttur*, ch. 2), but it plays no special role otherwise and should remain untranslated. *Sýr*, the nickname of the father of Harald Hard-Ruler, is a ‘speaking name’ in *Stífs þáttur blinda* but its meaning is not very important for Snorri’s *Óláfs saga helga*. In the area of natural languages, there are no perfect solutions. But we are persuaded that at least some type of systematization is not only allowed, but even desirable.

The Czech tradition of language codification goes back to the early fifteenth-century tract *De orthographia Bohemica* written by Jan Hus, which led to the system of marking the length of vowels (á, é, í, ó, ú, ů, ý) and the palatalization of vowels and consonants (č, ď, ě, ň, ř, š, ť, ž). Concerning the scientific treatment of old languages, most philologists reached a consensus in creating the Czech forms for Greek and Latin nouns and names in the nineteenth century, and for Chinese and Indian ones at the beginning of twentieth century. Thus, our attempt to harmonize the translated forms of Old Norse nouns and names can be perceived as a continuation of this language tradition. We presume our general reader to have no knowledge of Old Norse grammar; in this

respect, the situation is quite different to that of translating from classical languages into Czech.

Our attempts were modelled on the Czech grammar system, Czech vocabulary, and even common Czech ways of rendering Latin and Greek names from classical antiquity. Of course, each language is different, each has its own demands and history, but enumerating the questions and finding possible answers will hopefully provoke discussion and be used as inspiration in any language.

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Summary

This article attempts to list possible problems concerning Old Norse nouns and names that arise in translations and suggests some basic rules of how to handle them in the context of the Czech language. Some of the questions are universal for any Indo-European language. Some occur only in inflected languages. As the answers depend on language policy, tradition and the background of the expected reader, research on the history of rendering Old Norse nouns and names into Czech has also been undertaken.

Questions are posed around transcription and translation, as well as around the forms of place-names, how names of nations and other groupings should be used, and in what cases the translation of nicknames, personal names and place-

names is deemed appropriate. Regarding grammatical issues, we touch upon the problems of declension and derivation. We discuss whether nominative endings of masculine nouns should be retained and whether the word stem should be used as a basis for declension within the target language. By listing the existing problems in the areas of nouns and proper names and the advantages of each possible solution, we hope to provoke a fruitful discussion on translating also in other target languages.

Keywords: Proper names, translating, declension, Old Norse, Czech

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Berättelse om verksamheten under 2013

AGNETA NEY & MARCO BIANCHI

Isländska sällskapets styrelse hade under 2013 följande sammansättning:

ordförande: Agneta Ney (fram till 25/4 Heimir Pálsson)

vice ordförande: Veturliði Óskarsson (redaktör för *Scripta Islandica*)

sekreterare: Marco Bianchi

skattmästare: Jan Axelson (fram till 25/4 Eva Aniansson)

vice sekreterare: Maja Bäckvall

ledamöter: Anna Bredin, Rasmus Lund, Lasse Mårtensson (redaktör för *Scripta Islandica*), Alexandra Petrulevich, Mathias Strandberg

Ordförande för Isländska sällskapets Umeå-avdelning är universitetslektor Susanne Haugen.

Vid årets utgång var 57 personer ständiga medlemmar eller hedersmedlemmar i sällskapet. Antalet medlemmar/prenumeranter på sällskapets e-postlista uppgick till 113 personer. *Scripta Islandica* prenumererades av 49 personer och institutioner.

Den sextiotredje årgången av *Scripta Islandica* utkom som fulltextpublikation i Digitala vetenskapliga arkivet (DiVA) 2012. Den kom i bokform 2013 och har distribuerats till medlemmar och prenumeranter. Den sextiofjärde årgången av *Scripta Islandica* utkom i mars 2014 som fulltextpublikation i Digitala vetenskapliga arkivet (DiVA).

Den sextiofjärde årgången av *Scripta Islandica* innehåller minnestexter över de tre avlidna medlemmarna Sigurd Fries (skriven av Lennart Elmevik), Rune Palm (skriven av Daniel Sävborg) och Gun Widmark (skriven av Ulla Börestam). Årgången innehåller följande referentgranskade uppsatser: "Bland ormar och drakar. En jämförande studie av Ramsundsristningen och Gökstenen" av Agneta Ney, "Death and the king. *Grottasöngur* in its eddic context" av Judy Quinn, "Divine Semantics. Terminology for the Human and the Divine in Old Norse Poetry" av Brittany Schorn samt "Body Language in Medieval Iceland. A Study of Gesticulation in the Sagas and Tales of Icelanders" av Kirsten Wolf. Årgången innehåller även recensioner av "Thou Fearful Guest.

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Den 14 mars 2013 bjöd Isländska sällskapet in till en visning av Friðrik Þórs film *Mamma Gógó*. Kvällen inleddes av professor Veturlíði Óskarsson och docent Heimir Pálsson. Vid årsmötet den 25 april 2013 höll Agneta Ney, docent i historia, Anne-Sofie Gräslund, professor em. i arkeologi och Lise Bertelsen, ph.d., Marie Curie Research Fellow vid Institutionen för arkeologi och antik historia, samtliga vid Uppsala universitet, ett föredrag med titeln ”Sigurd drakdödaren i text och bilder”. Vid det extra årsmötet den 27 september 2013 höll Kristinn Jóhannesson, tidigare universitetslektor i isländska vid Göteborgs universitet, ett föredrag över ämnet ”Det omöjligas konst? — eller hur skall man kunna översätta isländska släktsagor till modern svenska?” Vid höstterminens andra sammankomst den 7 november 2013 inbjöds Terry Gunnell, professor i folkloristik vid Háskóli Íslands, att tala över ämnet ”The Belief Contexts and Performance of Völuspá. Considerations Regarding the Nordic Judgement Day”.

Uppsala den 15 maj 2014

Agneta Ney

Marco Bianchi

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