

The Manuscripts of *Jómsvíkinga Saga* A Survey

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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 Jónsvíkings 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 *Flóvents 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*, *Herrauds 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 Stadarstaður’ (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

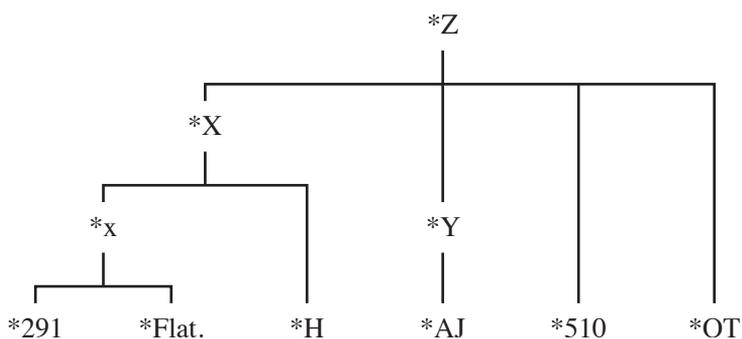


Fig. 1. Blake's stemma. (291 = AM 291 4to, Flat. = Flateyjarbók, H = Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7, AJ = the translation, 510 = AM 510 4to, OT = the text in the *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason*.)

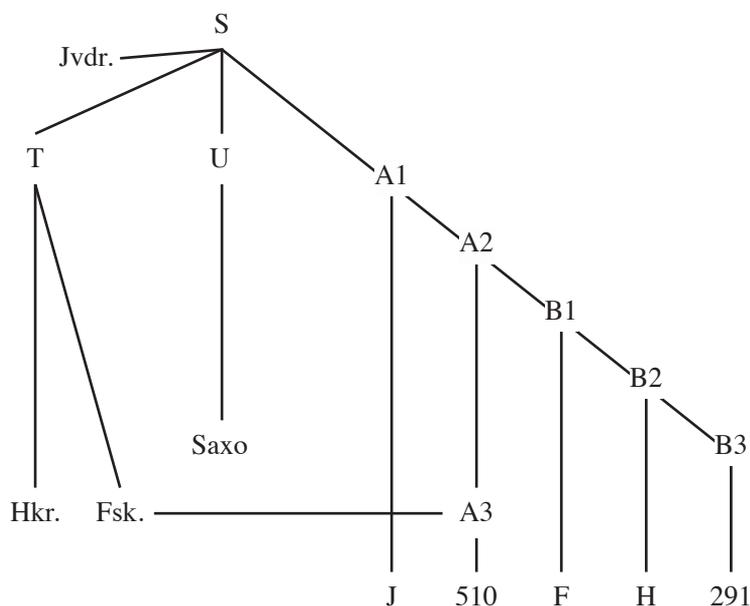


Fig. 2. Megaard's stemma. (Hkr. = *Heimskringla*, Fsk. = *Fagrskinna*, Saxo = *Gesta Danorum*, J = the translation, F = Flateyjarbók, H = Sthm. perg. 4:o nr 7, 291 = AM 291 4to.)

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

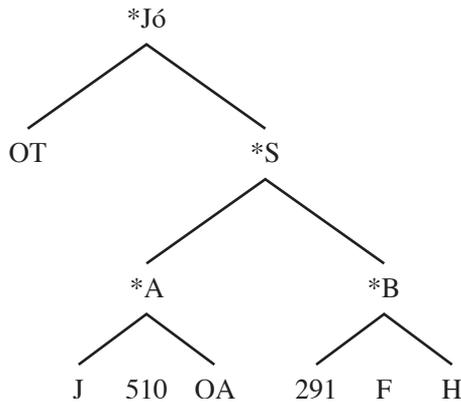


Fig. 3. Hempel's stemma. (*Jó = All common sources about the Jómsvíkinga, OT = those parts of the *Greatest saga of Óláfr Tryggvason* that differ from JS redactions, *S = The original *Jómsvíkinga saga* which splits into *A and *B, J = The Latin translation, 510 = AM 510 4to, OA = AM 310 4to, 291 = AM 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 Jómsvíkinga 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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