

Submitted as a Thesis for the Degree  
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by JOHN LE COUTEUR SIMON.

A CRITICAL EDITION OF BJARNAR SAGA  
HITDOELAKAPPA.

VOLUME I.

Department of Scandinavian Studies,  
University College London.

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ABSTRACT.

The aim of the thesis is a critical edition of Bjarnar saga Hitdoelakappa, providing as definitive a text as possible, based on a thorough examination of all known manuscripts of the saga. Variants and textual notes are furnished, together with a Commentary and translation, which as far as is known is the first in English.

Bjarnar saga falls into two overlapping groups of sagas, those concerning poets and those which have for their theme the story of the Icelander who goes abroad, having asked his betrothed to wait for him for three years. He is delayed and in his absence his rival obtains his bride. The end of such tales is frequently tragic, as is the case with Bjarnar saga.

With the exception of two fourteenth-century vellum sheets, Bjarnar saga is preserved only in paper manuscripts from the seventeenth century and later, the principal manuscript dating from about 1650. All later copies descend from this manuscript, which, however, is itself incomplete. The lacuna in the middle cannot be filled but it is largely possible to restore the missing opening chapters by using material contained in a version of Óláfs saga helga preserved in manuscripts dating from about 1700.

The saga deals with the rivalry of two Icelandic poets in their love for the same woman and in the exercise of their art. Scattered throughout the work are thirty-nine verses attributed to them. These verses are individually

discussed in the Commentary, together with the question of their actual authorship.

Extensive consideration has been given to the literary relations of Bjarnar saga with other Old Norse literature in endeavouring to arrive at its date of origin. No firm conclusion can be reached but the evidence appears to point to a date of around 1220 and probably to clerical authorship.

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CHAPTER I.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

I.

Sigurður Nordal says that Bjarnar saga has had "erlendis ... litlum vinsældum að fagna".<sup>(1)</sup> Whatever may be the reasons to which one should ascribe this lack of popularity outside the boundaries of Iceland, the quality of the work, despite a certain unevenness, is surely not amongst them. The Saga of Björn may lack the uniformity of Gunnlaugs saga but, when compared with the other short sagas in the group of which it forms a part, it loses nothing but may justifiably be rather said to gain by the comparison. It is hardly disputable that Kormáks saga and, to a lesser extent, Hallfreðar saga are little more than frames in which the verses of their respective heroes may be displayed to their best advantage; the verses of Björn and Þórðr adorn, albeit sometimes it appears a little irrelevantly, the saga of which they form a part but are hardly the sole reason for its composition. At any rate, there is much more to Bjarnar saga than its verses and, even though we were to lose the whole 39 of them, regrettable though that would be, the rest of the work would still stand on its own merits. This applies especially to the beginning and the end of the saga, the central part being, as will be referred to later, built up to a much greater extent around its verses.

Bjarnar saga Hitdoelakappa may, like Caesar's Gaul, be divided more or less neatly into three parts. These may be conveniently summarized as follows :-

(1) Björn's departure from Iceland, his adventures abroad and his return to Iceland. This section is equivalent to the páttir of Björn and Þórðr in the Bajarbók version of Óláfs saga Helga and forms Chapters I-XI (Pages 1-19) of this edition. It contains Verses 1 and 2.

(2) Björn's stay with Þórðr at Hitarnes and their subsequent quarrels. Chapters XII-XXX (Pages 20-50), containing Verses 3 to 30.

(3) Þorsteinn Kuggason's stay with Björn over Yule; their subsequent friendship; Þórðr's ambush of Björn resulting in the latter's death; the settlement at the Althing. This comprises Chapters XXXI-XXXVII (Pages 50-73) and contains Verses 31 to 39.

From the above it will be seen that the central portion of the saga, although comprising considerably less than half of the total content, actually contains more than two-thirds of its total number of verses, no less than 28 out of 39 in all. This leaves 9 verses for the final section of the saga, in fact almost one-third of the whole in length and a mere token two verses for the opening portion, which comprises an almost exact quarter of the whole work. It may be mentioned here that the quite extensive and splendidly related account of Þorsteinn Kuggason's Yule visit to Björn is completely unsupported by any verse, although Verse 36 later may preserve an echo of it<sup>(2)</sup>.

Furthermore, of the two verses in the first section of the saga, it is extremely doubtful whether Verse 1 stands in its correct place in the text as we have it now.

In any event, not all the verses composed by Björn and Þórðr are by any means preserved. The limitation of the interest of the scribe of the Bajarbók to those matters that concerned Óláfs Saga Helga has, for instance, in all probability resulted in the loss to posterity of some verses, relating to the dealings between Björn and Þórðr before the former's sojourn at Borg with his kinsman, Skúli.<sup>(3)</sup> However, of this we cannot be certain.

Briefly, at this stage, one may content oneself with stating that the first part of the saga is in general the more or less conventional story of the young Icelfander's journey abroad with Norwegian merchants, his exploits in Russia and as a Viking, his enjoyment of favour with three kings and an earl and, his name having been made, his subsequent return to his native land to settle down after a twelve year absence. To this we may add the equally conventional touch in such a situation of the fornaldarsaga, especially in the incident of the flying dragon, which has been thrown in for good measure.

The middle of the saga is a somewhat undigested mass of incidents concerning the in some respects petty quarrels of Björn and Þórðr, but for which, as indicated above, the author had or purported to have ample authority in the form of lausavísur. There could hardly be a greater contrast to the world of the king's saga and that of the fornaldarsaga than the life of the Icelandic farmer and

the local, one may say parochial, disagreements that form the subject of this section. The only real similarity is the continuing and indeed continually accelerating violence.

Finally, the author's talents may be said to have come into their own in the last section of the story, with his brilliant exposition of the ordeal of Þorsteinn Kuggason and his party, where the delineation of character is outstanding, and then rising to a peak with his description of Björn's last lone defence against overwhelming odds. The spirit of the Heroic Age has probably never been depicted better than in this scene. The author naturally descends a little from these heights in the following closing scenes of the saga but rounds off his story with efficiency and with dignity in his narration of the formidable compensation exacted by Þorsteinn for Björn's death, the amount received being almost unprecedented in Iceland.<sup>(4)</sup>

If only because of the outstanding quality of its last section alone, Bjarnar saga merits a much greater attention than it has hitherto received. It is the object of the following chapters of this commentary to amplify this statement and to provide the necessary background information to the text and translation of the saga which follow. This may justly be regarded as a rewarding task, as this is not only the first edition in English of Bjarnar saga, but, so far as is known, also the first English translation.



## II.

There have been six published editions of Bjarnar saga, the first being that of Halldór K. Friðriksson, published in Copenhagen in 1847 as Volume IV of the series, Nordiske Oldskrifter. This was accompanied by a Danish translation.

In 1893 R.C. Boer's edition was published in Halle. This was based on the majority of manuscripts of the saga available in Copenhagen together with that in Stockholm, is accompanied by an adequate commentary and, next to the Fornrit edition, is certainly the most valuable of those editions of the saga which have so far been published.

Valdimar Ásmundarson edited Bjarnar saga in 1898 in Reykjavik as Íslendinga sögur XXIV and a fresh edition appeared in the same series in 1923 under the hand of Benedikt Sveinsson.

In 1938 Bjarnar saga appeared in "Borgfirðinga sögur", Íslensk Fornrit III, edited by Sigurður Nordal and Guðni Jónsson. This, the main edition of the saga, contains a comprehensive introduction and the usual valuable notes common to the series. It is, however, based on even fewer manuscripts than is that of Boer.

Finally Guðni Jónsson edited the saga in 1946 in the Íslendingasagnaútgáfan published in Reykjavik, where it appeared in Volume III, "Snæfellinga sögur".

None of these editions was based on anything approaching the complete number of the manuscripts of the saga, since they ignore those which are to be found in Reykjavik, London, Oslo and Uppsala and in so doing they neglect some manuscripts of considerable importance.

So far as translations are concerned, Bjarnar saga has appeared in Danish, Norwegian Riksmål and Nynorsk and in German, the latter being that of Felix Niedner in "Vier Skaldengeschichten", Thule IX (1914).

There are also unprinted rimur concerning Björn Hítðalækappi by Eiríkur Pálsson (1825-1900) from Uppsálar in Svarfaðardalur. These are in manuscript form in the National Library of Iceland in Reykjavík.

### III.

In arriving at the text in this edition, consideration has been given to all the known extant manuscripts of the saga. As is explained in Chapter II of the Commentary, dealing with the Manuscripts, AM 73 a, fol. has been used as the basis of the first part of the saga, taken from Bæjarbók. For the remainder, AM 551 d a, 4to has been used, except for those parts of the saga, which are represented by the vellum fragments. AM 162 F, fol. Owing to defects in the first vellum fragment, it has been necessary to fill in gaps from AM 551 d a, 4to. Where this has been done, the words or letters supplied have been enclosed in square brackets.

AM 551 d a, 4to has neither chapter divisions nor chapter headings but is rather arbitrarily divided into paragraphs of varying sizes. These paragraphs have, for the purposes of this edition, been treated as chapters in addition to those chapters together with their titles which make up the portions of Bæjarbók and of the vellum included

in the text. The numbers of the chapters are indicated by Roman numerals in the margin. The verses, which are likewise not numbered in the manuscript, have on the other hand been given Arabic numerals in this edition.

Emendations to the text have been indicated by asterisks and the authorities for these emendations have been given in the list of variants following the text.

The verses, many of which are obviously in some measure corrupt, have however been left unaltered in the text, other than that proper names have been uniformly capitalized, where small letters have been used in the manuscript. This procedure has also been followed throughout the prose text. Otherwise the capitalization or lack of it in the manuscript has been left undisturbed in both prose and verse, as has the orthography. The verses have however been emended when individually discussed in Chapter III. Any quotations from these verses throughout the Commentary follow the emended versions.

The principles followed in preparing the lists of variants both for the text and for the three Appendices are outlined in the chapter on the Manuscripts. Since it is considered that all extant manuscripts of the saga, other than the Bæjarbók manuscripts and the vellum fragments, are derived from AM 551 d a, 4to, it has not been found necessary to provide full variants to the text other than from Bæjarbók. As far as the Bæjarbók portion is concerned, however, full variants have been given in those cases where it is apparent or probable that manuscripts represent independent copies of Bæjarbók. Mere orthographical

differences, however, have not been noted, nor have such minor matters as the alternation between eigi and ekki as an adverb.

Three Appendices have been provided. Appendix I contains that part of the pátrr of Björn and Þórðr in Bæjarbók for which a corresponding text is extant in AM 551 d a, 4to. The basic text here has been taken from AM 73 a, fol.

A certain group of manuscripts have a rewritten commencement to the saga and this is represented by Appendix II, Lbs. 2480, 4to being used as the basic version.

Finally, a further short pátrr relating to Björn exists in the AM 61, fol. and Tómasskinna manuscripts of Óláfs saga helga and the text from AM 61, fol. is given in Appendix III with variants from Tómasskinna.

Full variants have been provided to Appendix I from the other independent Bæjarbók manuscripts and to Appendix II from the other manuscripts in the group to which reference is made above and which is comprehensively discussed in Chapter II.

#### IV.

In preparing the translation of the saga, the text of the present edition has been used as the basis, the chapter division adopted there being followed. No chapter titles, however, have been employed, it not having been thought worthwhile to retain those titles, half of them fragmentary, which are occasionally used in the portions of the text taken from Bæjarbók and AM 162 F, fol.

It has been the principal aim that the translation be as accurate as possible and consequently this has entailed a certain lack of freedom with resultant sacrifice of style. So far as the verses are concerned, the alliteration of the original and its metre have been kept as far as possible but no attempt has been made at retaining assonance. The end-rhymes of the Grámagaflim verses ( 26 to 28) have, however, been imitated to some extent.

The following points should also be noted with respect to the translation :

- (i) Nominative endings of Icelandic proper names have been dispensed with.
- (ii) Present historicis have been rendered as Past. A case can be made out for the retention of the former in an English translation but it is not considered to be sufficiently convincing to justify its adoption where the translation is meant to be read rather than recited. (5)
- (iii) Icelandic names have generally not been translated, particularly place-names.
- (iv) Punctuation has been altered to some extent.
- (v) For purposes of easier reading, the chapters have necessarily been split up into paragraphs.

## V.

Attention has been given in the Commentary principally to the manuscripts, the verses and the question of the origin of the saga, its literary affinities and its

possible date and authorship. The text and variants in Volume II are followed by Textual Notes, which relate chiefly to disputed passages, in respect of which emended and variant readings have been adopted in some cases.

It is not claimed that these Textual Notes are in any way exhaustive and in those cases where an adequate footnote is given in the Fornrit edition it has not been thought necessary to duplicate this or in general to comment further.

For the same reason, General Notes on purely antiquarian, historical or geographical subjects have been dispensed with. These are more than adequately dealt with in the Fornrit edition.

The Orthography of the manuscripts, principally of the vellum fragments and of the verses, has been treated by Boer in his edition of the saga<sup>(6)</sup> and this has been consequently omitted here. Other than the fragments, all of the manuscripts of the saga are from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and later, in any case, and differ little from any other manuscripts of their period, except for conscious attempts at archaism from time to time.

Amongst other matters to which the reader may refer to Boer for a fairly comprehensive discussion are the geographical relations<sup>(7)</sup> of the saga and the characterization<sup>(8)</sup> and these subjects have only been lightly touched on in this edition.

One matter, however, which Boer does not deal with satisfactorily and which also is not treated as fully as it might be in the Fornrit edition is that of Björn's adventures

in Russia. This has accordingly been given somewhat fuller treatment in a separate chapter of the Commentary. A short chapter is also devoted to the Historicity and Chronology of the saga.

Volume II is completed by a Bibliography of all the known manuscripts of the saga and of former editions of the saga and other works which have been consulted in the preparation of this edition. The Bibliography is followed by a list of Abbreviations employed.

## VI.

In conclusion, the following points are made :

(1) It has been the aim to produce a diplomatic edition of the text of the saga, which will be as definitive as possible and with that object consideration has been given to all known manuscripts of the saga. In so doing, a large number of manuscripts have been examined and made use of for variant purposes, which have been neglected in earlier editions. It is considered that this in itself should greatly enhance the value of the present edition, since too often relatively late paper manuscripts, particularly those in London and in Reykjavik, have been lightly dismissed as valueless and unworthy of further examination. No text of a saga can be regarded as to any extent settled until due consideration has been given to all its known manuscripts, however late they may be.

(ii) As far as possible, by examination and comparison of the manuscripts, their line of descent and interrelationship

has been arrived at and this has been of considerable assistance in determining the respective value of each copy. The discovery of the link manuscript, Oslo 313, 4to, long believed to be missing, has been of great importance here. The relationship and, so far as is known, the history of these manuscripts, is extensively discussed in a separate chapter of the Commentary, depending almost entirely on independent research.

(iii) In the remaining chapters of the Commentary, attention has especially been paid to the verses and to the date of origin of the saga. Each verse has been considered separately and regard has been given to variations amongst the different manuscripts and to the commentaries of scholars concerning the verses, in order to arrive at as accurate an emended version of each verse as possible and to investigate thoroughly its meaning and background. The question of the authorship of the verses is also considered, that is, whether they are the products of the reputed poets, the saga-author himself, or of third parties. Each verse is reproduced in the version of the principal manuscript, followed where necessary by a corrected text and text in normal word-order, by notes, English prose translation and by a commentary. In this way it is felt that further assistance is given towards the understanding and appreciation of the saga.

(iv) In endeavouring to determine the date and place of authorship and the identity of the author of the saga, a great deal of consideration has necessarily been given to



the question of its literary relations with other sagas and poems. This has involved extensive examination of and comparison with other Old Norse literature, particularly the Sagas of Icelanders, and the results of this research are set out in the chapter dealing with the Date of Origin of the Saga. In this connection also it has been necessary to examine thoroughly the not inconsiderable corpus of scholarly literature relating in particular to Bjarnar saga itself and to the other sagas of poets, forming the group of which Bjarnar saga is a member. The question of the authorship of the saga is not one that appears possible to be determined finally and is a subject concerning which fresh facts are difficult to discover. It is hoped, however, that the evidence collated and details marshalled in the Commentary make some contribution towards a solution of the problem.

(v) No English translation of this saga has ever been published and it is accordingly considered that the translation appended to the text of the saga in this edition should in itself be of value in advancing the study of Old Norse literature and of Bjarnar saga in particular. Any means by which Old Norse literature may be brought before a wider public is not unworthy of attention and translation is certainly not the least worthy.

NOTES.

(1) Islensk Fornrit III (1938), XCVII.

(2) "enn hraust gedi á hausti  
. . . . kom westann  
. . . .  
. . . med lid dreingia."

(BSH, Vol. II, p.64, 11.7-10) (In references to the text, (BSH), the volume number (II) is henceforth omitted.)

(3) See BSH, p.1, 11.20-22.

- "en þui get ek ecki þeira smagræina sem milli foro þeira Biarnar ok Þordar aðr Biörn kom til Skula at þær hœyra ecki til þessari sögu."

(4) See BSH, p.73, 11.16-18.

- "og nu var su vmræda manna, ad varla hafi þullykt Epter mál ordid vm einn mann sem epter Biörn".

(5) See, for the opposite view, George Johnston, "On Translation - II", Saga-Book of the Viking Society XV (1957-61), 396; The Saga of Gisli (1963), xi.

(6) R.C.Boer, Biarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa (1893), XXXIX-XLII.

(7) Ibid, XXII-XXVIII.

(8) Ibid, XXXVI-XXXVII.

CHAPTER II.

THE MANUSCRIPTS.

A. Preliminary.

Biarnar saga is far from being the best preserved of sagas and it would indeed have needed very little for it, or nearly all of it, to have been completely lost to posterity. Apart from two solitary and disconnected vellum sheets dating from the late fourteenth century, the main body of the saga is represented by a paper manuscript from about 1650 and by numerous copies all stemming from that same manuscript. This principal manuscript, AM 551 d a, 4to, has, however, a lacuna in the middle, which, it would seem, could now only be filled by a discovery little short of a miracle. Moreover, the text lacks a beginning and this can only be supplied from paper copies of a now almost completely lost late fourteenth or early fifteenth century vellum containing a conflate version of Óláfs saga helga, the so-called Bajarbók. Amongst the episodes relating to St. Olaf, which have been included in this manuscript, is a páttur relating to Björn and Þórðr. This comprises ten chapters and deals with Björn's early history, omitting the small items which do not concern the Saga of St. Olaf. It relates principally Björn's adventures abroad, in Norway with Earl Eric, in Russia with King Valdimarr, in England with Canute, on viking cruises and then in Norway again with King Olaf. His clashes with Þórðr whilst abroad are dealt with and the páttur ends with Björn's return to Iceland, the remainder of his career being dismissed in a few lines, for indeed that had no longer any connection with King Olaf.

These ten chapters are obviously a re-telling, with

certain omissions and in some cases certain expansions, of the opening of Bjarnar saga. The last five and a half chapters correspond approximately to the beginning of AM 551 d a, 4to, whilst the first four and a half chapters represent the beginning of the saga itself, now otherwise lost.

All in all, there are at least sixty manuscripts relating to Bjarnar saga, if one counts all the Bæjarbók copies. These manuscripts are of very uneven value and, in the great majority of cases, their value for the purposes of textual criticism is very slight indeed. Some assistance can occasionally be derived from some of the older manuscripts in arriving at suitable emendations to corrupt passages in the text contained in AM 551 d a, 4to; so far as the younger manuscripts are concerned, their worth for this purpose is considerably less. Apart from the Bæjarbók transcripts, which are almost all of primary importance for variant purposes since they represent independent copies of the vellum, it is possible, in arriving at a critical text of the saga, except for aid in arriving at emendations, to dispense with all the other manuscripts, other than the vellum fragments of AM 162 F, fol., and to rely on AM 551 d a, 4to. Despite this, the other manuscripts are frequently not without interest and it is desirable to make some mention of each one, in greater or less detail, according to its respective importance. Since most of these manuscripts fall into various sub-groups, it will be convenient, when discussing the manuscripts, to make reference to these categories and to take them in that order. Finally, the Bjarnar saga manuscripts do, over and above any sub-divisions, fall into

three main classes which it is intended to discuss in order; first, the vellum fragments; secondly, the Bæjarbók transcripts; and thirdly, AM 551 d a, 4to and its derivatives.

B. The Vellum Fragments.

The solitary vellum fragments of Bjarnar saga are represented by two out of three folios, which are collectively known as AM 162 F, fol.<sup>(1)</sup> the third and last folio containing two pages from Kormáks saga. On a leaf attached to the fragments is written:-

"þetta blad feck eg 1707. fra Sr Jone i Hitardal.  
ur Biarnar Sögu Hitdala k.  
ur Kormaks Sögu."

Sigurður Nordal<sup>(2)</sup> in the Fornrit edition of the saga claims that the leaf relating to Kormáks saga is from Sira Jón Halldórsson in Hitardalur and that the provenance of the Bjarnar saga fragments is unknown. However, since Jón Halldórsson resided in the very area in which the scene of the saga is set and was moreover in correspondence with Árni Magnússon at this time both concerning Bjarnar saga and other matters, there seems every reason to believe that Árni obtained the Bjarnar saga fragments from Jón Halldórsson at the same time as the leaf from Kormáks saga. This question cannot, however, be definitely determined and is not in itself of vital importance.

The two leaves from Bjarnar saga, which, according to Nordal,<sup>(3)</sup> date from the latter part of the fourteenth century, are not consecutive and consequently comprise two separate sections, the one commencing with the words "vm nott"

and ending at "oc vard heill er sk" and the other beginning at "aurn of Byrne" and ending with "ef hann sei hrossin." In the present edition, these portions of text run from Page 47, line 11 to Page 50, line 16 and from Page 60, line 10 to Page 63, line 27.

The two sheets have, in their passage through the centuries until they came to rest in the Arnamagnæan Collection, suffered somewhat different treatment. The second leaf is intact, in reasonably good condition and quite legible, whereas the condition of the first sheet is rather poor with the text in parts difficult to read. Moreover, the leaf has been mutilated by having the edges sliced away at the sides and top, which has resulted in the loss of a certain amount of the text.

In the present edition, it has been necessary to fill these gaps from AM 551 d a, 4to and, where this has been done, the words or letters which have been supplied are indicated by their being enclosed in square brackets [ ].

Otherwise, AM 162 F, fol. has been followed with the exception of a few cases where emendation appeared necessary, due to the obvious corruption of the text. The readings from AM 162 F, fol. in these cases have been listed at the rear of the text, together with all variant readings where AM 551 d a, 4to (henceforth generally referred to as 551) differs from AM 162 F, fol. (henceforth usually referred to as F).

Emendations have been indicated by asterisks; an asterisk before a word in the text denoting that the word itself is an emended reading, whereas an asterisk after a

word indicates that a subsequent obviously redundant and incorrect word has been omitted.

C. The Bæjarbók Manuscripts.

1. AM 73 b, fol.

Bæjarbók, called Bæjarbók á Rauðasandi to distinguish it from Bæjarbók í Borgarfirði (AM 75 a, fol.), has had a very chequered history. Arni Magnússon appears to have acquired it through Amtmand Christian Müller late in 1697 or early in 1698,<sup>(4)</sup> for he gave Müller a promissory note for it on 12th January, 1698, and Müller was in Copenhagen during the winter of 1697 to 1698.<sup>(5)</sup>

In Arni Magnússon's catalogue of parchment manuscripts dating at the latest from 1727, the year before the great fire in Copenhagen, there is the following entry:-

•Olafs Saga Helga, prolixa, cum præfatione.

Magnuss Saga Eya Jarls.

Folio. Komin til min fra Gudrunu Eggerts dottur ad Bæ á Raudasande.\*<sup>(6)</sup>

Guðrún, who was the daughter of Eggert Björnsson from Skarð and widow of Björn sýslumaður Gíslason, died in 1724 at the age of 88,<sup>(7)</sup> but it appears that in 1697 she must have agreed to sell the manuscript to Arni Magnússon and that Amtmand Müller acted as the go-between during his visit to Copenhagen. In fact, this was not the only manuscript for which Arni gave Amtmand Müller a promissory note at this time.<sup>(8)</sup>

Unhappily, only four leaves are now extant of Bæjarbók and these are preserved as AM 73 b, fol. and

considered to date from about 1400.<sup>(9)</sup> It is not precisely known when the remainder of the codex was lost but it appears reasonably certain that it was during the second great fire in Copenhagen in 1795; since, according to a certain Pastor Jessen from Zealand, the leaves in question were found in the street in Copenhagen after the fire of that year. Pastor Jessen gave the leaves in 1841 to the sub-librarian of the University of Copenhagen, P.G.Thorsen, who seventeen years later, that is on 13th July, 1858, presented them to the Arnemagnsan Collection. In such an odd and roundabout way what was left of an important codex returned to the Collection, from which it had apparently been borrowed the best part of a century before.<sup>(10)</sup>

The páttir of Björn and Þórðr formed part of the great bulk of the manuscript which has been lost. However, before its almost complete destruction, AM 73 b, fol. was copied on several occasions, both in Iceland and in Denmark, and a number of those copies are fortunately still extant.

## 2. AM 73 a, fol.

Of all the Bæjarbók copies AM 73 a, fol.<sup>(11)</sup> is the only complete manuscript that is very probably a direct copy of the vellum.

Jón Ólafsson's catalogue<sup>(12)</sup> of 1730 describes AM 73 a, fol. as "Olafs helga Saga med hende Jons Magnuss. i Sólheimum og Jons Arnorss. i Liask. (ad eg meina)."<sup>(13)</sup>

AM 73 a, fol. has been written by three hands and, as the second scribe has only written 8 pages out of 448, it is clear that it is the first and third scribes who are



referred to by Jón Ólafsson from Grunnavík. Jón Helgason in Den Store Saga om Olav den Hellige<sup>(14)</sup> regards Jón Arnórsson<sup>(15)</sup> from Ljárskógar as the third scribe, so it would therefore appear that the first scribe is Jón Magnússon,<sup>(16)</sup> Arni Magnússon's brother.

It would be difficult to identify with any certainty hands in this manuscript, since a special effort was made by all three scribes to imitate the script in the vellum and they have in effect produced a thoroughly diplomatic copy, even to the extent of apparently consciously reproducing the errors in the codex.<sup>(17)</sup>

Jón Helgason<sup>(18)</sup> says, in this regard, concerning this manuscript:-

"73 a ligner ikke andre avskrifter som er bestemt til det islandske publikum. Bare den indre halvdel av sidene er beskrevet, og skriverne gjør sig tydelig umake for å gjengi den gamle codex så nøiaktig som mulig. Det er altså en avskrift med videnskapelig karakter, og man spør om den kan være foretatt for noen annen enn Arne Magnusson."

It may be mentioned that AM 73 a, fol. is divided into chapters, most of which are provided with titles, but the chapters are not numbered. The manuscript is to such an extent a diplomatic copy of the vellum that it appears reasonable to regard it as a direct copy. Accordingly, it qualifies as the most reliable of the Bjarnarbók copies and has for that reason been taken as the basis of the text of the pátttr of Björn and Þórðr in this edition of Bjarnar saga.

If it is a direct copy of AM 73 b, fol. it appears that Arni Magnússon must have taken the latter with him to Iceland when he was there making his Land Survey between 1702 and 1712 and accordingly AM 73 a, fol. was probably written during this period, probably about 1710. Arni did not get his manuscripts back in Denmark until 1720,<sup>(19)</sup> due to disturbance caused by the Danish-Swedish War and therefore it is likely that AM 73 a, fol. was written any time up to 1720, but not before 1702.

As previously mentioned, the beginning of Bjarnar saga can only be supplied from the páttir of Björn and Þórðr found in the Bajarbók copies, although this from its very nature is a version of the early history of Björn which has been adapted to fit the needs of Óláfs saga helga. For example, it would be very odd indeed if Bjarnar saga had originally begun as does the páttir with the words "Nu skal segja nokkut af þeim íslenskum monnum sem vppi voro um daga Ólafs konungs Háraldssonar." This, however, is a natural beginning for a tale which merely forms a section of a large saga.

The story as told in Bjarnar saga in its original form has clearly been shortened in part to eliminate certain items which concerned the early relations between Björn and Þórðr because in the words of the páttir, "þar hægja ecki til þessaRi sögu."<sup>(20)</sup> That is to say, they do not belong to Óláfs saga. These words could not have been in the original Bjarnar saga, for, as Guðbrandur Vigfússon remarked over a century ago, where would these items belong if not to Bjarnar saga?<sup>(21)</sup> It is probable, also, that the páttir has in some respects

expanded the original, where the affairs of King Olaf are concerned, and a comparison of the last five and a half chapters as set out in Appendix I of this edition with the parallel text from 551 would seem to indicate this.

As stated above, AM 73 a, fol. has provided the commencement of the text in this edition and this has, in fact, been treated as the first five chapters, ending at "willði hann æi til Islandz fara".<sup>(22)</sup> The remainder of the váttur, which corresponds to approximately the next six chapters of Bjarnar saga, as taken from 551, continues to relate the adventures of Björn and Þórör, as they affected King Olaf, but then ends abruptly with Björn's return to Iceland and a brief reference to further events, which are fully related in Bjarnar saga, but which do not concern Oláfs saga.<sup>(23)</sup>

### 3. AM 71, fol.

One of the most important of the other Bajarbók manuscripts is AM 71, fol. written by Magnús Einarsson<sup>(24)</sup> in a Gothic cursive script with verses and chapter titles in fraktur, probably not much earlier than 1725. On a slip attached to the manuscript Árni Magnússon has written:

"Pessa Olafs Sögu Helga feck eg fra Islande 1725, hana hefur skrifad Magnus Einarsson á Jörfa i Haukadal, epter bok in folio sem liede Lögmaðurenn Pall Jonsson, og var fra Snæbirne Palssyne á Myrum i Dyrafirde. Su bok hafde fyrrum vered eign Astridar Jonsdottur, vermodur Snæbiarnar."<sup>(25)</sup>

The so-called Astriðarbók, which belonged originally to Astriður Jónsdóttir, at one time married to the celebrated Magnús Jónsson í Vigur, has been lost, but must have been the oldest<sup>(26)</sup> of the known copies of Bæjarbók and probably dated from 1690 or earlier; at any rate no later than 1697, in which year Bæjarbók apparently left Iceland.

AM 71, fol. was adopted as a basis for his text by Boer in his edition of Bjarnar saga, but, since it has a modernised orthography and is not a direct copy of the vellum, it has not been thought justified to prefer it to AM 73 a, fol. Jón Helgason<sup>(27)</sup> has moreover pointed out the number of important mistakes which it contains and it does indeed vary quite considerably from AM 73 a, fol. In some cases its readings have been preferred to those in 73a and these cases and its other variants are noted at the back of the text. It should further be noted that it is divided into chapters, which are both numbered and provided with titles. The váttir of Björn and Pórr comprises Chapters 88 to 97 inclusive.

#### 4. AM 76 a, fol.

This is also a manuscript attributed by Jón Ólafsson in his catalogue of 1730 (AM 456, fol.) to Magnús Einarsson. It is a finely written manuscript with verses written in fraktur and prose in a type of cursive script which approaches fraktur.<sup>(28)</sup> It was probably written about 1720 and is apparently a copy of a copy made by the priest Eyjólfur Jónsson of Bæjarbók. This copy, known as Gottrupsbók, is now lost but was written for the lawman Lauritz Gottrup,

according to Jón Helgason,<sup>(29)</sup> during the years 1699 to 1702, whilst Eyjólfur was priest at Þingeyrar, where Gottrup lived. This seems rather doubtful, however, as Árni Magnússon must have had Bæjarbók with him in Copenhagen at least between 1697 and 1702 and accordingly one cannot date Gottrupsbók earlier than 1702, unless one goes back as far as 1697 at least. Possibly 1702, the year that Árni Magnússon returned to Iceland, would be the most likely date. Another copy of Gottrupsbók was written during the winter of 1711-1712<sup>(30)</sup> by Þorsteinn Sigurðsson for the lawman Páll Vídalín,<sup>(31)</sup> who co-operated with Árni Magnússon in his Land Survey of Iceland. This manuscript also appears to be lost.

Apart from Gottrupsbók, Eyjólfur Jónsson also wrote an example for himself, either from Gottrupsbók or directly from the vellum. In 1725 he told Árni Magnússon in a letter<sup>(32)</sup> that the copy which he had made was so illegible and poor that he did not dare send it to Árni but he hoped to send him a clean copy. The so-called Eyjólfsbók is lost but the manuscript which Eyjólfur sent Árni in the following year (1726) is preserved as AM 76 b, fol. This is the clean copy he had promised. It is, however, merely a fragment, representing the beginning and end of Bæjarbók and does not concern Þjarnar saga.

In a note attached to AM 76 b, fol,<sup>(33)</sup> Árni Magnússon remarks, inter alia :-

\*Bok Laurusar lógmanns (mater þeirrar er lógmann Vídalín á með hendi Þorsteins Sigurðssonar, og þeirrar er eg nu 1726 á með hende Magnusar Einarssonar) er progenies þeirrar

bokar er eg eignadist fra Gudrum Eggertsdottur a Bæ a Raudasande .....

Bok Snæbiarnar (af hverre eg hefi Copie) er af sama slage og þesse med hende Þorsteins Sigurdzsonar. Eru badar ur Saurbæjar bokinne ....."

Snæbjörn's book is Astriðarbók and the copy of it which Árni owned is AM 71, fol. On the other hand, the copy by Magnús Einarsson of Gottrupsbók which Árni owned in 1726 clearly must be AM 76 a, fol.

In AM 76 a, fol. the páttir of Björn and Þórðr appears at Chapters LXXXIX to XCVIII. This numbering is therefore slightly different from that of AM 71, fol. and there are no titles. AM 76 a, fol. is an unreliable manuscript and contains a great number of errors. Many of these errors must have been present in Gottrupsbók, which was evidently a far poorer copy of Bæjarbók than was Astriðarbók, since AM 71, fol., which was copied from the latter and was also written by Magnús Einarsson, has far fewer mistakes than AM 76 a, fol. The latter manuscript is however useful in suggesting emendations to AM 73 a, fol. in cases where it agrees with AM 71, fol. against 73 a. In any event, full variants from 76 a have been listed following the text.

5. ÍB 382, 4to.

Apart from the three complete Bæjarbók texts in the Arnemagnæan Collection, there are several other Óláfs saga texts in other manuscript collections which stem from Bæjarbók and relate to Bjarnar saga. These are well spread

amongst Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, England and Norway.

The manuscript in Iceland, IB 382, 4to,<sup>(34)</sup> is the most valuable of these. Jón Helgason<sup>(35)</sup> dates it to the first half of the eighteenth century and there is no reason to dispute this. The only thing known of its history is that the Bókmenntafélag obtained it from Sigmundur Matthíasson.<sup>(36)</sup> Like AM 76 a, fol., it is divided into chapters, which are numbered but not titled, and the páttir of Björn and Þórðr likewise appears as Chapters LXXXIX to XCVIII inclusive. It would appear therefore to be a copy of Gottrupsbók and, in fact, it also appears to be a more accurate copy than AM 76 a, fol. In so far, at least, as the ten chapters relating to Björn are concerned, the number of errors is considerably less than is found in 76a. That is to say, it is appreciably closer to 73 a than is 76 a, and consequently closer to the vellum and this fact is apparent from the variants which are fully noted.

6. Thott 1766, 4to.

This is a manuscript in the Royal Library in Copenhagen<sup>(37)</sup> and also appears to date from the first half of the eighteenth century. Like AM 76 a, fol. and IB 382, 4to, it is clearly related to Gottrupsbók, the ten chapters referring to Björn and Þórðr being without titles and being numbered LXXXIX to XCVIII. It also has many variants in common with 76 a, but, as will be seen from the list following the text, it contains quite a number of additional readings differing from 73 a, and is altogether a more corrupt text than 76 a and even more so when compared with IB 382, 4to.

Jón Helgason<sup>(38)</sup> regards it as probably a copy of Eyjólfsbók, and, as Eyjólfur Jónsson himself considered this copy of his of Gottrupsbók as a poor manuscript, this seems a very plausible assumption, apart from the textual reasons referred to by Jón Helgason. It might also be mentioned that Thott 1766, 4to is a manuscript which contains a great number of abbreviations and that the ten chapters relating to Bjarnar saga are specifically headed "Páttir Beorns Hytdala kappá oc Þordar Kolbeinss." In both these regards there is a direct link with the next manuscript to be discussed.

7. Uppsala R 719 b, fol.

This is a large folio manuscript in the University Library at Uppsala, the older portion of which consists of a copy of the Flateyjarbók version of Óláfs saga helga. This is dated at the end of 1699. There are, however, additions in other hands from Bajarbók, amongst which is the páttir of Björn and Þórðr. This was clearly added some time later and, together with the principal other Bajarbók additions, is written on much newer and cleaner paper than the older portion. A date of around 1750 for the Bajarbók additions appears to be reasonable. According to Jón Helgason,<sup>(39)</sup> the manuscript was written in Iceland and the binding is Icelandic. How it reached Uppsala appears to be unknown.

The ten chapters relating to Björn and Þórðr are headed "Páttir Beorns Hitdala Kappá, oc Þordar Kolbeinssunar." There are not titles to the chapters, the first chapter is unheaded and the remaining nine chapters merely headed "Cap".



The text is extremely compressed into precisely five folio leaves and the system of abbreviation bears a very close resemblance to that in Thott 1766, 4to. The hand is also very similar but is probably not identical as there are certain variations, particularly in letter formations. As will be seen from the variant list following the text, Thott 1766, 4to and R 719 b, fol. have almost identical variant readings throughout and without question no other two Bæjarbók texts, so far as the Þáttur of Björn and Þórðr is concerned, resemble each other more closely than do these two texts. There therefore appears to be no doubt that either both texts are copied from the one original, presumably Eyjólfsbók or, what appears to be rather more likely, one is copied from the other. Since R 719 b, fol. contains a few additional variations from 73 a that are not present in Thott 1766 4to, the Uppsala manuscript is in all probability the younger one, that is, so far as the additions from Bæjarbók are concerned. Moreover, Thott 1766, 4to contains a complete Óláfs saga helga from Bæjarbók (apart from other material), whereas R 719 b fol. merely has selected additions from Bæjarbók. In these circumstances, it is clear that Thott, 1766, 4to cannot have been copied from R 719 b fol. but that the reverse must have been the case unless both were taken directly from a common source, which is a hypothesis equally defensible.

8. BM. Add. 11139. 4to.

The oldest and largest part of this manuscript in the British Museum is dated by Jón Helgason<sup>(40)</sup> to around 1700 and consists of a copy of the Flateyjarbók version of

Oláfs saga helga. The manuscript is one of the large number which were purchased by the Museum in July 1837 from Finnur Magnússon for a sum generally reckoned to exceed their worth.

There are a number of later additions, mostly from Bæjarbók, and amongst them is "Páttur Þórdar Kolbeins Sonar, oc Biarnar Hýtdæla Kappa. Skrifadur úr Olafs Saugo hinne Stittre". Before this and at the end of an addition to the saga entitled "Paattur frá Pránde og Færeyingum" is written: "Skrifad ad Heinaberge, Anno 1753 og endad d. 19 Februarii." Since this is in the same hand as that of the páttur of Björn and Þórðr,, it is therefore reasonably safe to date this copy of the latter also to the year 1753.

According to the Manntal of 1703, the Census of Iceland compiled under the direction of Árni Magnússon and Páll Vídalín, there were two farmers living at Heinaberg in Saurbæjarsveit at that time, Bering Einarsson aged 41 and Jón Þórarinnsson aged 53, both married, the former with one son aged six, the latter with four children, two of them step-children.<sup>(41)</sup> The Jarðabók of Árni Magnússon and Páll Vídalín indicates that at the 3rd March 1704 half the land was farmed by Bering Einarsson and the other half by Þóra Jónsdóttir,<sup>(42)</sup> who, according to the Manntal, was the wife of Jón Þórarinnsson and apparently by 1704 his widow. It may be that Bering Einarsson's son, Jon Beringsson, was living at Heinaberg in 1753 but it could just as easily have been someone else and this does not tell us who wrote the additions to EM. Add. 11139, 4to.

The Þáttur of Björn and Þórðr is divided into ten chapters, all of them, except the first, simply headed "Capitule". The first chapter is without heading and none of the chapters has titles. The text appears clearly enough to descend from Gottrupsbók and is very close to ÍB 382, 4to and AM 76 a, fol. The number of variant readings from ÍB 382, 4to and AM 76 a, fol., however, which are to be found in the British Museum manuscript, appear to justify the view that the latter represents an independent copy of Gottrupsbók. The variants in Add. 11139, 4to are fully listed behind the text in this edition for the sake of completeness, but the value of this comparatively late manuscript, so far as the Bajarbók portions at any rate are concerned, can scarcely be regarded as very great.

9. Additional Manuscripts derived from Bajarbók.

There are three other manuscripts which contain Óláfs saga texts derived from Bajarbok copies. One is Thott 984, fol., an omnibus eighteenth-century manuscript in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. Óláfs saga is the twenty-fourth item in the manuscript and is contained in the second of its three volumes. Both the previous and a later item are dated 1755. The Royal Library Catalogue<sup>(43)</sup> regards the greater part of the manuscript as having in all probability been written by Jón Ólafsson "the younger". Here Jón Ólafsson from Svefneyjar (1731-1811) is apparently meant, as distinct from Jón Ólafsson from Grunnavík (1705-79), Árni Magnússon's amanuensis. Jón Ólafsson from Svefneyjar is referred to as "d. yngre" by Finnur Jónsson in his Introduction to Landnámabók<sup>(44)</sup> and it is assumed without comment by Jónas

Kristjánsson in his edition of Valla-Ljóts saga<sup>(45)</sup> that the Catalogue refers to Jón Ólafsson from Svefneyjar as being the principal scribe of Thott 984, fol. However, this scholar is more properly referred to as "the elder", whilst his much less famous younger brother of the same name (c.1738-75) is correctly termed Jón Ólafsson "the younger".<sup>(46)</sup>

Jón Helgason<sup>(47)</sup> was of the opinion that the Óláfs saga text in Thott 984, fol. appeared to be closely related to IB 382, 4to and therefore descended from Gottrúpsbók. At the time, however, he had been unable to make a closer examination, due to the manuscript having been lent to the National Library in Reykjavík.

The Óláfs saga text in Thott 984, fol. is divided into chapters, which have no titles. The páttur of Björn and Þórðr comprises Chapters LXXXIX to XCVIII inclusive and is entitled "Paattr Beðrns Hýtdala Kappa. oc Þordar = Kolbeins sunar."

The text of the páttur closely resembles that in Thott 1766, 4to and Uppsala R 719 b, fol., although the abbreviation characteristic of these two manuscripts is lacking. Thott 984, fol. is closer to the Uppsala manuscript, since it contains variants from Thott 1766, 4to, which are also to be found in R 719 b, fol. It has, however, quite a number of additional variant readings of its own. Page 2 of the text, for example, provides three instances :

line 9	bondi Rsið )	oc Beðrn Rido
line 10	hafði vana )	var vanr
line 23	biöGu )	Beogoztt til ferda

In line 25 of that same page, however, the words "ok er þeir finnaz", present in Thott 1766, 4to, are omitted in both R 719 b, fol. and Thott 984, fol.

Numerous other examples could be adduced to indicate the affinity of Thott 984, fol. and R 719 b, fol., whilst at the same time demonstrating that the text of the páttir in the latter cannot be copied from that of the former. Conversely, Thott 984, fol. with its complete Óláfs saga text from Bajarbók can hardly have used R 719 b, fol. as its model for reasons evident from the details given concerning that manuscript in Section 7 above.

It therefore appears likely that the texts of the páttir in Thott 984, fol. and R 719 b, fol. represent sister manuscripts and are probably copies of a copy of Thott 1766, 4to, although the manuscript from which they were copied could likewise have been a sister manuscript of Thott 1766, 4to, both quite possibly being copies of Eyjólfsbók.

The date of 1755 which it seems can be assigned to the Óláfs saga text of Thott 984, fol. would agree very well with either of the above assumptions, but it possibly raises some doubts as to whether it was actually written by Jón Ólafsson from Svefneyjar. The latter was a student in Copenhagen at the time and, if he was the scribe, this would mean that the manuscript from which he copied was also in Copenhagen in 1755. There is no reason, however, why this should not have been the case.

Since Thott 984, fol. appears most probably to be descended from Thott 1766, 4to, no variants from the former

have been listed behind the text in this edition, nor has this been done in the case of the two remaining Bæjarbók copies, Ny kgl.sml.1045, fol. and Oslo 262, fol. Ny kgl.sml. 1045, fol. is also a Royal Library manuscript and, according to the Catalogue,<sup>(48)</sup> was previously in Suhms samling (330, fol.). It is a manuscript of 417 folios written in the second half of the eighteenth century by Guðmundur Helgason Ísfold<sup>(49)</sup> and is clearly stated on the title-page to be a copy of AM 73 a, fol. The other manuscript, Oslo 262, fol. in the collection of the University Library in Oslo, is a young copy of AM 73 a, fol., with some use having been made of AM 71, fol.<sup>(50)</sup>

In addition, as previously mentioned, in order that scribes might make Bjarnar saga as complete as possible, it was necessary for them, in all manuscripts purporting to represent the full version of the saga, to use Bæjarbók in order to supply the beginning. In the older Bjarnar saga manuscripts, use has therefore been made of either the vellum or one of the early paper copies. Several of these manuscripts are of such importance and their actual line of descent from Bæjarbók so difficult to determine precisely that it has been considered advisable to show full variants from these particular manuscripts in relation to the text from AM 73 a, fol., which has been taken as the basic text for the first five chapters of this edition. The full Bjarnar saga manuscripts from which complete variants have been shown in respect of the Bæjarbók portion are AM 157 b, fol., AM 488, 4to, JS 7, fol., BM. Add. 4867, fol., Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to. These texts, which are individually

discussed below as full Bjarnar saga manuscripts, not as Bæjarbók manuscripts, are, in general older than the extant complete Bæjarbók copies. There is, furthermore, a small fragment appended to the front of AM 488, 4to which contains a copy of the last few lines of the páttir of Björn and Þórðr in Bæjarbók. Apart from one word, where AM 73 a, fol. has a corrupt reading, the text of this fragment is identical with that of 73 a. It has been used for variant readings in respect of the text of the last half of the páttir, as set out in Appendix I.

D. AM 551 d a, 4to and related Manuscripts.

AM 551 d a, 4to is the most important manuscript of Bjarnar saga. Had it or its prototype been lost for some reason or other shortly after the middle of the seventeenth century, there seems little reason to doubt that what we would have had left of the saga would have been very small indeed. Although a close examination of the many manuscripts of the saga still leaves a certain amount of doubt in respect of the precise relationship between some of them, in most cases the matter is quite clear and, despite the fact that a number of the other manuscripts also belong, to the seventeenth century, there is no valid reason for considering that any of them do not ultimately derive from 551. This is despite one or two other attractive theories, notably Boer's theory<sup>(51)</sup> of the derivation of Rask 28, exploded effectively by Nordal,<sup>(52)</sup> and the interesting possibility that BM. Add. 4867, fol. might derive from a sister manuscript of 551 in the possession of Magnús Jónsson í Vigur. These matters are

further discussed below in their place.

As referred to earlier, most of the manuscripts descending from AM 551 d a, 4to tend to fall into various sub-groups. These may be classified according to external evidence as to which other manuscript they have been copied from or according to internal evidence, such as different readings they have in common, alternative openings to the saga or different chapter divisions and numberings or lack of same. Generally these groups and sub-groups are fairly distinctive and can be comfortably treated separately, but occasionally the line of demarcation is not very definite and the manuscripts concerned can, in these cases, be placed in more than one group or, perhaps more properly, in none at all. So far as is possible, however, the remainder of the Bjarnar saga manuscripts will be discussed according to their groups, after first dealing with the principal manuscript, AM 551 d a, 4to.

I. AM 551 d a, 4to.

This is a seventeenth-century paper manuscript of 78 leaves with four additional leaves prefixed. The codex is in a variety of hands and is composed of manuscripts which were originally mutually independent. (53)

Of the codex proper the first 33 leaves (66 sides) represent Bjarnar saga. It is headed "Saga af Byrne Hytdala Kappa" and commences "Pann vetur för Biorn til Hyrdar Eyrykz Jarlz." (54) The manuscript is therefore defective at the beginning, that is, it lacks the first five chapters of the present edition, which have been supplied from the AM 73 a, fol:



copy of Bjarnabók. There is also an irreplaceable gap at the end of Chapter XVII of the present edition,<sup>(55)</sup> which is represented by one and a half pages of the manuscript (that is, most of the tenth leaf) being left blank after "seiger hann".

On preliminary leaf d<sup>v</sup> Guðbrandur Vigfússon has written certain explanatory remarks concerning the Bjarnar saga manuscript. These read as follows:-

"2 fremstu arkirnar lágu í Add. 77. 4to en eru nú hingað fluttar þetta er bók Fornóðar sem Árni nefnir og AM. 483 4to er rituð eftir. Er þessi bók frumrit allra handrita á pappir af Bjarnarsögu, sem menn mí þekkja, en hún er, sem ritvillur og stafsetning augljóslega sýnir, rituð á fyrstu hönd eftir þeirri skinnbók af Bjarnarsögu sem 2 blöð finnast af í AM. 162 f folio, og sem sira Jón í Hitardal sendi Árna. Þessi bók mun og að vestan komin.

Guðbrandr 14/11 60.

Eyðan framan við virðist vera þessari bók, en ekki skinnbókinni, að kenna, og er líklegt að örð hafi tjúst hér framan af. Eyðan í miðjunni hefir verið í skinnb. Þegar þessi afskrift var gíbr."

There are also two notes by Árni Magnússon attached to the front of the codex. One of them concerns the Bjarnar saga manuscript and reads :-

"Hvada hönd sie á Bjarnar sögu Hitdálakappa, þeirre er eg fieck af Fornóðe, veit hann eigi. Eg hefi spurt hann þar ad."<sup>(56)</sup>

This note therefore indicates that Arni had in vain sought information regarding the scribe from Torfæus, from whom he obtained the manuscript after the latter's death on 31st January, 1719. (57)

Nevertheless, Arni entertained a shrewd suspicion as to the identity of the scribe, if not as to his actual name. In a catalogue (58) compiled by him in October 1712 he notes concerning the present AM 104, 4to the following :- (59)

"Hird skra, med gamalli fliotaskrift, sem eg trui vera hönd skrifara hr. Porlaks. er æred lik (ef eigi hin sama) þeirre sem er á Biarnar sögu Hitdala kappa."

In another place, (60) he is even more positive in his identification, where he writes in respect of AM 324 fol., a Hirðskrá copy by Ásgeir Jónsson:-

"Um Num. 9 hefi eg fyrrum so annoterad:

.....  
Hird skra epter charta in 4to hia Pormodi med sömu hendi sem Biarnar Saga Hitdala kappa min. Er til forna komin ur Skardz bok [AM 350 fol.] á Skardzbok (!) (cuius et ego apographium habeo) sed non satis accuratè."

The Hr. Porlákur referred to is Bishop Porlákur Skúlason (61) (24th August 1597 to 4th January 1656), who was Bishop of Hólar from 1628 until his death. It is said of him:-

"Hann unni mjög íslenzkum fræðum, lét skrifa upp sögur (hefir sumt þess háttar einungis varðveitt oss frá honum). (162)

Amongst those sagas whose preservation is owed solely to his efforts and interest may be fairly safely reckoned Biarnar saga Hitdoelakappa. The Biarnar saga

manuscript in AM 551 d a, 4to is written in fljótaskrift, a Gothic cursive script, and comparison of the handwriting in this manuscript with that of the Hirðskrá in AM 104, 4to reveals a very strong resemblance, such a resemblance, in fact that makes it virtually certain that both were written by the same hand.

This assumption is further confirmed by the fact that there are several other manuscripts in the Arnamagnæan Collection that give the appearance of being written by the same scribe. These are the Hemings þáttur portion of AM 329, 4to, AM 410, 4to, AM 496, 4to, AM 562 c, 4to and AM 606 g, 4to.<sup>(63)</sup> In front of the Hemings þáttur portion of AM 329, 4to, Árni Magnússon has inserted a page indicating that he obtained a book of sagas containing Hemings þáttur from Madame Elin Þorlákisdóttir in 1707. The note closes with the words:- "Hr. Þorlákur hafði att þessa bok 1652."<sup>(64)</sup>

Further, at the end of Hrafnkels saga in AM 496, 4to, it is noted that this saga is written "a Holum J Hialltadal þann 16. Decembris Anno 1639." A piece of paper stuck inside the cover contains the following :- "Þorlákur Skúlason á sögu bók þessa með ríettu enn eingenn annar. 1652."

"Thorsteyrn Þorleifsson aa sögu book þessa með ríettu enn eingenn anar hvór sem það bannar Anno 1665."<sup>(65)</sup> This Þorsteinn Þorleifsson was the husband of Elin Þorlákisdóttir and son-in-law of Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason.<sup>(66)</sup> The book of sagas which Árni Magnússon had obtained from Elin Þorlákisdóttir had contained Hrafnkels saga, according to Árni's aforementioned note, and, as the note furthermore

indicates that Arni had broken up the book to some extent and had at least Hemings páttir bound separately, it seems fairly certain that the Hrafnkels saga in AM 496, 4to is the same as the one in the saga-book received from Elin Þorlákudóttir and that it was from the slip inserted inside AM 496, 4to that Arni obtained the information that Þorlákur Skúlason had owned in 1652 the book received from his daughter in 1707.

The remaining manuscripts, which appear to have been written by the same hand as AM 496, 4to and the Hemings páttir part of AM 329, 4to, were all obtained by Arni from Torfæus or rather from his widow and on most of them Arni comments that they were written by one of Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason's scribes. Arni's remarks in various places concerning the provenance of the Bjarnar saga portion of AM 551 d a, 4to have been detailed above.

Summing up from the above evidence, one reaches the conclusion that the Bjarnar saga manuscript, like the other manuscripts referred to above, was written by Bishop Þorlákur's scribe and that, since Bishop Þorlákur died in January 1656, it will in all probability have been written prior to that date. In fact, it seems reasonable to assign a date to it of between 1640 to 1650, but of course there can be no certainty of this.

Boer was of the opinion that 551 did not descend from AM 162 F, fol.<sup>(67)</sup> and that all the other paper manuscripts did not descend from 551.<sup>(68)</sup> In this, he differed from the views expressed by Guðbrandur Vigfússon in the preliminary leaf referred to above. Nordal, although he

expressed no firm opinion on the descent of the additional paper manuscripts, supported Guðbrandur Vigfússon and opposed Boer with regard to the relation between 551 and AM 162 F, fol. <sup>(68)</sup> In support of his argument that 551 did not descend from F, but rather from a sister manuscript, Boer had instanced the number of cases where the two manuscripts have slightly different readings. Boer considered that the readings of F were generally inferior. <sup>(70)</sup> Nordal, on the other hand, regarded the so-called better readings in the paper manuscripts as either worse or attempts at improvement on the part of the scribes. <sup>(71)</sup> There seems no reason to differ from Nordal's view, except that one can point out that it is by no means certain that 551 is a direct copy of F, since there could very well have been another paper copy in between, now lost, which would account for some of the different readings. However, in view of the probable date of 551 and Bishop Þorlákur's reputation for preserving sagas on the point of oblivion by having them copied, it is most probable that 551 is a direct copy of F, which then, it would seem, apart from two solitary leaves, became lost for ever in the short space of fifty years or so.

When Bishop Þorlákur had F copied, it was already in a very bad state. It lacked a beginning and this must have represented at least about three folios and it had a gap further on in the text and here possibly only one folio had become lost. Guðbrandur Vigfússon was right, when he wrote that the gap in the middle of the text had been in the vellum when the copy was made, because in 551 the scribe breaks off

half-way down the page and then leaves one and a half pages blank. However, Guðbrandur was wrong, when he maintained that the gap at the beginning did not seem to go back to the vellum; rather he thought it likely that a gathering had become lost from the front of 551. Boer has demonstrated that this view is incorrect and that 551 always lacked a beginning; this being proved by the scribe's numbering of the gatherings. He numbered the first gathering A, the second B, and so on.<sup>(72)</sup>

When Torfæus acquired 551 cannot be determined with certainty but it may very well have been when he was in Iceland in the summer of 1662 collecting manuscripts<sup>(73)</sup> and, no doubt, as well as collecting for the King of Denmark, he would not have failed to collect on his own behalf. In any event, he certainly had the manuscript of Bjarnar saga by 1689 at the very latest, as Arni Magnússon's correspondence<sup>(74)</sup> proves.

Arni Magnússon had stayed with Torfæus at Stangeland in Norway from October to December, 1689 and on 21st December, 1689, he wrote to Torfæus from Bergen,<sup>(75)</sup> asking for a loan in the spring of the following year of his fragment of Bjarnar saga :-

"Mette eg beida, hann villde mier i vor med skipum til lans unna Sógubroted af Birne Hitdalakappa, vare mier stor þægd, og skillde aptr til baka ospiallad sendast."<sup>(76)</sup>

Arni wrote again to Torfæus from Bergen on 8th January, 1690, reminding him of his previous letter, in which he had asked for a loan of the Bjarnar saga manuscript, as

there were a whole heap of verses in it, which he had meant to write down correctly but had forgotten to do so (apparently during his stay with Torfæus) :-

"Eg skrifade Monsr. til strax firer Joleinn og bad, ef hómum að meinfangalausú skie kinne, hann villde lia mier i vor med firstu skipum sógubrot af Birne Hitdælakappa; þar eru i heil hop [sic] visur, sem eg þirffte correct ad uppskrifa, og gleimdist þo." (77)

Later in the letter he makes the following interesting query, probably having regard to Verse 11 in Biarnar saga, where reference is made to Björn having plundered Þórðr in Sólundir :-<sup>(78)</sup>

"Hann lætur mig vita, hvar Solundir (eiar) liggia, eg man ei, hvórt þar eru nærre Prandheimi edur ei." (79)

Torfæus wrote to Árni on 6th March, 1690, promising him the loan of the manuscript and adding :-

"Jeg man nu eche, hvar Solmundar eyar liggia, þo eru þar eche langt fra Nordfyrde." (80)

On 22nd April, Árni wrote to Torfæus from Copenhagen, wondering why the manuscripts he had asked for had not come, as ships were arriving daily from Norway. (81)

At last on 10th July, Torfæus wrote to Árni :-

"Orkneyia saga och Hytdæla sendist med, bid hun afftur sendist och þad hia, sem uppa vantar." (82)

Torfæus hoped therefore that, when Árni returned to him the manuscript of the Biarnar saga fragment, he would be able to send with it a copy of the missing parts of the saga.

Again, on 17th July, Torfæus wrote to Árni, going through the latter's letters from 21st December, 1689, onwards

and answering them point by point :-

" ... Nu svarast uppa ydar bref och fyrst upa þad af 21. 10 br., at brot af Byrne Hytdæla kappa sendist med, nu upa þad aff 8. Januarii." (83)

... ..

8. Um Biorns Hitdælakappa sögu er svarad ... (84)

18. Um Soleyiar hvar liggia, hefi Jeg eigi rettfundit, nema ligge firir Norfirde, vil þo erkyndige mig betur. Nu er svarad upa alla posta i því brefi." (85)

Torffæus wrote again to Arni on 22nd July, referring to his two previous letters and adding :-

" ... Nu fellr eckert at schriffa, því uppa allt er svarad i hinum brefunum, Orkneya saga och Biorns Hytdæla kappa nedsendt ..." (86)

These three letters from Torffæus and the manuscripts which he had forwarded were received by Arni shortly before 4th September, 1690, for on that date he wrote to Torffæus from Copenhagen :-

" ..... Fyrir nockrum dögum komu mier til handa hans 3 tilskrif samt medfilgiande Orkneiasögu og af Birne Hitdælakappa, hvar firer eg aludlega þacka ..... (87)

... Þad, sem vantar i Biarnar sögu, er hvórge til, hana skal eg med firsta til baka senda." (88)

Arni accordingly was forced to disappoint Torffæus by informing him that the missing parts of the saga could not be found anywhere, but he kept his promise to return the manuscript promptly three weeks later when he sent it back together with his letter of 25th September, in which he wrote, thanking Torffæus for the loan :-



"..... Biarnarsaga sendist til baka med þacklæte firir láned." (89)

After he had received it, Torfæus noted on the letter :-

"A° 90 aff 257b. bekommit d. 12. octob. fra Mons. Arendt Magnusson." (90)

Meanwhile, Torfæus had written to Arni on 2nd October, informing him that every day he was expecting a letter from him, since he must have received the manuscripts that he had sent him. (91)

Finally, on 13th October, 1690, the day after he had received Arni's letters and the returned Biarnar saga manuscript, Torfæus wrote, thanking Arni and commenting :-

"At eigi finnist uphaf a Biarnar Hytdalakappa sogu, er mikid." (92)

This letter, like all the other letters by Torfæus mentioned above, is in the hand of the latter's amanuensis, the scribe Asgeir Jónsson.

Whether Arni ever borrowed 551 from Torfæus again is not certain and, in any event, he undoubtedly must have taken a copy of it or at least of part of it when he had a loan of it for those few weeks in 1690. At any rate, he did not acquire 551 as his own until after Torfæus's death in 1719.

So far as can be judged from the two leaves extant of the vellum, that manuscript made at least some attempt at chapter divisions and headings, for one chapter is headed "vm vorn Biorns oc fall" (93) and another simply "Cap." (94)

However, whatever existed of this has been at least partly dispensed with in 551, which has no chapter headings or chapter divisions proper, but is, however, divided into paragraphs, which correspond roughly to chapters and have been treated as such in this edition, even though this has resulted in some chapters being of very unequal size and the line of division being occasionally illogical.

## II. The Asgeir Jónsson copies.

Of the numerous manuscripts which are either direct copies of or are derived from copies of 551, four of the earliest and most important are in the hand of the noted Icelandic scribe, Asgeir Jónsson. These manuscripts are AM 488, 4to, Stockholm Papp. Fol. 38, AM 157 b, fol. and JS 7, fol., and they will be discussed separately below.

Asgeir Jónsson,<sup>(95)</sup> who was the son of Jón Jónsson of Gullberastaðir in Lundarreykjadalur and of Guðrún Asgeirsdóttir, his wife, matriculated at Copenhagen University on 19th November, 1686, and was recommended by Árni Magnússon to Torfæus as a scribe, during the latter's stay in Copenhagen in 1688. Asgeir accompanied Torfæus to Stangeland and stayed with him, apart from a single break, until 1704. This occurred when Asgeir travelled with Torfæus to Copenhagen in 1697, and, after the latter had returned to Norway, Asgeir remained behind and did not go back to Norway until the spring of the following year. He left Torfæus in 1704, received a separate royal post but is generally reckoned to have died about fifty years old on 27th June, 1707, and childless. By his hand many

important manuscripts have been preserved for posterity and Kålund has this to say about it :-(96)

"Hans håndskrift er en smuk, noget stiv halvfraktur, udstyret med talrige interlinearforkortelser og andre abbreviaturer, hvorved hans afskrifter gør et bestikkende indtryk af diplomatisk nøjagtighed, men som hos ham kun er et ganske konventionelt system uden hensyn til originalens ortografi."

1. AM 488, 4to.

This is in all probability the oldest copy of 551 and the majority of Bjarnar saga manuscripts descend from it. It is a manuscript of 59 leaves, the first eleven leaves of which have been added at a later date than the rest, these first eleven folios being the five chapters from Bæjarbók, which supply the missing beginning of the saga. (97)

A slip of paper inserted at the beginning of the manuscript gives details concerning its origin. This paper reads as follows :-

"Bjarnar saga Hitdæla kappa, þesse nærverande, er rituð epter pappirs exemplare fra Þormóði Torfasyne, misjafnt riðtt skrifudu. Það sama pappirs exemplar var hófudlaust, og byriadest með þeim ordum: þann vetr fór Biorn til hyrdar Eiricks i. hver ord hier standa fyrst á fol. 12. Hiá mier Arna Magnussyni er ein Olafs helga saga á Kálfskinni, fyllri enn almenneligar. Þar inni talast um Biórn Hitdæla Kappa, og ur þessare Olafs sógu eru ordriett teken þau 11 blóð sem hier fyrst standa. Item nockrar differentis sem hier eru in margine settar, allt til utkomu Biarnar, því lengra nær ecke þesse

relatio um Björn i nefndre Olafs sögu. svo sem og  
sia er af því lausa blade sem lagt er innann i bókena.\*

The above is in the hand of a scribe, other than the word "ordriett", which has been inserted by Arni himself. The loose leaf referred to in the last line of the note is the leaf previously mentioned, which is also attached to the beginning of the manuscript and contains the last few lines of the páttur concerning Björn and Þórðr in Bæjarbók. It is almost completely identical with the text in AM 73 a, fol. and therefore appears to be copied either from this manuscript or from Bæjarbók itself.

The date that 488 was written cannot be ascertained for certain but it could not have been earlier than 1688, when Asgeir Jónsson first entered Torfæus's employ. Since the latter lent 551 to Arni in 1690, there is every reason to consider that he had one or more copies taken first and that one of these was 488, assuming there to have been more than one at this stage. For reasons to be mentioned later, when discussing BM. Add. 4867, fol., a date a little earlier appears to be preferable and 1689 would appear to be the most likely.

Until Arni Magnússon acquired Bæjarbók by January, 1698 at the latest, AM 488, 4to remained "höfudlaust". In 1697 Torfæus and Asgeir Jónsson visited Copenhagen and it appears that the former brought a good number of his manuscripts with him. It seems reasonable to assume that 488 was amongst them and that Torfæus either made Arni a present of the manuscript on this occasion or Arni acquired it from him in another way. Torfæus apparently returned

to Norway after only a comparatively short stay but Asgeir remained in Copenhagen for some months further and, whilst there, undoubtedly added the beginning from Bæjarbók, the eleven folios referred to in the note prefixed to 488.

At any rate, the manuscript appears to have remained in Árni's possession thereafter and was taken by him to Iceland, for, on 12th January, 1708, we find him writing to the Rural Dean, Jón Halldórsson, in Hitardalur, from Skálholt and sending him AM 488, 4to and asking him to keep the manuscript for a time and add any corrections and any notes to it concerning topography, that he thought might be useful.<sup>(98)</sup>  
The relevant portion of Árni's letter is worth quoting :-

"Svo filger hier og med Biarnar - saga

Hi [t] dælakappa, su besta og versta sem eg sied hefe, og mun ecki effter nockurri annari ad spyria. Þessi saga ma hia ydur dveliaast, þar til hana ad fullu brukad hafed, og er mier liufft þó hennar dvöl hia ydur misserum skiffte. Eins vil eg hier hia óska, sem er, ad þar sem þier siæed manifesta vitia codicis annadhvort in nominibus propriis edur annarz, ad slikt þá villdud emendera in margine, og hlýfast ecke vid það, þui þess bstre helld eg codicem sidan. J ödru lage bid eg ydur ad gefa mier Commentarium chorographicum yfer þessa sögu, þvü þar er margt i, bæde nomina locorum og veiger, sem eg ecke finn mig i, þar ecke er svo grandkunnugur platzinu, ex : gr : um veg þann, er Þorsteirn Kuggason reid, um Husafell, (er hann tilstlade) hvar staded hafe,

et similia. Er mior þess þægara sem þesse Commentarius verdur skilianlegri, og villda eg helldur kíósa, að það stæde þar inne, sem eg til forna veit, enn að það være utelatid, sem eg ecke veit, jafnvel þott óðrum kynne kunnugt að vera og í þann máta alment þikia."

Jón Halldórsson answered this letter from Hitardalur on 20th June, 1708, acknowledging receipt of the manuscript which he wished to keep for some time in order to copy it. He agreed to do his best to make corrections for which Árni asked, although he rather deprecated his abilities in this regard :- (99)

"meina og sumt lagfæringar við þurfande í honum, þó ei fáe umbót af minne hende, hellst propter ignorantiam et differentiam in nominibus propriis locorum, sem þá hafa heited odru nafne, ur hvorium oftlega greider upphaf sierhvorrar sögu, quod hic desideratur; vil þo giora sem kann og fyrer seiged."

Jón Halldórsson retained 488 for nearly three years, for he did not finish his copy until 4th February, 1711, after which he presumably returned 488 to Árni without further delay. He fulfilled his promise, for he added numerous marginal notes to 488, which comment on its contents and some of which are topographical. Árni himself has also added some notes and corrections to the manuscript, principally of a minor nature.

AM 488, 4to is not divided into chapters. After "seigir hann",<sup>(100)</sup> it leaves a space of three and a half pages blank for the lacuna in the saga. It is on the whole an accurate copy of 551 and of Bæjarbók, and deserves the

description "ordriett" applied to it by Arni in so far as its first eleven folios are concerned. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that it is a better copy than AM 73 a, fol., from which it shows certain variations, which have been noted at the back of the text. For this reason and particularly for the reason that AM 73 a, fol. is obviously a very careful copy of Bæjarbók, it has not been preferred to 73 a as the basis for the first five chapters of the text, even though this results in rather more orthographical inconsistency between the two parts of the text than would otherwise have been the case. So far as the main bulk of the text is concerned, for which 551 and F, so far as it extends, have been used as the basis, 488 has been useful in helping to provide suitable emendations, where this has been necessary. The marginal notes to 488 have been particularly useful in this regard. All these cases have been noted in the variants.

One particular example of inaccuracy in 488 in copying from 551 should, however, be noted at this stage, since it is one that is especially important for tracing the relationship of the majority of the manuscripts of the saga. After Verse 23, 551 has the lines :-

"Arnór fór nu heim og varð heill sára sinna.  
Biörn fór nu heim og nockrer menn með honum flejre  
enn heimann fóru." (101)

The line "Arnór fór nu heim og varð heill sára sinna" is missing in 488, the scribe having gone straight on to the following sentence, which commences in an almost identical manner. The significance of this missing line will become

apparent later when some of the other manuscripts are discussed.

A further example of the missing of a line in copying for a somewhat similar reason is to be found in Chapter IX of the saga, where 551 has the sentence :-

"Kongur mælti, heyrum þetta nu af þeim Monnum er oss sogdu, þuiad þa reynnum vier ad godum Monnum, og munu þeir satt seigia." (102)

In 488, however, the line "er oss sogdu, þuiad þa reynnum vier ad godum Monnum" is missing, the occurrence of the word "Monnum" in successive lines having caused the scribal error. Again, this particular missing line will be referred to later when dealing with other manuscripts.

2. Stockholm Papp. Fol. 38.

This is a paper manuscript of 169 folios, the first 36 folios of which represent the only manuscript of Bjarnar saga to be found in the Royal Library in Stockholm. (103) It is entitled "Fragment af Sogu Biorns Hytdæla Kappa", commences with "Pann vetr for Biorn" and is without division into chapters. It is accordingly a copy of 551 without the introductory chapters from Bejarbók and appears to be in the hand of Asgeir Jónsson. The exact date when this copy was written cannot be ascertained but may have been around 1690, the year in which Torfæus lent 551 to Arni for a short while. When the manuscript left Torfæus's possession is also unknown, but it is reasonable to assume that it might have been before or at any rate shortly after 1698, for, as



will be mentioned below, in that year Torfæus acquired AM 157 b, fol. from Árni, a Bjarnar saga manuscript containing the introduction from Bæjarbók. Possibly the Bjarnar saga manuscript in Stockholm Papp. Fol. 38 was especially written for the account of the Swedes, but this of course is mere conjecture.

It is in all probability a direct copy from 551. It is in any event not copied from 488, even before the Bæjarbók chapters were added, for it contains the lines "Arnór fór nu heim og varð heill sára sinna" and "er oss sögðu, þuiad þa reynum vier að godum Monnum", missing in 488. The lacuna in the middle of the saga is represented by a space of three-quarters of a page in the manuscript. On the last page of the saga, where both 551 and 488 have the sentence "Enn Þordyz tok af mund sinn og heimanfylgiu, og fór vestur á Bardastrond til frænda sinna og Brejda fiord [sic]", (104) the Stockholm manuscript lacks the final words "og Brejda fiord". These words are also missing in a number of the other saga manuscripts, as will be referred to later.

### 3. AM 157 b, fol.

AM 157 b, fol. is a manuscript of 69 folios, of which Bjarnar saga takes up the last thirty-seven. The whole of the manuscript is written by Asgeir Jónsson, with the exception of the last three folios, which represent a later duplication of the final three folios, of Bjarnar saga. This was caused through the great bulk of the saga having for a long while been misplaced and included in Addit. 3, fol.

To this a new conclusion was added, corresponding to those last three folios of the saga which had remained in AM 157 b, fol. The whole of the saga is now together in AM 157 b, fol., together with the duplicated conclusion. (105)

As previously mentioned, Torfæus and Ásgeir Jónsson were in Copenhagen in 1697 and, after Torfæus returned home, Ásgeir remained behind for the winter, apparently not leaving until the beginning of April 1698. On 9th April, 1698, Árni Magnússon wrote to Torfæus from Copenhagen, advising him that his books (that is, his bound manuscripts) had been despatched to him and that Ásgeir had left shortly afterwards. In his letter, Árni writes :-

"I midri hinni vikunni for einn Skipherra ved nafn Oluf Lauritzen hiedan til Biörgvinar. Vissum vid Ásgeir eigi af hans ferdalagi, firr enn um dagenn adur enn hann fór um morguninn. Til lucku hafdi eg leverad Ásgeiri Monfreres bækur og hann þær innpackad, og komst þær med hönum, enn Ásgeir kunni ei so fliotur ad verda. Seinast i þeirri sömu viku reiste Ásgeir hier fra ... ad Holbeck, hvar eitt skip til Biörgvinar ferdugt lá, og mun hann fyrr til Monfreres koma enn þetta bref; ... I Monfreres bækur liet eg inbinda Sögu Skalds Haraldz kongs, sem og Upphafed af Biarnar Sögu Hitdalakappa, er eg ur einni Olafs Sögu Helga fra Islandi uppskrifa liet." (106)

On 26th September, 1699, we find Árni writing to Torfæus and complaining that the latter had given manuscripts, which had come from him, to Councillor Meier, who had never

been well-disposed to Arni. Upon Meier's death, it would be necessary for Arni to buy these manuscripts back at auction, although he owned copies of most of them already; otherwise they would go to the Swedes at a cheap prise. (107) Arni writes-

"... Um Sögu af Skaldum Haralldz k[onun]gs, Upphaf á Biarnar Sögu hit dæla kappa og annad þvilikt, sem fra mier er komid, er það ad seigia, ad so giarnann sem eg Monfrere communicera villde allt það eg i slikan mata hefdi, so ogiarna sie eg, ad vir non nisi malè de me meritus, et qvi volens me decepit, et tantum non ludibrio habuit, cum juvare posset, skylldu sig þar med tilgiora. Eg vil ecki tala um, ad þetta allt ei vel accorderar med þeirri lofan, er Monfrere hefur giórt til Academissens, þá þess bækur medtók ... " (108)

In fact, when Meier died in 1701, Arni did buy these manuscripts back and in AM 435 a, 4to he lists as Number 6 amongst those Icelandic manuscripts, which he bought after the death of Councillor Meier :-

"Biarnar Saga Hitdæla kappa, ex charta Torfæi; hodie meâ, ad tillögdu upphafinu ur Olafs Sögu Helga sem eg feck fra Bæ á Raudasande." (109)

It appears that this particular item was added in the Catalogue in 1727, thus several years after 551 had come into Arni's possession. Further on in the Catalogue Arni notes :-

"Numeros III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX hafde Þormodr Torfason gefed nefndum Etats Raad Meier 1698 og 1699, enn eg keypte þar sómuleidis epter Meier daudann .... Eg finn hia mier annoterad, ad eg liet

vegna Þormodar innbinda í Kaupenhavn 1697 og 1698  
numeros 3. 4. 5. 6. 7 af þessum bokum er hann gaf  
Mejer." (110)

The Bjarnar saga manuscript which Arni Magnússon bought back from Councillor Meier's estate has been identified as AM 157 b, fol. (111) It is not divided into chapters and has a space of one and a half pages to represent the lacuna in the middle of the saga. However, unlike 488, it has been written all at one time, the Bæjarbók introduction being followed immediately by the saga proper from 551 without a break. Accordingly, when Ásgeir Jónsson wrote AM 157 b, fol., he had either a complete manuscript before him to copy or he had the two complementary manuscripts in front of him, Bæjarbók and either 551 or a copy of it.

Boer (112) was of the opinion that AM 157 b, fol. was a direct copy of 488. This perfectly natural assumption cannot, however, be correct, since the line "Arnór fór nu heim og varð heill sára sinna", referred to above and missing in 488, is present in 157. Therefore, unless we are to attribute to Ásgeir Jónsson a prodigious feat of memory, it is impossible that 157 can be copied from 488, except perhaps for the introductory chapters from Bæjarbók. Once, however, we accept the logical conclusion that Ásgeir made use of two complementary manuscripts in writing 157, it is far more probable that, for the introduction, he used Bæjarbók itself and, indeed, this is the conclusion to be drawn from the words used by Arni both in his Catalogue and in his letter to Torfæus of 9th April, 1698. Furthermore, there are variants noted here and there in the margin in 157

and there is evidence to show that Bæjarbók was used for a comparison of the later chapters of the Þáttur of Björn and Þórðr with the text from 551, as far as they extend. For example, in the second last line of Chapter VII of the saga the words "og herriudu vm sumarid"<sup>(113)</sup> are to be found, whereas the text from AM 73 a, fol., reproduced in Appendix I, has "ok heriudu aa Vindr vm sumrum"<sup>(114)</sup>. At this point in 157 there is a marginal note, "a Vindr". This is not in 551 or 488 and can only have come from a comparison of the 551 text with Bæjarbók.

The further point to be resolved is, if the principal part of 157 was not copied from 488, what was used as its basis? This could have been 551 itself, but this presupposes the assumption that, after having lent 551 to Árni already in 1690, Torfsus brought 551 to Copenhagen in 1697 and left the manuscript with Árni again until he returned it in April of the following year. This is quite possible and indeed Torfsus could have brought all his personally-owned manuscripts with him, as distinct from those he may have had on loan from the Royal or University collections, unlikely as it may seem that he would have risked transporting his manuscripts from Norway to Copenhagen and back again for a relatively short time.

An examination of the two manuscripts demonstrates that Stockholm Papp. Fol. 38 was not the basis of the bulk of AM 157 b, fol., even though there are certain points in which both agree against 551. For example, the words "og Brejda fiord", missing from the final lines of Stockholm 38, are also lacking in 157. Again, the seventh line of Verse 15, which 551 and 488 give as "kaps wal drepinn"<sup>(115)</sup>

appears in Stockholm 38 merely as " ... vel drepinn" and in 157 as " ... væl drepin". These and other similarly small common variations may be attributed to the fact that both manuscripts were written by the same scribe within a relatively short period and he probably consciously made identical alterations in both cases. Indeed, these same minor emendations also appear in the fourth Asgeir Jónsson manuscript, JS 7, fol.

However, there are readings in AM 157 b, fol. which differ markedly from those in Stockholm 38. For example, in Chapter XX of the saga the text as taken from 551 but slightly emended in this edition reads :

"Þordur mælti, \*segit so frá forinne, \*þá er vier hofum reynt, huórt ey þarf þetta lid vid Biorn ad eiga". (116)

AM 488, 4to has a similar reading but in Stockholm 38 we find the following :

"Þorðr mælti, eptir því sem vier hofum reynt, þa mun þurfa þetta lip, ef vid Biorn skal duga".

AM 157 b, fol., on the other hand, is quite different :

"Þorðr mælti oc segir at svo mun þeim reynaz sem lips þessa muni vid þurfa at eiga vid Biorn".

JS 7, fol. has an almost identical reading to that of 157 and frequently 157 agrees with JS 7, fol. against Stockholm 38. This will be mentioned further when discussing JS 7, fol. but the differences are such that neither can be considered to descend from Stockholm 38.

It will also be shown that neither 157 nor JS 7, fol. are descended from one another but that they must both be regarded as being copies of 551 itself, unless one or the other (or both) has been copied from the copy that Arní surely had made of 551 when he borrowed it in 1690.

This latter theory is impossible of proof, however, since, if there did exist such a copy, it is now lost.

#### 4. JS 7, fol.

The fourth Asgeir Jónsson manuscript, and the only one of the four preserved in Iceland itself, is JS 7, fol. This formerly formed part of the collection of Jón Sigurðsson, but is now in the possession of the National Library of Iceland. The Catalogue<sup>(117)</sup> indicates that Jón Sigurðsson obtained the manuscript from Síra Ólafur E. Johnsen at Staður in 1856. Inside the cover there is a letter to Síra Björn Hjálmarsson in Tröllatunga from S. Vídalín, dated from Copenhagen in 1842.

Ólafur (Einarsson) Johnsen (1809-1885) was priest at Staður in Reykjanes from 1840 to 1884.<sup>(118)</sup> It seems likely that he may have acquired JS 7, fol. from Björn Hjálmarsson (1769-1853), who was himself born at Staður in Reykjanes, was for many years priest at Tröllatunga and for a time was prófastur in Strandasýsla.<sup>(119)</sup> He appears to have been a man of talent, as indeed to even greater an extent was his father, Hjálmar Þorsteinsson (1742-1819), who was also priest at Tröllatunga.<sup>(120)</sup> It is said about him :

•Hann var gáfumaður og vel að sér í mörgum greinum, fornum og nýjum, fróðleiksmáður, ... kennimaður góður, skrifari,

málari og bókbindari, ... skáldmæltur ... " (121)

It is therefore not beyond the bounds of possibility that JS 7, fol. may have at one time belonged to Hjálmar Þorsteinsson and through him have descended to Ólafur Johnsen and thence to Jón Sigurðsson but this of course remains only supposition.

The manuscript consists of 354 pages and contains eight items, all except the last, which comprises only four pages, in the hand of Ásgeir Jónsson. The Catalogue considers the manuscript to have been written in Ásgeir's younger years and dates it to around 1680. So far as the Bjarnar saga portion is concerned, at any rate, this cannot, however, be correct and, as will be demonstrated below, this part could not possibly have been written before 1697 at the earliest.

JS 7, fol., so far as Bjarnar saga is concerned, is headed "Hier Biriast Sagann af Birne Hýtdala Kappa" and begins "Nu skal skal seigia nockud," etc., with an incorrect repetition of the "skal". It is not divided into chapters but into paragraphs which correspond closely to the chapter and paragraph division in the present edition. "Þann vetr fór Biorn" follows on in the same line as the final words of the introduction from Bjarnarþók, with only a short space of about one and a half inches in length between. Accordingly, as with AM 157 b, fol., the scribe must have had either a combined manuscript before him when he wrote JS 7, fol., or he had both a Bjarnarþók manuscript and 551 (or a copy) to work from.



After "seigir hann", a space of two or three lines is left to indicate the lacuna and at the foot of the page is written at a later date in a later hand :-

"Hér vantar kafla i Sóguna : þar segir frá Viðtali þeirra Þórðar og Bjarnar, Burtfór Bjarnar frá Hítarnesi, kvonfanngi hans og svo frammevis."

JS 7, fol. is not a copy of 488. For example, it contains both the lines "Arnór .... sinna" and "er ... Monnum", referred to above as missing in 488. It disagrees with 488 in other ways and in fact frequently agrees with 551 against 488. Like 157, it lacks the words "og Brejda fiord" on the last page. It is not, however, a copy of 157. As will be seen from the variants in 157 and JS 7, which are given in full at the rear of the text, so far as the Bæjarbók portion of the text is concerned, all the variants in 157 are not repeated in JS 7 and the latter has numerous variants which are not found in the former. Also, the line "er ... Monnum", found in JS 7, fol., is missing in 157.

The interesting thing about JS 7, fol., however, is that, whilst it has more than its fair portion of mistakes and shows evidence of hurried and careless transcription, it also evinces a conscious attempt at correcting here and there obvious corruptions in the original. The principal example of this is to be found in Chapter XXI of this edition, where Grettir is mentioned. At this point, 551 is definitely corrupt and reads :-

"Enn Biorn og þeir fedgar, biuggu þa ofann fra Wollum er Geytiz bali, og varu geytur þar J raufinne."

JS 7, fol., on the contrary has :-

"En þeir fedgar bioggu þá a Vøllum. Ofann frá Vøllum er Grettirzþali og var Gretter þar i Raufini."

It is clear that this, on the whole, is a better reading than 551's and Jón Halldórsson has marginal notes to the same effect in 483 and has incorporated the improved readings in Oslo 313, 4to. These emendations have therefore been accepted in the text of the present edition.<sup>(122)</sup>

A further example of this is in Chapter IX, where Björn remarks to King Olaf :-

"Veyt eg herra, vm þa menn er mig rægdu vid þig aff fundi ockrum Þordar, ad þeir mundu gieta, og fyrer huad Eg mat mest."<sup>(123)</sup>

JS 7, fol. inserts "ecki" before "gieta", no doubt feeling that the sense was thus improved, as did Boer in his edition, who supplies "eigi".<sup>(124)</sup> This emendation has not been accepted in the present edition, as the sense is preserved just as well without the addition. Indeed, to alter the text in this way would largely destroy the irony implicit in Björn's remark.

Just as JS 7, fol. is not a copy of AM 157 b, fol., neither is the latter a copy of the former. In the line referred to earlier, 157 has "Geytis þali", later altered to "Grettis þali". The original reading therefore doubtless comes from 551, although 157 has perhaps been influenced by JS 7, fol. and both manuscripts are by the same scribe. There are a good number of cases where 157 agrees with 551 and 73 a against JS 7, fol. Some of these are as follows :

73 a or 551; 157

JS 7.

Page 3 line 2.	sin	miók sýn
" 3 " 3.	miók kíerliga	Omitted.
" 3 " 27.	af Noregi	af hafe frá Noregi
" 9 lines 9-10.	vtañ verit iij vetr	verit iij vetr uti
" 10 " 13-14.	og fyrr med Jarlinum	meþ jarli oc fyr

As mentioned earlier, JS 7 and 157 frequently agree with each other against Stockholm 38 and this eliminates any possibility that the latter could have been the source of or could have been copied from either of the other two manuscripts. For example, Björn's comment to King Olaf, quoted above, ends in Stockholm 38 :

"at þeir mundu ei geta hvat ec mat mest, er ec drap eigi Þorð".

These five words, "er ec drap eigi Þorð", are not found in either 157 or JS 7 and, had one or the other of these manuscripts been copied from Stockholm 38, it is hard to believe that they would have omitted this clause, obviously added by Ásgeir Jónsson in an endeavour to make the sentence more intelligible.

Other examples where 157 and JS 7 agree with each other against Stockholm 38 include the following :

	<u>551</u>	<u>Stockholm 38</u>	<u>157 and JS 7.</u>
Page 26 lines 1-2	far or neypura	faleikar	sundrþycki
" 32 line 24	þvigit	Omitted.	þeigi
" 37 " 24	þessa wysu	visu þessa	þessa visu

The conclusion is therefore that JS 7, fol. represents another independent copy from Bæjarbók and 551. All the evidence accordingly points to the fact that the four Asgeir Jónsson copies of Bjarnar saga are sister manuscripts copied from 551, three of them with the Bæjarbók introduction prefixed.

### III. The Magnús í Vigur Manuscripts.

In the latter half of the seventeenth century one of the most learned men and greatest collectors of manuscripts in Iceland was a certain wealthy farmer, Magnús Jónsson, who lived on the island of Vigur in Ísafjarðardjúp. Magnús was born in Vatnsfjörður in Vatnsfjarðarsveit on 17th September 1637, and died on 23rd March, 1702. His parents were Síra Jón Arason, priest in Vatnsfjörður, and his wife, Hólmfríður Sigurðardóttir.<sup>(125)</sup> His daughter, Þorbjörg, married in 1696 the celebrated lawman and scholar, Páll Jónsson Vídalín, but it appears that the marriage was not a happy one.<sup>(126)</sup>

As evidence of the scope of Magnús's collection and his zeal for the promotion of the transcription of manuscripts is the fact that no fewer than thirty-nine manuscripts which have belonged to him or are otherwise connected with him are now to be found scattered amongst various collections, particularly in the Arnamagnæan Collection, the National Library of Iceland and the British Museum. The British Museum itself contains no less than eight. A number of the thirty-nine manuscripts

have been written by Magnús himself but he had most of them copied by others. Two of his principal scribes were the father and son, Þórður Jónsson and Jón Þórðarson.<sup>(127)</sup>

It is clear that Magnús í Vigur carried on a correspondence with Árni Magnússon, but little evidence of it now remains. However, a copy of a letter in Árni's own hand contained in AM 410, fol. is of particular importance for the present purpose. The letter is dated from Copenhagen on 25th May, 1691 and, although the name of the addressee is not given, it is without doubt directed to Magnús í Vigur, in reply to a letter from the latter to Árni, dated 26th July, 1690. The relevant part of Árni's reply is as follows:-

\*Ehrugófuge Hófdingsmann Mikilsvirdande vin Ydar tilskrif af Dato Vigur 26 Julii 1690 er mier i firra sumar vel til handa komid, gledst þar af ad fornema idar velgeingne, sem mier alltid skal vere hin kiseresta. Eg þacka gude sem mig án slisa framleider. Sierdellis þacka eg idur Elskulege vin firer idar trigd i ockar uppteknu correspondence (sem eg skal astunda ad forskullda med sama mote) sem og firer mier senda sógupette. Ecki er til at taka ad hier nockursstadar fást kunne þad Biarnar Sögu Hitd. kappa abrestur, því eg meina hana hvörge nu finnast nema hia Þormode Torfasine i Noregi, og ockur badum, villdi bidia þier mier avisa villdud ef hana annarstadar uppspurt gietid, sama er ad seigia um þad i einar og adrar sögur vantar sem ockar a mille fared hafa, þad er hvörge ad fa so eg vite, kiemur þad so til ad minne higgiu, þessar

sógur eru í firstu skrifadar eftir pergamentzbokum sem hafa vantad blóð í, enn ecki til vered nema eitt exemplar ... " (128)

Árni accordingly advises Magnús, no doubt in response to an enquiry, that the part lacking in Bjarnar saga would not be found in Copenhagen, because he thought that the saga would not then be found anywhere except with Torfæus in Norway and with Magnús and himself. If Magnús learned of a copy of it anywhere else, Árni would be obliged if he let him know. In Árni's opinion, the vellums from which incomplete sagas of this type were copied must have themselves lacked leaves and no other copies must have existed. As has been seen, this indeed must have been the case with Bjarnar saga.

From Árni's letter, it is clear that there were at least three copies of Bjarnar saga in May 1691 and probably at least five, for it is likely that Torfæus had three, that is, 551 and its copies 488 and Stockholm 38. Árni must have taken a copy of 551 when he borrowed it in 1690, which copy is now apparently lost. Furthermore, when he wrote to Árni, in July 1690, Magnús must have had his own copy. All of these copies, of course, lacked the introductory chapters from Bajarbók.

The copy owned by Magnús í Vigur in 1690 is now lost but, as will be referred to more extensively below, there is good reason to believe that it was neither a copy of the vellum nor of 551 itself. Extant manuscripts which descend from Magnús's copy have many features in

common with 488 but have also variations common to each other, which differ from the text in 488. There is therefore evidence that these manuscripts descend, not from 488 itself, but from a copy of 488, which copy is now lost.

This will be elaborated on below, when discussing these dependent manuscripts, but, accepting that they do ultimately descend from 488, the question arises as to how Magnús came by his copy and where and when it was written. There is no evidence on this point, but there presumably must have been some correspondence, now unfortunately apparently no longer extant, between Torfæus and Magnús. The logical conclusion appears to be that either Torfæus lent 488 to Magnús, which he returned after having it copied, or he sent Magnús a copy of 488. This copy presumably would have been made by Aðgeir Jónsson. The second possibility seems the more likely and, if 488 was written in 1689, we can perhaps date Magnús's copy to 1690 and possibly he received it shortly before writing to Árni in July of that year. Magnús may well have sent Torfæus manuscripts in return, as it is apparent from Árni's letter of May, 1691, that Magnús had sent Árni "sóguþátte".

There are two manuscripts extant, which appear to be direct copies of Magnús í Vigur's copy of 1690. These are BM. Add. 4867, fol. and JS 624, 4to and will be treated next. Other dependent manuscripts are discussed later.

1. BM. Add. 4867, fol.

BM. Add. 4867, fol. is a well-preserved manuscript of 261 folios, containing copies of ten sagas and one páttir. On the spine of the binding, which is in need of some repair, is inscribed :-

"Miscellanea Islandica - Mus. Brit.

Ex Dono J. Banks. 4867. PLUT CXIII. D."

It is accordingly a Banks manuscript, that is, it is one of the Icelandic manuscripts collected by Sir Joseph Banks, the celebrated voyager and naturalist, as a result of his journey to Iceland in 1772 and subsequently given by him to the British Museum. (129)

How this particular manuscript was actually obtained for Banks is not known precisely but it appears that it must have been acquired for him by Ólafur Stefánsson (130) in the same way as he obtained the other Banks manuscripts which had belonged to Magnús í Vigur. After the latter's death some of his books had gone to his son-in-law Páll Vídalín from whom they passed to his son-in-law Bjarni sýslumaður Halldórsson. (131) The latter died in January 1773 and Ólafur Stefánsson was thus able to buy his books for Banks. The difficulty is, however, that it cannot be proved that either Páll Vídalín or Bjarni Halldórsson ever owned BM. Add. 4867, fol. (132)

Jón Þorkelsson in his article "Íslandske handskrifter í England og Skotland" (133) has this to say about this manuscript :-



"British Museum Add. 4867. Fol. er skrevet af Jón Þórðarson i årene 1690-1692 åbenbart for Magnús í Vigur, men den findes hverken anført i fortegnelsen over Vídalíns eller Bjarni Halldórssons samling. Håndskriftet er derfor kommet til Banks ad andre veje. Det er af Eiríkur Magnússon beskrevet i Njála II, 760-64." (134)

In the second volume of the 1875-89 Copenhagen edition of Njáls saga, Eiríkur Magnússon discusses BM. Add. 4867, fol. at some length, but principally in respect to Njáls saga, which takes up the first 99 folios in the manuscript. He states, inter alia :-

"Codex tilhører den på museet opbevarede samling af islandske håndskrifter, som på Sir Joseph Banks vegne tilveiebragtes af Stiftamtmand Olafur Stephensen i løbet af årene 1773-77. Njála er skreven af en Jón Þórðarson, for den på øen Vigur i Isafjorden bosatte godseier Magnús Jónsson, den bekendte Magnús 'digri'; lovmænd Páll Vídalíns svigerfader. Denne Jón Þórðarson tør man med rimelighed antage for en søn af bonden Þórðr Jónsson, en anden af Magnús Jónssons afskrivere, der ifølge egenhændige påtegninger i en af ham udskreven folio codex, Brit. Mus. Add. 4857, i April 1669 boede på gården Strandsel, men i begyndelsen af jan. 1670 på Skarð i Skötufjord, begge gårde beliggende i Øgurs præstegjæld .... Som det synes, har Jón været i besiddelse af visse, rimeligvis autodidaktiske, kundskaber. Således anvender han i Njála slet dannede græske skrifte tegn for sit eget navn ..

... Han fører for resten en god hand, uelegant, men sikker og let gjenkendelig, blandt andet derved, at han udfylder de mere åbne og rundformede begyndelsesbogstaver med middelmådigt tegnede menneskeansigter ... " (135)

This illumination of the initial letters of chapters, to which Eiríkur Magnússon refers, is, however, limited to Njáls saga and the rest of the codex is more soberly produced.

In fact, the whole of the manuscript is not in the hand of Jón Þórðarson, but by far the greater part is. The last three sagas<sup>(136)</sup> are in a different and later hand and, unlike almost all those by Jón Þórðarson, are undated.

As mentioned, the codex commences with Njáls saga, at the end of which is written "Anno Domini 1690 D. 18 Decembris", followed by Jón Þórðarson's name in Greek letters, "ΙΩΝ ΤΩΡΘΑΡ ΘΩΝ." Then follows "Paattur af Þorleyfe Jarla skaallde", dated "Anno 1691", as are the next three sagas, Eiríks saga rauða, Droplaugarsona saga and Vápnfirðinga saga. The sixth item in the codex, Liósvetninga saga, is undated, but can be safely assigned to 1691 also, as Bjarnar saga, which follows, almost certainly was commenced in 1691, for at the end we find written "Anno 1692. D. 6. Januarij." Eighth and last of those written by Jón Þórðarson is "Saga Jóns Hoola Biskups", dated "Anno 1692", with a monogram at the end. Here Jón Þórðarson laid down his pen for the time being.

Jón Þórðarson made his copy of Bjarnar saga for Magnús í Vigur in 1691-92, but the manuscript from which he copied must have lacked the opening chapters from Bjarnbók.

This is demonstrated further by the fact that, in the top right-hand corner of Folio 189<sup>r</sup> of the codex, where the text of the saga originally began with "Pann vetr for Biorn", the scribe has written, presumably in 1691, the words "Upphafit vantar." These words have been crossed out later when the beginning was added. This comprises Folios 186 to 188 inclusive of the codex, six sides in all, the writing on the last side being somewhat cramped, in order to squeeze the whole of the introductory text into the space available. The original part of the manuscript takes up Folios 189 to 206 inclusive.

The remarkable thing about the Bjarnar saga manuscript in BM. Add. 4867, fol. is that, in contrast to all of the other seventeenth-century texts of the saga, it is divided into chapters, twenty-six in all. Each chapter is headed, e.g., Cap. XXVI. What is more remarkable is that it appears to have been divided into chapters from the beginning. Five full chapters and part of Chapter VI are contained in the first three folios, which were added later and the balance of Chapter VI and Chapters VII to XXVI comprise the original part of the manuscript. The chapters give every indication of having been numbered from the start and Jón Þórðarson has, on the face of it, shown a great deal of foresight and judicious powers of estimation by allowing for the beginning that the saga lacked some five and a half chapters. Very possibly, however, both he and Magnús í Vigur knew of the páttir of Björn and Þórðr in Bjarnarbók, which was still in Iceland at that time, but for some reason were unable to get hold of the manuscript in order to copy the

relevant chapters. Instead, they showed the saga as commencing half way through Chapter VI and hoped to add the opening five and a half chapters later. On this hypothesis, it is quite possible that at some time between 1691 and 1697 Magnús í Vigur advised Árni Magnússon of the existence of Bæjarbók and that this led to Árni's subsequent acquisition of the manuscript. Such a theory is impossible of proof but the numbering of BM. Add. 4867 fol. in chapters in the manner described as early as 1691 is otherwise difficult to account for.

It is possible that space was left for the beginning of the saga by leaving three folios blank in the manuscript book, which were then filled in later. However, the paper seems cleaner and it is probable that these folios were inserted at a later date. There are also some slight spelling variations, the ink is different and the handwriting varies somewhat from that in the rest of the saga. The hand is very similar, as is the colour of the ink, to that of certain marginal notes to Vápnfirðinga saga, earlier in the same codex. These notes refer to the scribe, Jón Arnórsson lögsagnari in Ljárskógar, <sup>(137)</sup> and appear to be copied from marginal notes <sup>(138)</sup> made by the latter on a manuscript of Vápnfirðinga saga, not necessarily the one from which Jón Þórðarson made his copy of Vápnfirðinga saga.

It must be considered unlikely that the hand in Folios 186 to 183 is that of Jón Þórðarson at some date subsequent to the writing of the greater part of the manuscript. The date of Jón Þórðarson's death appears to be unknown but in the Manntal á Islandi of 1703 one of the

tenants of the two farms at Strandsel in Ögurssveit, Norður-Ísafjarðarsýsla, is shown as Sigríður Bjarnadóttir, a widow aged 48 with six children whose ages ranged from 23 to 11 years.<sup>(139)</sup> These children are recorded as Hlaðgerður Jónsdóttir, Þorsteinn Jónsson, Ásmundur Jónsson, Kristín Jónsdóttir, Hallgrímur Jónsson and Guðfinna Jónsdóttir. Since it is known that Jón Þórðarson was living at Strandsel in 1679-80 at least,<sup>(140)</sup> it is reasonable to suppose that he may have been the husband of Sigríður Bjarnadóttir and, if so, he must have been dead by 1703. The latest record of him personally appears to be the attribution to him of having partially written in 1699 and 1700 a Fornkvæðabók now lost but a copy of which exists as Ny kgl. sml. 1141, fol.<sup>(141)</sup> In 1699-1700 Jón Þórðarson is said to have been living at Kálfavík,<sup>(142)</sup> also in Ögurssveit. If this Jón Þórðarson was the husband of Sigríður Bjarnadóttir, his death therefore occurred between 1700 and 1703.

It is also of interest that the Jarðabók of Arni Magnússon and Páll Vídalín shows that in 1710 both farms at Strandsel were occupied by a certain Jón Jónsson.<sup>(143)</sup> Possibly this was another son of Sigríður Bjarnadóttir, who was presumably dead by then, but this seems unlikely.

On the other hand, the Manntal indicates that in 1703 there were two tenant-farmers at Kálfavík, possibly brothers, Jón Jónsson aged 40 and Sveinbjörn Jónsson, aged 45, together with their families.<sup>(144)</sup> It is perhaps noteworthy that Jón Jónsson had a son named Þórður, aged one. By 1710 the picture had partially changed, for the Jarðabók<sup>(145)</sup> tells us that, although Jón was still at

Kálfavík, Sveinbjörn's place had been taken by a certain Narfi Jónsson, perhaps a third brother, but, in any event, probably the same Narfi Jónsson, aged 51, who was at Kleifar, yet another farm in Ögurssveit, in 1703, but who was not there in 1710, having apparently been succeeded by a son. That Narfi, Sveinbjörn and Jón were all brothers and perhaps sons of Jón Þórðarson is a possibility, but Narfi's age makes the proposition an extremely doubtful one and Jónsson is and was a very common patronymic in Iceland.

The fact, however, that Jón Þórðarson is said to have been living at Kálfavík in 1700, that Jón Jónsson was living there in 1703 and 1710 and that the latter had a young son named Þórður who may very well have been named after his great-grandfather does suggest that Jón Jónsson may have been the son of Jón Þórðarson. In any event, if this were the case it would still be reasonable to date the latter's death between 1700 and 1703.

In AM 453, fol. there is a record of a correspondence between Arni Magnússon and a certain Jón Þórðarson of Bakki but this can hardly have been the same Jón Þórðarson whom Magnús í Vigur employed. These letters were written in 1708, shortly after Arni had lent AM 488, 4to to Jon Halldórsson. On 2nd March, 1708, Jón Þórðarson wrote to Arni, returning books that he had borrowed and asking for some sagas. He was apparently aware that Arni had lent 488 to Jón Halldórsson and seems to suggest that he might borrow it from him for a time, for he remarks :-

"Biarnar Hitdala kappá er hia Sr. Joni í Hitardal.  
hana kann hann sidar ad fá ...." (146)

On the 26th March, 1708, Jón Þórðarson wrote again to Arni Magnússon, returning what he had just borrowed and requesting a continuation of such loans. He appears to refer once more to AM 488, 4to, when he writes :-

" .... Gaman þætte mier sia af Birne Hytdala kappa sogur, ef lifa næði til vetrar, enn um sumartyma fellur til annad, því eg vill alldrei þakur abirgiast leingur enn eg má sem skemst .... " (147)

Whether Jón Þórðarson of Bakki ever succeeded in borrowing 488 or not cannot be discovered but so far as his identity is concerned, the Manntal shows two persons of that name living at a farm called Bakki in 1703. At Bakki in Tungupingsókn, Skutilsfjarðarhreppur, Vestur - Ísafjarðarsýsla, one of the farmers was Þórður Stefánsson aged 55. His second son, aged 20, was named Jón Þórðarson. (148) At Bakki in Leirár - og Melahreppur, Borgarfjarðarsýsla, the farmer was Jón Þórðarson lögrjettumaður, aged 55, with one child, Solveig Jónsdóttir, aged 21. (149)

The Jarðabók shows that Jón Þórðarson lögrjettumaður was still the farmer at Bakki in Melasveit in 1707 and also the owner of the land. (150) However, according to the Jarðabók, in 1710 Jón Þórðarson is shown as one of the three farmers at Hnifsdalur Neðri in Skutilsfjörður, (151) having presumably moved from Bakki, for the farmers there are now shown as Bjarni Sigmundsson and Ísleikur Bjarnason. (152)

The latter had been mentioned in the Manntal as being the second farmer at Bakki in Skutilsfjörður in 1703. There is now no mention of Þórður Stefánsson and possibly he was dead by 1710. This Bakki in Skutilsfjörður is designated in

the Jarðabók as being i Hnifsdal.

Therefore it appears that the only Jón Þórðarson living at a farm called Bakki in 1708 may have been Jón Þórðarson lögrjettumaður in Melasveit, then about 60 years of age. All the indications of residence, social status and age point to him quite conclusively as being Árni Magnússon's correspondent in March, 1708, rather than his younger namesake in Skutilsfjörður, even if the latter had not moved to Hnifsdalur Neðri by that time.

A third letter from Jón Þórðarson of Bakki to Árni Magnússon dated 29th July, 1708,<sup>(153)</sup> does refer to a son of Jón's named Þorhalli and his service with Árni and Páll Vídalín but this son is not mentioned in the Manntal as being at Bakki in Melasveit in 1703. This, however, is only negative evidence and hardly a matter of crucial importance, since he could easily have been elsewhere at the time.

The possibility, in any case, that Jón Þórðarson of Melasveit was identical with Jón Þórðarson, the scribe of Magnús í Vigur, appears to be definitely excluded. The distance alone between Vigur and Borgarfjarðarsýsla would almost certainly preclude that, even if there were no other factors almost equally strong to take into consideration.

During the period when Árni Magnússon was in Iceland working on his Jarðabók with Páll Vídalín, BM. Add. 4867, fol. was probably in the possession of either Páll Vídalín or of his wife, Magnús í Vigur's daughter. It would therefore, on the face of it, appear possible for Páll Vídalín to have had these folios added to 4867 by making use of Gottrupsbók



or possibly of the equally lost copy of the same that Þorsteinn Sigurðsson made in 1711-1712. However, the likeliest provenance for the three additional folios appears to be 488, and this is confirmed by the number of cases, where 4867 presents the same variants from 73 a as do 488, 157 and JS 7. These variants are listed in full behind the text.

The Bjarnar saga manuscript in 4867 is headed "Sagann af Þyrne Hýtdala Kappa" and commences "Híer skal seigia nockut", etc. By replacing the "Nu" of Bajarbók and 488 with "Híer", the scribe of 4867 has made a conscious effort to make the opening of the saga more natural.

The lacuna in the middle of the saga is marked by a space of half a page after "segir hann". As previously mentioned, at the end of the saga are the words "Anno 1692. D. 6. Januarij." In addition, at the top of the final page is written the German word Beschluss.

In this regard, it is of interest that Jón Helgason in his Introduction to Kvæðabók úr Vigur<sup>(154)</sup> draws attention to the fact that at the top of Folio 175<sup>v</sup> of the manuscript of the Kvæðabók, AM 148, 8vo, the scribe has also made use of the word Beschluss to indicate the completion on that page of the poem dealt with in that part of the manuscript. Jón Helgason considers that this part of AM 148, 8vo was definitely written by Þórður Jónsson, who had demonstrated his learning in AM 426, fol. by writing the Danish word Beslutning at the top of the folio containing the end of Hrafn saga. If Jón Helgason is right in ascribing the part in question of AM 148, 8vo to Þórður Jónsson and not to his

probable son, Jón Þórðarson, the conclusion must be drawn that the latter shared the former's fondness for display of learning. On the other hand, the hand in this part of the Kvæðabók is very similar to that of Jón Þórðarson in BM Add. 4867, fol. and the formation of the word Beschluss identical or almost so in both cases. One must therefore consider it possible that Jón Þórðarson may also have been the scribe in AM 148, 8vo, rather than Þórður Jónsson.

There are many indications in 4867 which demonstrate its connection with 488 and also with its sister manuscript JS 624, 4to. It will however, be more convenient to deal with the interrelationship of these manuscripts, when discussing JS 624, 4to below.

## 2. JS 624, 4to.

A further manuscript that escaped Árni Magnússon of almost equal age as 4867 and stemming from the same school of scribes<sup>(155)</sup> is JS 624, 4to.<sup>(156)</sup> This is a codex in various hands, previously in Jón Sigurðsson's collection and now in the National Library of Iceland, upon the title page of which stands "Skientileg Saugu Book .... Skrifud Ad Látrum vid Isafiórd Anno 1695". JS 624, 4to contains six sagas, of which Ljósvetninga saga is the second and Biarnar saga the third. According to Björn Sigfússon,<sup>(157)</sup> some of Látrabók, as he calls the codex, was written as early as 1693 and the manuscript bears the mark of the Vatnsfjörður school. It may therefore be that the Biarnar saga portion of the manuscript is written a little earlier than 1695,

which is probably the date when the whole manuscript was completed, but this is a matter of small importance.

JS 624, 4to, so far as Bjarnar saga is concerned, is a fljótaskrift manuscript, which is headed "Saga Biarnar Hitdalakappa" with the words "vantar upphafed" written underneath in brackets. This may be compared with 4867, where the Bjarnar saga manuscript was originally noted "Upphafit vantar" before the introductory chapters from Bæjarbók were added.

JS 624, 4to commences "Þann vetur fór Biörn" and, like 551 and 488, but unlike 4867, is not divided into chapters, although it is paragraphed. The lacuna after "seiger hann" is indicated by a space of two or three lines.

A comparison of JS 624, 4to with 4867 indicates that the former is not a copy of the latter, although they present very similar features and were both almost certainly copied from the same manuscript, the one in the possession of Magnús í Vigur. This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that both manuscripts were written in the same area, that is, Ísafjörður.

There are, for example, certain omissions in the text of 4867, which are not paralleled in 624. An example of this is to be found at Page 13, line 22 of the present edition, where 551, 488 and 624 all have the curious expression "Sie þeir giora", a possible Germanism which presumably originated with 551. In 4867, on the other hand, the superfluous word "Sie" has been omitted. Further examples are at Page 50, lines 4-5, "ollum megin oc farr hann eigi hlift ser og koma þeir ahann sárum" and at Page 50, lines 23-24.

"Potti sier þungt weita wilia mote Byrne", where these phrases are in both cases present in 551, 488 and 624 but are omitted, through scribal errors, in 4867. This clearly demonstrates that 624 cannot have been copied from 4867.

The possibility that 4867 may have been copied from 624 appears to be effectively excluded by the information we have as to the respective dates of the writing of these manuscripts. Moreover, there are instances where 4867 agrees with 551 and 488 against 624; for example, Page 21, line 14, where 551, 488 and 4867 read "nu liuger þu" as against "þu liúger" in 624 and Pages 38, line 28 to 39, line 1, where the phrase, "þar bio sa madur er Eydur hiet" is present in 551, 488 and 4867 but missing in 624. Any remote possibility that 4867 could be a copy of 624 can therefore be ruled out.

On the other hand, 624 and 4867 both present many features in common with 488, but not with 551. Examples of these are as follows :-

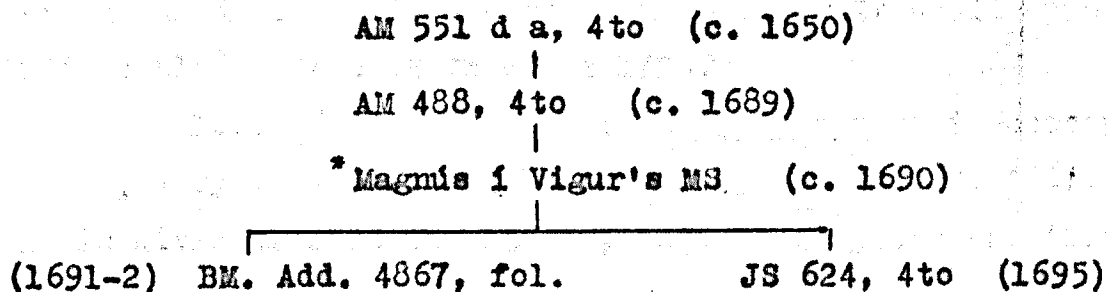
	<u>551</u>	<u>488, 624, 4867</u>
Page 17, line 2.	er oss sogdu, þuiad þa reynum vier ad godum Monnum,	Omitted.
" 21, " 27.	og komur	Omitted.
" 22, " 4.	þui eg hefi	og hefi eg
" 37, " 22.	Arnór fór nu heim og vard heill sära sinna.	Omitted.

In addition, 624 and 4867 frequently combine in variations against 488, which in these cases generally agree with 551. These may be exemplified as follows :-

	<u>551</u>	<u>488</u>	<u>4867</u>	<u>624</u>
P. 20, line 3.	milli	i milli	J millum	J millum
" 20, " 22.	vegligri	vegligri	vænligri	Wænlegre
" 29, " 21.	kuolld	kvold	sinn	sinn
" 35, " 16.	hiedann fämennre	heðann faamennri	faamennre hedan	fämennare hiedann
" 37, " 24.	þessa wysu	þessa visu	wýsu þessa	Wijsu þessa
" 39, " 18-19.	finna fyrr	finna fyrr	firr finna	firr finna

This factor can be explained by 624 and 4867 both having been copied from a copy of AM 488, 4to. This copy has now become lost but would have presented all these combined features. There seems good reason to believe that this was the manuscript to which Arni Magnússon referred in his letter of 25th May, 1691, to Magnús í Vigur, that is, the manuscript of Bjarnar saga which Magnús presumably had in his possession in 1690.

A genealogical chart of these manuscripts would therefore be as follows :-



In 1690, of course, AM 488, 4to did not have the beginning from Bjarnabók prefixed to it, since this would not have been added until early in 1698. The beginning was added later to BM. Add. 4867, fol., probably about 1708, when Arni Magnússon had 488 with him in Iceland and lent it to Jón

Halldórsson to copy. Like AM 551 d a, 4to, Magnús í Vigur's manuscript did not have the beginning and, likewise, JS 624, 4to has always remained "höfuðlaust".

3. Lbs. 2452, 4to.

Lbs. 2452, 4to is a fine eighteenth-century codex in various hands. According to the Catalogue<sup>(158)</sup> of the Manuscripts in the National Library of Iceland, it was purchased in 1932 from Þorleifur Jóhannesson in Stykkishólmur but had belonged to Páll faktor Hjaltalin. On the title-page, which is in the hand of Síra Olafur Sigurðsson of Flatey, is written :-

"Ein Agiæt Saugu - og Rýmna-Bók Samansöfnud af Bergþóri Þorvardssyni og að hans Forlagi innbundin í eitt, Árid 1814 af Ól. Sigurdssyni."

The codex contains six items, the first of which is Bjarnar saga. This is a beautifully written manuscript, very much in the style of AM 76 a, fol. and appears to be in the hand of Magnús Einarsson á Jörfa. It would appear reasonable to date it to about 1720.

Lbs. 2452, 4to, so far as Bjarnar saga is concerned, gives every indication of being a copy of BM. Add. 4867, fol. It is divided, like the latter, into 26 chapters and thus forms one of a small group of manuscripts adhering to this method of chapter division. The others in this group, apart from 4867, are Lbs. 1489, 4to and BM. Add. 24972, 4to. All of these manuscripts also have the same variant beginning : "Híer skal seigia nockuð", slightly varied only in orthography.

They share also common factors such as the lack of the sentence "Arnór ..... sinna" after Verse 23 and the retention of the phrase "til frænda sinna og Breydafiardar" on the last page of the manuscript (cf. p. 57, supra). These two examples, however, and others merely prove a descent from 551 through 488 and it is likely that, apart from Lbs. 2452, 4to, these manuscripts are affected by other manuscripts descending from 488. This is particularly the case with BM. Add. 24972, 4to, which shows strong affinities with the Jón Halldórsson copy, Oslo 313, 4to, and is best referred to as a mixed manuscript.

4. Lbs. 1489, 4to.

This is a manuscript written between 1810 and 1814 by Jón sýslumaður Jónsson á Melum and Sira Ólafur Sigurðsson,<sup>(159)</sup> who later danicised his name to Sivertsen.<sup>(160)</sup> According to the title-page, it was written "ad Melum vid Hrutafiörd frá Veturnóttum 1810 til Sumarmála 1814 af Jóni Jónssyni Antiquitatum Patriæ Studioso." Jón Jónsson was Björn M. Olsen's grandfather on the maternal side. Björn M. Olsen has prefixed a notice to the manuscript, which gives its history and indicates that it went first from Jón Jónsson to Ólafur Sivertsen, then to the latter's daughter Katrín, later to her son Ólafur lækni Guðmundsson and after his death to his widow, Margrét Magnúsdóttir, Björn M. Olsen's sister. The manuscript was then sold by Björn M. Ólsen to the National Library of Iceland in 1909.<sup>(161)</sup>

Lbs. 1489, 4to is a large codex containing many sagas and "Sagan af Byrni Hytdæla-Kappa oc Þórði skáldi Kolbeins syni" is the fifteenth item. This particular part of

the codex is considered by Jónas Kristjánsson<sup>(162)</sup> to be in the hand of Jón Jónsson and at the end of the saga is written :-

"Oc lykr hér nú Frasögu þessari af Byrni Hítþala Kappa. Endud þann 26<sup>ta</sup> April, 1813."

Prefixed to the saga is the following comment by Björn M. Ólsen :-

"Bjarnar s. Hítþalakap.

Upphaf sögunnar á kin sitt að rekja til "Bæjarbókar", eins og ónnur handrit þessarar sögu, aftur að bls 12 í Boers útg. (þann vetr etc), enn framhaldið til A.M. 551 d a (A í Boers útg.)

Hefur varla sjálfstætt gildi."

The manuscript has marginal notes by the scribe, indicating the substance of the text. It is divided into 26 chapters, but they are not numbered after Chapter XIV. Where the lacuna exists in the middle of the saga there is the note :-

"Her vantar styckiskorn í Söguna um burtför Blórns af Hýtarnesi gipting hans etc."

Lbs. 1489, 4to appears to be descended from BM. Add. 4867, fol. through Lbs. 2452, 4to and this view is fortified by the fact that both manuscripts were in the possession of Síra Ólafur Sivertsen in and around 1814. It would, in any event, have been impossible for Lbs. 1489, 4to to have been copied from 4867 directly, as that manuscript had passed into the possession of Sir Joseph Banks long before the close of the eighteenth century.



5. BM. Add. 24972, 4to.

BM. Add. 24972, 4to is an early nineteenth-century codex, containing a considerable number of sagas, which was purchased by the British Museum on 9th September, 1862, from the Rev. S. Baring Gould, presumably obtained by him during his visit to Iceland in 1861. At the foot of one of the pages is the signature of Daði Nielsson, the poet and scholar, who perished in a snowstorm on Skagaströnd on 8th January, 1857. (163)

The third item in the codex is Bjarnar saga, headed "Hier hefur sögu af Byrne hytdala Kappa." It is a corrupt, poorly written and, for all purposes of scholarship, valueless text. It is convenient to discuss it briefly here, since it appears to descend remotely from BM. Add. 4867, fol., although there is also clear evidence that use has been made of a text descending from Oslo 313, 4to. It has the same division into 26 chapters as 4867 and, therefore, having regard to the probable age of the manuscript (perhaps about 1820), may be considered as descending in some respects from Lbs.2452, 4to.

But for its chapter division, however, it would be extremely difficult to place it in this group, as it appears much more obviously related to Oslo 313, 4to, which will be discussed next. In this regard, it is sufficient to remark that it contains two variant readings from Oslo 313, 4to, which have been accepted as emendations in the present edition, but which are not found in 4867, nor in any other extant manuscript older than Oslo 313, 4to. These are the two expansions, "skialldan" at Page 30, line 24, where 551 merely

has "sk" and space for seven or eight letters, and "og vilia" at Page 33, line 22, where the sense indicates that something similar has obviously been omitted in 551.

BM. Add. 24972, 4to is especially corrupt as regards verses. Of the 39 in the saga, only seventeen are retained in this manuscript, Verses 6-10, 12-18, 20, 23, 25, 30, 33-37 and 39 being omitted.

#### IV. The Jón Halldórsson Manuscript and its copies.

Of the numerous manuscripts descending from AM 488, 4to, no less than thirteen can be traced without difficulty to the copy which Jon Halldórsson made between 1708 and 1711 of 488. Both Boer and Nordal presumably regarded this manuscript as lost when they prepared their editions of Bjarnar saga. This is, however, fortunately not the case, since the manuscript is preserved in the collection of the University of Oslo as MS. 313, 4to. How this manuscript arrived in Oslo and was acquired by the University appears to be unknown<sup>(164)</sup> but presumably it did not leave Iceland until at least some time after 1815, judging from the dates of its extant known direct copies.


##### 1. Oslo, 313, 4to.

Oslo, 313, 4to contains copies of Bjarnar saga and Njals saga, Bjarnar saga taking up the first 62 pages. At the top of an otherwise blank prefatory page to the manuscript is written : "Thessi Bok inneheldur : Sögu Brot af Byrne Hytdæla Kappa oc Niala Saga."

Jón Halldórsson has written on the first page of the Bjarnar saga manuscript :-

"Sögu Brot af Byrne Hýtdala Kappa.

Þetta Sögubrot hefi eg skrifad eftter því Exemplari a pappir, sem Edla Hálærdur Hr Professor og Archiv Secreterer Arne Magnuson hefur mier lied, um hvort hann skrifar so i sýnu Brefi til mýn.

Biarnar Saga Hitdala kappa þessi er ritud eftter pappirs Exemplari fra Pormode Torfa sýni mislafnt rielt skrifudu. Þad sama pappirs Exemplar var hófudlaust, og býriadist med þeim ordum. Þann vetr fór Biorn til hirdar Eiriks Jarls. hvor ord hier standa fyrst pag. 10. vid því merki ä spatiunni . hia mier Arna Magnussýni er ein Olafs Helga Saga ä Kälfskinni, fyllri enn almenniligar : þar inne talast um Birne Hitdala Kappa. og ur þeiri Olafs Sögu er ordrielt tekid sem hier fyrst stendur framm ad fyrrsögu merki sem og differentis, sem hier eru in margine settar. leingra nær ecki þessi relatio um Biörn i nefndri Olafs Sögu, sem siä mä af."

At the end of the saga the following is written :-

"Ritad i Hitardal, og endat dag 4. Februarii Anno 1711. af Joni pr. Halldorss."

A loose piece of paper inserted between the leaves of the manuscript contains the following note in Danish :-

"Bjorn Hitdala Kappes saga

Nials saga.

Særdeles godt Manuscript af Præsten Jon Halldorsson i Hitardal paa Island, fuldendt 1711."

The Bjarnar saga portion of Oslo, 313, 4to (JH as it will be referred to hereunder), is divided into 35 chapters, which are numbered, e.g. "25. Cap." Apart from BM. Add. 4867, fol., which is divided into 26 chapters, it is therefore the first extant manuscript of the saga to be divided into numbered chapters. The division into and numbering of chapters in subsequent copies of the saga is therefore very largely due to Jón Halldórsson's initiative in JH.

Arni Magnússon had asked Jón Halldórsson to add any notes to 488 that he thought proper and this he duly did. In the copy that he made for himself Jón Halldórsson adopted a varying procedure in this respect. Sometimes he made use of the same or an almost similar marginal note; sometimes the note is omitted altogether; sometimes he embodied the whole substance of the note itself in the text, thus producing an emendation. Jón Halldórsson has also, in a number of other cases, emended the text in a manner that gives every indication of being very close to the original and, as will be noted from the list of variants, a number of these emendations have been accepted in the present edition, as have also certain emendations stemming from marginal notes to 488.

At the end of the manuscript on a separate page are certain notes relating to Björn's age, apparently by Jón Halldórsson's son, Síra Vigfús í Hítardal.

2. Lbs. 1442, 4to.

The oldest of the copies of Oslo, 313, 4to, is probably Lbs. 1442, 4to. This codex in the National Library of Iceland is in three hands and is dated by the Catalogue<sup>(165)</sup> to between about 1720 to 1740. It is entitled "Fróðlegar Frásögur Edur Historiur". It had been in the possession of Jakob Eiríksson á Búðum and his descendants, Jón sýslumaður á Espihóli, Jón sýslumaður Espólin<sup>(166)</sup> and Síra Hákon Espólin and was acquired by the Landsbókasafn by being purchased from the National Librarian, Jón Jakobsson in 1906.

The third item in the codex is "Sagann af Byrne Hýtdæla Kappa" and at the end is written "Skrifad Anno 1724 Endad 22 Februarij". It is a careful copy of JH, from Jón Halldórsson's preface down to the marginal notes and emendations which the latter made in the text. The wording of the preface has, however, been varied by the scribe to indicate that Lbs. 1442, 4to was not written by Jón Halldórsson himself. He accordingly commences :

"Petta sögubrot hefe eg skrifad etter þui Exemplary; á pappir sem Edla halardur Hr. Professor og Archiv=secreterer Arne Magnusson hefur mier lied Seiger Profasturinn i Hýtardal Sr Jon Halldorsson vmm hvort hann Hr. Arne skrifar i brefe til profastsins".

A slightly greater space is left for the lacuna than in JH, this space being almost wholly occupied by a full page decorative letter "J" (perhaps for Jón?), something unique in Bjarnar saga manuscripts.

3. Lbs. 1488, 4to.

This is a saga-book chiefly written by two scribes and dated by the Catalogue<sup>(167)</sup> to about 1750, part of it being in the hand of Pétur Jónsson from Svefneyjar.<sup>(168)</sup> Each saga has a comment by Björn M. Ólsen. The codex was owned by Ólafur læknir Guðmundsson, who received it from his father, Síra Guðmundur Einarsson. It reached Björn M. Ólsen and the Landsbókasafn Íslands in the same way as Lbs. 1489, 4to.

"Sagann af Byrne Hýtdæla Kappa" is the seventh and last manuscript in the codex. It is noted at the beginning that it is a copy of Jón Halldórsson's copy of AM 488, 4to. Björn M. Ólsen has the following prefatory note to the manuscript :-

"Samkvæmt athugasemd framan við söguna, er hún skrifuð eftir handriti sr. Jóns Halldórssonar í Hítardal, sem aftur var skrifað eftir exemplari, sem Árni Magnússon ljeði honum.

Handritið er því sistir handritsins Nr. 65, 4<sup>o</sup> i hdsr. Bmfjel., og afskrift af AM. 488, 4<sup>o</sup>, sem Ásgeir Jónsson hefur skrifað eftir handriti, sem Þormóður Torfason átti. Sbr. form. við Boers útg. af B. Hít. bls. XII með neðanmgr."

It is probable that it is a copy of JH through Lbs. 1442, 4to, since like the latter, but unlike JH, it has the note "Hier vantar i söguna" in the space left for the lacuna. There is a change of scribes in the twenty-fifth chapter of the manuscript, the second scribe having a much better hand.

At the end of the manuscript two verses have been scribbled, the former being an example of braghent rímur metre.<sup>(169)</sup> The verses appear to read as follows :-

Mig hefur beded mardalls graata menia fógur,  
nafn sitt bynda nu við Sógur,  
nærsta eru ord mýn Gógur

Arma lýf! Tvö vel vörmu,  
Výður þlaaning Jóds Ráanar,  
Særdur Týr af sverdi,  
Sett skúndar Leid rietta,  
Blarg fraa losað bergi,  
blýd þitt nafned smýða,  
Dóttur, digda þróttinn,  
Dag hvern hlióttu fagrann.

4. Lbs. 970, 4to.

Lbs. 970, 4to is a short codex of 45 leaves, written, according to the Landsbókasafn Catalogue,<sup>(170)</sup> about 1800 by Sigurður Sigurðsson á Fjarðarhorni.<sup>(171)</sup> On the final page is written "Min elskuleigi Husbondi Siera O. Sivertsen". This is the Sira Ólafur Sigurðsson referred to earlier when discussing Lbs. 1489, 4to and it is probable that the latter manuscript was to some extent influenced by Lbs. 970, 4to.

"Sagann af Byrni Hytdæla Kappa" is the second saga in the codex. There is a note in the corner on the first page, perhaps by Björn M. Ólsen: "Eftir AM (551 d a) sbr 488, 4<sup>o</sup>". It is headed "Cap 1. cum Prefatione" and has the same version of Jón Halldórsson's preface as has Lbs.1488,

4to, of which it appears to be a copy. Like that manuscript, it has the note, "her vantar í söguna" in the margin beside the space left for the lacuna. In this space are scribbled seven names in a handwriting different to that of the scribe. All the names are, however, in the same handwriting, and they appear to be "Guðmundur Pallsson, Gisli Guðmundsson, Christijan, Thomas Jonsson, Sveinn Thorsteinsson, Asgeir Einarsson, Thordur Pallsson".

The manuscript is imperfect. Not only does it lack several pages between Chapters 26 to 29, as stated in the Catalogue, but there are also pages missing between Chapters 17 and 19 and between Chapters 30 and 35.

5. Lbs. 717, 4to.

Lbs. 717, 4to.<sup>(172)</sup> is a codex written in 1805 by Þorsteinn Oddsson.<sup>(173)</sup> It is headed :-

"Nockrir Fróðligir og sannir Íslendinga Sögu-þættir, Uppskrifadir Arit MDCCCV. Þ. Oddsson."

The first item is "Saga af Þyrni Hýtdæla-Kappa". It contains a great number of abbreviations and also appears to be a copy of Lbs. 1442, 4to. There is no space left for the lacuna, this being indicated only by the words, "hér vantar í söguna".

6. Lbs. 718, 4to.

This is a sister manuscript of Lbs. 717, 4to and is also in the hand of Þorsteinn Oddsson. The Landsbókasafn Catalogue<sup>(174)</sup> dates it to around 1810. The third item is "Sögobrot frá Þyrni Hýtdæla-Kappa".



Similarly to Lbs. 717, 4to, no space is left for the lacuna, there being merely the marginal note, "Her vantar i söguna".

7. Lbs. 357, 4to.

This is a collection of sagas written in two hands between about 1800 to 1813, according to Landsbókasafn Catalogue.<sup>(175)</sup> The hand at the beginning and end of the codex is that of Bogi Benediktsson from Staðarfell.<sup>(176)</sup>

"Sagan af Birni Hítðala-kappa" is the eighth item in the collection. Like the other manuscripts in the JH group, it is divided into 35 Chapters. Towards the end of Chapter 24 the handwriting changes and the second scribe, Bogi Benediktsson, takes over.

Lbs. 357, 4to appears also to be a copy of Lbs. 1442, 4to and, like Lbs. 717, 4to and Lbs. 718, 4to, merely comments "hér vantar i söguna", before proceeding with the fifteenth chapter.

It has certain special marginal notes, which, amongst other matters, give dates, such as "Biörn fæddur 990". His death is placed in 1027.

8. Westin 91, 4to.

Westin 91<sup>(177)</sup> is a quarto manuscript in the Library of the University of Uppsala. It contains "Sagann af Byrne Hytdalakappa" in 44 folios. The manuscript appears to date from about 1750 and is a fairly close copy of JH, although possibly through an intermediary, with a few slight variations of its own. Frequently the scribe has

incorporated Jón Halldórsson's notes in the text itself. Jón Halldórsson's preface, however, is lacking.

The text of the saga is for the most part in ordinary cursive script, but after each of Chapters XXV, XXVII, XXXIII, XXXIV and XXXV (the final chapter), the scribe has written a verse in fljótaskrift. These, as far as can be ascertained, appear to read as follows :

Lofun fremur, eý vand efnd,  
ad því margur glotte,  
Mörgum Kiemur, Makleg hefnd,  
meltu vejta spotte

hans Jafninge, hárs umn ey,  
hier á Lande Isa,  
fleins ad þinge, fram gieck eý,  
frægdarverk er lýsa.

Biorn Hytdæla, Kappe Kiendur,  
Kueddur Jóna Dygda há, r,  
Deiddu þræla, hraustur hendur,  
herrans fróma Mann vrd stár.

Mæda er stór, ad miska þann,  
madur er heitast unner,  
og áster Jór med allann Jann,  
Jedest Tvö því J veg er fann.

Lista Snialler, fræger frá  
falla niótar branda  
feiger aller falldu á,  
frýder Kappar standa.

9. IB. 65, 4to.

This manuscript, previously in the possession of the Copenhagen section of the Icelandic Literary Society and now in the National Library of Iceland, was given to the Society by Árni kaupmaður Thorlacius in 1859.<sup>(178)</sup> It is in three hands and contains seven sagas.

The second item is Biarnarsaga and it is endorsed as being a copy of Jón Halldórsson's copy of AM 488, 4to. The manuscript indicates that it was begun by Teitr Jónsson<sup>(179)</sup> in January, 1763, and finished by Jón Ólafsson<sup>(180)</sup> at Grimsstaðir on 4th February, 1763.

10. Lbs. 716, 4to.

This manuscript was written between 1793 and 1795 and, according to the Landsbókasafn Catalogue,<sup>(181)</sup> is in the hand of Þorsteinn Gíslason from Stokkahláðir.<sup>(182)</sup>

The second saga in the manuscript is "Sagann af Birne Hytdæla Kappa". It descends from JH, probably through an intervening copy. After "seiger hann", there is no space for the lacuna, but only the remark :- "Hier vantar umm. gipting Biarnar". The verses are numbered in this manuscript, but Verses 27 and 28 are taken as one verse, the subsequent verses being accordingly numbered one short, resulting in a total of 38 verses instead of 39.

At the end of the saga, there is the following note :-

"Endad þann 22 Januari 1794. Skrifad eptir Raungu Exemplare á Kroppe í Eiafirde og það verdr ad visurnar eru so afbakadar frá því sem þar hafa vered giord i firstu og bid eg þá sem lesa ad lagfæra það sem Raungt er skrifad."

11. Lbs. 1568, 4to.

This, like the preceding manuscript, is a collection of sagas in the hand of Þorsteinn Gíslason á Stokkahlöðum and is dated by the Catalogue <sup>(183)</sup> as from about 1800 to 1812.

The eighth saga in the manuscript is "Sagann af Þyrni Hýtdala Kappa" and it appears to be a sister manuscript of Lbs. 716, 4to. There is again no space left for the lacuna after "seigir hann", but once more the comment is made, "her vantar í um gipting Biarnar".

The saga has the following note at the close :-

" (4 Martí 1812.)

Þéttir raungu Exemplari skrifað og visrnar gerfiliga afbakaðar svo að í sumum þeirra verður þess vegna einginn rett meining fundinn.

P. Gíslason. "

12. Lbs. 327, fol.

This is a manuscript of 48 folios, written in one hand and dated by the Catalogue <sup>(184)</sup> to about 1800.

The manuscript, which is in a somewhat damaged condition, gives, however, the appearance of being older. It was given to the Landsbókasafn by Síra Þorvaldur Þjarnarson á Mel. <sup>(185)</sup>

The first sixteen folios are taken up by "Sögubrot frá Þyrni Hýtdala-Kappa" and at the top of Folio 1 is the note :-

"Skrifað eptir eiginhandarriti Jóns prests Halldórssonar í Hýtdal endudu 4<sup>da</sup> Febr. 1711."

It is accordingly another independent copy of Oslo, 313 4to.

13. JS 340, 4to.

This is a fairly substantial manuscript of rimur and sagas, all, according to the Catalogue<sup>(186)</sup> of the Landsbókasafn, written by Þórarinn bókbindari Sveinsson<sup>(187)</sup> about 1820, with the exception of the title-page and the next two pages, which were added later.

The second item in the codex is "Sagann af Birni Hýttðala Kappa". It is divided into 35 Chapters and gives every indication of being a copy of JH or, more probably, of an intervening copy.

14. Lbs. 1339, 4to.

This manuscript, according to the Notes and Corrections to the Catalogue,<sup>(188)</sup> was written about 1815, by Gunnar stúdent Þorsteinsson<sup>(189)</sup> from Hlíðarfótur, son of Síra Þorsteinn Sveinbjarnarson from Hestur.

The manuscript contains a great number of sagas, the thirteenth of which is "Sögo brot fra Birni Hytdala-Kappa". At the top right-hand corner of the first page there is a note indicating that this saga is a copy of the manuscript completed by Jón Halldórsson on 4th February, 1711. This is therefore a further independent copy of JH and possibly the latest extant direct copy.

The scribe must, however, when making his copy, have had access to other manuscripts, for, directly following the last words of the saga, "oc lykr her nu frasogo þessari", is the text of the fragment from Bajarbók, which appears on the leaf prefixed to 488, and which commences "Arngeirr ór Hólmi" and concludes "lifðo badir".

There are two verses at the foot of the final page which tend to praise Björn and be abusive of Þórðr. They are not the same as those that follow Lbs. 1488, 4to and those scattered throughout Westin 91, 4to.

The first of these two verses is partially illegible at the beginning of the lines through wearing of the manuscript. However, as far as can be made out, they read as follows :-

... an let opt skildi skorna,  
scioma tamr við hljóminn,  
... npinn Hýtdala Kappi,  
hugpruðr aldrei fludi,  
... einglingr lista krýngr,  
lyfsstunda á efsta fundi  
... rn sjóg heipan,  
hærir með mana skjarninn.

Þórðr viddilari Kúrdi  
Kolbeinsson hreckja svoli  
Duglytill, Refr, Ragr  
Ravnversta grey ylldaunud,  
Falskt, lyginn og folssaur  
Flyoflindr Komu Þjofr.

It may readily be seen that the description of Þórðr in the second verse is far from complimentary.

This type of verse and perhaps more particularly those to be found in Westin 91, 4to appear to have much in common with the kappavísur, discussed by Jón Helgason

in his Introduction to Kvæðabók úr Vigur,<sup>(190)</sup> examples of which are to be found on folios 39<sup>F</sup> and 39<sup>V</sup> of that manuscript. One of these is headed Biorn Eyðala Kappa (no doubt for Hítðalakappa). Jón Helgason states that the oldest of these verses about saga-heroes, which are to be found in manuscripts from the seventeenth century and later, appear to be those by Þórður Magnússon a Strjúgi.<sup>(191)</sup>

V. Additional Copies of AM 488, 4to.

As well as Oslo 313, 4to, there are a number of other manuscripts which are directly copied from AM 488, 4to and these are detailed hereunder. They present few features of particular interest and none of them is of any consequence for textual scholarship.

1. Ny kgl. sml. 1168, fol.

This is a manuscript of 55 folios together with an additional preceding folio and contains only Bjarnar saga. It is now in the Royal Library at Copenhagen, but, according to the Catalogue,<sup>(192)</sup> was previously in Suhms samling (305, fol.) The manuscript dates from the second half of the eighteenth century and a note on it states it is to be a copy of AM 488, 4to. It contains a copy of Arni Magnússon's explanatory preface, his "efterretning", as it is termed in this manuscript, but has no marginal notes. There are no chapter divisions.

2. Ny kgl. sml. 1169, fol.

This companion manuscript to the above in the Royal Library at Copenhagen was formerly in Suhms samling

(661, fol.)<sup>(193)</sup> It is in 80 folios and is also from the latter part of the eighteenth century. It is stated to be a copy of AM 488, 4to and on the opposite page to each page of text is a Latin translation, so far as is known the first translation of the saga. There seems to have been some attempt made to correct the text of 488 and there is, moreover, a unique chapter division into 46 chapters.

3. BM. Add. 11126, fol.

This is a large folio manuscript, containing nine sagas, and was sold to the British Museum by Professor Finnur Magnússon in July, 1837. The manuscript, which is in a very good hand, is stated to have been copied in 1768 at Copenhagen by Oddr Jónsson.<sup>(194)</sup>

The sixth item in the manuscript is Bjarnar saga and it is stated to have been copied from AM 448, 4to, an obvious error for AM 488, 4to. It is on the whole a careful copy of 488, down to Arni's preface, which is prefixed here by the lines :-

\*Biarnar Saga Hítöla Kappa.

Apographum Exemplaris chartacei in 4to manu  
Asgeiris Jona in Bibliotheca A. Magnæi Num.448.  
Dicti Exemplaris notitiam in Scheda sequentibus  
exhibet A. Magnusus."

The manuscript has very few marginal notes, however, but on occasion use has been made of Jon Halldórsson's notes to 488 to correct the text in the British Museum copy.



4. Lbs. 128, 4to.

This manuscript of 138 leaves in the National Library of Iceland contains only Bjarnar saga and is stated by the Catalogue<sup>(195)</sup> to be in the hand of Guðmundur Isfold and to have been written about 1770.<sup>(196)</sup> It is an exact copy of AM 488, 4to, even to the marginal notes.

5. AM 408, fol.

This is a manuscript of 46 folios containing only Bjarnar saga. According to the Catalogue,<sup>(197)</sup> it was previously part of Addit. 3b, fol. The manuscript dates from the close of the eighteenth century and was written by Guðmundur Magnúsus.<sup>(198)</sup> It is a copy of AM 488, 4to and contains some of the marginal notes.

6. Lbs. 2329, 4to.

Lbs. 2329, 4to is a large quarto manuscript in the National Library of Iceland, comprising the second volume of a series of three, Lbs. 2328, 4to, 2329, 4to and 2330, 4to,<sup>(199)</sup> all written between 1867 and 1891 by the scholar Sighvatur Grímsson Borgfirðingur, who died at the age of 89 years in 1930.<sup>(200)</sup>

Bjarnar saga forms the first item in Lbs. 2329, 4to and appears to have been written about 1883. It is described at the beginning as being copied from Halldór Friðriksson's printed edition in Copenhagen in 1847 (Nordiske Oldskrifter, IV.) It may be regarded as a copy of AM 488, 4to, however, since Halldór Friðriksson used this manuscript as the basis of his edition.

VI. Rask 28 and related Manuscripts.

Of the remaining Bjarnar saga manuscripts eight form a special group on their own, distinguished by their possessing an opening which varies substantially from that found in the pátttr in Bæjarbók. An early eighteenth century scribe, noting the relative unsatisfactoriness of the beginning of the pátttr when used as the opening of the saga proper, clearly wished to create a more suitable introductory chapter and so rewrote the Bæjarbók material, so far as the first page or two is concerned. In this he appears to have made use both of Landnámabók <sup>(201)</sup> and of Egils saga. <sup>(202)</sup> He has certainly created an opening which for a complete saga reads a little more plausibly than that from Bæjarbók but it still strikes one as odd that he does not, anymore than Bæjarbók, relate the details of the youthful quarrels of Björn with Þórðr. As Boer has pointed out, <sup>(203)</sup> in the real Bjarnar saga these quarrels would have been in their right place and consequently would have received the treatment due to them. Thus it can be seen that the rewritten beginning in the eight sagas of this group is ultimately just as dependent on Bæjarbók and quite obviously is not derived directly from the original.

The rewritten beginning merges into the concluding lines of Chapter I of the saga, as taken from Bæjarbók, at "Skuli var vel til Biarnar ok wirdi hann mikils" <sup>(204)</sup> and thereafter there is no difference, except for occasional variants, between the text of the manuscripts in this group and that of the other manuscripts of Bjarnar saga.

One of the most prominent of the eight manuscripts and one of the only two in the group referred to by Boer is Rask 28 and, because of this, it is convenient, for simplicity's sake, to refer to the whole group as the Rask group, although none of the other seven manuscripts is connected with Rask.

The separate beginning in this group of manuscripts is of sufficient interest and the text sufficiently different to warrant separate treatment, other than merely forming part of the variants to the Bajarbók text, and accordingly the text of this introductory portion as taken from one of the manuscripts in the group is reproduced in Appendix II and this is followed by a list of variants to this passage taken from the other seven manuscripts. The manuscript, which has been used as the basis for Appendix II, is Lbs. 2480, 4to, and the reasons for its choice will be indicated below.

Of the eight manuscripts in the Rask group, five fall into one sub-group, written between 1737 and about 1780 and the remaining three into another, written between about 1800 to 1810. The oldest manuscripts are Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to, written in 1737 and 1742 respectively. The variations between these two manuscripts preclude Lbs. 2480, 4to from having been copied from Lbs. 840, 4to, since the latter manuscript contains many more readings differing from 551 than does Lbs. 2480, 4to. Under these circumstances, both Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to must have been copied from an earlier manuscript or manuscripts, which have since become lost. Consequently, it is not now possible to ascertain who was the scribe who was responsible

for the special commencement of the saga in the Rask group, but it seems unlikely that the prototype of these manuscripts ought to be dated much later than 1720 and probably somewhat earlier would be more likely.

There is good reason to believe that this prototype, so far as the bulk of the saga apart from the chapters from Bejarbók is concerned, was a copy, either directly or through one or more intermediaries, of the copy of AM 483, 4to, which appears to have belonged to Magnús í Vigur. Both Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to have many variants from 551 in common with JS 624, 4to and BM. Add. 4867, fol. or with one or other of these manuscripts as well as additional readings (especially Lbs. 840, 4to.) Furthermore, they have many variants in common with JS 624, 4to and BM. Add. 4867, fol., which are not found in AM 483, 4to and which preclude the prototype of the Rask group from having been copied directly from 483. Their close relationship to the copies of Magnús í Vigur's manuscript likewise excludes the manuscripts in the Rask group from being descended from Jón Halldórsson's copy of 483 and, if further proof were needed of this, it is provided by the fact that the sentence, "Biorn var enn með hina somu virðing og fyrr með Jarlinum", <sup>(205)</sup> following Verse 2, is missing in JH but is to be found in both Lbs. 2480, 4to and Lbs. 840, 4to, as in 624 and 4867, although in Lbs. 840, 4to the last four words read "hjá Jallenum sem firr."

The fact that Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to have numerous variants from 551 in common with 624 and 4867 and indeed with 483 is adequately demonstrated by the examples given above <sup>(206)</sup> when discussing JS 624, 4to,

in order to show features which 624 and 4867 have in common with 488, but not with 551. These examples at Pages 17, line 2, 21, line 27, 22, line 4 and 37, line 22 respectively of the text are equally applicable to Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to, which have the same variant readings as 488, 624 and 4867.

Similarly, the examples given immediately afterwards to demonstrate cases where 624 and 4867 both have an identical reading, which is, however, different from that of 488, may also be used for Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to, except that, in the first given example, Lbs. 840, 4to has the reading, "á mille", which differs from all the others. This is, however, in line with the general tendency in Lbs. 840, 4to, which, apart from the Bæjarbók introduction, has many readings which diverge from other manuscripts in the same group, due probably to the scribe's conscious re-writing of the text in small matters or, possibly, to more than one manuscript being available to him from which to copy.

That neither 624 nor 4867 was the model for the prototype of the Rask group is demonstrated by the fact that the phrase, "Par bio sa madur er Eydur hiet" at Pages 38, line 28 to 39, line 1, missing in 624 but present in 551, 488 and 4867, is also present in Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to and that the phrases, "ollum megin oc færri hann eigi hlífir ser og koma þeir a hann sárum" (Page 50, lines 4-5) and "Pottir sier þungt weita wilia moti Byrne" (Page 50, lines 23-24), missing in 4867 but present in 551, 488 and 624, are present in Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to.

There are numerous other cases where the latter manuscripts disclose variations, mostly of a minor nature, from both 624 and 4867 or from one or the other, but the above should be sufficient to indicate that the prototype of the Rask group was an independent copy of Magnús í Vigur's manuscript, or, if an intermediary existed, it was neither 624 nor 4867.

It is impossible to say whether the Bæjarbók introduction had been added to Magnús í Vigur's copy when the copy from which the Rask group descends was made or whether the scribe made use of a separate manuscript for the introductory chapters, perhaps even Bæjarbók itself or, more likely, Gottrupsbók. In any event, there are sufficient variant readings to justify listing these behind the text so far as the Bæjarbók introduction is concerned, only those from Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 2480, 4to being shown. In the variants these texts, for the sake of convenience, are referred to as R1 and R2 respectively. Variants are not shown there for that part of the first chapter which is printed as Appendix II, as full variants from all the Rask group manuscripts are listed in connection with the latter, in this case their catalogue numbers without prefix letters being used to identify them.

Finally, two of the Rask group of manuscripts, in this case, Lbs. 2480, 4to and Rask 28, have occasionally been found useful in supporting suitable emended readings to the text from 551. In the variants these manuscripts are referred to as R2 and R3 respectively.

1. Lbs. 2480, 4to.

Lbs. 2480, 4to is a short manuscript of 32 folios, which contains Bjarnar saga only. It is headed "Her hefur Saugu Bjarnar Hýtdæla kappá" and commences "A dógum Eyreks Kónigs Blóðoxar", the standard opening phrase of the Rask group. At the close of the manuscript the following is written, "Skrifad i flýter ad Stad vid Súgandafiörd A° 1742." One hand only has been employed and the Catalogue<sup>(207)</sup> of the Landsbókasafn accounts it to be that of Síra Tyrtingur Finnsson, a noted scribe, who was priest at Staður in Sugandafjörður in the North-West of Iceland from 1737 onwards and who perished in a snowstorm "bæja i milli" some time before 1762.<sup>(208)</sup>

Like the other manuscripts in the group, Lbs. 2480, 4to is not divided into chapters and, on the whole, is a normal type of Bjarnar saga manuscript, presenting strong affinities with 4867 and 624, as mentioned above, and having few unusual features. It marks the lacuna with a space of three-quarters of a page after "seiger hann". In common, however, with most of the Rask group, where 551 has, on the last page of the saga, "og for vestur á Bardastrond til frænda sinna og Breidafiörd", Lbs. 2480, 4to rewrites the line as follows :- "og fór vestur á Bardaströnd vid Breidafiörd til frænda sinna."

Lbs. 2480, 4to contains the whole of the 39 verses in the saga, the orthography of the verses not varying from that of the prose. Although Lbs. 2480, 4to was written five years later than Lbs. 840, 4to, the fact that it is

much closer to 4867 and 624 and consequently to 488 and 551 makes it a more reliable manuscript than Lbs. 840, 4to and clearly closer to the prototype of the group. It has consequently been preferred to the older manuscript as the basis of Appendix II, although the differences between the text of the manuscripts, so far as the Appendix is concerned, are extremely slight. Possibly the very fact that Tyrfingur Finnsson wrote Lbs. 2480, 4to in haste partly accounts for his evident fidelity to his original, since he would have had little time to alter the text consciously, as the scribe of Lbs. 840, 4to obviously did, but on the other hand the speed of his copying would enable certain minor errors to creep in.

2. Lbs. 840, 4to.

Lbs. 840, 4to is a manuscript of 334 folios, written in 1737, for the most part by the one hand, except for the last four folios, which the Catalogue<sup>(209)</sup> of the Landsbókasafn states were added about 1830. It would appear that the manuscript has been in the possession of Skúli sýslumaður Magnússon and of his father, Magnús Ketilsson,<sup>(210)</sup> for their names are written on different pages of the manuscript, which is entitled :- "Frödlegur Sagna Fiesiódur ... Skrifad ad Skarde a Skardsströnd Anno Domini MDCCXXXVIJ."

"Sagann af Býrne Hýtdæla Kappa" is the fourth saga in the manuscript and takes up Folios 72 to 106. Alone amongst the Rask group it varies the opening line of the saga slightly, commencing "A dögum Kóngz Eyreks Blóðaxar".



Also, unlike most of the manuscripts in the group, it does not use the rewritten phrase, "vid Breidafjörð til frænda sinna" at the end of the saga, but instead has "til frænda sinna og Breiðafjarðar", as found in 4867 and 624. This is of some significance and implies that the prototype of the group also employed this phrase and that the rewritten phrase originated with Lbs. 2480, 4to or its immediate antecedent, assuming one existed between it and the prototype.

Lbs. 840, 4to contains only a moderate number of variants from the Bæjarbók portion of the saga, but the situation changes radically when one comes to the 551 text. Here Lbs. 840, 4to seems to embody what one can only term a deliberate attempt at rewriting, the alterations being of too trivial a nature to make it very likely that the scribe had two texts before him from which to copy. This trait is combined with extensive abbreviation in the orthography and, so far as the verses are concerned, of which the manuscript contains the complete thirty-nine, a conscious attempt at archaism in the spelling. The verses are thus made to stand out from the prose by their different style of orthography, with its use of "þ" for "d," "o" for "u" and capitals for double consonants. As an example of the spelling employed, Verse 30 may be quoted :-

"Draum Drainþo nu nauma,  
Nipbranþz Skarþur lanþa,  
koma mun JGr á EGlar,  
eN bragsmiþar ceNa,  
báþar henþur i blóde  
braut Kallþhamarþ nauta,

mer of kennþur i minþom,  
Mæring ropinn verj."

3. Lbs. 942, 4to.

Lbs. 942, 4to is a manuscript of 81 folios in four or five hands.<sup>(211)</sup> It is in rather poor condition but is unlikely to be much older than about 1750. Biarnar saga occupies the first 44 folios and is headed "Her hefur sögu Biarnar Hýtdæla Kappa." It contains the phrase, "við Breiðafiörð til frænda sinna" and all in all appears to be closely related to Lbs. 2480, 4to, since it contains the variants to be found in the latter manuscript but not those additional and different readings which appear in Lbs. 840,4to.

That it cannot, however, be directly descended from Lbs. 2480, 4to is demonstrated by the fact that it repeats the space left blank for several letters after "sk" in 551, 488, 4867 and 624, etc., whereas Lbs. 2480, 4to expands this to "skilenn vid". In the present edition at Page 30, line 24, the emendation "skialldan" from Oslo 313, 4to has been accepted, as previously mentioned.

It should be noted, also, that in certain of the verses in Lbs. 942, 4to alternative and, in fact, emended readings have been written above the line. These readings are those adopted in Hask 28. The principal example is Verse 2, where in line 3 "hárs" and "feriu" are written in above "hátt" and "diniu" respectively, in line 5 "vomum" above "vinum" and in line 7 "vidia" above a crossed-out "bid", an incomplete "bida." The handwriting of the emendations resembles that of the verses as a whole very closely, but

it is quite possible that the emendations were added later, perhaps after comparison with Rask 28. It is clear that Lbs. 942, 4to cannot be a copy of Rask 28 in general, as otherwise the readings subject to emendation would not appear at all. On the contrary, however, Rask 28 could be copied from Lbs. 942, 4to after the emended readings had been added to the latter, which readings Rask 28 simply adopted without further ado.

A factor that has some bearing on the relationship between these two manuscripts is that, in both cases, Verse 36 is missing, although the prefatory words, "Biörn kvad Vísu", are present in both manuscripts. In Lbs. 942, 4to a space of about 3 lines is left but in Rask 28 only half a line. On this evidence Rask 28 could be copied from Lbs. 942, 4to or both could be copied from the manuscript from which Lbs. 942, 4to was copied. This must be a manuscript intermediate between the parent manuscript of Lbs. 2480, 4to and Lbs. 942, 4to, as, had the latter been copied directly from the parent manuscript, the scribe, when missing Verse 36, would not deliberately have left three lines space for it. However, this is explained if one assumes him to have copied from a manuscript, the scribe of which had, after writing "Biörn kvad Vísu", then failed to copy out Verse 36 and simply carried on with the rest of the text.

Accordingly, Lbs. 942, 4to must be descended from a sister manuscript of Lbs. 2480, 4to, both of which would have been copied from an earlier manuscript, which, like Lbs. 840, 4to, would have descended from the prototype of the Rask group. In this regard, it may be mentioned that Lbs. 840, 4to also has "sk", as, indeed, does Rask 28.

4. Rask 28.

Rask 28 is a quarto manuscript of 193 leaves in the collection of Rasmus Rask,<sup>(212)</sup> one of the ancillary collections now forming part of the Arnarnagnæanske Samling. Kálund's Catalogue<sup>(213)</sup> ascribes it to the last half of the eighteenth century and a date around 1760 appears to be reasonable. It is a manuscript in various hands and on Folio II<sup>v</sup> the following is written :-

"Pessi Bók ... er af mér underskrifudum med verdi keypt. Holti þann 17. Augusti 1811.  
Th. Bóðvarsson."

Þorvaldur Bóðvarsson,<sup>(214)</sup> who was priest at Holt, again, significantly, in Ísafjarðarsýsla, had been visited by Rask in 1815 during his stay in Iceland. A letter from him to Rask dated 27th August, 1816, is extant, in which he thanks Rask for books which the latter had sent to him, in exchange for manuscripts which he had let Rask have.<sup>(215)</sup> It can hardly be doubted that Rask 28 was amongst those manuscripts.

The fourth item in the manuscript is Bjarnar saga, occupying Folios 121 to 170<sup>x</sup>. It is headed "Híer hefr Saugu Bjarnar Hýtdala Kappa" and, like Lbs. 942, 4to, is written in fljótaskrift, so far as the prose is concerned, with a type of half-fraktur used for the verses.

There is little further that need be said concerning this manuscript, beyond what has already been stated when discussing Lbs. 942, 4to above. It obviously descends from

a sister manuscript of Lbs. 2480, 4to and probably through Lbs. 942, 4to, a number of attempts at improvement to the text having been made, both as regards the prose and the verses, and some of these provide a useful basis for emendations. The list of variants following the text contains the readings of which use has been made in this edition.

It may also be mentioned that, whereas the older manuscripts in the group leave considerable space for the lacuna in the text, Rask 28 leaves merely the one line, in the centre of which is written one word only, "defect".

5. AM 929, 4to.

AM 929, 4to is a manuscript of 208 folios, written, according to the Catalogue,<sup>(216)</sup> about 1780 by various hands. The Arnamagnæan Collection acquired it in 1883 from Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab. So far as Bjarnar saga is concerned, the manuscript is almost valueless. The latter part of the codex has been lost and only one page of Bjarnar saga has been preserved, that is, the very last page of the codex, Folio 208<sup>v</sup>.

It contains therefore the beginning of the saga, according to the Rask group, and breaks off "at Hytarnese á Islande er het".<sup>(217)</sup> So far as can be judged from the meagre material available, it could be a copy of Lbs. 942, 4to. The line, "er seirna var kalladur Hytdæla kappe",<sup>(218)</sup> which is in brackets in Lbs. 2480, 4to, Lbs. 840, 4to and Lbs. 942, 4to, lacks the brackets in Rask 28. The brackets are retained in AM 929, 4to and it is unlikely that, if

this manuscript had been copied from Rask 28, the scribe would have made use of brackets. This at least suggests that Rask 28 was not the model for AM 929, 4to.

6. Lbs. 967, 4to.

Lbs. 967, 4to is one of three early nineteenth-century manuscripts that form a separate and relatively minor sub-group within the Rask group, the other two being BM. Add. 11129, 4to and JS 629, 4to. These are principally distinguished from the remaining manuscripts in the group, in that they lack Verses 10, 23 and 36 and their immediately preceding prose. Their exact relationship to each other is difficult to determine but they appear to descend from Lbs. 2480, 4to.

Lbs. 967, 4to, is a manuscript in one hand containing 195 folios, which the Landsbókasafn Catalogue<sup>(219)</sup> dates to around 1800. It contains only two sagas, Heiðarvíga saga and Bjarnar saga, which takes up the last 85 folios.

Lbs. 967-972, 4to were all bought in 1904 from Dr. Björn M. Ólsen, Lbs. 967, 4to having been owned by his father.

7. BM. Add. 11129, 4to.

This is a manuscript dating from about 1800, which is amongst those purchased by the British Museum from Professor Finnur Magnússon in July, 1837. It contains 97 folios numbered as 190 pages, some having been numbered twice. The volume contains only "Bjarnar Saga Hytdæla Kappa" and is in a very good hand.

BM. Add. 11129, 4to repeats the variants of Lbs. 2480, 4to and, in addition, has a number of others of its own. It proves its descent from Lbs. 2480, 4to rather than from Lbs. 942, 4to by its reading of "skilenn vid" at Page 30, line 24 of the present edition, instead of "sk", as in Lbs. 942, 4to and Rask 28.

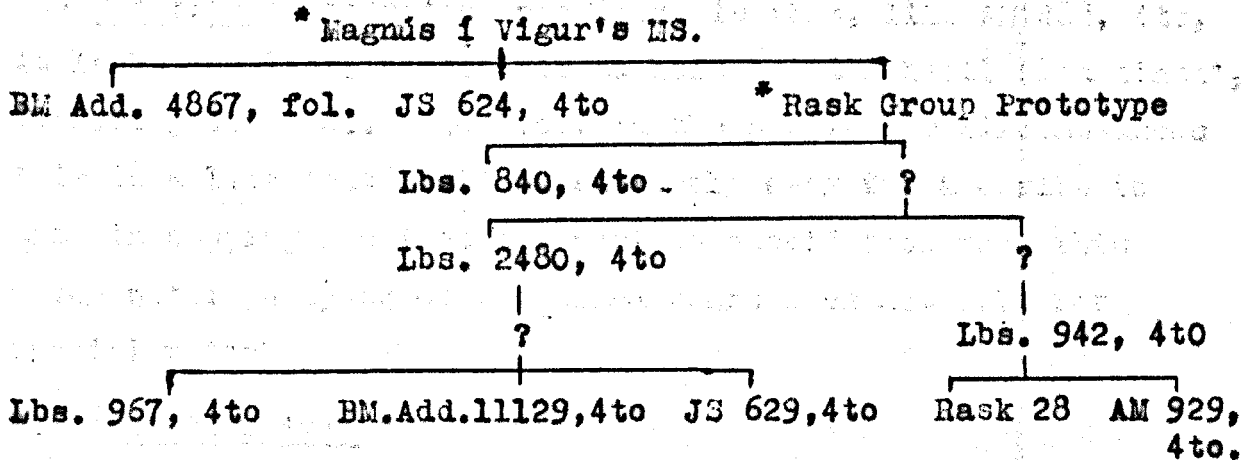
Like Lbs. 967, 4to and JS 629, 4to, it omits entirely the bracketed form "(er seirna var kalladur Hytdæla kappe)" in Appendix II. Its omission, in common with its sister manuscripts in the sub-group, of Verses 10, 23 and 36 and preceding prose is difficult to account for but presumably all three descend from a copy of or descending from Lbs. 2480, 4to, in which copy these omissions occurred. Admittedly, Verse 36 is also missing in Lbs. 942, 4to and Rask 28, but these manuscripts contain attempts at improvement and variants which do not occur in BM. Add. 11129, 4to.

8. JS 629, 4to.

This is a codex in the National Library of Iceland containing 29 sagas and Pættir, mostly the latter, written at various times by various scribes.<sup>(220)</sup> Bjarnar saga is the third item and commences, similarly to Lbs. 967, 4to, "Her hefr Savghu Biarnar Hytdæla Kappa." Several items in the codex have been written by Halldór Davíðsson, son of Davíð Jónsson of Hof in Örsfi<sup>(221)</sup> and Jónas Kristjánsson<sup>(222)</sup> ascribes the Bjarnar saga manuscript to him also, apart from the last one and a half pages, which are in a different hand. Since Hemings pættir, which comes later in the codex, was written by Halldór Davíðsson in 1811, it seems reasonable to assign the Bjarnar saga portion to about 1810.

As mentioned previously, JS 629, 4to, so far as Bjarnar saga is concerned, is a sister manuscript of Lbs. 967, 4to and BM. Add. 11129, 4to. It contains the reading "skilenn vid" and also lacks Verses 10, 23 and 36 and their preceding prose. It also contains a considerable number of additional independent variant readings, as is sufficiently indicated by the samples noted in the list of variants to Appendix II. On the whole, these variant readings seem to illustrate an attempt on the part of the scribe at textual improvement and re-writing. It might be mentioned here that on the last page the usual variant reading of the Rask group, "vid Breidafiord til frænda sinna" has been rewritten as "til frænda sinna, og á Breiðafiord". Where the lacuna appears, a space of half a page is left and in the margin is written the familiar but for this group unique note, "her vantar i söguna".

Set out below is a table of the apparent relationships of the Rask group of manuscripts, both mutually and in respect to Magnús í Vigur's manuscript :-





## VII. Miscellaneous Manuscripts.

In addition to those manuscripts previously discussed, there are eight further Bjarnar saga manuscripts, which do not fall into the groups already mentioned. One of these is a direct transcription of AM 551 d a, 4to, whereas the remaining seven appear to go back to either AM 157 b, fol. or JS 7, fol. Three of these indeed, by their division into 20 chapters, form a separate sub-group on their own, which, however, will not be given separate treatment here, except in so far as each manuscript is discussed individually.

### 1. NY kgl. sml. 1167, fol.

This is a manuscript of 64 folios dating from the second half of the eighteenth century, which was formerly No. 42, fol. in Suhms samling.<sup>(223)</sup> A notice on the fly-leaf in Suhm's<sup>(224)</sup> hand states it to be a copy of AM 551 d a, 4to and that it was written by J. Olavius, presumably Jón Oláfsson of Svefneyjar.<sup>(224)</sup> Like 551, it is not divided into chapters. An interesting point about this transcription, which has not the Bjarnarbók introduction prefixed, is that, like AM 488, 4to, it lacks the line, "Arnór fór nu heim og varð heill sára sinna", following Verse 23. However, in the particular circumstances this is a line that would be extremely easy for a scribe to miss in copying and that two scribes should each make this error within a space of a hundred years does not call for special remark.

### 2. AM 931, 4to.

This is a manuscript of 50 folios written in 1753 to

1754 by Sira Jón Auðunarson.<sup>(226)</sup> The third and last item is "Sagan af Byrne Hytdalakappa", completed on 9th January, 1754, the previous item having been finished on 3rd January, 1754. The Arnamagnæan Collection obtained the manuscript from Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab in 1833.<sup>(227)</sup>

Boer<sup>(228)</sup> regarded AM 931, 4to, which is not divided into chapters, as being copied from AM 157 b, fol., but this cannot be correct. Sufficient proof of this is provided by the fact that the line "er oss sogdu, þuiad þa reynum vier ad godum Monnum", which is missing in 157, is present in AM 931, 4to. This line is also to be found in JS 7, fol. and there seems little doubt that AM 931, 4to has been copied from the latter, since, although AM 931, 4to agrees with 157 and JS 7, where they both deviate from 488 and generally where they both agree with each other, in those cases where 157 and JS 7 disagree, AM 931, 4to agrees with JS 7. Those examples given above, when dealing with JS 7, fol., to illustrate the latter's variants from 157 as well as 73 a or 551 are also valid for AM 931, 4to and repetition here would be superfluous.

In any event, since AM 157 b, fol. was in Copenhagen in 1754 and there is no indication that Sira Jón Auðunarson ever left Iceland, AM 931, 4to could not be a direct copy of 157. If it, on the other hand, is a direct copy of JS 7, as appears likely, the latter manuscript must have been in Iceland in 1754 and there is no reason why this should not have been the case.

3. AM 403, fol.

This folio manuscript contains copies of sagas which, according to the Catalogue,<sup>(229)</sup> were made in connection with "den år 1841 foretagne undersøgelse af de offentlige biblioteker i Stockholm og Upsala". It was also obtained by the Arnamagnæan Collection in 1883 from Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab.

Biarnar saga is the first saga in the codex. It is of 40 folios and was written by Konráð Gíslason.<sup>(230)</sup> It is expressly stated to be a copy of AM 157b, fol. with added variant readings, especially from Stockholm Papp. Fol.38.

4. Lbs. 445, fol.

This is a folio manuscript of 323 leaves written about 1782 in one hand, except for two folios of Svarfdoela saga, which are in the hand of Einar Bjarnason from Starrastaðir,<sup>(231)</sup> the original leaves having become lost.<sup>(232)</sup> The Landsbókasafn received the manuscript as a legacy from the estate of Ólafur magister Marteinsson<sup>(233)</sup> in 1934.

"Saga af Byrne Hitdæla Kappa" is the seventh out of the eight items in the manuscript. It is unique amongst the Biarnar saga manuscripts in being divided into 31 chapters and hardly falls into any particular category, except that it shows fairly strong resemblance to AM 157 b, fol., from which it probably descends. Like 157, it has the line "Arnór ... sinna" after Verse 23 and the line on the last page, "ok fór vestr á Bardastrond til franda sinna". Also, like 157, it lacks the line "er .... Monnum".

At Page 10, lines 13-14, of the present edition, Lbs. 445, fol. has "Bíðrn var enn með ina sömo vyrðing oc firr med Jarlinom", similarly to 551 and 157. JS7, fol. on the contrary, reads "meþ Jarli oc fyr". Three further examples amongst many, where Lbs. 445, fol. agrees with 157 and 73a against JS7, fol., are :-

	<u>73a, 157, 445.</u>	<u>JS7, fol.</u>
Page 2, line 9.	þegar	heim
" 2, " 20.	i skip	til skips
" 2, " 21.	farar eyri	fararbeina

5. Kall 241, fol.

This short folio manuscript of 34 leaves in Kalls samling in the Royal Library at Copenhagen contains only two sagas, Bjarnar saga and Hálfs saga. It has certain marginal notes, which, according to the Royal Library Catalogue, (234) are in Langebek's hand. (235) It is an eighteenth-century manuscript and a date around 1750 would appear to be reasonable. Bjarnar saga occupies the first 25 folios and is headed "Her Biriar Sögu Af Birne Hýtdala Kappa".

This manuscript is not divided into chapters and appears almost certainly to be descended from JS 7, fol. It contains the line, "Arnór ... sinna" and the phrase "á Bardastraund til Frenða sinna", which it shares with both AM 157 b, fol. and JS 7, fol. However, the following examples illustrate its affinity with JS 7, fol., as against AM 157 b, fol. :-

	<u>AM 157 b, fol.</u>	<u>JS 7, fol.</u>	<u>Kall 241, fol.</u>
Page 2, line 9.	þegar	heim	heym
" 2, " 20.	i skip	til skips	til skips
" 2, " 21.	farar æyri	fararbeina	Fararbæina
" 3, " 27.	af Noregi	af hafe frá Noregi	af Hafe Fra Noreg
" 10, " 13-14.	og fyrr med Jarlinum	meþ Jarlinum og fyr	med Jarlinum og Fyrr

In addition, like JS 7, fol. and unlike AM 157 b, fol., it contains the line "er .... Monnum".

It is also worth noting that the third item in JS 7, fol. is the saga "Aff Alfe Kónge og Alfreckumm" and, as mentioned above, the saga "af Alfe Konge og Alfreckum" is the only other item in Kall 241, fol. This makes it all the more probable that the latter manuscript is descended from JS 7, fol.

Abraham Kall,<sup>(236)</sup> whose manuscripts were bought by the Royal Library after his death in 1821, was a great collector. He had been Librarian at the University of Copenhagen and had worked with Langebek. It therefore seems probable that Kall 241, fol. may have been written at Copenhagen, very likely for Langebek, since there are notes in his hand on it, and that it was later acquired by Kall. It is known that at least a few of Kall's manuscripts had previously belonged to Langebek.<sup>(237)</sup>

This presupposes that JS 7, fol. was in Copenhagen in the middle of the eighteenth century, assuming Kall 241, fol. to be a direct copy. Since the early history of the former

manuscript is unknown and it is only known for certain to have been in Iceland in the nineteenth century, this could very well have been the case.

In any event, Kall 241, fol. cannot be descended from JS 7 fol. through AM 931, 4to, since in the latter manuscript Verse 24 is missing. On the other hand, this verse is present in both JS 7, fol. and Kall 241, fol. If we assume that both AM 931, 4to and Kall 241, fol. are independently direct copies of JS 7, fol. and since it is known that AM 931, 4to was written in Iceland in 1753-54, this would mean that Kall 241, fol. must be rather earlier than 1753, if it was copied from JS 7, fol., when the latter was still in Denmark.

There is surely nothing, however, that would have prevented either Langebek or Kall from having acquired a manuscript written in Iceland and which could have been copied from JS 7, fol. There seems good reason, indeed, for believing that the latter manuscript may have been brought or sent to Iceland a good deal earlier than 1750 and was very probably brought by Árni Magnússon in 1702 and left there by him, possibly with Páll Vídalín.

6. Lbs. 143, 4to.

This manuscript of 147 folios<sup>(238)</sup> was written in 1823 by Gísli Konráðsson.<sup>(239)</sup> It is entitled :-

"Neckrar Fornsógur Íslendinga. Í flýti uppritaðar at Scórðugili hino nyrðra árom eptir Guðsburð mdcccxxij of Havstit af Gísla Konráðssyni."

The National Library of Iceland acquired it from Halldór Kr. Friðriksson.<sup>(240)</sup> The book was owned by Björn Björnsson á Bessastöðum in 1855 and in 1823, the year it was written, the owner was Bjarni Einarsson.

The eleventh item in the manuscript, occupying Folios 113 to 139 inclusive, is "Sagan af Byrni Hýtdælakappa". It is divided into 20 chapters and each chapter is provided with a title, e.g. "1. Cap : utanferð Bearnar".

Lbs. 143, 4to also appears to be descended from JS 7, fol., so far as Bjarnar saga is concerned, although, in the circumstances, it is reasonable to assume an intermediate manuscript to have existed. Like JS 7, fol., it contains the lines "Arnór ... sinna" and "er ..... Monnum" and variations are slight. Those that there are may well mainly be due to the haste with which it is stated to have been written. For instance, in Lbs. 143, 4to the whole line is missing, containing the phrase given in JS 7, fol. as "meþ Jarlinum oc fyr" (page 10, lines 13-14 of the text). The principal difference, however, is the division into 20 chapters.

Lbs. 143, 4to cannot be a direct copy of Kall 241, fol., since the latter was in Copenhagen in 1823. Nor can it be a copy of AM 931, 4to, since it also contains Verse 24, missing in that manuscript.

It, however, shows a new feature where it leaves no space for the lacuna after "seiger hann", but instead adds the words, "at þu matt hafa fyrir sömum ok klækiskap". It is also worth mentioning that, on the first page of the saga, after the words "dóttur Skallagrims" (page 1, line 15 of

the present edition), Lbs. 143, 4to has the following interpolation :-

"Arngeir fadir Bearnar var Son Bessa hins godlausu Balkasonar Blæingssonar Sotasonar af Sótanesi. Bessi goðlaus átti Þordysi Þorhaddsdottur úr Hytardal og hófdu henni heiman fylgt Holmslaund. Systir Bessa var Geirbjörg er átti Þorgeir Meldún i Tungufelli. Þeirra sun var Veleifr inn gamli Fadir Holmgaungu Bessa."

The source of this is almost certainly Skarðsárþók,<sup>(241)</sup> of Paragraph 55 of which it is an adaptation. The material for this paragraph is principally taken from Hauksbók 45.<sup>(242)</sup> In Skarðsárþók we read, inter alia :-

"Balki het maðr s(on) Blangs Sotasonar af Sotanesi .... hans s(on) var Bersi Goðlaus .... hans systir var Geirbjörg er átti Þorgeir Meldun i Tungufelli. Þeirra s(on) var Veleifr hinn gamli f(aðir) Holmgongu Bersa. Bersi Goðlaus átti Þordise Þorhaddsd(ottur) or Hitardal. og fylgdu henne heimann Holmslund. ....Þeirra s(on) Arngeir er átti Þordise ... Þeirra s(on) Biorn Hitdalakappi."<sup>(243)</sup>

7. ÍBR 4, 4to.

This is a substantial quarto manuscript of 631 pages in the National Library of Iceland, one of a set of five saga manuscripts written by Einar Bjarnason frá Starrastöðum. These manuscripts, ÍBR 2-6, 4to are stated by the Catalogue<sup>(244)</sup> to have been written between 1815 and 1820. However, as Jónas Kristjánsson has already pointed out,<sup>(245)</sup> this at least



cannot apply to [BR 4, 4to, since Einar Bjarnason has indicated at the end of one of the sagas in the volume, Porskfirðinga saga, that it was written in 1844.

Bjarnar saga is the eleventh of fourteen items in the volume. Like Lbs. 143, 4to, it is divided into 20 chapters, but these, although numbered, lack titles. Unlike Lbs. 143, 4to, it has the variant beginning, "Hér skal segja nockð". It has, however, many points of resemblance to Lbs. 143, 4to, including the line "Arnórr ... sinna" after Verse 23 and the phrase "á Bardaströnd til frænda sinna" on the last page. In addition, before a space of three-quarters of a page for the lacuna, it adds, after "segir hann", "at þú mátt hafa fyrir skóm oc klækiskap". It has an almost identical interpolation on the first page to that in Lbs. 143, 4to. However, it has also a slight rewriting of lines 6-9 of Page 1, which introduce Þórðr.

Einar Bjarnason has written the following at the end of the saga :-

Sögu þessa hef eg skrifað eptir því Exempli : sem ritað hafði Sýslumaður Halldor Jacobsson, var það mjög þjett og bundið, hef eg viðast hvar fylgð hans ritunarmáta framar enn minum; Söguna hef eg samanborið við nokkrar afskriftir sem mér hafa í hendr borist, hvorra enginn hefur neitt framhaft enn þessi; enn þann orðanun sem að nokkru mann (?) hefur fundist hef eg sett út á Spasunum. ....

Byryð í Feb. 1826. enduð í Markis 1827."

The copy of the saga made by Halldór sýslumaður Jakobsson,<sup>(246)</sup> which Einar Bjarnason used for IBR 4, 4to, seems to be lost. It appears very likely, however, that it may have been a copy of JS 7, fol. and, at any rate, it is reasonable to suppose that it was also the prototype for Lbs. 143, 4to, which may therefore be regarded as a sister manuscript of IBR 4, 4to. Einar Bjarnason indicates, however, that he made use of various other copies which were available to him and indeed IBR 4, 4to has a fair number of marginal notes.

8. Lbs. 671, 4to.

The third and latest manuscript in the sub-group is Lbs. 671, 4to, which contains 552 pages and was written between 1846 and 1848.<sup>(247)</sup> It is entitled :-

"Nokkrar fornar Íslendinga Sögur. Skrifaðar arið MDCCCXLVIII af Þorsteini Þorsteinssyni Málmeij."<sup>(248)</sup>

The nineteenth item is "Sagann af Biarna Hýtdala kappi" and it was completed on 31st December, 1846. Like IBR 4, 4to, it commences "Hér skal seigia nockuð" and is divided into 20 chapters which do not have titles, but are numbered e.g. :- "Tuttugasti Kapítuli."

The distinguishing features of IBR 4, 4to, are to be found again in Lbs. 671, 4to with but minor variations and there is good reason for believing that the latter manuscript is a copy of the former, which was written some twenty years earlier.

The interpolation in Chapter I is virtually the same as in ÍBR 4, 4to and varies very little from that in Lbs. 143, 4to. In Lbs. 671, 4to we read after "Arngeirsson" (page 1, line 14 of the present edition) :

"Bersasonar Godlaus Bjálka sonar, Blæingssonar Sotasonar af Sotanesi, Bersi Godlaus átti Þordysi Þorhaddis dottir úr Hytardal og filgðu henni heiman Holmslond, systir Bersa var Geirbjörg er átti Þorgeir í Tungufelli þeira son var Veleifr hinn Gamli faðir Holmgaungu Bersa, Móðir Bjorns var Þordis Dottr Þorfins Stranga og Sæunnar Dóttir Skalda Gryms."

The only variation from the above in ÍBR 4, 4to is the addition of "Meldun" after "Þorgeir". It may be seen that the wording of the interpolation in Lbs. 671, 4to and ÍBR 4, 4to is in some regard even closer to Skarðsárþók than is that in Lbs. 143, 4to, as witness the additional identical phrase, "og filgðu henni heiman Holmslond".

The rewriting of lines 6-9 of Page 1 in the present edition is also almost the same as in ÍBR 4, 4to. In Lbs. 671, 4to this reads as follows :-

"Í þennann týma bjó Þordur Kolbeinsson í Hytarnesi. hann hiellt sér vel fram til vyrðingar var jafnan utan lands með tygnum mómnum og af þeim vel virdir sökum sœntunar sinnar því hann var skáld mikið."

In this regard, ÍBR 4, 4to has the same reading, apart from adding "á Íslandi" after "í Hytarnesi".

In the case of the lacuna, Lbs. 671, 4to leaves no space, but has the following expanded reading peculiar to itself :-

"Segir hann að þu skalt hafa fyrir skóm og klækiskap. Hier vantar i söguna lytið sticki sem hvergi hefr en feingist."

VIII. Additional Manuscripts relating to Bjarnar saga.

In addition to the manuscripts of the text or part of the text of the saga, there are three others which deal with the chronology and the verses and which merit a brief mention.

1. Lbs. 127, 4to.

This manuscript in the Landsbókasafn Islands <sup>(249)</sup> came, like Lbs. 128, 4to, from the collection of Bishop Hannes Finnsson. <sup>(250)</sup> It is a short manuscript of some 67 folios in three hands and was written about 1770. It relates exclusively to the chronology in the Family Sagas.

That portion of the manuscript which deals with the chronology of Bjarnar saga is by Vigfús prófastur Jónsson <sup>(251)</sup> and is entirely in his hand. It concludes :-

"Eftir áður skrifðu reiknast Biörn fæddur 988 að hafa siglt 1006, verið utanlands 12 vetur. og fallið 1024, 36 ára gamall."

2. Lbs. 460, 4to.

This manuscript of 395 folios and attached notes in the National Library of Iceland <sup>(252)</sup> was written between 1830 and 1850 for the most part by Sveinbjörn Egilsson. <sup>(253)</sup>

It contains a motley collection of notes on scaldic poetry, genealogy, etc., in the sagas and deals particularly with chronology and the verses.

The fifth section of the manuscript relates to Bjarnar saga. The verses of the saga are each set out in a natural prose order and are followed by translations into Latin. Finally the verses are written down again as they appear in AM 488, 4to, together with suggested emendations at the side.

3. Lbs. 1965, 8vo.

This, the only octavo manuscript<sup>(254)</sup> relating to Bjarnar saga, contains 146 pages and was written between 1867 and 1870 by Þorleifur Jónsson, priest at Skinnastaðir.<sup>(255)</sup> It contains notes on the verses in seven sagas and in Snorra Edda.

The second section deals with Bjarnar saga and is based on the verses as set out in Halldór Friðriksson's edition of 1847. The verses are written down in prose order and each one is fully annotated. Some of the interpretations of the kennings are curious and, to say the least, extremely doubtful; for example, "vöðva hlað" in Verse 2 is interpreted as "armbaugr" and "braut Kaldimarsnauta" in Verse 30 in the following way: "Kaldimarsnauta (=nautr) sverð, braut þess, hönd."

NOTES.

List of Abbreviations.

- Katalog : Katalog over Den Arnarnagnæanske  
Håndskriftsamling (1889-94).
- Royal Library  
Catalogue : Katalog over de Oldnorsk-Islandske  
Håndskrifter i det store kongelige  
Bibliotek og i Universitetsbiblioteket  
(1900).
- Skrá : Skrá um Handritasofn  
Landsbókasafnsins (1918-37).
- ÍF : Íslenzk Fornrit.
- ÍÆ : Íslenzkar Æviskrár.
- Sýs. : Sýslumannaæfir.

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- (1) See Katalog I (1889), 124.
  - (2) ÍF III (1938), XCVI.
  - (3) Ibid, XCV-XCVI.
  - (4) Árni Magnússons Levned og Skrifter II (1930), 215.
  - (5) O.A.Johnsen and Jón Helgason, Den Store Saga om  
Olav den Hellige II (1941), 978.
  - (6) Arne Magnússons Håndskriftfortegnelse (1909), 20.
  - (7) Den Store Saga II, 978; Bogi Benediktsson,  
Sýs. II (1889-1904), 94, 110.
  - (8) Árni Magnússons Levned og Skrifter II, 215.

- (9) Katalog I, 49-50; Den Store Saga II, 984.
- (10) Den Store Saga II, 982.
- (11) Katalog I, 49.
- (12) AM 456, fol.
- (13) Den Store Saga II, 980.
- (14) Ibid.
- (15) Born about 1665, died 1726. See Sýs. II, 698-705; Páll E. Ólason, ÍÆ III (1950), 52.
- (16) Born 1662, died 1738. See Sýs. II, 690-96; ÍÆ III, 219-20.
- (17) Den Store Saga II, 984.
- (18) Ibid., 980.
- (19) Stefán Einarsson, A History of Icelandic Literature (1957), 183; Den Store Saga II, 906, 1056 and references given there. The books and manuscripts were brought back by Admiral Raben to Copenhagen.
- (20) BSH, p.1, 1.22.
- (21) Ný Félagsrit XVIII (1858), 160.
- (22) BSH, p.10, 1.1.
- (23) See Appendix I.
- (24) Born about 1688, died 1752. See Sýs. II, 577, 672; III, 201; ÍÆ III, 415.
- (25) Katalog I, 48.
- (26) Den Store Saga II, 979.
- (27) Ibid., 986.
- (28) See Katalog I, 56; Den Store Saga II, 979.
- (29) Ibid.
- (30) Ibid. - For Þorsteinn Sigurðsson (1678-1765), see ÍÆ V (1952), 226-7; Sýs. IV (1909-15), 778-81.

- (31) Born 1667, died 1727. See Bjarni Jónsson frá Unnarholti, Íslenzkir Hafnarstúdentar (1949), 45-46 and references given there; also ÍÆ IV (1951), 145-6.
- (32) Arne Magnussons Private Brevveksling (1920), 234.
- (33) Katalog I, 56-57.
- (34) See Skrá II (1927-32), 816.
- (35) Den Store Saga II, 991.
- (36) Born 1841, died 1924. Book-collector who lived for many years in Canada and gave all his manuscripts to the Landsbókasafn. See ÍÆ IV, 204-205.
- (37) See Royal Library Catalogue 342-3. - The Thott collection was left to the Royal Library upon his death by Count Otto Thott (1703-1785). See Dansk Biografisk Leksikon XXIV (1943), 55-9; Royal Library Catalogue, XLIX.
- (38) Den Store Saga II, 990.
- (39) Ibid, 1077.
- (40) Ibid, 1075.
- (41) Manntal á Íslandi Arið 1703 (1924-47), 155.
- (42) Jarðabók Arna Magnússonar og Páls Vídalíns VI (1938), 148.
- (43) Royal Library Catalogue, 317-19.
- (44) Landnámabók (1925), VII.
- (45) S.G.N.L. LXIII (1952), XXXVI.
- (46) See ÍÆ III, 239-40.
- (47) Den Store Saga II, 1070-71.
- (48) Royal Library Catalogue, 97.
- (49) Born 1732, died 1782. See Den Store Saga II, 981; ÍÆ II (1949), 153.
- (50) See Den Store Saga II, 1077.



- (51) R.C.Boer, Bjarnar Saga Hítidoelakappa (1893), VIII.
- (52) IF III, XCVII. - "Það, sem betur fer í textanum, gæti verið umbætur og tilgátur skrifara (stundum réttar)."  
- Rask 28 is in any event a relatively late manuscript and does not deserve the attention paid to it by Boer. It contains, however, useful emendations of some obviously corrupt readings in AM 551 d a, 4to.
- (53) Katalog I, 691-2.
- (54) BSH, p. 10, 1.2.
- (55) BSH, p.30, 1.12.
- (56) See Jónas Kristjánsson, Valla-Ljóts Saga, VII-VIII.
- (57) For Þormóður Torfason, known as Torfæus (1636-1719), see ÍÆ V, 190-91; Dansk Biografisk Leksikon XXIV, 196-7; Halldór Hermansson, "Þormóður Torfason", Skirnir CXXVIII (1954), 65-94.
- (58) In Arne Magnussons i AM. 435 A-B, 4to indeholdte Håndskriftsfortegnelser (1909).
- (59) Ibid, 75.
- (60) Ibid, 69.
- (61) ÍÆ V, 166-7.
- (62) Ibid, 166.
- (63) See Gillian Fellows Jensen, Hemings Þáttr Áslákssonar (1962), xxii; Jónas Kristjánsson, Valla-Ljóts Saga, V-VI.
- (64) Hemings Þáttr, xxii.
- (65) Ibid; Valla-Ljóts Saga, V-VI.
- (66) Hemings Þáttr, xxii; Valla-Ljóts Saga, VI.
- (67) Bjarnar Saga Hítidoelakappa, VIII-IX.
- (68) Ibid, VII.

- (69) IF III, XCV-XCVII.
- (70) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, VIII-IX.
- (71) IF III, XCVI.
- (72) See Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, VII-VIII. The first page of each gathering of eight pages is numbered at the foot.
- (73) ÍA V, 190.
- (74) Arne Magnusson : Brevveksling med Torfæus (1916).
- (75) Ibid, 16-17.
- (76) Ibid, 17.
- (77) Ibid, 19.
- (78) BSH, p.25, 11.19-26.
- (79) Brevveksling med Torfæus, 21.
- (80) Ibid, 24.
- (81) Ibid, 38.
- (82) Ibid, 45.
- (83) Ibid, 46.
- (84) Ibid, 47.
- (85) Ibid, 48.
- (86) Ibid, 52.
- (87) Ibid, 63.
- (88) Ibid, 65.
- (89) Ibid, 73.
- (90) Ibid.
- (91) Ibid, 74.
- (92) Ibid, 95.
- (93) BSH, p.61, 1.12.
- (94) BSH, p.62, 1. 6.
- (95) See Brevveksling med Torfæus, XXX-XXXII; Íslenzkir Hafnarstúdentar, 47-8; ÍA I (1948), 91-2.

- (96) Brevveksling med Torfæus, XXXII.
- (97) See Katalog I, 661-2.
- (98) Arne Magnussons Private Brevveksling, 184.  
- For Jón Halldórsson, see ÍÆ III, 142-3;  
Islenzkir Hafnarstúdentar, 47 and references given there.
- (99) Private Brevveksling, 188.
- (100) BSH, p. 30, l. 12.
- (101) BSH, p. 37, ll. 22-3.
- (102) BSH, p. 17, ll. 1-3.
- (103) See V.Gödel, Katalog öfver Kongl. Bibliothekets  
Fornisländska och Fornnorska Handskrifter (1897-1900),  
150-51.
- (104) BSH, p. 73, ll. 23-5.
- (105) Katalog I, 109.
- (106) Brevveksling med Torfæus, 216.
- (107) Ibid, 273-5.
- (108) Ibid, 275.
- (109) Arne Magnussons Håndskriftfortegnelser, 52.
- (110) Ibid, 54.
- (111) Ibid, 52.
- (112) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, XIII.
- (113) BSH, p. 11, l.1.
- (114) Appendix I, Vol. II, p.98, l.4.
- (115) BSH, p.28, l.22.
- (116) BSH, p.35, ll.7-8.
- (117) Skrá II, 454-5.
- (118) ÍÆ IV, 56-7.
- (119) ÍÆ I, 221-2.
- (120) ÍÆ II (1949), 356-7.

- (121) Ibid.
- (122) BSH, p. 38, ll. 10-12.
- (123) BSH, p. 16, ll. 22-4.
- (124) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakanna, 21.
- (125) See Jón Helgason, Kvæðabók úr Vigur (1955), 7-14; Jóhann Gunnar Ólafsson, "Magnús Jónsson í Vigur", Skirnir CXXX (1956), 107-25; Sýs. II, 78, 675-6; ÍA III, 433-4.
- (126) Íslenzkir Hafnarstúdentar, 45-6; Sýs. II, 676.
- (127) Skirnir CXXX, 118; Kvæðabók úr Vigur, II.
- (128) Private Brevveksling, 241-2.
- (129) See Halldór Hermannsson, "Sir Joseph Banks and Iceland", Islandica XVIII (1928); Uno von Troil, Brev om Island (1933), 28; Jón Helgason, Handritaspjall (1958), 102.  
- Brev om Island, 14-25, indicates that the visitors landed in Iceland on 29th August, 1772 and departed on 9th October.  
- For Banks (1743-1820) generally, see Dictionary of National Biography III (1885), 129-33; H.C.Cameron, Sir Joseph Banks (1952).
- (130) For Ólafur Stefánsson or Stephensen (1731-1812), stiftamtmaður, see ÍA IV, 81-2.
- (131) Born 1703, died 1773. See ÍA I, 169-70.
- (132) Kvæðabók úr Vigur, 8,12.
- (133) ANF VIII (1892), 199-237.
- (134) Ibid., 203.
- (135) Njála II (1875-89), 760-62.
- (136) Laurentius saga, Sagan af Þorsteini Hvíta and Sagan af Gormi kongi inum gamla.

- (137) See Note 15 supra.
- (138) The notes are chronological, such as the following :  
"Á Sógubók með hende Jóns Arnórssonar stendur  
híer hiá á Spassiunne A Anno 977 var Broddhelge  
veigenn".
- (139) Manntal á Islandi Árið 1703, 221.
- (140) Kvæðabók úr Vigur, 9.
- (141) Ibid, 10-11.
- (142) Ibid.
- (143) Jarðabók Árna Magnússonar og Páls Vídalíns VII  
(1940), 196.
- (144) Manntal, 222.
- (145) Jarðabók VII, 192.
- (146) Private Brevveksling, 517.
- (147) Ibid, 518.
- (148) Manntal, 216.
- (149) Ibid, 53.
- (150) Jarðabók IV (1925-7), 139.
- (151) Jarðabók VII, 155.
- (152) Ibid, 158.
- (153) Private Brevveksling, 518-19.
- (154) Kvæðabók úr Vigur, 18.
- (155) ÍF X (1940), XCV.
- (156) Skrá II, 613-15.
- (157) ÍF X, LVIII.
- (158) Skrá III (1935-7), 318.
- (159) Skrá I, 535-6.
- (160) See Jónas Kristjánsson, Valla-Liöts Saga, XXIII-XXIV;  
for Jón Jónsson (1787-1860), see Sfs. II 397-9;

- ÍÆ III, 198; for Ólafur Sigurðsson or Sivertsen (1790-1860), see also ÍÆ IV, 79-80; V, 557 (for correction).
- (161) Jónas Kristjánsson, Valla-Ljóts Saga, XXIV.
- (162) Ibid.
- (163) For Daði Nielsson (1809-56), see ÍÆ I, 303; V, 540 (for correction); Jón Jónsson, "Daði Nielsson 'froði'", Skirnir LXXXIV (1910), 117-37.
- (164) In this regard, Solveig Tunold of the Manuscripts' Department of the University Library in Oslo writes on 5th April, 1963 :-
- "As to where this manuscript comes from, we are sorry to say that our old catalogues give no information on this point for the Ms in question."
- (165) Skrá I, (1918-25), 522-3.
- (166) For Jón Jónsson Espólin the annalist (1769-1836), see Stefán Einarsson, A History of Icelandic Literature, 218; ÍÆ III, 106-7; Sfs. I (1881-4), 421-30; III (1905-8), 107-110, 517-22.
- (167) Skrá I, 535.
- (168) Not identifiable in Islenskar Eviskrár or in Sfslumannaefir.
- (169) See Stefán Einarsson, A History of Icelandic Literature, 86-8.
- (170) Skrá I, 406.
- (171) See Sfs. III, 261. Sigurður Sigurðsson was the father of Ólafur Sigurðsson (see note 160 above). Fjarðarhorn is a farm in Hrútafjörður.

- (172) Skrá I, 328.
- (173) Born 1778, died 1809. See ÍA V, 224.
- (174) Skrá I, 328-9.
- (175) Skrá I, 219.
- (176) For Bogi Benediktsson frá Staðarfelli (1771-1849), the composer of the monumental work on the Lives of the Sheriffs, see Sýs. IV (1909-15), I-XII; ÍA I, 262-3.
- (177) For a very brief account of the Icelandic manuscripts in the Westinska samling in the University of Uppsala, see V. Gödel, Fornnorsk-Ísländsk Litteratur i Sverige (1897), 86. - The Westin collection was given to the University Library in 1877 by Jacob Westin (1810-80). See Svensk Uppslagbok XXXI (1955), 133.
- (178) Skrá II, 748.
- (179) Born about 1742, died 1815. See ÍA V, 7-8.
- (180) Born about 1691, died about 1765. See ÍA III, 237.
- (181) Skrá I, 328.
- (182) Born 1776, died 1838. See ÍA V, 203.
- (183) Skrá I, 551.
- (184) Skrá I, 106.
- (185) Born 1840, died 1906. A noted scholar and book-collector, grandson of Síra Þorvaldur Böðvarsson í Holti, the friend of Rask.
- (186) Skrá II, 555-6.
- (187) Born 1778, died 1859. See ÍA V, 78-9.
- (188) Skrá III, 573; see also Skrá I, 501-502.
- (189) Born about 1780, died 1854. See ÍA II (1949),

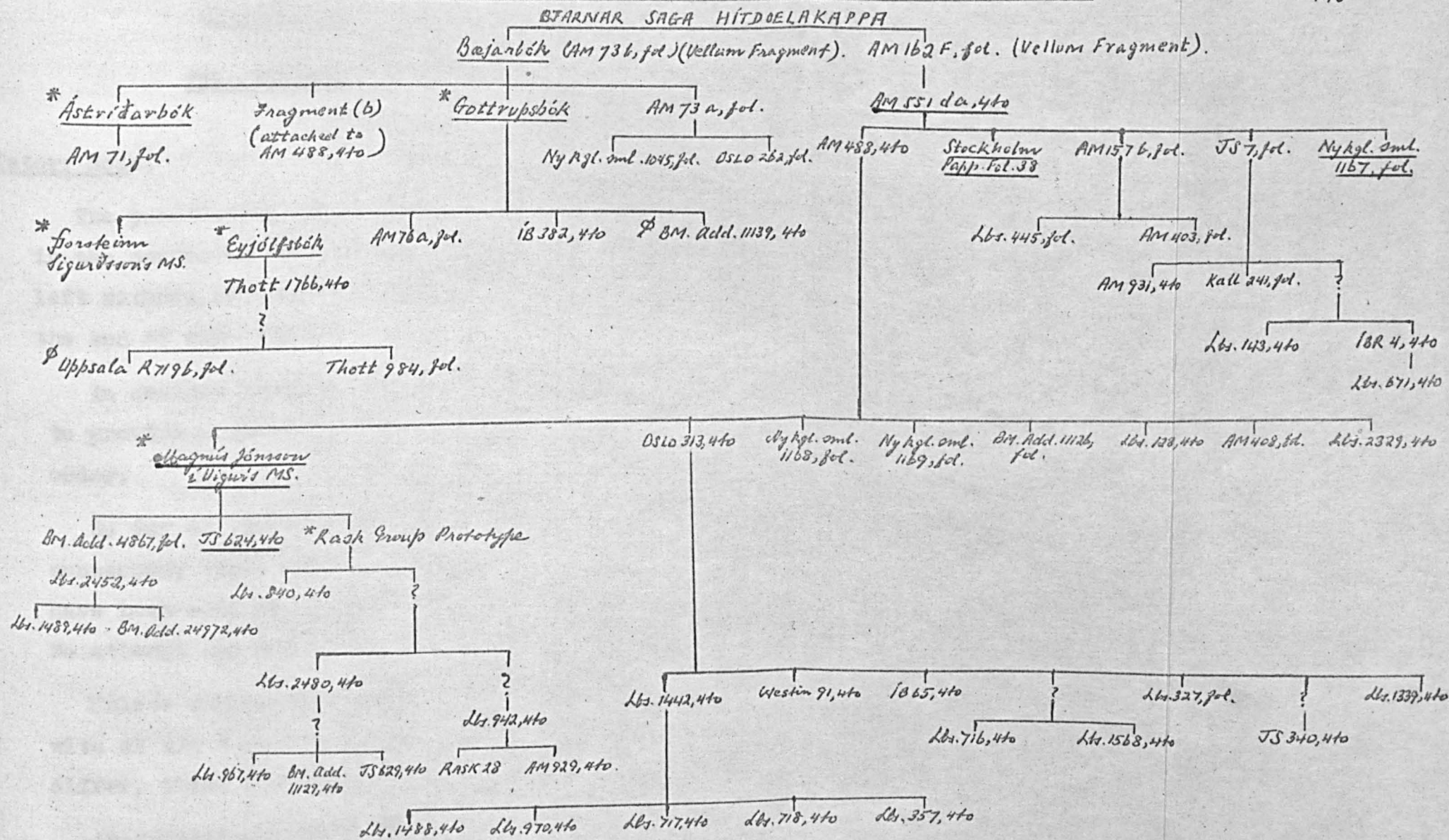
- 208-9. For his father, Sira Þorsteinn Sveinbjarnarson (1730-1814) see ÍA V, 229.
- (190) Kvæðabók úr Vigur, 35-7.
- (191) Flourished 1575. See ÍA V, 107; A History of Icelandic Literature, 185, 186, 190, 191.
- (192) Royal Library Catalogue, 128.
- (193) Ibid.
- (194) A particularly prolific scribe. Born 1734, died 1814. See ÍA IV, 15.
- (195) Skrá I, 154.
- (196) For Guðmundur Helgason Ísfold (1732-82), see Note 49.
- (197) Katalog I, 310.
- (198) For Guðmundur Magnússon or Magnæus see ÍA II, 170.
- (199) Skrá III, 303.
- (200) For Sighvatur Grímsson Borgfirðingur (20 Dec. 1840-14 Jan. 1930), see ÍA IV, 200-201.
- (201) Landnámabók (1900), 22.
- (202) ÍF II, 151.
- (203) Þjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, XI.
- (204) BSH, p.1, lines 22-3.
- (205) BSH, p.10, lines 13-14.
- (206) See p. 84.
- (207) Skrá III, 325.
- (208) ÍA V, 34.
- (209) Skrá I, 369.
- (210) For Skúli Magnússon (1768-1837), see Sýs. II, 733-8; ÍA IV, 292-3. For his father, Magnús sýslumaður Ketilsson (1732-1803), see Sýs. II, 718-33, ÍA III, 440-42.



- (211) Skrá I, 397.
- (212) See Björn M. Ólsen, Rasmus Kristján Rask 1787-1887. Minningarrit (1888).
- (213) Katalog II (1894), 517-8.
- (214) Born 1758, died 1836. See ÍA V, 240-41; Rasmus Kristján Rask, 19.
- (215) Louis Hjelmslev, Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask, II (1941), 291; Rasmus Kristján Rask, 124.
- (216) Katalog II, 266-7.
- (217) Appendix II, Vol. II, p. 115, ll. 17-18.
- (218) Ibid, page 115, lines 13-14.
- (219) Skrá I, 404.
- (220) Skrá II, 613-15.
- (221) For Halldór Davíðsson (c. 1792-1860), see ÍA II, 250; V, 547 (for correction). For his father, Davíð Jónsson (Mála-Davíð) (c. 1768-1839), see ÍA I, 306.
- (222) Valla-Ljóts Saga, XXX.
- (223) Royal Library Catalogue, 127.
- (224) Peter Frederick Suhm (1728-98), historian, owned a collection of about 100,000 books, which he sold to the Royal Library in Copenhagen in 1796. It is now incorporated in Ny kongelig samling. For Suhm, see Dansk Biografisk Leksikon XXIII (1942), 114-24. For Suhms samling, see Royal Library Catalogue, I-II.
- (225) Born 1731, died 1811. See ÍA III, 239-40.
- (226) Born about 1716, died 1782. See ÍA III, 56.
- (227) Katalog II, 267.
- (228) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, XIII.

- (229) Katalog I, 309.
- (230) Born 1808, died 1891. See ÍA III, 369-70.
- (231) Born 1782, died 1856. See ÍA I, 340.
- (232) Skrá III, 270.
- (233) Born 1899, died 1934. His collection is in the National Library of Iceland. See ÍA IV, 67.
- (234) Royal Library Catalogue, 373.
- (235) For Jacob Langebek (1710-75), historian and archivist, see Dansk Biografisk Leksikon XIII (1938), 605-11.
- (236) See Dansk Biografisk Leksikon XII (1937), 312-14.
- (237) Katalog I, XLIX.
- (238) Skrá I, 157-8.
- (239) Born 1787, died 1877. See ÍA II, 66-7; V, 543 (for correction).
- (240) Born 1819, died 1902. See ÍA II, 253-4; ÍA V, 547.
- (241) Edited by Jakob Benediktsson (1958).
- (242) Landnámabók (1900), 21.
- (243) Skarðsárþók, 30.
- (244) Skrá III, 210-11.
- (245) Valle-Ljóts Saga, XVII.
- (246) See ÍA II (1949), 257-8; Sýs. II, 394.
- (247) Skrá I, 302-4.
- (248) See Sýs. III, 151. Málmeý is in Skagafjörður.
- (249) Skrá I, 154.
- (250) Born 1739, died 1796. See ÍA II, 308-10.
- (251) Born 1706, died 1776. See ÍA V, 53-4.
- (252) Skrá I, 246.

- (253) For Sveinbjörn Egilsson (1791-1852), see Stefán Einarsson, A History of Icelandic Literature, 219; íA IV, 361-2; V, 561 (for correction).
- (254) Skrá II, 383.
- (255) Born 1845, died 1911. See íA V, 179-80.



NOTES.

- \* Indicates an apparently lost MS.
- φ MS. relates only partly to Bæjarbók, but includes sátte of Björn and Fróði.
- Underlining in red indicates MSS. that lack the commencement from Bæjarbók.
- All missing intermediate MSS. are not necessarily accounted for in this chart.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE VERSES.

#### Prefatory Note.

- (1) The punctuation of the manuscripts has been omitted in the corrected text of the verses, the latter being left without punctuation, except for a full stop at the end of each verse.
- (2) In certain cases it has not been found necessary to provide a corrected text or a text in normal word order.
- (3) So far as variants from the corrected text are concerned, these have only been shown where emendations have been made to the text of the principal manuscript. No attempt has been made at providing full variants.
- (4) Unless otherwise stated, the main manuscripts agree with AM 551 d a, 4to and therefore, where they do not differ, these readings are not repeated in the variants.
- (5) Abbreviations employed are those detailed in the list of abbreviations prefixed to the variants from the text of the saga itself.  
(See Vol. II, p.74).

Verse 1.

(i) Text as in AM 73 a, fol.

her munði nu handar.  
hæft skilium brag vilia.  
liki fogr sem læika.  
lofn æykynðill sofna:  
ef hórskorðan hærði.  
harðlaner at verim.  
Görðumz fręgr med fiorða  
flæina wald i tiállði:

(ii) Text in normal word order.

Her munði nu handar Lofn<sup>(a)</sup> liki fogr,  
Æykynðill, vilia sofna sem læika<sup>(b)</sup>, - hæft skilium  
brag, - ef hórskorðan<sup>(c)</sup> hærði at verim harðlaner  
med fiorða flæina wald<sup>(d)</sup> i tiállði. Görðumz  
fręgr.

(iii) Notes

(a) Lofn (cf. English "love"): a name of Freyja;  
handar Lofn : kenning for "woman".

(b) læika : "plaything"; in this case, "beloved" or  
"wife".

(c) hórr : "linen"; skorða : "prop" or "stay"  
(especially under a ship or boat when ashore);  
hórskorða : "prop of linen"; kenning for "woman".

(d) flæinn : "spear"; flæina waldr : "wielder of  
spears"; kenning for "warrior".

(iv) Prose translation.

Here now would Eykyndill, the woman fair in body, wish to sleep as a wife - (I have) composed poetry with skill - if the woman heard that I was very near with three other warriors in a tent. I became famous.

(v) Commentary.

According to the prose text, this verse was composed by Björn in a tent in Russia, whilst the wounds that he had received during his duel with Kaldimarr were healing, he having been too sorely wounded to be moved from the spot. Yet it is said in the verse that if Eykyndill, that is, Oddný, heard that Björn was very near, she would wish to sleep with him in the tent. Since Björn and Oddný were probably never further apart than they were at that time, it has been argued by most commentators that this clearly shows an inconsistency between the prose and the verse. Whilst it is generally acknowledged that there is probably little historical basis for Björn's Russian adventures, in particular his duel with Kaldimarr, the verse is usually regarded as having been composed by Björn or, at any rate, not by the author of the saga, who, not knowing better where to place it, has set it here more or less at haphazard. Indeed, the apparent inconsistency of verse and prose has been held to be proof of the age of this verse and of others falling into the same category, if not of their genuineness.

In contrast to Finnur Jónsson,<sup>(1)</sup> Sigurður Nordal<sup>(2)</sup> and W. H. Vogt,<sup>(3)</sup> Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(4)</sup> maintains that the use of old words and expressions in verses only proves that the poet was well versed in poetic technique and that there is in fact no real inconsistency between prose and verse. There is no reason to interpret this particular verse other than that Björn was indeed nowhere near the woman at the time in question, as appears from the prose. Therefore the charge of inconsistency is unjustified and the conclusion can be drawn that both verse and prose are the work of the author of the saga.

In most cases such as this, however, the question is one that can never be determined finally. It would therefore seem more logical to regard this verse, despite Bjarni Einarsson's conclusions, as having most likely not been invented by the author of the saga, particularly as, together with Verse 2, it is set apart from the bulk of the other verses. On the other hand, it might reasonably be argued that this was as good a place as any to insert a verse to relieve the monotony of the prose. This does not mean that the author invented it. He knew the verse and inserted it here because he thought it relevant to the incident he had just described and indeed he probably added the piece about the tent in the prose to make it agree with the verse, not vice versa. There is no need to claim inconsistency; no doubt if Oddný had heard that Björn was very near her, she would have wished to have been with him at that time. Given the circumstances



described in the prose, this is, of course, impossible of achievement, but this would not prevent Björn indulging in wishful fantasy. All this, however, does not mean that the verse was actually composed in Russia or was originally intended to relate to incidents taking place in that country. It is far more likely that its author, whether Björn or another, had Iceland, not Russia in mind, when he composed it.

- (1) Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie (1912), 27-32.
- (2) Íslensk Fornrit III (1938), "Formáli," esp. LXX-LXXIV.
- (3) ANF XXXVII (1921), 27-79.
- (4) Skáldasögur (1961), 236-7.

Verse 2.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Hrister handar fasta,  
hefer dreingur gamanz feingid,  
hrynia hart á Dynu,  
hlaud Eykindilz vodva,  
medan Vistina vinnum,  
velldur nockvad þui klockua,  
skeyd verd eg skridz ad beida,  
skorda ár á Bordi.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Hristi handar fasta  
hefer dreingur gamanz feingid  
hrynia hart á Dynu  
hlaud Eykindilz vodva  
medan\*vel stinna vinnum  
velldur nockvad þui klockua  
\*skid verd eg \*skridar beida  
\*skordu ár á Bordi.

Hristi ) See ÍF III, 123.

vel stinna ) vel stinann 73.

skid ) See ÍF III, 123.

skridar ) See ÍF III, 123.

skordu ) See ÍF III, 123.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Dreingur hefer feingid Hristi handar fasta<sup>(a)</sup>  
gamanz, vodva hlaud Eykindilz hrynia hart á Dynu, medan  
vinnum vel stinna ár klockua á Bordi, nockvad velldur þui;  
verd eg beida skordu skid<sup>(b)</sup> skridar.

(iv) Notes.

(a) Hrist : the name of a valkyrie; handar fasti :  
"fire of the arm"; "gold"; Hrist handar fasta :  
"valkyrie of gold"; kenning for "woman".

(b) skorda : "prop"; skordu skid : "skis of the  
prop"; kenning for "ship".

(v) Prose translation.

The man has given pleasure to the woman; Eykyndill's piles of muscle fall hard on the down-bed, whilst we make a very stiff oar pliable in the gunwale; something causes it; I must ask the ship for a forward movement.

(vi) Commentary.

This verse has also provided material for a charge of inconsistency with the preceding prose text. The latter states that, as Björn and his companions lay at anchor by Hamarseyrr, he composed a verse. In this verse he contrasts the sexual pleasure that Oddný and Þórðr are enjoying with each other with the hard labour that he must perform, as he strains on the oar of his ship. Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(1)</sup>, whilst admitting the apparent inconsistency, does not consider it to be of great account, in effect, a mere oversight on the part of the author, who, in his opinion, wrote both verse and prose.

The inconsistency does not indeed appear to be of great consequence. It would be perfectly natural for Björn, after he had ceased rowing to compose a verse in which he referred to his previous exertion. There is no valid reason to make it mandatory that that exertion should still be going on at the time of composition. Whether the author of the saga composed the verse himself as well or not, this is surely an inconsistency that it would be quite natural for him, in either case, not to notice. It is also worth mentioning here that the placename, Hamarseyrr,

Presumably somewhere in Norway, is otherwise unknown. It was no doubt included to add a little local colour and to make a probably fictitious scene appear a little more plausible.

This verse also presents some textual problems, the chief of which is the interpretation of the line, hlaud Eykindilz vodva. Boer<sup>(2)</sup> and, following him, Finnur Jónsson<sup>(3)</sup>, interpreted vodva hlaud as a kenning for "tears". This view has been shown to be untenable by Gering<sup>(4)</sup> and Kock.<sup>(5)</sup> The first word in the line is not the loan-word hlað, allied to English "lace",<sup>(6)</sup> but the genuine Nordic word hlað, signifying a "heaped up mass" or "pile". The expression vodva hlaud therefore means, purely and simply, nothing more nor less than a piled up mass of muscle, that is, in this case, "buttocks" or "thighs". Björn simply makes a crude comparison between his doings and those of Þórðr and Oddný at that time. As Kock remarks, whatever fell on the down-bed certainly was not tears.<sup>(7)</sup>

The textual emendations in the second half-verse appear to be unavoidable, but would be rather less if Boer's readings<sup>(8)</sup> were adopted. He reads vins stinna instead of vel stinna, which means that both skeyd and skorda may remain unaltered. Since skeyd itself signifies "ship", there is no need to make use of the kenning skordu skid, but instead one is faced with a somewhat unusual kenning for "woman", vins skorda, which should be read together with nockvad velldur þui, the woman being the causer of the action. Since Björn had not returned to Iceland the previous summer because he had learned of

Oddný's marriage to Þórðr, there is therefore justification for this interpretation of the line. However, the word skíð is frequently found as part of a kenning for "ship"<sup>(9)</sup> and this reading, adopted by Nordal,<sup>(10)</sup> has also been followed here. Kock's objection<sup>(11)</sup> that wine (vin) was an imported product also has some validity.

- (1) Skáldasögur, 237-8.
- (2) Bjarnar saga Hitdoelakappa (1893), 89.
- (3) Den norsk-islandske Skjaldedigtning (1912-15), B I 277.
- (4) ZdP XLIV (1912), 163-4.
- (5) Notationes norroenæ (1923-41), para. 742.
- (6) Cleasby Vigfusson, Icelandic-English Dictionary (1957), 268.
- (7) Notationes norroenæ, para. 742.
- (8) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 12, 89-90.
- (9) Cleasby Vigfusson, Icelandic-English Dictionary, 550.
- (10) Íslensk Fornrit III, 123.
- (11) Notationes norroenæ, para. 743.

Verse 3.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Snot bidur suejn hinn huyta  
sunnat kuyar Jnnann,  
reyd er ad Rynar glóðar,  
ranglat móka ganga,  
harla nyt su er heyter,  
hlauck midskipar ockua,  
sprund bidur vt ad andar,  
Eykindill mig skynda.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Snot bidur suejn hinn huyta  
\*svinn at kuyar Jnnann  
reyd \*era Rynar glóðar  
ranglat móka ganga  
harla nyt su er heyter  
Hlauck \*mids vita Rockua  
sprund bidur vt ad andar  
Eykindill mig skynda.

svinn at) 4867.

era) See IF III, 140.

mids vita Rockua) See IF III, 140.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Svinn snot bidur hinn huyta suejn ganga  
at móka kuyar Jnnann; reyd Rynar glóðar<sup>(a)</sup> era ranglat

sprund, harla nyt Hlauck Rockua mids vita,<sup>(b)</sup>  
su er heyter Eykindill, bidur mig skynda vt ad andar.

(iv) Notes.

(a) reyd : "vehicle, carriage"; Rynar glód : "fire of the Rhine"; "gold"; reyd Rynar glóðar : "carriage of gold"; kenning for "woman".

(b) Hlauck : the name of a valkyrie; Rockui : the name of a sea-king"; mid : "fishing-bank"; Rockua mid : "fishing-bank of the sea-king"; "sea"; viti : "beacon, fire"; Rockua mids viti : "fire of the sea"; "gold"; Hlauck Rockua mids vita : "valkyrie of gold"; kenning for "woman".

(v) Prose translation.

The wise woman asks the cowardly boy to go and clean out pens; the woman is not unjust; the woman, the very useful woman, she who is called Eykindill, asks me to hurry out to the porch.

(vi) Commentary.

Oddný and Þórðr have been quarrelling and the preceding prose relates that Björn had heard what they were saying and had then uttered a verse. The verse, however, states that Oddný asks Björn to hurry out to the porch. There need not be any inconsistency here, if one regards the prose statement as complimentary to that in the verse. No doubt Björn was also in the house and Oddný asked him to leave, so as no longer to be an auditor of the quarrel between husband and wife. (1)

The sixth line of the verse is obviously corrupt in the manuscripts and the reading mids vita Rockua for midskipar ockua seems the only likely one, although Boer<sup>(2)</sup> comments that mid is seldom found as part of a kenning.

The expression, suejn hinn huyta, deserves special comment. Björn uses it again as an epithet for Þórðr in Verse 11 and it is clearly pejorative. Björn expresses his contempt for Þórðr by calling him hvitr and the addition of sveinn 'boy' doubles the insult. Björn M. Ólsen<sup>(3)</sup> regarded the development of the meaning "cowardly" for hvitr as being connected with the fact that fairness of hair and complexion was regarded as a feminine quality, whilst Albert M. Sturtevant<sup>(4)</sup> traced it to the contempt of the heathen Icelanders for Hvitakristr as opposed to the warrior god Thor. Both interpretations have their validity, but that of Björn M. Ólsen seems the more probable, as being a shade of meaning likely to appeal to an outdoor people.

(1) See Bjarni Einarsson, Skáldasögur, 238.

(2) Biarnar Saga Híttoelakappa, 90.

(3) Om Gunnlaugs Saga Ormstungu (1911), 28-9.

(4) Scandinavian Studies XXIV (1952), 119-21.



Verse 4.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.

Vt skalltu ganga,  
Jllur þyki mier,  
gleimur þinn vera  
vid grid konur,  
situr þu á auptnum  
er vier Jnn komum,  
Jafnaudugur mier,  
vt skalltu ganga.

(ii) Text in normal word order.

Vt skalltu ganga; þinn gleimur vid grid konur  
þyki mier vera Jllur; þu situr á auptnum, er  
vier Jnn komum, Jafnaudugur mier; vt skalltu ganga.

(iii) Prose translation.

You shall go out; your noisy merriment with  
serving-maids seems ill to me; you sit in the  
evenings, when I come in, as if you were equal in  
wealth to me; you shall go out.

(iv) Commentary.

This verse, like the following, is in  
fornvröislag and together they form a senna.  
Pórðr opens and criticizes Björn's behaviour.  
Björn replies in like vein and defies Pórðr.

Verse 5.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Hier mun eg sitia  
og hátt vel kueda,  
skiemta þinne  
þiód vel konu,  
þa mun ockur, ej  
til ordz lagid,  
em eg heill J hug,  
hier mun eg sitia.

(ii) Text in normal word order.

Eg mun sitia hier og kueda hátt vel, skiemta  
þinne konu þiód vel; þa mun ej lagid ockur til  
ordz. Eg em heill J hug. Eg mun sitia hier.

(iii) Prose translation.

I shall sit here and make verses very loudly,  
amuse your wife very well; then we shall not be  
blamed. I am sincere in mind. I shall sit here.

(iv) Commentary.

The second part of the senna, Björn's reply.  
It may be noted that, whereas Þórðr refers to  
Björn's jesting with the serving-women, Björn in  
his response declares it his intention to amuse  
Þórðr's wife, Oddný. Boer(1) reads þat for þa  
in the fifth line, giving the meaning, "We shall  
not be blamed for that", which is perhaps  
preferable.

(1) Biarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 28.

Verse 6.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Eykindill verpur aundu,  
Ordsæll og vill mæla,  
Brudr hefur bestar rædur,  
breksom wid mig nockud,  
enn til Jardar orda,  
aulreyrar geingur heyra,  
lytill sveirn og leynist  
Laun krár og sezt fiærri.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Eykindill verpur aundu  
Ordsæll og vill mæla  
Brudr hefur bestar rædur  
breksom wid mig nockud  
enn til Jardar orda  
aulreyrar geingur heyra  
lytill sveirn og leynist  
\*Launkárr og sezt fiærri.

Launkárr ) See IF III, 142.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Ordsæll Eykindill verpur aundu og vill mæla  
nockud wid mig; breksom Brudr hefur bestar  
rædur; enn lytill sveirn geingur heyra til orda  
aulreyrar Jardar<sup>(a)</sup> og leynist Launkárr og  
sezt fiærri.

(iv) Notes.

- (a) aulreyrr : "ale-reed, drinking-horn";  
Jörd : the name of a goddess, mother of Thor;  
aulreyrar Jörd : "goddess of the drinking-horn"  
kenning for "woman".

(v) Prose translation.

Eykindill, who enjoys a good reputation, sighs and wants to say something to me; the coquettish woman makes excellent conversation; but the little boy goes and listens to the words of the woman and hides himself craftily and is seated far off.

(vi) Commentary.

This verse is completely consistent with the preceding prose and its consistency in fact is such that one must entertain a strong suspicion that it was written to fit in with the prose. The reverse, of course, is equally capable of being argued.

Björn again refers to Þórðr contemptuously, this time as lytill sveirn. In this regard, cf. Verse 9 and also the prose text at page 66, lines 16-17, where he makes use of the same expression.

Verse 7.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Muna mun Biorn ad byrne,  
bauga grund or mundum,  
snot hin snerilata,  
slapp hid dala kappa,  
skapad var mier enn miorrar,  
muna þriot konu niota,  
rád er slyktt til snudar,  
sueigar þoll ad eiga.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Muna mun Biorn ad Byrne  
Bauga Grund or mundum  
snot hin snerilata  
slapp Hid dala kappa  
skapad var mier enn miorrar  
muna \*þriotr konu niota  
rád er slyktt til snudar  
sueigar þoll ad eiga.

þriotr ) 488.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Biorn mun muna, ad bauga Grund,<sup>(a)</sup> hin  
snerilata snot, slapp or mundum Byrne Hid dala  
kappa; mier var skapad ad eiga sueigar þoll,<sup>(b)</sup>  
enn þriotr muna niota miorrar konu; slyktt  
rád er til snudar.

(iv) Notes.

- (a) Grund : "Jörð" (Sæmundar Edda (1926), 2, 60); in this case, a goddess; bauga Grund : "goddess of rings"; kenning for "woman".
- (b) sueigr : "headdress, snood"; poll : "young fir-tree"; sueigar poll : "fir-tree of the snood"; kenning for "woman".

(v) Prose translation.

Björn will remember that the woman, the lively lady, slipped from the grasp of Björn Hítðlakappi. It was my fate to marry the lady, but the scoundrel will not enjoy the slender woman. That it turned out so is to my profit.

(vi) Commentary.

This verse and the following two form another type of senna, this time in dróttkvæðr. Þórðr has set Oddný upon his knee and kisses her in Björn's presence, in order to see what effect this has on Björn. There then follows a succession of three verses, in which first Þórðr, then Björn in two consecutive verses, reminds the other of a loss or humiliation inflicted by the one upon the other.

Accordingly, in this verse Þórðr recalls to Björn how the latter had lost Oddný, when he appeared sure to marry her. In other words, she had "slipped from his grasp". Þórðr rubs this fact in, at the same time as he caresses Oddný in front of Björn.

Verse 8.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Það mun þier er mæti  
þyn sveyt lidi mynu,  
þar fyrer Præla eýri  
Þord ej mune fordum,  
og fra audi myklum,  
ódreingiliga geingud,  
bartu þo allvel orter,  
opt sinnum hlut minna.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Það mun þier er mæti  
þyn sveyt lidi mynu  
þar fyrer Præla eýri  
\*Þordr ej mune fordum  
og fra audi myklum  
ódreingiliga geingud  
bartu þo allvel orter  
opt sinnum hlut minna.

Þordr) JH.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Þordr, það mun þier ej mune, er þyn sveyt  
mæti fordum lidi mynu þar fyrer Præla eýri, og  
geingud ódreingiliga fra myklum audi; bartu opt  
sinnum minna hlut, þo orter allvel.

(iv) Prose translation.

Pórðr, you will always remember when your company once met my followers there by Prælaeyrr, and you dishonourably deserted great wealth. You often got the worst of it, although you made verses very well.

(v) Commentary.

Björn, in this verse, replies to Pórðr and reminds him of his discomfiture at Prælaeyrr in the Brenn Isles, when Pórðr hid from Björn, who subsequently plundered him and his companions.

(See pages 12-15 of the text).

Verse 9.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Muna mattu hitt ad hattar  
halland vann eg grandí,  
lytill suejrn vm leyti,  
lát prudur huad þu dúder,  
oc frá byriar blacki,  
brátt sem orka máttar,  
annarz snauðr enn audru  
Jllz kunnandi runnud.



(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Muna mattu hitt ad hattar  
halland vann eg grandí  
lytill suejrn vm leyti  
lat prudur \* huatt þu dúder  
oc frá byriar blacki  
brátt sem orka mätter  
annarz snauðr enn \*ædru  
Jllz kunnandi runnuð.

huatt) See IF III, 143; MSS read hvar (551 huad).  
ædru ) See IF III, 143.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Muna mattu hitt, lytill suejrn, ad þu dúder  
lát prudur hattar halland<sup>(a)</sup> huatt vm leyti; vann  
eg grandí; oc runnuð brátt Jllz kunnandi frá  
byriar blacki,<sup>(b)</sup> sem mätter orka, snauðr annarz  
enn ædru.

(iv) Notes.

(a) hötr : "hood"; halland : "sloping land";  
hattar halland : "sloping land of the hood";  
kenning for "head".

(b) byrr : "fair wind"; blackr : "dun-coloured  
horse"; byriar blackr : "horse of the  
fair wind"; kenning for "ship".

(v) Prose translation.

You will remember, little boy, that you  
vigorously wagged your head in an elegant manner

on the hill. I sustained no injury; and you, who are of an evil disposition, ran from the ship quickly, as fast as you could, bereft of everything other than fear.

(vi) Commentary.

In this verse, Björn expresses similar sentiments to those of the former and continues to remind Þórðr of his disgraceful behaviour in the Brenn Isles. The hill, upon which Þórðr "wagged his head in an elegant manner", is presumably the bakki under which he hid in a bush. (See page 13, line 18 of the text).

This verse and the two preceding give a convincing impression of being genuine or at least of being older than the prose and of having been used by the saga author as a basis for the latter. The same also applies to the two following verses, in which Björn continues with his theme.

Verse 10.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Heffnt tel eg þess að þessa,

þornteigar glecktu eiga,

þyn eþ iþurd að eim,

Þorðr vegsemi skorðu,

er á Odda eyre

vndan mynum þundi,

bruar vnd backa lögum,

brenn eyia lattu skreya.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Heffnt tel eg þess að þessa  
þornteigar gíecktu eiga  
þyn \*er íþurd að einu  
Þorðr vegsemi skorðu  
er á Odda eyre  
vndan mynum \*fundi  
bruar vnd backa lögum  
Brenn eyia \*lægud skreya.

er ) See IF III, 144.

fundi ) 4867.

lægud ) See IF III, 144.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Eg tel þess heffnt, að þu gíeckt eiga þessa  
þornteigar skorðu.<sup>(a)</sup> Þyn vegsemi, Þorðr, er að  
einu íþurd. Er lögud, skreya, vnd lögum bruar  
backa Brenn eyia á Odda eyre vndan mynum fundi.

(iv) Notes.

(a) þornteigr : "land of the brooch-pin"; kenning  
for "brooch"; skorða : "prop, support";  
þornteigar skorða : "support of the brooch";  
kenning for "woman".

(v) Prose translation.

I count it to be avenged that you married  
this woman. Your honour, Þorðr, is continually  
on the wane. You lay, wretch, at Oddaeyrr under

the low bank by the jetty of the Brenn Isles,  
to avoid discovery by me.

(vi) Commentary.

The prose text tells us that Björn thought that he had still not repaid Þórðr fully for boasting that he had obtained Oddný and Björn had had to let her go. Accordingly, Björn expands on the subject-matter of the two previous verses in this and the subsequent verse.

It seems likely that it was from this verse and from Verse 8 that the author obtained his information concerning the place-names of the scene of Þórðr's discomfiture at Björn's hands and also the fact that Þórðr was discovered by Björn in a hiding-place under a bank or hill and presumably not far from a landing-place or jetty.

Verse 11.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.

Sátu við svejrn hinn hvyti  
suiptur auð og giptu,  
aður var auðz við hriðir,  
ófund J solundum,  
þa er raungietinn reyntag,  
rusil qvædz aff þier bæði  
helldur var graleykur gollinn.  
gaurj knaur og aura.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Sátu vid suejrn hinn hvyti  
suiptur \*audi og giptu  
adur \*var eg \*oddz vid hridir  
ðfund J Solundum  
þa er raungietinn reyntag  
\*rusil qvædur aff þier bædi  
helldur var graleykur golldinn  
gaurj knaur og aura.

audi ) R2. R3.

var eg ) See IF III, 144.

oddz ) See IF III, 144.

rusil qvædur ) See IF III, 144.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Þu sátt vid ðfund J Solundum, hinn hvyti  
suejrn, suiptur audi og giptu, - adur var eg  
vid oddz hridir,<sup>(a)</sup> - þa er eg reynta raungietinn  
aff þier, rusil qvædur, bædi knaur og aura.  
Graleykur var helldur golldinn gaurj.

(iv) Notes.

(a) oddr : "point of a weapon; spear"; hrid :  
"storm"; oddz hrid : "storm of the spear";  
kenning for "combat, fray."

(v) Prose translation.

You avoided envy in Sólundir, cowardly boy,  
deprived of wealth and good luck, - I have been  
present at frays before, - when, known for valour,  
I plundered from you, noisy fellow, both ship  
and valuables. The churl was repaid somewhat  
for his malice.

(vi) Commentary.

Whereas the prose states that Þórðr was not only captured but also robbed by Björn in the Brenn Isles and makes no mention of the Sólund Isles, this verse specifically states that it was in the latter group that Björn was plundered of both his ship and his other goods.

The Sólund Isles, now known as Sulen Islands, lie at the entrance to Sognefiord off the West Coast of Norway. They are therefore at a great distance indeed from the Brenn Isles at the mouth of the Göta River, off the South-west Coast of present-day Sweden. It is accordingly rather too much to believe that, after capturing Þórðr and his ship in the Brenn Isles, Björn then transported Þórðr and his belongings to Sólundir, before finally relieving him of them. It is also a little difficult to agree with Bjarni Einarsson's <sup>(1)</sup> contention that the two groups of islands were all the same to the saga-writer and that the clear discrepancy between verse and prose gives no grounds for asserting that

he did not compose this particular verse himself. Bjarni's comment that both Sólundir and Brenneyjar are also mentioned in Egils saga <sup>(2)</sup> and Kormáks saga <sup>(3)</sup> lends his argument little support for there is no evidence in those sagas that their respective authors in any way confused the two groups. Their references merely confirm the statement in Bjarnar saga <sup>(4)</sup> that the Brenn Isles were much visited by vikings.

It is highly unlikely that the early thirteenth-century author of Bjarnar saga would have been unaware of the different location of the two groups of islands and it is much more preferable to believe that, in writing the prose account of Björn's capturing and plundering of Þórðr, he decided to do away with the inconvenient reference to Sólundir, but naturally was obliged to retain it in the verse, if only for the sake of the rhyme. Nordal <sup>(5)</sup> considers that probably it was in Sólundir that Þórðr was plundered by Björn and Prælaeyrr was in this group, but that in Brenneyjar Þórðr escaped by hiding.

This is an attractive view and probably as good as any other. Against this it could be contended that the author of the verse, whether the saga author, Björn himself or a third party, merely inserted J Solundum in the verse for the sake of the rhyme.

There seems good textual reason, however, for considering this verse as being much older than the prose, apart from the discrepancy discussed above. It contains a most curious word, rusil qvædur, a hapax legomenon, which Finnur Jónsson<sup>(6)</sup> describes as rare and the meaning of which can scarcely be regarded as other than doubtful.<sup>(7)</sup>

- (1) Skáldasögur, 239.
- (2) Islenzk Fornrit II (1933), 66, 121.
- (3) Islenzk Fornrit VIII (1939), 271, 296.
- (4) BSH, p.12, l.19.
- (5) Islenzk Fornrit III, "Formáli," LXXII.
- (6) Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie (1912), 28.

- (7) The first element is particularly obscure, the second probably referring to "poetry". See especially Nordal, in Islenzk Fornrit III, 145 footnote. Cleasby Vigfusson, Icelandic-English Dictionary, 503, compares rusil with German Hüssel "a snout", and defines the whole word as meaning "doggerel poet".

Verse 12.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Pa mun þunnrar Blæiu  
þoll westarla vnd faullum,  
rindur wekur mig mundar.  
madur þynz getu sanna,



eff giæte son sæta,  
sunnu marz vid Runne,  
von hiet riettrar raunar,  
ryklundud mier lykan.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Pa mun þunnrar Blæiu  
poll westarla vnd \*fiacillum  
Rindur wekur mig mundar  
\*mannz \*synz getu sanna  
eff giæte son sæta  
sunnu marz vid Runne  
von \*hietk riettrar raunar  
ryklundud mier lykan.

fiacillum ) R2 R3.

mannz ) See ÍF III, 145.

synz ) MSS read þynz.

hietk ) See ÍF III, 145.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Pa mun poll þunnrar Blæiu<sup>(a)</sup> westarla vnd  
fiacillum sanna getu mannz synz, - mundar Rindur<sup>(b)</sup>  
wekur mig, - eff ryklundud sæta giæte son lykan  
mier vid marz sunnu Runne.<sup>(c)</sup> Von hietk riettrar  
raunar.

(iv) Notes.

(a) poll : "young fir-tree"; Blæia : "a fine  
coloured cloth"; poll þunnrar Blæiu : "fir-tree  
of the thin cloth"; kenning for "woman".

(b) mundr : "bridegroom's dowry"; in this case, "wealth"; Rindur : a goddess, the mother of Váli (a son of Odin); mundar Rindur : "Rindur of wealth"; kenning for "woman".

(c) marr : "sea"; sunna : "sun"; marz sunna : "sun of the sea"; kenning for "gold"; Runnr : "bush, shrub"; marz sunnu Runnr : "bush of gold"; kenning for "man".

(v) Prose translation.

Then will the woman, westward under the fells, prove the guess of her husband, - the woman wakes me, - if the high-spirited woman should get a son resembling me by the man. I promised expectation of valid proof.

(vi) Commentary.

The prose relates that Björn sat next to Oddný one evening and added insult to injury by uttering this verse to Þórðr, in which he prophesied that Oddný would bear a son resembling Björn himself.

The verse bears a distinct resemblance to Verse 28 of Eyrbyggja saga, which describes a somewhat similar situation in somewhat similar terms, except, however, that in Eyrbyggja saga the child has already been born. One of the verses has obviously been influenced by the other and which of the two should have the priority

has been a matter of considerable discussion by scholars. Since, however, the whole question is complex and is essentially one of literary relationships, it has been thought preferable to leave full discussion of the various aspects involved to Chapter VI, where the literary relations of the saga as a whole are dealt with. More detailed mention of the similarity of part of Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga to the first few lines of Verse 11 of Baldrs draumar is also deferred to that chapter.

As Boer<sup>(1)</sup> remarked, the description of the woman as living westarla vnd fiaullum is striking, although it must refer to Oddný, who lived far enough west.

(1) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 93.

Verse 13.

(1)

Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to:

Sextan var hugur hiona  
huerr lifdi sier þuerri,  
rus J oro hvse,  
audlyn ad mun synum,  
adur gard vita giordi,  
grundar einn fyrer stundu,  
strider stockui bvdum,  
stor giedz lide oro.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Sextan var hugur hiona  
huerr lifdi sier, \*puerrir  
\*ys J oro hvse  
audlyn ad mun synum  
adur gard vita giordi  
grunndar einn fyrer stundu  
strider \*stock i bvdum  
\*stor giedr lide oro.

puerrir ) See IF III, 147.

ys ) See IF III, 147.

stock i ) See IF III, 147.

stor giedr ) See IF III, 147.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Hugur sextan hiona var ad mun synum, audlyn.<sup>(a)</sup>  
Huerr ys puerrir<sup>(b)</sup> lifdi sier J oro hvse, adur  
einn stor giedr grunndar gard vita strider<sup>(c)</sup> giordi  
fyrer stundu stock i bvdum lide oro.

(iv) Notes.

(a) Lyn (Hlin) : one of the names of Freyja;  
audlyn : "wealth-Hlin"; kenning for "woman".

(b) yr : "yew-tree, bow of yew"; ys puerrir :  
"diminisher of the bow"; kenning for "warrior,  
man".

(c) grund : "grassy plain, green field"; gardr :  
"fence"; grunndar gardr : "fence of the

grassy plain"; kenning for "sea"; viti : "beacon";  
grunnar gard-viti : "beacon of the sea"; kenning for  
"gold"; strider : "fighter, warrior"; grunnar  
gard-vita strider : "warrior of gold"; kenning  
for "man".

(v) Prose translation.

The mood of sixteen servants was contented,  
woman. Each man lived as suited himself in our home,  
before a certain vehement man caused a disturbance  
a while ago amongst the dwellings of our household.

(vi) Commentary.

The situation described briefly in this verse  
attributed to Þórðr Kolbeinsson has been greatly  
elaborated upon in the preceding prose, where the  
author relates the disruption to Þórðr's household  
as a result of Björn's sharing food at table with  
his dog. None of the other verses in the saga gives  
more indication than this one of having been grounded  
in tradition and handed down to the saga author over  
a period of perhaps two centuries.

The second and third lines in the verse have  
given scholars some difficulty but Kock<sup>(1)</sup> has shown  
admirably that the whole pattern falls into place  
if an unnecessary r at the beginning of the third  
line is brought back to its original position at the  
end of the preceding line. The other adjustments  
needed in the verse are of a minor nature.

(1) Notationes norroenae, para, 586.

Verse 14.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Vt skalltu ganga,  
oss selldud miól,  
rautt álití,  
rvg sagder þu,  
enn þegar virdar  
vatni blendu,  
war þad aska ein,  
vt skalltu ganga.

(11) Prose translation.

You shall go out; you sold us flour red in appearance; you said it was rye, but, as soon as men mixed it with water, it was only ashes. You shall go out.

(111) Commentary.

This verse together with the following form a senna in fornvrðislag similar to Verses 4 and 5. In both cases, Þórðr commences and Björn replies, Þórðr using identical words for the first and last lines of both his verses, the words used by Björn in each such case being almost identical.

Verse 15.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Kyrr mun eg sitia,  
kom eg á hausti,  
hefi eg fornann maur,  
fullu keyptann,

felld gáfód mier  
fagur rautt vadann,  
kaps wæl drepinn,  
kyrr mun eg sitia.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Kyrr mun eg sitia  
kom eg á hausti  
hefi eg fornann maur  
fullu keyptann  
felld gáfód mier  
fagur \*róggvadann  
kaps wæl drepinn  
kyrr mun eg sitia.

róggvadann ) R2 R3.

(iii) Prose translation.

I shall remain sitting; I came in Autumn;  
I have bought the old suet at a full price. You  
gave me a fine shaggy cloak, beautifully worn out.  
I shall remain sitting.

(iv) Commentary.

The events and transactions referred to in  
this verse and the preceding one are not dealt with  
in the prose, where it is merely stated that Þórðr  
and Björn sat on a bench and quarrelled, following  
which they uttered these verses. It is subsequently  
stated that each then thought things were worse  
than before. Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(1)</sup> considers that,

although the accusations in the verses may be absurd, they in effect illustrate the quarrelsome and discontented state of mind of the two protagonists. To this may be added that Björn's comment that he had paid in full for old suet could well mean that, in his opinion, he had more than paid for any hospitality he had received at Þórðr's hands by having to put up with his company for so long. The reference to the cloak is presumably ironic but may relate to a worthless gift by Þórðr to Björn.<sup>(2)</sup> The former's mention in Verse 14 of a sale by Björn to him of flour of inferior quality is an accusation of a less symbolic nature and seems to refer to a specific transaction, although Þórðr may have invented or exaggerated the inferiority of the goods in question. In other words, the reasonable conclusion is that both these verses and particularly that attributed to Þórðr formed part of the oral tradition and were included in the saga by the author without elaboration. Had he composed the verses himself, it is difficult to believe that he would not at least have dealt more fully with the matter of the consignment of sub-standard flour.

(1) Skáldasögur, 239.

(2) See R. C. Boer, Bjarnar Saga Híttoelakappa, 94.



Verse 16.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Suo flaker allur af alla,  
oddz bodgiefnar loddu,  
hinn er Liota fal lyter  
linbedz sang Jnnann,  
ad holmorum huyler,  
hromblackz kalinn nackuad,  
lofa eg þrudar hag þydrar,  
þornz ä bediar hörne.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Suo flaker \*Ullur \*of alla  
oddz bodgiefnar Loddu  
hinn er Liota fal \*lyti  
linbedz sang Jnnann  
ad \*holnjörun huyler  
\*hrannblackz kalinn nackuad  
lofa eg Prudar hag þydrar  
þornz ä bediar hörne.

Ullur ) See ÍF III, 149.

of ) 4867 R1 R2 R3.

lyti ) See ÍF III, 149.

holnjörun ) See ÍF III, 149.

hrannblackz ) See ÍF III, 149.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Suo flaker oddz bodgiefnar Ullur, <sup>(a)</sup> hinn  
er fal Liota lyti, Jnnann of alla sang linbedz  
Loddu, <sup>(b)</sup> ad hrannblackz holnjörun <sup>(c)</sup> huyler

nackuad kalinn ä bediar hörne. Lofa eg hag þydrar þornz Prudar.<sup>(d)</sup>

(iv) Notes.

- (a) oddr : "spear-point"; bod : "battle"; Giefn : one of the names of Freyja; bodgiefn : "battle-Giefn"; a valkyrie; oddz bodgiefn : "valkyrie of the spear-point"; kenning for "battle"; Ullur : a god; oddz bodgiefnar Ullur : "Ullur of battle"; kenning for "warrior".
- (b) linnr : "serpent"; linnbedr : "bed of the serpent"; kenning for "gold"; Lodda : island in Rygjafylki in Norway; linnbedz Lodda : "Lodda of gold"; kenning for "woman".
- (c) hrönn : "wave"; blackr : "dun-coloured horse"; hrannblackr : "horse of the wave"; kenning for "ship"; höll : "hill"; hrannblackz höll : "hill of the ship"; kenning for "sea"; Njórun : a goddess; hrannblackz holnjórun : "goddess of the sea"; kenning for "woman".
- (d) þorn : "thorn, brooch-pin"; Prudr : "a goddess or valkyrie"; þornz Prudr : "goddess of the brooch-pin"; kenning for "woman".

(v) Prose translation.

The warrior stretches himself out, he who concealed ugly faults, within the whole of the woman's bed, so that she sleeps somewhat frozen in a corner of the bed. I praise the condition of the affectionate woman.

(vi) Commentary.

The prose relates a curious story how Oddný came late to bed one night and Þórór would not allow her any room in the bed, with the result that she had to sit up all night. The verse, on the other hand, says that she was obliged to sleep in a corner of the bed in a rather frozen condition. Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(1)</sup> terms this a case of inexactitude in language and points out that in any case the prose states that she did climb up into the bed and tried unsuccessfully to get under the bedclothes, so it cannot be argued that she did not get into the bed at all. Consequently it would follow that the saga author could easily have been responsible for the verse as well. This is indisputable but what also seems beyond reasonable doubt is that the author could scarcely have been responsible for inventing such a clumsy tale. It is far more likely that, if he did not make use of a verse by Björn himself or reputedly by Björn, he was at least dependent on oral tradition for the basis of his version.

Boer<sup>(2)</sup> has pointed out that Verse 29 of Eyrbyggja saga, which also bears an affinity to Verse 1 of Biarnar saga, contains a kenning similar to one in the present verse under discussion, that is, hrannblackz holniórun. The relationship of these verses to Verse 29 of Eyrbyggja saga is treated in Chapter VI, where the literary relations

of Bjarnar saga are discussed.

(1) Skáldasögur, 239.

(2) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 95.

Verse 17.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Systur eru tær med tære,  
true eg enn sogum hennar,  
þyd og þeirra moder,  
þeck bragsmydar skecki,  
þæru mier enn mejra,  
þongrund lofa eg stundum,  
þad er versoka veiti  
vanligt J stad kuanar.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Systur eru tær med tære  
true eg enn sogum hennar  
þyd og þeirra moder  
þeck bragsmydar skecki  
þæru mier enn mejra  
\* mengrund lofa eg stundum  
þad er versoka veiti  
vanligt J stad kuanar.

mengrund ) 4867 R2 R3.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Tær systur og þeirra þyd moder eru bragsmydar

skecki<sup>(a)</sup> þeck með týre. True eg enn sogum hennar.  
Þæru mæir enn meþra J stad kuænar. Stundum lofa eg  
mengrund.<sup>(b)</sup> Það er versoka veiti<sup>(c)</sup> vanligt.

(iv) Notes.

(a) bragsmyd : "making of poetry"; skeckir : "spoiler";  
bragsmyðar skeckir : "spoiler of poetry".

(b) men : "necklace"; Gründ : a goddess; mengrund :  
"goddess of the necklace"; kenning for "woman".

(c) versokr : "sea-fire"; kenning for "gold";  
veitir : "giver"; versoka veitir : "giver of gold";  
kenning for "man".

(v) Prose translation.

Two sisters and their affectionate mother are dear with honour to the spoiler of poetry. I still believe her words. They are worth all the more to me in the woman's stead. From time to time I praise the woman. That is expected of the man.

(vi) Commentary.

The prose states that Oddný had told Björn that, since he had not obtained her, as had been intended, he should have a daughter of hers and Þórðr's in her place. Björn reminded her of this one evening and set Oddný's daughters on his knee and uttered a verse.

It has been said by Nordal<sup>(1)</sup> that it could not be deduced from the verse that Björn was to get Oddný's daughter in her place. Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(2)</sup> agrees that the prose account cannot be compiled from the contents of the verse but claims that there is no

disagreement between the two.

Taking the verse generally, this is true. Björn says that he still believes what Oddný has said and goes on to add that her two daughters are worth all the more to him now that he has not obtained Oddný herself. This does not exclude the possibility that Oddný actually only promised him one of the girls. It is of course possible, as Boer does,<sup>(3)</sup> to read þær as referring to Oddný's words and not to her daughters and, if this were the case, there would be no confliction at all between verse and prose. In any event, the apparent discrepancy does little towards proving or disproving the authorship of the verse one way or the other.

- (1) Íslensk Fornrit III, "Formáli", LXXII.
- (2) Skáldasögur, 240.
- (3) Biarnar Saga Híttoelakappa, 95.

Verse 18.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.

Hoddeymer liggur heima,  
hier fregnar um Jsaama,  
sár fleck maurua myggur,  
misleytur af selreytum,  
enn þa er vt taka hranner,  
allhvass um skier falla,  
færur lockur leýru,  
liotur kjerlingu skiota.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Hoddeymer liggur heima  
hier \*fregna \*þad \*gegner  
sár fieck maurua myggur  
misleytur af selreytum  
enn þa er vt taka hranner  
allhvass vm skier falla  
farer lockur \*vm leýru  
liotur kierlingu skiota.

fregna þad gegner ) R2 R3.  
vm ) MSS omit.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Hoddeymer<sup>(a)</sup> liggur heima; hier fregna þad  
gegner. Misleytur maurua myggur<sup>(b)</sup> fieck sár  
af selreytum; enn þa er hranner taka falla  
allhvass vm skier vt, farer<sup>(c)</sup> liotur lockur  
skiota kierlingu<sup>(d)</sup> vm leýru.

(iv) Notes.

(a) hodd : "hoard, treasure"; geymir : "keeper";  
hoddeymer : "keeper of treasure"; kenning for  
"man". (b) maurr : "suet"; myggur : "destroyer,  
consumer"; maurua myggur : "consumer of suet";  
pejorative kenning for "man". (c) kierlinga :  
"old woman"; fera kierlingu : "to skip or skim  
a stone across water"; in this case, "to move or  
hop like a skipping stone".

(v) Prose translation.

The man lies at home; here honest men learn that. The pallid suet-eater got a wound from the seal's clawing; but, when the waves begin to recede quickly out over the skerries, the ugly good-for-nothing smartly skips a stone across the muddy shores.

(vi) Commentary.

Pórör had managed to kill a seal which he had found in a hole in the ice, but had suffered the humiliation of being bitten and, as a consequence, being laid up for some time. Björn heard of his plight and composed a verse about it, far from complimentary to Pórör. Boer<sup>(1)</sup> read the last part of the verse as referring to the seal, which had therefore escaped, if this were the case. Accordingly, this would imply a disagreement with the prose. It is far more likely that Nordal<sup>(2)</sup> is correct in regarding the "ugly good-for-nothing" as being Pórör himself, who, after being bitten by the seal, hops and jumps along the shore like a stone which a child skips across the surface of a pond. In such case, the verse agrees precisely with the prose, so well indeed that this must be one of the verses most likely to have been written by the saga author himself.

The description of Pórör as a "pallid suet-eater" (misleytur maurua myggur) is of course deliberately offensive in tone in line with the rest of the verse and is a reflection on his courage.



In this connection, comparison should be made with the appellation, sueirn hinn hyvti in Verses 3 and 11 and also with Björn's comment in Verse 15 concerning the fornann maur ("old suet") which he had ostensibly bought from Þórðr. Icelanders were frequently referred to by the Norwegians as morlandi or morlendingr, presumably either because of the amount of suet they ate or, perhaps more probably, because they used suet as an item of trade.<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) Biarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 96.

(2) Íslenzk Fornrit III, 152.

(3) See, in this regard, Íslenzk Fornrit V (1934), 253; also Íslenzk Fornrit III, 337;

Jón Jóhannesson, Íslendinga saga I (1956), 372.

Verse 19.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Hvad skyllder þu hia,  
heima rior J skickiu  
enn hofome, orkn of skiemdan,  
ár a mynu säri  
þat mun sorg vnd saurgan,  
sein þollur hala kollu,  
remme tunglzz ad raungum,  
randskialfur greiptu kalffin.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Huad skyllder þu \*halda  
heima \*ricr J \*sliki  
enn hofomc, orkn of skiemdan  
ár a mynu säri  
þat mun sorg vnd saurgan  
seim þollur hala kollu  
remme tunglzz ad raungum  
randskialfur greiptu \*kalffi.

halda ) See ÍF III, 153.

ricr ) JH R3.

sliki ) See ÍF III, 153.

kalffi ) See ÍF III, 153.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Huad skyllder þu heima ricr J sliki halda ár  
a mynu säri, enn hofomc orkn of skiemdan? Pat  
mun sorg, greiptu seim þollur,<sup>(a)</sup> remme tunglzz  
randskialfur,<sup>(b)</sup> ad raungum kalffi vnd saurgan  
hala kollu.

(iv) Notes.

(a) seim : "riches, gold"; þollur : "young fir-  
tree"; seim þollur : "fir-tree of gold";  
kenning for "man".

(b) remme : "strong" (in compounds); tungl :  
"moon"; rönd : "rim"; remme tunglzz rönd :  
"rim of the strong moon"; kenning for "shield";  
skialfur : "shaker, quiverer"; remme tunglzz  
randskialfur : "quiverer of the shield";

kenning for "man" (probably pejorative).

(v) Prose translation.

Why should you, mighty at home in filth, always  
keep harping on my wound, even if a seal has injured me?  
It will be a matter of vexation to you that you,  
shield-quiverer, fir-tree of gold, grabbed hold of  
the calf by the wrong end under the cow's filthy tail.

(vi) Commentary.

This verse by Þórðr is in the nature of a reply  
to the preceding verse of Björn's. The latter had  
been obliged to lay hold of a newly born calf and toss  
it up into a stall, after his housecarle had refused  
to do so. This came to the ears of Þórðr and he  
seized the opportunity to take his revenge on Björn  
in verse.

The verse needs little comment. Both the verse  
and the tale itself are of a type that could easily  
have been retained in memory for two centuries in a  
farmers' society, where cradity would be an aid to  
memory, not otherwise. There therefore seems  
sufficient reason for regarding the verse as genuine.  
The fact that there are a number of verses by Þórðr  
which have been preserved, apart from those attributed  
to him in the saga, is also of some persuasive force  
for the argument that the saga author would have felt  
less temptation to invent verses by Þórðr, than he would  
have had in the case of Björn, none of whose other work  
has survived.

The last word in the second line has caused commentators some difficulty, but Kock's interpretation<sup>(1)</sup> is with little doubt the most likely. The acceptance of the form sliki from the nominative slikr gives both internal rhyme and sense to the line, especially when regard is had to the preceding prose. Comparison with the common Dutch word for 'slime, filth', slijk reinforces this view and it is surprising that this possibility does not seem to have occurred to Boer.<sup>(2)</sup>

- (1) Notationes norroenæ, para. 588, where he also gives the alternative readings of Boer and Finnur Jónsson. The latter suggested at sliku.
- (2) Bjarnar Saga Híttoelakappa, 96. Boer accepted J skickiu as being corrupt and tentatively proposed of like instead.

Verse 20.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.  
Standa styre lundar  
stadar,  
glikur er geira saker  
gunsterckur ad þui verki,  
stendur aff stafna lundi,  
styrer Þoroddi fyrre.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.  
Standa styre lundar  
stadar,  
glikur er geira saker  
gunsterckur ad þui verki,

stendur aff \*stala lundi,  
\*styR \*Porróði fyrre.

stala ) JH.

styR ) JH.

Porróði ) JH.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Standa styre lundar<sup>(a)</sup> stadar ...  
Gunsterckur geira saker<sup>(b)</sup> er glikur ad þui  
verke. Porróði stendur fyrrestyR aff stala  
lundi.<sup>(c)</sup>

(iv) Notes.

(a) styre lundr : "helm-tree"; kenning for "man".

(b) geirr : "spear"; saker : "seeker"; geira  
saker : "seeker of spears"; kenning for  
"warrior".

(c) stal : "steel, steel weapons"; lundr : "tree";  
stala lundr : "tree of steel"; kenning for  
"man".

(v) Prose translation.

The men of the place stand ... This work  
could be expected of the battle-strong warrior.  
Greater trouble is prepared for Þórðr by the man.

(vi) Commentary.

This verse is defective, almost three lines  
having almost certainly been deliberately omitted  
by the scribe of AM 551 d a, 4to or by an  
earlier scribe, in order, it would seem, to  
excise some material felt to be offensive.

In the prose we read that an objectionable object had been found in Þórðr's landing-place in the shape of two men, presumably roughly cut out of wood, one wearing a blue hood. This no doubt was meant to represent Þórðr, since we are told earlier in the saga that he used to wear a blue cloak.<sup>(1)</sup> This was an example of trénið for which Björn was responsible and it clearly imputed homosexual activities to Þórðr and, to make matters worse, apparently assigned to him the woman's part.<sup>(2)</sup> To top it all, Björn composed a verse about it, which in its present mutilated state appears innocuous enough but, when complete, would no doubt have been sufficient to add fuel to the fire.

Bo Almqvist, in his recent work on nið,<sup>(3)</sup> points out, however, that synonyms for swords or spears could be used with an obscene meaning in scaldic verse and believes that geira sækir in the third line may have an obscene content and not merely signify "warrior", as would normally be the case.

Kock<sup>(4)</sup> proposed that the second line of the verse might be restored by reading stoðvar for stadar and completing the line by adding skítu lútir. Skítu stoð would signify "landing-place of a vessel" and the first two lines could then mean: "The men of the landing-place stand bent over". Since this version cannot in any way be proved, although it is not unlikely, it has not been thought right to accept such an emendation.

Emendations which have, however, been accepted, concern the last two lines. These two lines happen also

to be found in the Third Grammatical Treatise in the Codex Wormianus of Snorra Edda,<sup>(5)</sup> where they are quoted as an example of lapdacismus, which arises where two l's are followed by another or, as in the case quoted, where a vowel stands between two l's. In the Grammatical Treatise the lines read as follows :-

Stendr af staala lvnđi  
styrr Þorróði fyrí.

Jón Halldorsson, in Oslo 313, 4to, has followed this version and emendations incorporated in the corrected text above have been taken from his rendition.

The Third Grammatical Treatise was written by Snorri's nephew, Óláfr Þórðarson hvítaskáld, probably between 1245 and 1252,<sup>(6)</sup> accordingly about thirty years after the probable date of composition of Biarnar saga itself and its version of the two lines in question must therefore be given priority over that contained in a seventeenth-century paper manuscript.

Even Vigfússon and Powell,<sup>(7)</sup> whose verdict concerning the value of the verses in Biarnar saga was particularly severe, accepted this níðvísa as genuine and there is little reason to dissent from this view. It contains, moreover, the form Þorróði, which Finnur Jónsson undoubtedly regarded as old. In his view, Óláfr hvítaskáld, who did not mention the name of the author, would have regarded the two lines which he cited as very ancient.<sup>(8)</sup> It is, of course, possible to argue in any given case, in the absence of primary evidence, that a certain event did not occur, or as here, that a

certain verse is spurious, but to adopt such an attitude at all costs even in the face of most persuasive evidence to the contrary is merely to pursue iconoclasm for iconoclasm's sake.

- (1) BSN, p.20, l. 11.
- (2) See, in this regard, Eric Noreen, "Studier i Fornvästnordisk Diktning, Andra Samlingen", Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift (1922) - Filosofi, Språkvetenskap och Historiska Vetenskaper 4, 42; also Bo Almqvist, "Norrön Middiktning I" Nordiska Texter och Undersökningar XXI (1965), 65-6, 211.
- (3) Op. cit.; 177.
- (4) Notationes norroenae, para. 755.
- (5) Björn M. Ólsen, "Den Tredje og Fjerde Grammatiske Afhandling i Snorres Edda", S.G.M.L. XII (1884), 15, 70.
- (6) See Björn M. Ólsen, op.cit., and Jan de Vries, Altnordische Literaturgeschichte II (1942), 483.
- (7) Corpus Poeticum Boreale II (1883), 108.

Their comment is worth quoting :-

"Biorn's Saga, like Gretti's Saga, has been adorned with spurious verse, attributed to him and Thorrod Kolbeinsson, but none of them can be supposed genuine, save two satirical staves, one in court-metre, which has been maimed by the copyist, for its coarseness, and one called Gramaga-flim, the Rock-perch-flyting, which is in a rhyming-ditty metre".

- (8) Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie (1912), 28.



Verse 21.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.

Wetat kona kneyster,  
kondreingur vid styr leingi,  
hinna vinn Eyki annad,  
aurmalugur þad giorua,  
huar baud serkiar berkj,  
beyt eg J tuau legi,  
traudur er eg stna eydar,  
Einvygis læt eg hnyga.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Wetat \*kvenna kneyster  
\*kom dreingur vid styr leingi  
\*hinns vinn Eyki \*annast  
aurmalugur þad giorua  
huar baud serkiar berkj  
beyt eg J tuau legi  
traudur er\* stna eydar  
Einvygis læt eg hnyga.

kvenna ) See ÍF III, 159; MSS read kona  
(R1 qvena ).

kom dreingur ) See ÍF III, 159; MSS read  
kondreingur (R2 R3 kann dreingur).

hinns ) See ÍF III, 159.

annast ) See ÍF III, 159.

er ) See ÍF III, 160.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Aurmalagur kvenna kneyster, hinns annast vm  
Eyki, wetat það glórúa, huar eg lét baud serkiar  
berkj<sup>(a)</sup> hnyga. Dreingur kom leingi við styr.  
Eg beyt legi J tuau. Etna eydar<sup>(b)</sup> er traudur  
Einvygis.

(iv) Notes.

(a) baud : "battle"; serkr : "shirt"; baud serkr :  
"battle-shirt"; kenning for "coat of mail";  
berkj : "birch"; baud serkiar berkj : "birch-  
tree (s) of the mail-coat"; kenning for  
"warrior(s)".

(b) etna : "food"; eydar : "squanderer"; etna eydar :  
"squanderer of food"; pejorative kenning for  
"man"; "glutton".

(v) Prose translation.

The hastily spoken forcer of women, he who  
looks after beasts of burden, does not know precise-  
ly where I caused the warriors to fall. The valiant  
man was long in the fight. The blade bit legs  
asunder. The glutton is reluctant for a duel.

(vi) Commentary.

This is the first of a group of four verses,  
the first and last by Björn and the middle two by  
Pórðr, which deal with an unsuccessful attempt by  
two Norwegian kinsmen of Pórðr's to ambush Björn,  
resulting in Björn slaying both the brothers.

The verses contain slight apparent discrepancies  
from the prose but any differences are insufficient

to prevent both verse and prose from having been written by the same person, nor, assuming on the other hand that the verse had been handed down orally, can the saga author be said to have been careless in his endeavours to make prose agree with verse. For instance, the fact that the verse speaks of a sword-blade biting legs asunder, whereas the prose merely states that Björn slew both the brothers, raises no question of conflict between prose and verse. The author had no need to repeat in the prose every minute detail that the verse contained. A paraphrase and at the same time an expansion of its contents would be sufficient for him.

Nevertheless, there is good reason for suspecting that these four verses owe their composition to the author of the saga. They form a tidy little group on their own, following each other in quick succession, preceded by an extensively told story, which may or may not rest on a genuine tradition, but, from its nature, is more probably the invention of the author. It contains the very typical motives of the dream, the warning by a female and the ambush and, in addition, the particularly inept passage where Björn's aunt, Þórhildr, tells him that she has a son there named Þorfinnr, whereas this must have been, so far as Björn was concerned, a piece of completely gratuitous information.

The expression atna eydar should be compared with that of maurá myggur in Verse 18, also used by Björn concerning Þórðr. Kock<sup>(1)</sup> also draws attention to the likeness between kvenna knevter and the passage in Verse 25

of Eyrbyggja saga, where Björn Breiðvíkingakappi uses the expression válki falda geymi-Bil. In both cases there is reference to pressing or forcing of women, but on the whole the resemblance seems rather strained.

- (1) Notationes norroenæ, para. 756.

Verse 22.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Huestum 12, enn tuister,  
tarsmyr gefendur voru,  
leyfa vegz J lauffe,  
laungaugl beru hraune,  
ofläta sä eg Jtrann,  
adur stie eg fliott á grioti,  
hafa villdu þa haulldar,  
herdi menn J gierdum.

- (ii) Text in normal word order.

12 huestum laungaugl<sup>(a)</sup> J Leyfa vegz  
lauffe,<sup>(b)</sup> Beru hraune, enn tarsmyr gefendur<sup>(c)</sup>  
voru tuister. Eg sä Jtrann ofläta J gierdum.  
Adur stie eg fliott á grioti. Haulldar villdu  
hafa þa herdi menn.

- (iii) Notes.

(a) laungaugl : "secret goslings"; that is,  
"arrows" (the flight of which deceives the eye  
by their swiftness).

- (b) Leyfi : a name of a giant; Leyfa vegr : "Leyfi's road"; kenning for "mountains"; lauf : "leaf"; Leyfa vegz lauf : "leaves of mountains"; kenning for "stones".
- (c) tarsmyr "flood of tears"; tarsmyr gefendur : "givers of the tear-flood"; kenning for "warriors".

(iv) Prose translation.

We twelve sharpened arrows on the stones in Beruhraun but the warriors were silent. I saw the splendid dandy in armour. I had previously walked quickly over the stony ground. The men wanted to get hold of the valiant men.

(v) Commentary.

This verse, the second in the group of four, was, according to the prose, uttered by Þórðr upon his return home from witnessing the unsuccessful ambush. There is nothing in the verse that is fundamentally at variance with the prose. It might of course be argued that the prose mentions nothing of sharpening arrows. Apart from the likelihood that some at least of Þórðr's men would have been armed in that way and this could safely be left to the reader's imagination, allowance must be made for poetic licence. Laungaugl is an excellent and most expressive term for "arrows" and in its place in the verse provides very suitable alliteration and rhyme.

This is a verse, as Kock<sup>(1)</sup> has pointed out, which really needs no emendation. Boer<sup>(2)</sup> had adopted different readings and a different interpretation of part of the first half-verse, but Kock effectively refutes these.

- (1) Notationes norroenæ, para. 589.  
(2) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 97-8.

Verse 23.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Pornz vejk eg ber Byrne,  
balldur rog sogu skialldar,  
neytur þykist sa Nytur,  
Nadur bingz enn mig adra,  
þad er þotte betre,  
þaugn elvidum haugna,  
nu ollskerder ordinn,  
eglrykz bani tueggia.

- (ii) Corrected text of verse.

Pornz \*vejt eg ber Byrne  
Balldur rog sogu skialldar  
neytur þykist sa Nytur  
Nadur bingz enn \*mer adra  
\*þuit enn þotte betre  
þaugn elvidum Haugna  
nu \*er \*Ullskerder ordinn  
\*egleykz bani tueggia.

vejt ) See ÍF III, 161; MSS read vejk (R2 R3 eyk).

mer ) See ÍF III, 161.

þuit enn ) See ÍF III, 161.

er ) 4867 R2 R3.

Ullskerder) 4867 624 R1 R2 R3.

egleykz ) 624 R2 R3.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Eg vejt, skialldar þornz Balldur<sup>(a)</sup> ber Byrne  
adra rog sogu enn mer. Sa Nadur bingz Nytur<sup>(b)</sup>  
þykist neytur, þuit nu er egleykz Ullskerder<sup>(c)</sup>  
enn ordinn bani tueggia. Haugna elvidum<sup>(d)</sup>  
þotte betre þaugn.

(iv) Notes.

(a) skialldar þorn : "thorn of the shield";  
kenning for "sword"; skialldar þornz Balldur :  
"Baldr of the sword"; kenning for "warrior".

(b) Nadur : "adder"; bingr : "bed"; Nadur bingr :  
"adder-bed"; kenning for "gold"; Nadur bingz  
Nytur : "user of gold"; kenning for "man".

(c) Ullr : a god; egleykz Ullr : "Ullr of the  
sword-play"; kenning for "warrior"; skerder :  
"diminisher"; egleykz Ullskerder : "diminisher  
of warriors"; kenning for "man".

(d) Haugna el : "storm of Haugni"; kenning for  
"battle"; vidr : "tree"; Haugna elvidr : "tree  
of battle"; kenning for "warrior".

(v) Prose translation.

I know that the warrior (Björn) gives a different account of the fight to himself than to me. That man thinks himself capable, because he has now once more become the slayer of two men. Silence would seem better to warriors.

(vi) Commentary.

Pórr utters this verse immediately following the previous one and it may therefore be considered a continuation of the same story. There is nothing in the verse that may be regarded as inconsistent with the tale told in the prose.

The text in 551 clearly needs a number of emendations, some of which are supplied from other manuscripts and the remainder from conjecture. Kock<sup>(1)</sup> argued that the opening words of the fifth line, þad er, ought to be retained, and should be regarded as a relative pronoun linked with rog soqu adra. That is to say, because of the account of the fight that Björn gave, silence would seem preferable for the warriors (presumably Pórr and his followers). Boer<sup>(2)</sup> and Nordal,<sup>(3)</sup> however, amend þad er to þuit enn and this, transferred to another clause, appears to give better sense. In any event, it seems possible to read the last sentence, "Silence would seem better to warriors", as ironic in meaning and applicable to warriors in general and not specifically to Pórr and his companions. Indeed, it may even be regarded as



a rebuke by Þórðr to Björn.

- (1) Notationes Norroene, para. 1108.
- (2) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 98.
- (3) Íslensk Fornrit III, 161-2.

Verse 24.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.

Það vil eg Þordur að friette,  
 þess vnum baur Gunnar,  
 ops bunic veic fra veiti,  
 wægja sudur med ægi,  
 att þar er tñnir hittunst,  
 Jök eg taffni dag hraffne,  
 hafni qūr fyrer hneigi,  
 hnigu tueyr vider geyra.

(11) Corrected text of verse.

Það vil eg Þordur að friette  
 þess vnum baur Gunnar  
 ops \*buinn veic fra veiti  
 wægja sudur med ægi  
 att þar er \*einir hittunst  
 Jök eg \*taffn i dag hraffne  
 \*hafviggjar fyrer hneigi  
 hnigu tueyr vider geyra.

buinn ) See ÍF III, 162; MSS read bunic (R3 bunir).

einir ) See ÍF III, 162; MSS read hinir (551 tñnir).

taffn i ) 4867 R2 R3.

hafviggjar) See ÍF III, 162.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Eg vil, ad Þórður friette það, ad tveyr  
geyra vider<sup>(a)</sup> hnigu fyrer hafviggjar hneigi,<sup>(b)</sup>  
þar er hittunst einir. Vnmum Gunnar baur<sup>(c)</sup>  
þess. Veic ops buinn fra wægja veiti<sup>(d)</sup> sudur  
med ægi. Eg Jök hraffne taffn i dag.

(iv) Notes.

(a) geyra vidr : "tree of spears"; kenning for  
"warrior".

(b) hafvigg : "sea-horse"; kenning for "ship";  
hneigir : "incliner, steerer"; hafviggjar  
hneigir : "steerer of the ship"; kenning  
for "man".

(c) Gunnar : "battle"; baur : a kind of tree;  
Gunnar baur : "tree of battle"; kenning for  
"warrior".

(d) wægir : "sword (decorated with wavy lines);  
veitir : "giver, granter"; wægja veitir :  
"giver of the sword"; kenning for "man".

(v) Prose translation.

I wish that Þórður might learn that two  
warriors fell before the man, there where we  
met one another alone. I do not grudge that to  
the warrior. Prepared for flight he turned  
from the man southwards along the sea. I  
increased the raven's food to-day.

(vi) Commentary.

The fourth and last verse of the group is  
said to have been composed by Björn upon his

return home after slaying Þórðr's kinsmen. The verse does appear to diverge in two points from the prose. The verse says that Björn and the two brothers met each other alone and says nothing of Björn's uncle by marriage, Arnórr, and the ten other men who were with him. It furthermore speaks of Þórðr "fleeing southwards along the sea", an event which is not confirmed by the prose. This could, however, be inferred, for the action described in the verses takes place in Snæfellsnes not far from the shore and it would be natural for Þórðr to flee "southwards along the sea" on his way back to Hítarnes.

This leaves only the first apparent divergence. This is not of great importance, since, so far as can be judged, Björn seems to have derived very little assistance from his companions. Arnórr was put out of action at the outset and the prose tells us that Björn slew one of the brothers almost immediately. In addition, it leaves us to assume that it was he who also despatched the other brother. Accordingly, Björn and Þórðr's two kinsmen may well be said to have "met one another alone". There is therefore no contradiction worth mentioning between verse and prose and if, as is likely, the saga author wrote both in this case, it would not be surprising if he did not repeat precisely in one medium what he had already written in the other. In fact, if he had written the prose first, it might well for metrical reasons be extremely difficult for him not to make some slight deviations in the verse.

Verse 25.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Kalffz veyt eg son sialfann,  
suerda godz á roðnum,  
ræddu kapp ne kuiddu,  
klifz Jorua nam eg fíorui,  
og vagum þann þeigi,  
Pundar garpuz med vopnum,  
falz vard fleygi þolli,  
fíorgrand nídar branda.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Kalffz veyt eg son sialfann  
suerda godz á roðnum  
ræddu kapp ne kuiddu  
Klifz Jorua nam eg fíorui  
og vagum þann þeigi  
Pundar \*garpuz med vopnum  
\*fall vard fleygi þolli  
fíorgrand Nídar branda.

garpuz ) See ÍF III, 167.

fall ) See ÍF III, 167.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Eg veyt sialfann son Kalffz, suerda  
godz, <sup>(a)</sup> nam eg fíorui á roðnum Klifz Jorua;  
ræddu kapp ne kuiddu; og vagum þann þeigi  
med Pundar garpuz <sup>(b)</sup> vopnum; fall vard  
fíorgrand Nídar branda fleygi þolli. <sup>(c)</sup>

(iv) Notes.

- (a) guerda god : "god of swords"; kenning for "warrior",
- (b) Pundr : one of the names of Odin; grap : "storm"; Pundar grap : "storm of Odin"; kenning for "battle, warfare".
- (c) Nid : a river in Norway; Nidar brandr : "fire of the Nid"; kenning for "gold"; fleygi pollr : "throwing fir-tree"; Nidar branda fleygi pollr : "tree which throws gold"; kenning for "man".

(v) Prose translation.

I know that I took the life of the very son of the warrior, Kálfr, on reddened Klifsjörvi; they spoke in dispute and felt no apprehension; and yet we did not slay that man with weapons of war. A fall resulted in mortal injury to the man.

(vi) Commentary.

It cannot be disputed that, whatever the cause, there is one fundamental contradiction between this verse and the prose account. The latter relates in considerable detail how Kálfr's son, Þorsteinn, at Þórör's instigation, attempts to murder Björn on the road between Hólmr and Húsafell. Björn, however, anticipates the blow, takes hold of Þorsteinn, hurls him to the ground and chokes him to death. The verse confirms this in its essentials but adds that the struggle took place at Klifsjörvi.

Now, later in the saga, just before Björn's last fight, he speaks of crossing Klifssandr to Klifsjörvi.<sup>(1)</sup> At this spot in AM 488, 4to, a marginal note of Árni Magnússon's states : "Það ornefni er nu urgeingid. nu kallast það Klifssandur". Be that as it may, the present Klifssandur is west of the Hítará River, whereas the road to Húsafell from Hólur lies east of the river.<sup>(2)</sup>

The conclusion from this is, therefore, if the verse is genuine, which is doubtful, that Þorsteinn was not killed on the road to Húsafell at all. Why, however, in that case, Björn should have killed him in such a desolate place as Klifssandur or rather what they would have been doing there is a matter for conjecture. It follows from the supposition that the verse is genuine or at least not by the saga author that the author either did not know where Klifsjörvi was and accordingly placed it on the road to Húsafell or, if he did know, chose for some reason of his own to disregard it. The latter appears to be more likely, since to judge from the saga as a whole, the author was very familiar with topography of the area.

Nordal states that the author's failure to set the scene of the fight at Klifsjörvi was not due to ignorance but quite the contrary, since an ignorant author would have made use of the place-name in the verse and had the fight take place at Klifsjörvi, even though he had no idea where that was.<sup>(3)</sup> Bjarni Einarsson,<sup>(4)</sup> who believes that

the saga author wrote both verse and prose, solves the problem by claiming that the latter used the name Klifsjörvi in the verse merely for decorative effect. Consequently, any apparent contradiction with the prose would not have worried him and we do not have to consider whether he was aware of the exact locality of Klifsjörvi or not.

The latter explanation seems as good as any, if we believe that the author of the saga also wrote the verse. Whether he did or not, it is clear that for the purpose of his story, it was much more convenient to have Þorsteinn attempt to kill Björn, when the latter was accompanying him part of the way from Hólmr to Húsafell, instead of having it take place in the opposite direction at Klifsjörvi, going nowhere in particular, unless it could be considered as a roundabout back way to Þorsteinn's father's house in Selárdalr.

- (1) BSH, p. 65, 1.1..
- (2) See P.E.Kristian Kálund : Bidrag til en historisk-topografisk Beskrivelse af Island (1877), 395-8.
- (3) Íslensk Fornrit III, "Formáli", XCI.
- (4) Skáldasögur, 240-41.

Verse 26.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Fiskur gleck á land,  
enn flód á sand,  
hrognkelse lykur  
var á holldi slykur,  
at ein aga,  
ylgz grámaga,  
meinblandad hræ.  
margt er Jllt J sæ.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Fiskur gleck á land  
enn flód á sand  
hrognkelse lykur  
var á holldi slykur  
at ein aga  
\*ylgr<sup>(a)</sup> grámaga  
meinblandad hræ  
margt er Jllt J sæ.

ylgr ) See ÍF III, 169.

(iii) Notes.

(a) einagi : "woman's garment, veil"; ylgr :  
"she-wolf"; einaga ylgr : "she-wolf of the  
veil"; pejorative kenning for "greedy woman".

(iv) Prose translation.

A fish went on land and the flood-tide on  
the sand. It was like a lumpfish and slime was on



its flesh. The greedy woman ate the grey-stomach,  
the poisonous carrion. Much is bad in the sea.

(v) Commentary.

This verse and the following two form part of the Grámagaflím, a lampoon which Björn had composed about Þórðr. The prose tells us that Þórðr's mother, Arnóra, had eaten a fish called a gránagi, which she had found on the seashore. As a result she had given birth to Þórðr, who was thus not entirely of human descent.

The three verses differ from the other verses in the saga in being composed in rúnhent, a special metre in rhyming couplets.<sup>(1)</sup> There are few examples of this kind of metre in the sagas and there seems little doubt that these verses are very old. It would have been possible for a thirteenth-century author, skilled in versifying, to have composed them, but this must be regarded as unlikely. Their tone and style is quite different from the others in the saga and one can fairly safely assign them to tradition, if not to Björn himself.

The verses almost come under the heading of níð, but should perhaps be regarded rather as forming part of a satirical poem.<sup>(2)</sup> They are termed flím or "lampoon" and are a unique example of a type of poetry of which very little has been preserved.

The word slykur in the fourth line of the verse is the same as that referred to in the Commentary to Verse 19. Boer<sup>(3)</sup> describes it

as hapaxlegomenon in the meaning of "slime", but since it would appear to be correct to read it as an emendation in Verse 19, it is thus found at least twice. Nevertheless, the word in this meaning has clearly become obsolete early in Icelandic and this is a further argument for regarding the Grámagallim and indeed Verse 19 as being of considerable antiquity.

- (1) See "Egils saga Skalla-Grimssonar", Íslensk Fornrit II (1933), "Formáli", XIX-XX, for the origin of rúnhent in general. Egils Höfuðlausn was probably the first Norse poem in rúnhent and the model for subsequent compositions in this metre.
- (2) See Erik Noreen, "Studier i Fornvästnordisk Diktning", Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift (1922), 49; also Bo Almqvist, "Norrön Niddiktning I", Nordiska Texter och Undersökningar XXI (1965), 61.
- (3) Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 99.

Verse 27.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.

Óx Brudar kuidur,  
fra briosti Nidur,  
suo ad gerdu Eyk, (a)  
gieck helldur keyk,  
og aum J vómb,  
vard helldur thil þaumb.

(ii) Notes.

(a) gerda : "head-scarf"; gerdu Eyk : "oak of the head-scarf"; kenning for "woman".

(iii) Prose translation.

The woman's belly grew down from her breast, so that she walked rather bent backwards and wretched in the womb. She became rather paunchy.

(iv) Commentary.

The second verse of the fragment which has been preserved of the Grámagaflin. See the Commentary to Verse 26. Two lines of this verse, apparently the fifth and sixth, are lost.

Verse 28.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.

Suejrn kom J lios,  
sagtt hafdi drös,  
audar gilldi<sup>(a)</sup>  
ad hun ala villdi  
henne þotti sä,  
hundbytur þar er lä,  
Jafnsniallur sem Geyt  
er J augun leyt.

(ii) Notes.

(a) audr : "riches"; audar gilldir : "increaser of riches"; kenning for "man".

(iii) Prose translation.

The boy was born; the girl had told the man that she wanted to give birth; the dog-biter seemed to her, there where he lay, just as brave as a goat, when she looked into his eyes.

(iv) Commentary.

The third and last verse of the fragment preserved of the Grámagaflim. See the Commentary to Verse 26.

Verse 29.

(i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Leyt eg hvar rann hia runne,  
runnur dockmara Gunnar,  
ægiligur J augum,  
ad gliki mier vjka,  
queda þreyndgir þeigi  
þad Barn vita Murnar,  
heiti humra Brautar  
hlunz synz fodur kunna.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Leyt eg hvar rann hia runne  
runnur dockmara Gunnar  
ægiligur J augum  
ad gliki mier vjka  
queda \*þreyendr þeigi  
þad Barn vita Murnar  
\*Heita humra Brautar  
hlunz \*synn fodur kunna.

Preyendr ) R1 R2 R3.

Heita ) See ÍF III, 172; MSS read heiti (4867 R1 R2 R3 hellti). synn ) See ÍF III, 172.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Eg leyt, hvar vjka dockmara runnur<sup>(a)</sup> rann  
hla Gunnar runne,<sup>(b)</sup> ægiligur J augum, að gliki mæri;  
Maurnar vita preyendr<sup>(c)</sup> queda það Barn þeigi kunna  
Heita humra Brautar hlunz,<sup>(d)</sup> fodur synn.

(iv) Notes.

- (a) vjk : "bay"; vjka dockmarr ; "dark horse of the bays"; kenning for "ship"; runnr : "shrub"; vjka dockmara runnur : "shrub of ships"; kenning for "man, boy".
- (b) Gunnr : "battle", also the name of a valkyrie; Gunnar runnur : "shrub of battle"; kenning for "man".
- (c) Maur : the river Marne; Maurnar viti : "fire of the Marne"; kenning for "gold"; preyja : "to desire"; Maurnar vita preyendr : "desirers of gold"; kenning for "men".
- (d) humarr : "lobster"; humra braut : "road of lobsters"; kenning for "sea"; hlunnr : "roller, piece of wood"; humra Brautar hlunnr : "roller of the sea"; kenning for "ship"; Heiti : the name of a sea-king; Heiti humra Brautar hlunz : "Heiti of the ship"; kenning for "man".

(v) Prose translation.

I saw where the boy, terrible in the eyes,  
resembling me, ran by the man; men say that child does  
not yet know the sea-hero, his father.

(vi) Commentary.

The prose describes how Björn came to the Autumn assembly and saw a handsome little boy running about. Björn asked whose son he was and was told that the boy was the son of Þórör Kolbeinsson and was called Kolli. In the verse that he then uttered Björn hinted that he was actually the boy's father.

In very similar circumstances in Eyrbyggja saga, Björn Breiðvíkingakappi utters a verse (Verse 27), concerning his reputed son by another man's wife. The similarity of Verse 27 of Eyrbyggja saga to Verse 29 of Biarnar saga is so great that two lines (the third and sixth) are actually identical in each verse, the eighth is identical with a slight emendation and the first all but one word.

It has been argued that here we have two versions of what was originally only one verse. The original verse has accordingly been split into two in the oral tradition, rather than that one verse has been deliberately copied from the other. This is, however, an unprovable theory and indeed there seems little reason for departing from the logical assumption that one verse has merely been influenced by the other, in this case to the extent of conscious plagiarism.

As in the case of the relationship between Verse 12 of this saga and Verse 28 of Eyrbyggja saga, the points at issue are fully discussed in Chapter VI, when treating the literary relations of the saga as a whole.

Verse 30.

- (i) Text as in AM 162 F, fol. (Readings in brackets supplied from AM 551 d a, 4to).

Draum dreymþut nv na(uma)  
nidbranz skarar landa  
koma man yggr a eggjar  
enn bragsmidar kenne  
[bádar h]enndr i blodi  
braut kalldhamars nauta  
mer of kenndr imynd(um  
mæ)ringr rodinn vare.

- (ii) Corrected text of verse.

Draum \*dreymþunk nv Nauma  
Nidbranz skarar landa  
koma man \*Yggr a eggjar  
enn bragsmidar kenne  
bádar henndr i blodi  
braut kalldhamars nauta  
mer of kenndr i \*mundum  
Meringr rodinn vare.

dreympunk ) See ÍF III, 178.

mundum ) See ÍF III, 178.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Dreympunk nv Draum, skarar landa Nidbranz  
Nauma,<sup>(a)</sup> - Yggr<sup>(b)</sup> man enn koma bragsmidar kenne<sup>(c)</sup>  
a eggjar, - bádar henndr vere i blodi of kenndr  
Meringr rodinn i mundum mer; kalldhamars nauta<sup>(d)</sup>  
braut.

(iv) Notes.

(a) skör : "hair; skarar land : "land of the hair";  
kenning for "head"; Nidbrandr : "fire of the river  
Nid"; kenning for "gold"; skarar landa Nidbrandr :  
"gold of the head"; kenning for "diadem"; Nauma :  
a goddess; skarar landa Nidbranz Nauma : "goddess of  
the diadem"; kenning for "woman".

(b) Yggr : a name of Odin.

(c) bragsmid : "art of poetry"; bragsmidar kenner :  
"connoisseur of the poetic art"; kenning for "poet".

(d) kalldhamars nautr : "coldhammer's companion";  
heiti for "sword".

(v) Prose translation.

I dreamt a dream now, woman, -  
Odin will yet bring the poet to the sword-blades,  
- both hands were in blood and famous Meringr  
was reddened in my hands; the swords broke.



(vi) Commentary.

This is the first of Björn's two dream-verses and like the other (Verse 34), unquestionably one of the finest verses in the saga with a strong claim to originality. It is especially interesting for its references to Kalldhamars nauta (an accusative plural) and to Björn's sword, Maringr, which, according to the saga,<sup>(1)</sup> Björn had acquired by slaying its previous owner, the champion Kaldimarr. There had therefore been a tendency for earlier scholars to amend kalldhamars nauta to Kalldimars nauta.

Boer<sup>(2)</sup> demolished this argument by demonstrating quite conclusively that there never was a Kaldimarr and that, moreover, Kalldhamars nautr features as a sverðsheiti in Snorra Edda. In any case, since Kaldimarr did not exist, his name merely being invented in analogy with that of Valdimarr, the King of Russia in the saga, to accept Kalldimars nauta in the verse would obviously brand the latter as not genuine without more ado. There is no certainty as to the verse's genuineness, in any event, but its claim is strengthened by eliminating any reference to Kaldimarr.<sup>(3)</sup>

Later in the saga,<sup>(4)</sup> Björn lends his sword Maringr to Porfinnr Pvarason with unfortunate results for Björn, since he lacked his good sword when he needed it most, as did Freyr at Ragnarök.<sup>(5)</sup>

Clearly, Mæringr was hardly one of the swords which broke in Björn's dream, that is, if one is to regard the dream as having been fulfilled subsequently.

- (1) BSH, p.9, ll.6-7.
- (2) Bjarnar Saga Hítöelakappa, XXI-XXII, XXX-XXXI.
- (3) Bjarni Einarsson points out, moreover, (Skáldasögur, 241), that the saga-author could scarcely have interpreted kalldhamar as Kaldimarr, when he wrote the former.
- (4) BSH, p.59, ll.14-15.
- (5) See Völuspá, 52; also Skirnismál, 8, 9.

Verse 31.

- (i) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Biörn tekur brátt er mornar,  
brádur víð Jllu ráði,  
graunum vanur að grypa,  
glopur víð hvorju hröpi,  
og huitmala hælir  
huimleydur með stíól breydann,  
sannj fryður að suinnu  
sytle hann veslstur Manna.

- (ii) Corrected text of verse.

Biörn tekur brátt er mornar  
brádur víð Jllu ráði  
graunum vanur að grypa  
glopur víð hvorju hröpi  
og huitmala hælir  
huimleydur með stíól breydann

sannj \*firrdur og suinnu  
sytle hann vesælstur Manna.

firrdur og ) See ÍF III, 189.

(iii) Text in Normal word order.

Biörn tekur brátt bráður við Jllu ráði;  
er mornar; glopur vanur að grypa graunum  
við hvorju hröpi; og huimleydur huitmala  
hælir með breydann stiól, firrdur sannj og  
suinnu, sytle hann Manna vesælstur.

(iv) Prose translation.

Björn the rash soon adopts an evil plan,  
when day dawns; the fool is accustomed to gape  
at every slander; and the loathsome boaster of  
cowardly speech with broad rump, bereft of truth  
and reason, he sits the most wretched of men.

(v) Commentary.

This verse and the following one make up  
another pair of verses on the same line as those  
earlier in the saga, that is, a type of senna,  
in which Þórðr and Björn exchange abuse.  
The occasion for this was an unsuccessful attempt  
at reconciliation between the two poets.

Again it cannot be determined conclusively  
whether the verses are genuine or not.

It is, however, just as likely that the prose

was written round the verses as that the verses were made to fit the prose. Indeed, in the case of this verse by Þórðr the argument that it is genuine seems stronger. Finnur Jónsson has pointed out the likeness of the style in a number of Þórðr's verses in Bjarnar saga to that in the remainder of his verse preserved elsewhere.<sup>(1)</sup> Þórðr has a tendency to insert comment of a moralizing nature<sup>(2)</sup> in his verses and also has a liking for repetitions containing assonance. Examples of such repetitions are Biorn ad Byrne in Verse 7, Biorn enn Birni in Verse 38 and, in the particular verse under discussion brátt ... brádur. It therefore seems difficult to contend that these verses, at least, are not by Þórðr.

The third line in this verse lacks assonance but attempts to amend this have not been convincing and the line, as it stands, at any rate makes sense. It is, moreover, not the only line in the saga's verses without assonance.

The word huitmal in the expression huitmala hælir should be compared with sueirn hinn hvyti in Verse 11 and again in Verse 3, where, however, it is Björn who uses the adjective hvytr in the sense of "cowardly". In this verse, Verse 31, it is Þórðr's turn. It is, however, an argument for the saga author's composition of all these verses that the use of hvytr in this sense could then be regarded as a favourite one for him and typical of his style.

This is, on the other hand, largely outweighed by the considerations referred to above.

- (1) Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie (1912), 30-31, where numerous examples are given.
- (2) Such as rád er slyktt til snudar in Verse 7.

Verse 32.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Præt ej ad þu sier betri,  
Þordur skulld ongua villda,  
alls gazstu einga snilli,  
elion latur a skrati,  
vart hofum werrj orta,  
vin eg bior harz eina  
sekr gloepz ockur enn eg orta,  
Jsbiodur vm þig wysu.

- (11) Corrected text of verse.

Præt ej ad þu sier betri  
Þordur skulld ongua villda  
alls gazstu einga snilli  
elion latur a skrati  
vart hofum werrj orta  
vin eg bior Harz \*inna  
sekr gloepz \*ógnar enn eg orta  
Jsbiodur vm þig wysu.

inna ) See ÍF III, 190.

ógnar ) See ÍF III, 190.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Pórdur, þræt ej, að þu sier betri; villda  
ongua skulld. Gazstu alls einga snilli, skrati  
latur a elion. Hofum vart orta werrj wysu enn eg  
orta vm þig, ógnar Jsbiotur,<sup>(a)</sup> sekr gloepz.  
Eg vin inna Harz bior.<sup>(b)</sup>

(iv) Notes.

(a) ógn : "terror"; ógnar Jss : "ice of terror";  
kenning for "sword"; ógnar Jsbiotur : "offerer  
of the sword"; kenning for "warrior".

(b) Har : a name of Odin; Harz bior : "Odin's beer";  
kenning for "poetry".

(v) Prose translation.

Pórdur, do not contend that you are better;  
I did not want to owe you anything. You had no  
valour at all, sluggish blusterer. I have  
scarcely composed a worse verse than I composed  
about you, warrior, guilty of crime. I compose  
poetry.

(vi) Commentary.

This verse seems so obvious and ready a  
reply to Pórdur's attack that one must suspect its  
genuineness. On the other hand, it certainly  
gives the impression of age, with a number of  
unusual word usages and being clearly in a very  
corrupt state. The second and seventh lines  
lack assonance. Kock's attempts<sup>(1)</sup> at emendation  
by replacing skulld in the second line by an

otherwise unknown skild and sekr gloeps in the seventh line by svartgloeps are hardly satisfactory. Nordal's emendation<sup>(2)</sup> in the latter line of ockur to ógnar is by no means certain but has been accepted as at least providing a satisfactory interpretation.

Finnur Jónsson<sup>(3)</sup> regards Hárs in the sixth line of the verse as a form indicating age and demonstrating the genuineness of the verse. In the spelling in the manuscripts, Harz, this does not appear but for metrical reasons such a form as Hárs is obviously demanded. It has not been thought fit, however, to alter the seventeenth-century spelling in the text as set out above.

(1) Notationes norroene, 90-91.

(2) Íslensk Fornrit III, 190.

(3) Den Oldnorske og Oldislandske Litteraturs Historie I. (1920-24), 498.

Verse 33.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to. (Readings in brackets supplied from AM 162 F, fol.)

Aullungis bíð eg allar,  
atgeyrz edur  
riett skil eg rammar vøtter,  
raudopz þær er hlyrn skopud,  
að styrbender standi,  
stálgalldurs enn æ wallda,

blodugur [aurn of Byrne  
bradraudr haufud suar, udum]

(11) Corrected text of verse.

Aullungis bid eg allar,  
atgeyrz edur . . . . .  
riett skil eg rammur vatter  
\*randopz þær er hlyrn \*skopu  
ad styrbender standi  
stálgalldurs enn \*eg wallda  
blodugur aurn of Byrne  
\*bardraudr haufud suarudum.

randopz ) See ÍF III, 193.

skopu ) See ÍF III, 193.

eg ) See ÍF III, 193.

bardraudr ) See ÍF III, 193.

(111) Text in normal word order.

Aullungis bid eg allar rammur randopz<sup>(a)</sup>  
vatter, þær er skopu hlyrn, edur atgeyrz . . . . .  
- skil eg riett, - ad blodugur aurn standi  
bardraudr of haufud suarudum Byrne, stálgalldurs  
styrbender,<sup>(b)</sup> enn eg wallda.

(iv) Notes.

(a) randop : \*shield-shouting, battle\*.

(b) stálgalldur : steel-song\*; kenning for

\*battle\*; stálgalldurs styrr : \*tumult of  
the steel-song\*; kenning for \*battle\*;

stálgalldurs styrbender : \*bender of battle\*;

kenning for \*warrior\*.



(v) Prose translation.

I pray all of the mighty spirits of battle, they who created the heavenly bodies, or ..... of the halberd - I understand what is right - that a bloody eagle may stand with reddened beak over Björn's scalp, warrior, and I may be the cause of it.

(vi) Commentary.

This verse, which Þórðr is said to have uttered on the occasion of laying plans for the ambush in which Björn loses his life, is one of considerable power, despite its corruptions.

Half of the second line is missing in 55l and, although the second vellum fragment commences with the last line and a half of this verse, the first part of the verse is of course missing, so unhappily we do not know whether the second line was incomplete in this manuscript as well. Accordingly, although one suspects that it may have been, it is impossible to know whether the scribe of 55l simply could not read what stood in this place in the manuscript from which he copied or whether that manuscript also contained a gap. This is, in any case, not the only gap in a line in 55l. <sup>(1)</sup>

Although it has not been thought advisable to fill this particular blank with a proposed reading various attempts have been made by scholars at doing so. Boer <sup>(2)</sup> and Nordal, <sup>(3)</sup> following Sveinbjörn Egilsson, <sup>(4)</sup> have proposed goð fleiri and Finnur

Jónsson <sup>(5)</sup> and Kock <sup>(6)</sup> have altered the whole line to read respectively, atgeirs, ok skeið þeira and atgeirs lituör, fleira. If any of these readings should be adopted, the first at least has the merit of simplicity and falls in readily with the meaning of the rest of the verse as set out above. Acceptance of either of the other two readings involves a certain rearrangement, when interpreting the verse as a whole. On the other hand, one has, it is true, some difficulty, as Boer recognized, <sup>(7)</sup> in understanding how Þórör could call on more warlike gods than "all of the mighty spirits of battle".

Most of the emendations in this verse are clearly unavoidable and uncontroversial but the last line deserves some attention. In 551 this reads Bradraudur hofud snaudum as against bradraudr haufud suar, udum in the vellum fragment AM 162 F, fol. Boer accepted the reading in 551, which has the advantage of assonance and makes just as much sense as the other. If one accepts 551's reading, we then find Þórör wishing "that a bloody eagle, reddened by its prey, may stand over Björn, bereft of his head". Since Þórör is later to strike Björn's head from his body, this is not inapt. If, however, we accept the reading haufud suarudum in F as being in an older manuscript and as equally valid a term, it then appears necessary with Nordal to change bradraudr into bardraudr, in order to

preserve the assonance. This has accordingly been the reading adopted above but there is little to choose between the two alternatives.

The spirit of the verse is worthy of special comment. Þórðr was undoubtedly a Christian, like all other Icelanders, however nominally, at the time when the verse is supposed to have been composed. Equally unquestionably he would have been born and brought up a heathen and the confusion that must have reigned in his mind is depicted in this verse, where he prays "all of the mighty spirits of battle" for assistance in destroying Björn.<sup>(8)</sup> These "spirits of battle, . . . who created the heavenly bodies", would, in Þórðr's mind, much more likely have been the sons of Borr, that is, Odin and his brothers, than the Christian God and his angels.<sup>(9)</sup>

- (1) See BSM, p.3C, l.24, where 551 has ej sk . . . . ., space being left for seven or eight letters. In the text, this has been emended as ej skialldan, following the reading in Jón Halldórsson's manuscript, Oslo 313, 4to.
- (2) Biarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 62, 102.
- (3) Íslensk Fornrit III, 193.
- (4) Lexicon poëticum (1860), 28<sup>a</sup>.
- (5) Den norsk-islandske Skjaldedigtning, BI 209.
- (6) Notationes norroene, para. 591.
- (7) Biarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, 102.

- (8) See, in this regard, Fredrik Paasche, "Norges og Islands Litteratur inntil Utgangen av Middelalderen", Norsk Litteratur Historie I (1957), 246-7.
- (9) See Völuspá, 4-6; Íslenzk Fornrit III, 193.

Verse 34.

- (i) Text as in AM 162 F, fol.

Vnndr er ef ecki benndir  
oft uakir dreingr at leingrum  
ogn hefeg fyrda fregna  
framvisar mer disir.  
Þviat armlegiar orma  
ilmr dagleggiar hilmiss  
heim or huerium draumi  
hialm falldinn bydr skalldi.

- (ii) Corrected text of verse.

Vnndr er ef ecki benndir  
oft uakir dreingr at leingrum  
ogn hefeg fyrda fregna  
framvisar mer disir  
Þviat armlegiar orma  
Ilmr \*dagleygiar hilmiss  
heim or huerium draumi  
hialm falldinn bydr skalldi.

dagleygiar ) See ÍF III, 197; MSS read dagligrar  
(F dagleggiar).

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Vnndr er, ef ecki beundir mer framvisar  
disir, - dreingr uakir oft at leingrum. Hefeg  
fregna ogn fyrda, - þviat hialm falldinn  
armlegiar orna Ilmr<sup>(a)</sup> dagleygiar hilmiss<sup>(b)</sup>  
bydr skalldi heim or huerium draumi..

(iv) Notes.

- (a) armleggr : "arm"; armlegiar ormr : "snake  
of the arm"; kenning for "ring"; Ilmr :  
a goddess; armlegiar orna Ilmr : "Ilmr  
of rings"; kenning for "woman, valkyrie".
- (b) dagleygr : "day-fire"; kenning for "sun";  
dagleygiar hilmir : "prince of the sun";  
kenning for "God"; armlegiar orna Ilmr  
dagleygiar hilmiss : "valkyrie of God".

(v) Prose translation.

It is a wonder if prophetic goddesses  
do not give me a sign - the warrior is often  
a long time awake. I have learned of men's  
threats - because the helmeted valkyrie of  
God calls the poet home in every dream.

(vi) Commentary.

According to the prose, Björn uttered  
this verse on the morning of the last day of  
his life, when questioned by his wife about  
his evil dreams during the previous night.

The verse contains a remarkable mixture of Christianity and paganism and Nordal considers that a proof of its age. <sup>(1)</sup> This statement is difficult to contest, as it would appear very unlikely that a thirteenth-century author would have so mingled features of two different religions. This would, however, have been very easy and indeed quite natural for a poet in the early eleventh century, who had been born and brought up a heathen, although a mere boy at the time of his change of faith.

The disir, of whom Björn speaks in the phrase framvisar disir, were mysterious female deities, whose exact nature is not certain. They may perhaps have been dead female ancestors. <sup>(2)</sup> Be this as it may, they had no part in the Christian religion, although belief in them seems to have lingered on and they may have become equated with guardian spirits or angels. <sup>(3)</sup>

Björn's reference to the messenger of God who called him "home in every dream" might simply have supposed an angel, were it not that the messenger is female and moreover "helmeted". Unquestionably therefore the reference is to a valkyrie, one of the messengers of Odin, although the kenning dagleygiar hilmir seems more appropriate to the Christian God. We are therefore faced with a mixture of images, characteristic of a

poet of the period of the conversion.

Supernatural women calling a hero home are not especially uncommon in early Norse verse and Verses 25-27 of Gisla saga<sup>(4)</sup> provide a somewhat different and rather more Christian example of this phenomenon. There is good reason for believing, however, in this latter case, that, although the verses purport to have been composed in the heathen period, they are spurious and were the product of a Christian poet some two centuries or more later.<sup>(5)</sup>

So far as the text itself of the verse is concerned, Nordal<sup>(6)</sup> has demonstrated that there are several examples of a plural subject governing a singular verb in Old Norse, when the verb precedes the subject. There is therefore no need to alter benndir, as has been done by other editors.

The word dagleggiar in the sixth line of the verse is undoubtedly an error in spelling influenced by amleggiar in the preceding line and Nordal's emendation to dagleygiar<sup>(7)</sup> seems incontrovertible.

- (1) Íslensk Fornrit III, 197.
- (2) Concerning the disir, see especially E.O.G. Turville-Petre, Myth and Religion of the North (1964), 221-8; "A Note on the Lándaðisir", Early English and Norse Studies

(1963), 196-201.

- (3) In this regard, see review by E.O.G. Turville-Petre in Saga-Book of the Viking Society XIV (1953-5), 137 ff. of Dag Strömbäck, Tidranle och Diserna (1949).
- (4) Íslensk Fornrit VI (1943), 94-6.
- (5) See P.G. Foote, "An Essay on the Saga of Gisli", in The Saga of Gisli, translated by George Johnston (1963), esp. 119-23.
- (6) Íslensk Fornrit III, 196-7.
- (7) Ibid., 197.

Verse 35.

(1) Text as in AM 162 F, fol.

Vt geing ec med lid litid  
litt se ek hers uid uiti  
suerd fylgir menn myrdi  
mitt oc skiolldr hinn hvite  
enn firir einun runne  
agis dyrs of myrar  
uodr skal hialz or hennde  
hrockua fyrr en ek stockua.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Vt geing ec med lid litid  
litt se ek hers uid uiti  
suerd fylgir menn myrdi  
mitt oc skiolldr hinn hvite



enn firir einum runne  
ægis dyrs of Myrar  
uondr skal hialz or hennde  
hrockua fyrr en ek stockua.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Ec geing vt med litid lid. Ek se litt uid uiti  
hers. Mitt suerd oc hinn hvite skiolldr fylgir  
Menn myrði;<sup>(a)</sup> enn fyrr en ek stockua of Myrar  
firir einum ægis dyrs runne,<sup>(b)</sup> skal hialz uondr<sup>(c)</sup>  
hrockua or hennde.

(iv) Notes.

- (a) Men(n) : "necklace, jewel"; Menn myrdir :  
"murderer of jewels"; kenning for "man".
- (b) ægir : "sea"; ægis dyr : "beast of the sea";  
kenning for "ship"; runnr : "shrub, bush, grove";  
ægis dyrs runnr : "shrub of a ship"; kenning  
for "man".
- (c) hialt : "knob at end of sword's hilt, sword-  
guard"; uondr : "wand, switch"; hialz uondr :  
"wand of the sword-knob"; kenning for "sword".

(v) Prose translation.

I go out with a small following. I guard  
myself little against the vengeance of men.  
My sword and the white shield accompany me; but,  
before I flee over Mýrar before a man, my sword  
shall be brandished in my hand.

(vi) Commentary.

It has been stated by Vogt<sup>(1)</sup> and Nordal<sup>(2)</sup> that the contents of this verse are in disagreement with the prose. However, whether the verse is the work of Björn himself, the saga-author or a third party, examination of it shows quite convincingly that little if any real discrepancy does, in fact, exist.

We are told that, on the particular morning in question, all those of Björn's housecarles, who were still at home, went into the forest to cut wood, leaving Björn the only grown man in the house. He got ready to go and attend to his horses and took with him his mane-shears and a shield, having in his hand the sword belonging to Porfinnr Pvarason. Björn had lent his own sword, Mæringr, to Porfinnr. With Björn there went a fifteen year old boy and, at this point, when they went out of the homefield, Björn uttered a verse.

Looking at the verse, we find that Björn states that he is going out with lid litid. There is no disagreement here. Björn has indeed only "a small following", the fifteen year old boy. He states "Mitt suerd oc hinn hvite skiolldr fylgir Menn myrði". Boer<sup>(3)</sup> simply considered that

Menn myrdir referred to Porfinnr Pvarason. Nordal accepted that it referred to Björn himself, as is most probable, but claimed that this put the verse into disagreement with the prose, no doubt believing that the phrase, mitt suerd related to Meringr, which was then in Porfinnr's possession. If that were the case, Björn could not be carrying his own sword as he left the homefield. Surely, however, Björn's utterance : "My sword and the white shield accompany me" is a simple statement of fact. He merely meant the sword he was carrying at that moment, that is, Porfinnr's sword and, as for the shield, whether it was white or not is surely of little significance.

Bjarni Einarsson contends <sup>(4)</sup> that there is no discrepancy because Menn myrdir refers to Porfinnr and reinforces this by arguing that, if Björn had still had Meringr, there would have been no need for him to assert in the last half of the verse that, before he would flee before a man, his sword would be brandished in his hand. According to this interpretation, hialz uondr refers to Porfinnr's sword and suerd mitt to Meringr. This is possible but seems a most unnecessary distinction to make and the argument

that Björn would not have made his assertion if he had had Meringr with him is one that carries little weight.

Finally, Björn speaks of the possibility of fleeing over Myrar. The manuscript actually has myrar, that is, "swamps" or "marshy land" in general rather than the area known as Mýrar between Hítardalur and the coast. Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(5)</sup> implies that there is no need, as all editors have done, to change myrar into Myrar, since Björn would hardly have spoken of fleeing over Mýrar, when he was up at Hólmur, some considerable distance away. However, to maintain that Björn meant marshy land in general makes even less sense and it is much more probable that he had the area, Mýrar, in mind. As a general statement, it goes well enough in the verse and, after all, Björn was himself a member of the family or clan known as Mýramenn.<sup>(6)</sup> A further consideration that Bjarni mentions and which is part of the wider question of the literary relations of the saga in general and, in this case, with Grettis saga in particular, is the fact that, in Verse 48 of Grettis saga, Grettir speaks of a certain Gísli, who ran before him over Mýrar.<sup>(7)</sup> On the face of it, this would appear to be a case of influence exerted by Bjarnar saga on Grettis saga, but the matter is wider than this and is discussed in its proper place.

(1) ANF XXXVII (1921), 65.

(2) Íslenzk Fornrit III, 198.

- (3) Die Bjarnar Saga Hítidoelakappa, 103.  
(4) Skáldasögur, 242.  
(5) Ibid.  
(6) It is always possible, of course, that the verse is misplaced in the saga and concerns an occasion, when Björn, armed, but with a small following, was faced with the likelihood of attack during a journey "over Mýrar", perhaps returning from a visit (to his sister at Knarrarnes?). His lid litid may mean no following at all.  
(7) "en fyr mér um Mýrar  
.. ..  
.. ..  
fisandi rann Gíslí."

Verse 36.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.  
Túer eru vordur enn vorum,  
vopn eyrar vel flejri,  
optar kalld vnd skylldi,  
skol iat Jolom,  
enn hraust godi á hausti,  
hoddlestiz kom westann,  
suejt vara leggja lytil  
snarfeingz med lid dreingia.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

\*Tueir \*erum vordur enn vorum  
vopn Eyrar wel flejri  
opt \*var \*skalld vnd skyllidi  
\*skolkinnis \*at Jolom  
enn hraust \*gedi á hausti  
hoddlestiz kom westann  
suejt vara \*seggia lytil  
snarfeingz med lid dreingia.

Tueir ) 624 4867 R1 R2.

erum ) See ÍF III, 198.

opt var ) See ÍF III, 198.

skalld ) See ÍF III, 198.

skolkinnis ) See ÍF III, 198.

at ) See ÍF III, 198; MSS read iat (R2 sat).

gedi ) See ÍF III, 198.

seggia ) 488 JH 624 4867 R1 R2.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Erum tueir, vopn Eyrar vordur,<sup>(a)</sup> enn vorum  
wel flejri. Skalld var opt vnd skyllidi at  
skolkinnis Jolom.<sup>(b)</sup> Enn hraust gedi kom westann  
á hausti med lid dreingia. Seggia suejt snarfeingz  
hoddlestiz<sup>(c)</sup> vara lytil.

(iv) Notes.

- (a) Eyr : a goddess; vopn Eyr : "goddess of  
weapons"; kenning for "valkyrie, battle";  
vopn Eyrar vordur : "warder of battle";

kenning for "warrior".

(b) skolkinni : heiti for a wolf; skolkirmis Jol :  
"Yule-tide of the wolf"; kenning for "battle, slaughter".

(c) hodd : "treasure"; hoddlestir : "breaker of treasure";  
kenning for "man, chieftain".

(v) Prose translation.

We are two, warrior, but we were considerably more. The poet was often under arms in the fighting. The valiant man came from the West in Autumn with a following of gallant men. The company of men of the bold chieftain was not small.

(vi) Commentary.

This is reputedly Björn's last verse and is said to have been composed by him when he and the boy with him were close to Hvitingshjallar, where Björn's horses were pastured. The boy had just told him that he could see not only the horses, but also six men coming towards them.

It has been objected by Nordal<sup>(1)</sup> that it is not natural that Björn should address the boy who was with him in the way he does in the verse and he suggests that possibly the author has made a mistake in the prose and that perhaps the boy was actually a full-grown man. This assumes a complete inconsistency between prose and verse. However, boys became warriors at an early age in that time and fifteen was for that purpose not particularly young.

Allowing therefore for a certain figurativeness of speech, prose and verse are not inconsistent with each other.

The last half of the verse is obscure. Boer<sup>(2)</sup> suggests that the "valiant man" who "came from the West in Autumn" is Björn himself and that the occasion referred to may have been when Björn returned from visiting his uncle Arnórr at Saxahváll, accompanied by Arnórr and a following of men, only to be attacked unsuccessfully by Þórðr's kinsmen. Nordal,<sup>(3)</sup> on the other hand, claims that Þorsteinn Kuggason is meant. This is extremely doubtful, unless it refers to an occasion not mentioned in the prose. Þorsteinn certainly visited Björn from the west at least once, after the failure of the attempted reconciliation between Björn and Þórðr under Hraun and after Þorsteinn had subsequently visited Þórðr, but this appears to have been in late winter.<sup>(4)</sup> Earlier, during Christmas, Þorsteinn had made his famous first visit to Björn, but this was from the North, from Ljárskógar.<sup>(5)</sup> All in all, therefore, unless one supposes a different visit altogether of Þorsteinn's, it is preferable to assume with Boer that Björn was speaking about himself in the second half of Verse 36.

It is, however, perhaps even more likely that this verse, like the previous one, was composed on an earlier occasion, and has been fitted in by the saga author at this spot for want of a better place.



This would amply account for the apparent inconsistencies between prose and verse. This leaves aside the question as to whether it would be likely that Björn would have found time to compose a verse at that juncture and, even more to the point, whether the fifteen-year-old boy, agitated as he was, would have been able to remember and later retail such a verse, supposing that it had been composed then. If this is taken into consideration, added force is given to the argument that both these verses relate to an earlier period in Björn's life and are out of place where they are in the saga.

The language of the verse presents some features meriting separate comment. The second line is presumably corrupt, since the word wel begins with the same consonantal sound as the opening alliterating word vopn. Nordal<sup>(6)</sup> suggests mun fleiri instead of wel fleiri, but this has not been considered a matter for emendation. The fourth line reads skol iat Jolum in the manuscript but this is obviously corrupt, if only for metrical reasons. Both Boer and Nordal emend this to skalkinnis at Jolum and this has much to recommend it. Skólkinni is a heiti for a wolf in Snorra Edda.<sup>(7)</sup> Furthermore, it should be noted that the wolf in Grímnismál 40,<sup>(8)</sup> which pursues the sun, is named Skoll.

It remains to be mentioned that Nordal<sup>(9)</sup> has drawn attention to the similarity of part of this

verse and also of part of Verse 25 to the first half of Verse 13 of Fóstbroœðra saga. The literary relations which are involved here are unquestionably somewhat complex and their discussion is reserved to its proper place in Chapter VI.

- (1) Íslensk Fornrit III, 198.
- (2) Die Bjarnar Saga Hítloelakappa, 103-104.
- (3) Íslensk Fornrit III, 199.
- (4) BSH, pp.56-9.
- (5) BSH, pp.50-55.
- (6) Íslensk Fornrit III, 199.
- (7) Edda Snorra Sturlusonar (1952), 251.
- (8) Sæmundar -Edda (1926), 78.
- (9) Íslensk Fornrit III, "Formáli", LXXIII.

Verse 37.

- (1) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.  
Laskat snarr at sneru,  
segg þann bitu Eggjar,  
hinn er fyrer heidi sunnann,  
hugþryði mior kuyða,  
að eg Mordvandann myndag,  
meiðz hlutum ran af beidi,  
bitu þann fyrer sok sanna,  
suerd hanz bani verða.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Laskat snarr at sneru  
segg þann bitu Eggjar  
hinn er fyrer heidi sunnann  
hugþryði mior \*þryði  
að \*Mordvandar myndag  
meiðz hlutum ran af beidi  
bitu þann fyrer sok sanna  
suerd hanz bani verða.

fryði ) See ÍF III, 203.

að ) See ÍF III, 203.

Mordvandar ) See ÍF III, 203.

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Eggjar bitu þann segg, hinn er þryði mior  
hugþryði fyrer sunnann heidi. Laskat, snarr at  
sneru, að myndag verða bani hanz. Hlutum ran af  
Mordvandar meiðz beidi.<sup>(a)</sup> Suerd bitu þann fyrer  
sanna sok.

(iv) Notes.

(a) Mordvöndr : "murder-wand"; heiti for a sword;  
meiðr : "tree"; Mordvandar meiðr : "tree of the  
sword"; kenning for "shield"; beidir : "requester";  
Mordvandar meiðz beidir : "requester of the shield";  
kenning for "warrior".

(v) Prose translation.

Sword-blades bit that man, he who challenged  
my courage south of the moor. It did not fail,  
warrior bold in onslaught, that I would become his

slayer. I underwent plundering by the warrior. Swords bit him for a true reason.

(vi) Commentary.

The prose relates that Þórðr uttered this verse after he had finished Björn off by striking his head from his body. There is nothing in it that would indicate it was not composed by Þórðr himself, even though it was very likely composed some time subsequent to the event that it commemorates, rather than at the precise time assigned to it by the author of the saga.

Þórðr refers to the plundering that he had undergone at Björn's hands many years before off the coast of Norway and to the plurality of swords by means of which Björn had now been finally struck down. Hvítingshjallar is certainly "south of the moor", south of Hítardalsheiðr and Knappafellsheiðr, although it is possible that here Þórðr may allude to a previous incident. Moreover, the first line of the verse contains another example of the repetition device typical of Þórðr's poetry, that is, snarr at sneru. If the saga author has in fact composed all the verses in the saga himself, he has certainly been most ingenious and successful in not only imitating Þórðr's style as exemplified in his other extant verse, but in devising a quite different style for Björn, who tends particularly to favour kennings of a mythological type involving goddesses. It is true that Þórðr also occasionally makes use of the same type of kenning but

not nearly to the same extent.

Nordvandar meidr would be a perfectly good kenning for a warrior, as well as for a shield. It is of interest that mordvöndr also occurs as a heiti for a sword in two successive verses (31 and 32) of Kormáks saga. Linguistic resemblances between the verses of Kormáks saga and those of Biarnar saga are, in fact, fairly frequent, although they are, as a rule, merely examples of the common stock of scaldic vocabulary and there would thus generally be little likelihood of direct borrowing or influence. These cases are, however, referred to when dealing with the literary relations of the saga.

Verse 38.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a. 4to.

Huert stefne þier hrafnar,  
hart med flock hinn suarta,  
farit liost matar leita,  
landnordur fra Klifsandi,  
þar liggur Biorn enn birni,  
blodgaugl of skaur stodu,  
þollur huie hialmz á hialla  
hujtingz ofar litlu.

(ii) Text in normal word order.

Hrafnar, huert stefne þier hart med hinn  
suarta flock? Farit liost leita matar landnordur  
fra Klifsandi. Par liggur Biorn, enn blodgaugl<sup>(a)</sup>  
stodu of skaur Birni. Hialmz pollur<sup>(b)</sup> hnie litlu  
ofar á Hujtingz hialla.

(iii) Notes.

(a) blodgaugl : "geese of blood"; kenning for  
"ravens".

(b) pollur : "young fir-tree"; hialmz pollur :  
"fir-tree of the helmet"; kenning for "warrior".

(iv) Prose translation.

Ravens, where are you going so fast with your  
black flock? You are obviously travelling to  
look for food north-east from Klifsandr. There  
Björn lies but ravens stood over his hair. The  
warrior fell a little higher up on Hvitingshjalli.

(v) Commentary.

After Þórðr and his companions had slain  
Björn at Hvitingshjallar, they rode away from the  
scene of the fight and, when they had come down  
over Klifsandr, ravens flew towards them. Then  
Þórðr composed this verse.

It is a remarkable one, full of descriptive  
power and easily one of the best in the saga.

The repetition device typical of Þórðr's poetry is  
present in the fifth line, par liggur Biorn enn Birni,

and there is little reason to doubt the genuineness of the verse.

Vogt<sup>(1)</sup> considered that the verse was in contradiction to the prose, which states that Þórðr struck off Björn's head and bound it to his saddle-strap.<sup>(2)</sup> If this were the case, ravens could hardly stand over that same head on Hvitingshjallar. Bjarni Einarsson,<sup>(3)</sup> who in any event believes that the saga author probably wrote all the verses as well, regards this apparent discrepancy as due to pure poetic licence and he could undoubtedly be correct, although this does not necessarily prove that the same man wrote both prose and verse. Þórðr himself could just as well have been making use of poetic licence when he composed the verse, but it is far more likely that the verse is correct and the prose in this case is in error, since the binding of a slain enemy's head to the victor's saddle-strap is a well-known literary motive.<sup>(4)</sup> The line blodgaugl of skaur stodu, is, however, typical poetic imagery, and the same line occurs, word for word, in Verse 24 of Gunnlaugs saga, made use of by Hrafn in a dream-verse in a case where, as Bjarni Einarsson says,<sup>(5)</sup> the ravens could hardly have stood over his head, since both his body and that of Gunnlaugr were being looked after. Influence of Bjarnar saga on Gunnlaugs saga can hardly be discounted here.

Vogt<sup>(6)</sup> also made much of the fact, that, whereas the verse only mentions Klifsandr and Hvitingshjallar, the prose refers to a number of other places as well, such as Klifsjörvi, Klifsdalr and Hellisdalr. Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(7)</sup> discounts this, arguing that the author liked to make use of fine-sounding names for the sake of local colour. This is no doubt true, but the real answer seems to be rather that, whilst there is a limit to the number of place names with which a poet can clutter up a verse, the same argument does not apply to prose. There was no reason why the author should not expand his narrative by giving more topographical details and accordingly this cannot by any stretch of the imagination be reckoned a matter of disagreement between prose and verse.

(1) ANF XXXVII (1921), 64.

(2) BSH, p.67, l.23.

(3) Skáldasögur, 243.

(4) See Íslensk Fornrit III, 203, footnote.

(5) Skáldasögur, 243.

(6) ANF XXXVII (1921), 64.

(7) Skáldasögur, 243-4.



Verse 39.

(1) Text as in AM 551 d a, 4to.

Mödur verd eg mitt hross lejda,  
mjuk verður for siukrar.  
reid vara fliott vnd frydri  
fiargvefiar dag margann,  
þuiad borgar huorgi,  
hlau vnder sier dauckua,  
mikid stryd var það moda  
merki skinz fyrer verkium.

(ii) Corrected text of verse.

Mödur verd eg mitt hross lejda  
mjuk \*verdra for siukrar  
reid vara fliott vnd \*Frydi  
fiargvefiar dag margann  
þuiad \*hugborgar huorgi  
\*Hlauck \*vnde sier \*dauckuar  
mykid stryd var það Moda  
\*merkiz skinz fyrer verkium.

verdra ) See ÍF III, 205.

Frydi) See ÍF III, 206.

hugborgar ) See ÍF III, 206.

Hlauck ) JH 4867 R2 R3.

vnde ) See ÍF III, 206.

dauckuar ) See ÍF III, 206; MSS read dauckua  
(4867 nauckua).

merkiz ) See ÍF III, 206; MSS read merki  
(4867 R1 R2 R3 merku).

(iii) Text in normal word order.

Eg verd mödur lejda mitt hross vnd fiargvefiar  
Frydi<sup>(a)</sup> margann dag, - for siukrar verdra mjuk;  
reid vara fliott, - þuiad dauckuar skinz Hlauck<sup>(b)</sup>  
vnde sier huorgi fyrer hugborgar<sup>(c)</sup> verkium. Þad  
var merkiz Moda<sup>(d)</sup> mykid stryd.

(iv) Notes.

- (a) fiargvefr : "woven cloth of the gods?";  
Frydr : a goddess; fiargvefiar Frydr : "goddess of  
the woven cloth"; kenning for "woman".
- (b) dauck : "pool"; skin : "sheen"; dauckuar skin :  
"sheen of the pool"; kenning for "gold"; Hlauck :  
a valkyrie; dauckuar skinz Hlauck : "valkyrie of  
gold"; kenning for "woman".
- (c) hugborg : "heart-fortification"; kenning  
for "breast".
- (d) merki : "banner"; also a heiti for a sword  
(Edda Snorra Sturlusonar(1952), 239 ); Modi :  
a son of Thor; merkiz modi : "Móði of the banner  
(or sword)"; kenning for "warrior".

(v) Prose translation.

I become tired of leading my horse under the  
woman many a day - the journey of the sick woman  
will not be comfortable; the ride was not swift -  
because the woman was not happy anywhere on account  
of pains in the breast. That was great grief  
to the warrior.

(vi) Commentary.

The preceding prose to this final verse of the saga relates that Oddný suffered so much distress at the death of Björn that the only way that Þórðr could at all console her was to lead her up and down on horseback. As a result of this, he composed this verse.

It shows Þórðr in quite a different light from that presented by the two previous verses and the psychological effect is such that the reader feels almost sorry for Þórðr, despite the deed of which he has just been guilty. If this is genuinely a composition by Þórðr himself, it indicates his versatility; if, on the other hand, it is the work of the saga author, it demonstrates the latter's considerable psychological powers and skill.

The verse, although clear enough in general meaning, contains a number of individual obscurities and corruptions. Certain emendations are therefore unavoidable. Most are of a minor nature, such as the alteration of verdur to verdra in the second line, to make much better sense.

In the fifth line, however, borgar, which is almost certainly corrupt, has been emended to hugborgar, following Nordal,<sup>(1)</sup> who has adopted the readings of Kock<sup>(2)</sup> for the last half of the verse. The prose

speaks of the pains with which Oddný was afflicted and the verse is in close agreement with the prose.

Hugborg is a recognized kenning for "breast" and in Guðrúnarkviða I, Verse 14, Guðrún speaks of :

hugborg jöfurs  
hjörvi skorna.

(1) Íslenzk Fornrit III, 206.

(2) Notationes norroenæ, para. 593.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHRONOLOGY AND HISTORICITY OF THE SAGA.

The author of Bjarnar saga obviously had a fairly extensive knowledge of the Kings' Sagas, but from which ones he derived his knowledge would scarcely be possible to determine with any certainty. However, it is upon these that he must have based his chronology and this is the basis upon which one must found calculations concerning the date of Björn's voyage abroad and of his return to Iceland.

There is no reason for differing from the chronology of the saga as set out by Nordal in the Fornrit edition. <sup>(1)</sup> From this and measuring backwards from the date of St. Olaf's victory at Nesjar in 1015 (sometimes reckoned as 1016), <sup>(2)</sup> one obtains the result that Björn went abroad in 1007 and returned to Iceland in 1019. Björn was eighteen years old when he went abroad, <sup>(3)</sup> which would fix his date of birth as in 989 and, since Þórðr was fifteen years his senior, <sup>(4)</sup> he can accordingly be presumed born in 974. Up to the date of Björn's return, the events of the saga can be dated with almost mathematical precision but, after his return, confusion reigns and the chronology leaves much to be desired. Relative clarity again returns when one reaches the final chapters, as the death of Björn can be dated in relation to the deaths of Þorsteinn Kuggason and Þorkell Eyjólfsson, who arbitrated after Björn's slaying and whose deaths are known from the Annals. <sup>(5)</sup>

According to the Annals, Þorkell drowned in 1026 (on Maundy Thursday, according to Laxdoela saga <sup>(6)</sup>) and Þorsteinn was killed in 1027. Consequently, providing that

Porkell and Porsteinn actually took part in the affair, as stated in the saga, and assuming that the dates given in the Annals are accurate, the prosecution of the case against Björn's slayers could not have taken place later than at the Althing in the summer of 1025 and the death of Björn, who was slain the previous autumn, must therefore have taken place no later than 1024, presumably about October.

It is the period between 1019 and 1024, the dates of Björn's return and death respectively, which gives so much difficulty and where any attempt at anything like accurate chronology cannot be reconciled in any way with the statements of time lapse in the saga and with the physical impossibility that all these events could have occurred in so short a time. Björn spent the winter with Þórðr and Oddný at Hítarnes upon his return to Iceland and this may be reckoned as the winter of 1019 to 1020. He may also have married Þórdís in 1020, although this cannot be known for certain because of the hiatus in the saga at this point, and Kolli, the reputed son of Björn and Oddný would scarcely have been born later than 1020 and certainly not earlier.<sup>(7)</sup> The visit of Porsteinn Kuggason to Björn appears to have been at the Christmas of 1023, but any attempt to date events of the saga which would appear to have occurred between 1020 and 1023 is doomed to failure beforehand and does not repay the effort. So many events are cramped into these three years and the saga indeed gives the impression that a much greater period is covered.

This need not be so, however, provided that the possibility is discarded that Kolli could have taken part

in the final attack on Björn, since, according to the above reckoning, he would have then been no more than four years old. Indeed, if he had been old enough to have taken an active part, this would have made Þórðr close on sixty years old at the time, which appears at first sight somewhat unlikely, although it would partly account for Þórðr's caution and reluctance to come to close quarters with Björn.

Nevertheless such a contingency would hardly have been uppermost or at all to the fore in the author's mind, nor indeed, it appears safe to assume, would any chronological incongruities in the chain of events related in the saga. The author would scarcely have been concerned with making his chronology agree, least of all with that of annals or other sagas, but foremost in his mind would have been his aim of telling a good story. The view that the sagas must be regarded as historical documents or primarily so has long been out of fashion. Consequently the author would have seen no inconsistency in having Kolli take part in an attack against Björn at a time when he was either too young to have done so or alternatively at a time which must have been several years after the death of Þorsteinn and Þorkell, who were to be the chief parties in the arbitration of the settlement for Björn's slaying. The author's main interest here surely was to make use of the effective device of the father-son combat, where at least one party is unaware of the relationship. (8)

It is appropriate also at this point briefly to mention the close resemblance between the circumstances surrounding the birth of Kolli and those relating to the

birth of Kjartan at Fróðá in Eyrbyggja saga,<sup>(9)</sup> supposedly son of Þóroddr skattkaupandi and his wife Puriðr, sister of Snorri goði, but reputedly the son of Björn Breiðvíkingakappi Ásbrandsson and Puriðr. Not only do we find in each case the reputed father with the name of Björn in suspiciously similar circumstances, but both Björns are poets<sup>(10)</sup> and both utter verses<sup>(11)</sup> which are almost identical on the occasion of seeing their illicitly conceived sons when small boys some years afterwards. It is indisputable that one of these verses must have been influenced by or rather plagiarized from the other and this point is discussed in Chapter VI.

So far as the historicity in general of the saga is concerned, it is probably no more and no less historical than most of the Family Sagas, but there are good grounds for considering that it contains more historical elements than some of the others, in particular the later sagas, such as Víglundar saga, for example, which is patently pure invention<sup>(12)</sup> or a truly classical saga like Hrafnkels saga, which has been ably demonstrated to be a novel, that cleverly and brilliantly gives the appearance of being based on fact.<sup>(13)</sup>

Snorra Edda<sup>(14)</sup> quotes two lines of a lausavísa by Björn (Verse 20 in the saga) and Björn is mentioned in an interpolation in Gunnlaugs saga<sup>(15)</sup> and also in Egils saga<sup>(16)</sup> although this of itself proves little.<sup>(17)</sup> Biarnar saga, however, has characters mentioned in the Kings' Sagas and the Annals playing major parts : King Olaf, Earl Eric, Skili Þorsteinsson, Þorsteinn Kuggason and Þorkell Eyjólfsson. Þórðr Kolbeinsson may also without question be regarded as a historical character, since he was a major scald, a number



of whose verses are preserved elsewhere, (18) and was the father of the celebrated Arnórr jarlaskáld, who himself makes a brief appearance in Bjarnar saga. (19)

Björn also features in Grettis saga, (20) where the occasion when Grettir took refuge in Grettisbæli is related in greatly expanded form, in contrast to the brief mention it receives in Bjarnar saga. (21) It is sufficient to remark here that, since Grettis saga, particularly in its present form, is demonstrably later than Bjarnar saga, it is therefore reasonable to conclude that the account in Grettis saga of Grettir's stay with Björn is derived from the earlier saga. However, this matter is discussed further in Chapter VI.

It is also worthy of note that, of the twenty-eight short articles from the Óláfs saga of Styrmir the Wise which appear as a kind of addendum to Flateyjarbók, (22) Articles 12, 13 and 14 refer to Icelanders who had been with King Olaf in high favour and had become his retainers. Article 14 lists several and mentions Björn in these words: "Fiordi Bjorn Hitdala kappi." (23)

Björn and Þórðr are both mentioned in several places in Landnámabók, where there are indeed differing versions of Þórðr's ancestry, which may be accounted for by different traditions. It is frequently difficult and in some cases probably impossible to be sure that certain details in Landnámabók are not taken from the Family Sagas and this is especially the case with early sagas like Bjarnar saga but it seems reasonable to assume that, even if this be true, this may not in general invalidate the historicity in this

case. Clearly, however, both versions of Þórðr's ancestry in Landnámabók cannot be true or at least cannot relate to the same Þórðr Kolbeinsson and this and other aspects of the relationships of Bjarnar saga with Landnámabók are discussed in Chapter VI.

Local traditions probably account for many of the incidents in Bjarnar saga and therefore may very well also account for the short piece concerning Björn and St. Olaf and the silken thong, included in Tómasskinna<sup>(24)</sup> and A.M. 61 fol.<sup>(25)</sup> It seems extremely doubtful that this was the source and core of the whole saga. It is much more likely that there were numerous traditions and also verses preserved and that the saga was composed around them by a thirteenth century author. He may have invented some of the verses but this is probably quite impossible to resolve. The verses were reckoned by Finnur Jónsson<sup>(26)</sup> to be very old and this was also the opinion of Guðbrandur Vigfússon.<sup>(27)</sup> It is not disputed that some of them hardly appear to agree with the prose<sup>(28)</sup> but Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(29)</sup> demonstrates convincingly that there is, in fact, much greater agreement than would appear at first sight. The verses are fully and individually discussed in Chapter III but it may be mentioned here that, in any event, even if the verses should not agree with the prose, this is probably convincing proof of their age, whether they originate from Björn himself or not, since, if they had been composed by the author of the saga, it is logical to assume that he would have been careful to make them agree with the prose text, as is invariably the case in late sagas,

where it is often obvious that the verses are spurious and have been composed by the author for the sole purpose of adornment and to give a flavour of antiquity.

There is, of course, no need to seek historicity in a saga and it should be judged as a work of art; and in particular as an historical novel. In some cases it is probably more accurate to speak of a novel which acquires an historical flavour by being set in the past and by a judicious and plentiful use of couleur locale. Novels of Sir Walter Scott's such as "Guy Mannering" and "The Pirate" would qualify as examples of this genus and, amongst the sagas, Hrafnkels saga undoubtedly comes under this heading, as was mentioned above.

Looked at as a work of art, Bjarnar saga is irregular in quality and thus bears the marks of an early saga. In its splendid climax with Björn's epic last defence, it has much of the heroic saga and indeed may be termed an epitome of the heroic age. Yet there is nothing of the improbable here. In his last desperate stand against impossible odds with escape or assistance out of the question, alone, dim of sight and ill-armed, with nothing left but determination to sell his life as dearly as possible, Björn resists to the end and manages to slay three of his attackers before he falls. But one should surely emphasize that he does only slay three and, in the context of the saga, none of these slayings may be considered as at all unlikely. As a contrast to the sober and realistic style of this saga, one need only compare the highly improbable and indeed

impossible feats performed by Þórðr hreða in his saga,<sup>(30)</sup> where we find such laconic statements scattered throughout the narrative, each dealing with a different encounter, as "Þórðr varð sex manna bani"<sup>(31)</sup> "Þórðr drepr fjóra menn af Ozuri"<sup>(32)</sup> and "drap hann nú enn fimm menn."<sup>(33)</sup> It is not too much to say that so many killings on such a massive and repeated scale become just a little tiresome after a while.

No firm opinion can be expressed on the historicity of Björn's activities at the courts of Earl Eric and King Olaf and indeed with Canute. Like, to be sure, most events in the Family Sagas, they have to be taken on trust, if we believe them at all, and, so far as Björn's adventures at the courts are concerned, these resemble all too well the typical experiences attributed to Icelanders abroad and it would naturally be normal for an Icelandic author to credit his hero with such adventures in order to increase his stature. The association with Canute looks particularly suspect, in view of the episode with the flying dragon, with its echoes of the fornaldarsaga.

It is, however, not impossible that Björn could have been with Canute or, for that matter, with Earl Eric or St.Olaf, to say nothing of Valdimarr. Indeed, the whole question of the historicity of the Russian episode in the saga is of such importance that it warrants separate discussion in a chapter to itself and is accordingly so treated in Chapter V. Nevertheless, the section relating to Earl Eric could have been suggested by Björn's kinship to and association with Skúli and the fact that it was well-known

that Skúli had been with Eric at the Battle of Svöld in A.D.1000. The broad outline of the story of Björn's association with Olaf may very likely be true or at least have some factual basis but one must treat it with considerable suspicion, since it bears so much of the aura of hagiography that so thoroughly surrounds St. Olaf.

There remain the verses and the fact that, providing these are regarded as substantially genuine, there arises a pattern woven around the enmity of Björn and Þórðr and it is accordingly not inconceivable that Björn may have plundered Þórðr whilst on a viking expedition, although the venue of their meeting seems to be in doubt.<sup>(34)</sup> Still, there is no absolute guarantee that the whole may not be an invention of the author, except that there may have been an Icelander named Björn who was present for a time at King Olaf's court and who later returned to Iceland and became embroiled in the typical petty quarrels of his district. It is even possible that the account in the saga is older than the short episode in AM 61 fol. and Tómasskinna and indeed it seems scarcely credible that the few details given in this would have been sufficient in themselves to inspire the composition of the entire saga.

It is more feasible that the episode derives from the saga or, more probably, independently from oral traditions related about Björn and subsequently handed down. In this way any discrepancies could be readily accounted for but principally this concerns the provenance of the sword Meringr, as discussed in Chapter V, in relation to Björn's exploits in Russia. Alternatively, this discrepancy could result from the composer of the short episode writing down the

details about Björn from memory, after having read or heard the saga, and having made a slip of memory. Furthermore, assuming Björn ever had a sword named Meringr and Verse 30 is the only real evidence for this and the meaning of the word, as pointed out elsewhere,<sup>(35)</sup> is doubtful in any case, there is no guarantee that he did not acquire the sword in a third way and not from either Olaf or Valdimarr.

However, speculation in this regard is profitless and we must take the story on trust for what it is, an historical romance splendidly told in many respects, which commences competently enough, if conventionally, halts only here and there in the middle and ends with a fine flourish.

NOTES.

- (1) ÍF III (1938), LXXXVII.
- (2) Guðni Jónsson, Annálar og Nafnaskrá (1948)  
- Konungsannáll, p.5.  
"1015. Nesjabardagi með Óláfi konungi inum helga ok Sveini jarli Hákonarsyni."  
- Lögmannsannáll, p.80.  
"1016. Bardagi fyrir Nesjun."
- (3) BSH, p.4, 1.29.
- (4) BSH, p.6, 1.28.
- (5) "Konungsannáll", edited by Guðni Jónsson, Annálar og Nafnaskrá (1948), p.6.
- (6) ÍF V (1934), 221-2.
- (7) The name "Kolli enn prúdi", as he is termed in Chapter XXIII of the saga (BSH, p.44, 1.12), recalls vividly the twelfth-century Icelandic scald of the same name, known for the five verses remaining of his Ingadrápa, dated by Finnur Jónsson to about 1140.  
- See Den norsk-islandske Skjaldedigtning (1912-15), A I 503-4; B I 476-7.  
- It does not seem too much to suggest that here we have the origin of the name or at least of the attribute of Björn's reputed son; still another indication that the author of Bjarnar saga knew his Kings' Sagas or at least had a certain familiarity with the names of Icelandic poets of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

- (8) Stith Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk Literature V (1955-58), 127-8, at this item :-  
- N731.2. Father-son combat. Neither knows who the other is. (Sohrab and Rustem).  
- See also the examples referred to by Jón Helgason in his article "Hildibrandskviða" in Ritgerðakorn og Ræðustífar (1959), esp. p.76.
- (9) ÍF IV (1935), 76-81.
- (10) There are seven verses in Eyrbyggja saga, which are attributed to Bjorn Breiðvíkingakappi, none without poetic value and one, Verse 24 ("Guls mundum vit vilja", etc.) of especial charm. See Verses 24, 25 and 27-31 of "Eyrbyggja saga", ÍF IV, 78-9, 108-111.
- (11) Verse 29 in BSH, p.44; Verse 27 of "Eyrbyggja saga", ÍF IV, 108. There are also similarities between Verse 12 in BSH, p.26 and Verse 28 of Eyrbyggja saga, op.cit., 108-109.
- (12) ÍF XIV (1959).  
- See Jan de Vries, Altnordische Literaturgeschichte II (1942), 493-4; Sigurður Nordal, "Sagalitteraturen", Nordisk Kultur 8B (1953), 269. - "Et par historiske navne medtages kun for syns skyld."
- (13) See Sigurður Nordal, "Hrafnkatla", Íslensk Fræði VII (1949); English translation by R. George Thomas, Hrafnkels saga Freysgoða (1958).
- (14) "Den Tredje og Fjerde Grammatiske Afhandling i Snorres Edda", edited by Björn M. Ólsen, S.G.N.L. XII (1884), 15, 70.
- (15) ÍF III, 51 footnote.



- (16) ÍF II (1933), 151.
- (17) Since Bjarnar saga is generally reckoned older than Gunnlaugs saga and Egils saga, the most plausible assumption is that their allusions to Björn derive from the earlier work. The affinities between Gunnlaugs saga and Bjarnar saga are comprehensively discussed by Bjorn M. Olsen in "Om Gunnlaugs Saga Ormstungu", D.Kgl. Danske Vidensk. Selsk. Skrifter, 7 Række, Historisk og Filosofisk Afd. II.1. (1911). See also P.G.Foote, "Introduction" to Gunnlaugs Saga Ormstungu, (Nelson's Icelandic Texts, 1957), xvii-xviii.
- (18) An Eiriksdrápa, a fragment of a Belgskakadrápa and a verse in Gunnlaugs saga. See Finnur Jónsson, Den norsk-islandske Skjaldedigtning, AI 212-19, BI 202-10; Jan de Vries, Altnordische Literaturgeschichte I (1941), 184-6.
- (19) BSH, p.46, ll.20-21.
- (20) ÍF VII (1936), 186-98.
- (21) BSH, p.38, ll.11-14.
- (22) G.Vigfússon and C.R.Unger, Flateyjarbók III (1868), 237-48. They are here entitled "Vidbætir við Olafs Sögu hins helga."  
- See also O.A.Johnsen and Jón Helgason, Den Store Saga om Olav den Hellige II (1941), 683-95, 1034.
- (23) FLb. III, 244; Den Store Saga II, 690.
- (24) Gl.kgl.sml.1008 fol. See Den Store Saga II, 1034-42.
- (25) See Den Store Saga II, 766-7; 970-8.
- (26) "Sagaernes Lausavísur", Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed III R.2.Bind (1912), 29.

- (27) "Um Tímatál", Safn til Sögu Íslands I (1856), 459.
- (28) See W.H.Vogt, "Die Bjarnar saga hitdoelakappa", ANF XXXVII (1921), 27-29; Finnur Jónsson, "Sagaernes Lausavisur", 27-32; Sigurður Nordal, ÍF III, LXX-LXXIV.
- (29) Skáldasögur (1961) 236-44. Bjarni Einarsson maintains that the differences between verse and prose are not so great that the author of the saga could not have composed all of the verses himself.
- (30) ÍF XIV.
- (31) Ibid, 203-4.
- (32) Ibid, 206.
- (33) Ibid, 217-18.
- (34) Verse 10 of the saga refers to an encounter between Björn and Þórðr in the Brenneyjar (at the mouth of the Göta River), whereas, according to Verse 11, the plundering appears to have taken place in Sólundir, islands by Sogn in Norway. The prose text takes its cue from Verse 10. (See pp.12-15).
- It is reasonable to assume that there were actually two incidents, which the author has either confused or coalesced; that Þórðr had escaped Björn in the Brenneyjar by hiding but that he had been subsequently plundered in Sólundir. - See Sigurður Nordal, ÍF III, LXXI-LXXII. Both groups of islands were great refuges for vikings. - See Bjarni Einarsson, Skáldasögur, 239.
- (35) Vol. I, p. 286.

CHAPTER V.

THE RUSSIAN EPISODE.

When one considers the historicity of Bjarnar saga, central to the discussion must be what may conveniently be termed the Russian Episode; that is to say, Chapter IV of the saga, which deals with the adventures of Björn in Russia in the service of King Valdimarr, for here we have a tale not only centred round a historical royal personage but one which may be said to have some historical foundation, however various its origins may be.

In Chapter IV of the saga it is told that Russia was invaded by a mighty army, led by a powerful champion named Kaldimarr, a near kinsman of King Valdimarr. Kaldimarr had not obtained the throne, simply because he was the younger of the two, but otherwise he was regarded as having equal rights of sovereignty.

When Valdimarr learned of the invasion, he sent messengers offering his kinsman half the kingdom, if he would only depart in peace. However, Kaldimarr declined this offer, demanding the whole of the realm. If this were not satisfactory to Valdimarr, he offered him the alternatives of either fighting a duel with him or else their two armies should fight. Neither choice was a happy one to Valdimarr, but after the lapse of some time he offered to provide a substitute to fight the duel on his behalf. Kaldimarr agreed on the condition that the sovereignty of the whole realm should depend on the result.

Despite offers of friendship and honour, none amongst the king's men was willing to fight with Kaldimarr, until Björn stepped forward. After a desperate fight, during which

Björn was himself wounded almost to death, Björn managed to slay Kaldimarr. For this deed he received great honour from the king and all the armour, which Kaldimarr had owned, in addition to the champion's famous sword, Mæringr. Following upon this, Björn was himself called a champion and, because of the district from which he came, was known as Hítöelakappi.<sup>(1)</sup>

Valdimarr was Vladimir I, the Great (otherwise St. Vladimir), who ruled over Russia as Grand Prince of Kiev for 37 years, from 978 to 1015.<sup>(2)</sup> Svyatoslav, Grand Prince of Kiev, died in 973 and was succeeded by his three sons, Yaropolk, Oleg and Vladimir, who divided the realm between them, Yaropolk ruling in Kiev itself, Oleg in Dereva and Vladimir in Novgorod. Whereas the two former were full brothers, Vladimir was merely a half-brother, his mother being Malusha, stewardess of Svyatoslav's mother, the Dowager Princess Olga.<sup>(3)</sup>

This tripartite division of the realm of Garðariki did not last long, for in 977 Yaropolk attacked Oleg, seized the latter's city and, in so doing, brought about his death.<sup>(4)</sup> Vladimir now fled overseas in fear, whereupon Yaropolk sent his lieutenants to Novgorod and thus for a short space of time became sole ruler of Russia.

The following year, however, Vladimir returned to Novgorod with Varangian auxiliaries. He immediately ordered Yaropolk's lieutenants to return to their master and inform him that Vladimir was advancing against him and preparing to fight. In due course, Vladimir marched on Kiev with a large force, in which city Yaropolk took refuge, since he was not able to resist Vladimir.

Vladimir entrenched himself outside Kiev and in the meantime sent messages to Yaropolk's general Blud inside the city, promising him his favour if he would betray his master. As a result, Blud tricked Yaropolk into abandoning Kiev and fleeing with him to Rodnya. After entering Kiev, Vladimir laid siege to Rodnya.

Blud now induced Yaropolk to make peace with Vladimir and to appear before him to accept what terms he might offer. Blud and Vladimir having laid their plans, upon Yaropolk's entering Vladimir's hall in Kiev, he was at once struck down by two Varangians and slain.<sup>(5)</sup> In this manner, Vladimir brought the whole of Russia under his control.

While admitting the differences, Boer draws a close parallel between these events, as narrated in the Russian Primary Chronicle, and the invasion of Garðariki by Kaldimarr in the saga and his subsequent death at the hands of Björn.<sup>(6)</sup> Not only, however, does he fully identify the two stories, but he even goes so far as to regard it as probable that Björn had taken part in the campaign against Yaropolk, although he does not definitely suggest that he had actually been one of the two Varangian assassins mentioned by the chronicler. As has been pointed out by more than one commentator since,<sup>(7)</sup> Boer has here let his enthusiasm run away with him. His theory that Björn could have been present during the conflict between Yaropolk and Vladimir can only be based on an incorrect grasp of the dates of Vladimir's reign, for, in another place in his introduction to his edition of the saga, he dates the duel with Kaldimarr to the year 1009, that is, some 30 years after Yaropolk's slaying, according to the dating in the Chronicle!

Since Boer agrees that Björn was probably not born until about 989, it is obvious that he could not have been present at an event which took place approximately ten years earlier, even allowing for a possible error of one or two years either way in the chronicler's dating. This, of course, by no means excludes the possibility that the memory of the historical event may have in some way influenced the composition of the story as it appears in the saga, since, not only do two Varangians appear to have been instrumental in carrying out the orders of Blud and Vladimir, but Vladimir's army was evidently largely composed of Scandinavians. It is not even impossible that there may have been Icelanders amongst them, one of whom could have brought the tale back with him. On the other hand, the method by which Vladimir eliminated his rival and thus became sole ruler of Russia, would undoubtedly have remained current throughout his reign and it is equally likely that the story could have been brought back to Iceland a generation or more after the event, perhaps even by Björn himself. From there it would only be a short stage before it formed in course of time one of the local traditions in Hítardalr round Björn's own person.

The conflict between Vladimir and Yaropolk is, however, only one of the pieces of evidence which the Russian Primary Chronicle provides and which may profitably be used in determining the historical background to Björn's adventures in Russia. The Chronicle, in fact, relates two other episodes, which are not only closer in time to the saga's period but are also rather more attractive and appropriate to our purpose, since they both deal with duels rather than a political assassination, and both of which Boer appears to have missed

completely. At any rate, he makes no mention of either.

The first of these events took place in the year 992, when the wild Turco-Tartar tribe known as Pechenegs<sup>(8)</sup> made one of their periodical attacks. Vladimir encountered them at the Trubezh River, each army being on opposite banks. To settle the issue, the Prince of the Pechenegs proposed a duel between champions of either side.<sup>(9)</sup> Vladimir in vain sought for a champion throughout his whole army but at last found one in an old man's young son, a typical kolbitr.<sup>(10)</sup> The Pechenegs' champion, on the other hand, was "gigantic and fearsome"<sup>(11)</sup> (cf. Kaldimarr: "mikill ok mattigr"<sup>(12)</sup>). Nevertheless, in the ensuing contest, the Russian, moderate in size though he was, crushed his adversary to death, whereupon the Pechenegs fled. As a reward Vladimir made both the youth and his father great men.<sup>(13)</sup>

This tale, whether true or not, presents certain features which are closely paralleled by some of those found in that related in the saga, notably the two opposing armies to be represented by their champions, the size of the enemy champion and the fruitless search for a representative on the part of Vladimir until one eventually appeared in the person of one, who, in both cases, could virtually be termed an outsider, the resultant downfall of the powerful enemy and the subsequent honouring by Vladimir of the victor. There the resemblance ceases and one could obviously point to just as many differences. There is no question of kinship between Vladimir and his enemy, whether one considers either the opposing prince or his champion, Vladimir's representative is fairly obviously not a recent arrival from Scandinavia and is most probably a Slav, there is no indication that he was wounded

in the struggle, and so on.

The chronological difficulty referred to previously when discussing the warfare between Vladimir and Yaropolk applies with almost equal validity in this case as well. Björn born in 989 could not have been with Vladimir on this occasion either, as there is no real reason for doubting the Chronicle's dating of the event, assuming that it actually took place and is not a mere legend. It is not unlikely, however, that there were Scandinavians in Vladimir's army during his campaign against the Pechenegs who may have been witnesses of the duel, even though apparently none was a participant. The story, like that of the murder of Yaropolk, could have remained well-known amongst the Varangians in Russia and could easily have reached Iceland at a later date, being brought either by Björn himself or another, and have become in the course of time mingled indissolubly with that of the quarrel of the two rival kinsmen, Vladimir and Yaropolk.

As has been pointed out by Ad. Stender-Petersen,<sup>(14)</sup> the tale, as related by the chronicler, bears striking resemblances to that of David and Goliath<sup>(15)</sup> and, even if basically true, it must obviously have been greatly influenced by the biblical story, so well known to the monkish chroniclers. Stender-Petersen claims that nothing indicates that the author of the Primary Chronicle in any way doubted the authenticity of the story he related. This may well be so, but it is difficult not to believe that, if not the whole story, a good deal of it is due to the embellishments of an earlier scribe. Nothing can, of course, be asserted with certainty, but it appears to be taking the matter too far to agree with



Stender-Petersen that the David and Goliath story had already influenced oral tradition to this extent in Russia in Vladimir's reign, especially amongst the Varangians,<sup>(16)</sup> some of whom may, as remarked above, have witnessed the actual event, which formed the basis of that described in the Chronicle. This, of course, assumes that the whole episode is not a complete fabrication. If this, as is not unlikely, be true, it seems difficult to believe that it could have been brought to Iceland either by Björn or by anyone else during his lifetime. Indeed, it appears very doubtful whether the story could have received much currency until well after the death of Vladimir and probably not much earlier than towards the end of the reign of his son, Yaroslav the Wise.<sup>(17)</sup> As, after the latter's death, Norse influence waned rapidly in Russia, this probably places a terminus ad quem to the date of any transmission of the tale to Scandinavia in general. Since there are so many points of resemblance between the story and that related in the saga that it is hard to believe that they can all be coincidental, it is reasonable to accept that the tale was brought to Iceland at an early date, but in its original state without all the biblical trappings later added to it.

A third story related in the Russian Primary Chronicle which bears close affinities to that of the combat between Björn and Kaldimarr has as its chief actor, Mstislav, the younger brother of Yaroslav the Wise, with whom he was for some time at odds.

In 1022, Mstislav with his forces attacked a tribe known as Kasogians.<sup>(18)</sup> When the two armies faced each other, Rededya, the Prince of the Kasogians, proposed a duel between the two leaders, the winner to receive all the possessions of

the other. Mstislav agreed to this and, at Rededya's suggestion, the contest was to be by wrestling and weapons were not to be used.

After some time, "Mstislav began to tire, for Rededya was large and strong."<sup>(19)</sup> However, he made a last effort, threw Rededya to the ground and then drew his knife and stabbed him, afterwards seizing all the loser's property.

The Chronicle then relates that, the following year, Mstislav attacked Yaroslav with a force of Khazars and Kasogians.<sup>(20)</sup> Yaroslav, who, with his Swedish queen, Ingigerd, had particularly close relations with Scandinavia, sent overseas for Varangian aid. This was promptly provided by a prince named Haakon,<sup>(21)</sup> with a band of followers. This Haakon, who is referred to in the Chronicle as being blind, appears to be not further identifiable.

Yaroslav now marched against Mstislav, together with Haakon and his Varangians. In the subsequent battle, however, Yaroslav suffered defeat, both he and Haakon fleeing from the field. Haakon returned to Scandinavia but Yaroslav reached Novgorod safely and afterwards came to terms with Mstislav, each reigning over their separate realms.

All these events occurred some time after Björn's departure from Russia and indeed after his return to Iceland, although prior to his death. Therefore, provided that the chronology is correct, Björn could not have been present in Russia at this time nor have been a member of Haakon's army. However, a report of the duel between Mstislav and Rededya could easily have been brought back to Norway or Sweden, probably the latter, by one of the Varangians who followed

Haakon and thence have travelled to Iceland, where it became mingled with the other traditions which came to be attached to Björn's name. (22)

There are a number of reasons for taking this view, even though one may be quite satisfied that Björn personally did not set foot in Russia after the death of Vladimir. These principally spring from the resemblances between the story of the fight between Mstislav and Rededya and that of the duel between Björn and Kaldimarr. One may summarize them briefly as follows:-

- (a) In both cases the strength of the opponent is emphasized;
- (b) Both Björn and Mstislav make a last effort when almost beaten and strike their opponent down;
- (c) In both cases the winner is to take all;
- (d) The acquisition of the loser's property is a feature of both stories, although admittedly there is a variation here. However, Björn does obtain the armour of Kaldimarr and the sword Meringr, as well as the title of "kappi".

One turns now to another tale concerned with the relations between Scandinavians and Russia in the days of Yaroslav the Wise, but one that is not referred to directly in the Primary Chronicle. This is the Eymundar þáttur Hringssonar, which forms one of the stories loosely connected with St. Olaf, and contained in Flateyjarbók. (23)

So far as is material to our purpose here, the story of the Eymundar þáttur can be briefly told. Eymundr was a Norwegian prince who assisted Jarizleifr. (Yaroslav)

against the invasions of his elder brother Burizlafr (Svyatopolk,<sup>(24)</sup> married to a daughter of Boleslaw I of Poland, who in 1018 attacked Yaroslav in alliance with Svyatopolk).

After Eymundr had slain Burizlafr, he fell out with Jarizleifr and went over to another brother, Vartilafr (Yaroslav's nephew, Bryachislav),<sup>(25)</sup>

According to the pátr, Eymundr was accompanied by five Icelanders when he trapped and slew Burizlafr. The names of all these five Icelanders are given, one of them being called Biorn and another Gardaketill,<sup>(26)</sup> who also appears later in Yngvars saga víðforla.<sup>(27)</sup>

Finnur Jónsson<sup>(28)</sup> suggests that the Biorn who accompanied Eymundr was Björn Hitdœlakappi. This would not, however, agree with the chronology of the saga, as Björn had left Russia before Eymundr's arrival in that country, which could not have been earlier than 1015.<sup>(29)</sup>

Nevertheless, there are again certain resemblances between the Eymundar pátr and the Kaldimarr episode in the Bjarnar saga. We have in both cases an invading kinsman, who is slain by the hero, albeit in rather different circumstances in each of the two stories. An Icelander named Björn is a principal character in both tales. Also to be noted is the textual similarity in that both invading armies are described in the same terms, in Bjarnar saga as a "herr oflyandi"<sup>(30)</sup> and in Eymundar pátr as an "oflyandi herr".<sup>(31)</sup>

One cannot escape the conclusion that, rather than Björn Hitdœlakappi having brought the story of Eymundr to Iceland, as Finnur Jónsson suggests, the Eymundr story itself may well have influenced the traditions about Björn or, at any rate, the saga's author. Of course, the name of Biorn

for one of the companions of Eymundr may merely have been arrived at as an echo from the traditions surrounding Björn Hítöelakappi and perhaps this is the most likely, so far as this one point is concerned. Mutual influence of the saga and Þáttur upon each other cannot be excluded and, in this regard, one must not forget that the only version we have for this part of Bjarnar saga is from the Bajarbók manuscript of Óláfs saga helga. In other words, both the Eymundar þáttur and the chapter under discussion of Bjarnar saga form part of the corpus of literature written around St. Olaf and, in such circumstances, influence of one story upon the other would not be surprising. The date of such influence might accordingly be relatively quite late. This could also account for the similarity noted above of the expressions used to denote the two invading armies, but, on the other hand, these may also justly be regarded as versions of a somewhat stereotyped phrase. (32)

At this point, it is appropriate to consider the name Kaldimarr itself and its possible derivation. In this connection, it is necessary to point out that the name or one very similar to it appears in Verse 30 of the saga, the last three lines of which read;

"braut kalldhamars nauta

mer of kenndr imyndum

Maringr rodinn väre." (33)

The term Kaldhamarsnautr appears as a sverðsheit in Snorra Edda. (34) This however could owe its origin to the verse, and, according to Nordal, (35) the words "braut kalldhamars nauta" simply mean "sverð brotnuðu". In other

words, although one may accept Kaldhamarsnautr as a sverðsheiti or preferably as a sverðskening,<sup>(36)</sup> it is not to be interpreted as meaning "the gift of Kaldimarr" but merely as a sword which has come into contact with and been fashioned by a cold hammer. This interpretation is undoubtedly an attractive one.

Still greater doubt attaches to the meaning of the word Mæringr. Helmut De Boor<sup>(37)</sup> considered Mæringr to be a mannsheiti and not a sverðsheiti and indeed it features amongst the mannsheiti in the Catalogue verses of Snorra Edda.<sup>(38)</sup> Both Nordal<sup>(39)</sup> and Finnur Jónsson<sup>(40)</sup> reject De Boor's interpretation, however.

The story that Mæringr fell to Björn's lot, after he had slain Kaldimarr, is not the only one to account for his acquisition of the sword. In the small Þáttur relating to Björn which is to be found in the Tómasskinna and AM61 fol. manuscripts of Óláfs saga helga and which is printed as appendix III to the text in this edition it is told that "Ólafr konungr gaf Birni sverð gott er hann kallaði Mæringh."<sup>(41)</sup> On the other hand, in Bjarnar saga, it is said that King Olaf had given Þórðr a sword.<sup>(42)</sup>

It can hardly be doubted that the duel related in the saga never took place and that Kaldimarr never existed. There is also no valid reason to doubt that the latter's name has merely been formed from analogy with Valdimarr and it seems most probable that it received its original inspiration from a misinterpretation of the words "kaldhamars nauta" in Verse 30, a misconception which apparently predates the writing or composition of the saga itself.<sup>(43)</sup> The original

name of the kappi has been lost, if it was ever known.

As Sigurður Nordal says, <sup>(44)</sup> it is clear that, whatever swords broke, Meringr was not one of them, even in the dream in Verse 30. De Boor's claim that Meringr is a mannsheiti appears somewhat improbable, but is lent support by the fact that Björn is wounded in the subsequent fight and that the name of Meringr as Björn's sword is probably derived solely from the line in Verse 30. It would therefore be easy to attribute to the defeated champion both the name Kaldimarr and the sword Meringr, both names being invented as a result of Verse 30. In the other source, however, the sword Meringr is given to Björn by King Olaf and this could very well be more correct.

The conclusions drawn may therefore be summarized as follows:-

- (1) There were probably many local traditions concerning Björn Hitdoelakappi, the last of the kappar in Iceland. <sup>(45)</sup>
- (2) It was necessary to account for his name and this could be done by means of a typical adventure of an Icelander abroad, although Björn may indeed have fought in Russia amongst the Varangians who were employed by Valdimarr.
- (3) Björn and other Icelanders may well have brought a multiplicity of stories to Iceland concerning the reigns of Valdimarr and Yaroslav and these could have been used in the following way to compile the tale in the saga:-

- (i) the story of Yaropolk and Vladimir to account for the close relatives with equal rights to the throne, except that the roles are reversed, Vladimir being the younger and the invader in reality.
  - (ii) the fight between the two champions on the river bank to account for both the discovery of an unexpected champion after seeking one fruitlessly through a whole army and the gigantic strength of the opponent.
  - (iii) the duel between Mstislav and Rededya to account for the "winner take all" motive, the strength of the opponent, the last effort when almost defeated, the slaying of the opponent and the acquisition of his property.
  - (iv) the Eymundr story with the invading kinsman, (here the elder), and his defeat and slaying by the hero, a Scandinavian, may also have been not without influence. The fact that the name of Björn is given as that of one of Eymundr's companions proves very little and can well be a reflection from the story of Björn Hítðalakappi.
- (4) A misinterpretation of a line in Verse 30, a misconception predating the final composition of the saga, accounts for the name Kaldimarr, combined with easy suggestion from Valdimarr. The champion had previously, like the champion of the Pechenegs, never had a name known to posterity, or it had become lost.



(5) Verse 30 also at a previous date supplied the name of Mæringr as that of Björn's sword, although this is less certain, and the name of Mæringr could well have predated the composition of the verse, particularly if it is genuinely by Björn. In any event, it was then convenient to ascribe Björn's acquisition of Mæringr to his defeat of Kaldimarr, but the statement elsewhere that he was given the sword Mæringr by King Olaf may and probably does reflect a truer tradition. This is a problem which is, however, extremely difficult and, in fact, is probably impossible to resolve.

NOTES.

- (1) BSN, p.9, 11.7-8.  
- See, however, W.H.Vogt, "Die Bjarnar saga hitdoelakappa", ANF XXXVII (1921), 56-7, where Vogt points out that Þórðr himself calls Björn a kappi in the saga and says that the property Björn took from the outlaws would be his gift with the name. (BSN, p.46, 11.4-7). Vogt considered that Björn was not earlier referred to as a kappi and that the saga's story of how Björn received his title in Russia is modelled on Eyrbyggja saga's account of how Björn Breiðvíkingakappi received his as a result of his service with the Jómsvikings. (ÍF IV (1935), 80, 106).
- (2) See S.H.Cross and O.P.Sherbowitz-Wetzor, The Russian Primary Chronicle (N.D.), 242. (Note 74).  
- "The assassination of Yaropolk and Vladimir's occupation of Kiev should probably be dated as of 978, since the latter died in 1015 after a reign of 37 years."
- (3) Russian Primary Chronicle, 87.
- (4) Ibid, 91.
- (5) Ibid, 93.
- (6) R.C.Boer, Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa, XXI-XXII.
- (7) Helmut De Boer, "Das Schwert Mering", ZfP XLV (1913), 292.  
F.Braun, "Das Historische Russland im Nordischen Schrifttum des X.-XIV. Jahrhunderts", Festschrift für Eugen Mogk (1924), 173.  
S.H.Cross: "La Tradition Islandaise de Saint Vladimir",

Révue des Études Slaves, IX (1931), 139-40.

Ad. Stender-Petersen, "Die Varägersage als Quelle der Altrussischen Chronik", Acta Jutlandica VI, 1 (1934), 162-3.

Sigurður Nordal, ÍF III, (1938), LXXVII-LXXVIII.

- On the other hand, Boer's view has been accepted at its face value by W.H.Vogt, "Die Bjarnar saga hitdoelakappa", 38.

(8) See S.H. Cross, "The Earliest Allusion in Slavic Literature to the Revelations of Pseudo-Methodius", Speculum IV (1929), 333.

(9) Russian Primary Chronicle, 119.

(10) "Then there came to the Prince an old man who said to him, 'Oh Prince, I have a younger son at home. I came forth with four others, but he abides by the hearth.'" Russian Primary Chronicle, 120.

- This is a typical literary and folk motif. See, inter alia, note by Sigurður Nordal to "Egils saga", ÍF II (1933), 62; Jan De Vries: Heldenlied en Heldensage (1959), 198 (English translation, Heroic Song and Heroic Legend (1963), 214) and, for full references, especially Stith Thompson: Motif-Index of Folk-Literature, (1955-1958), Vol.V, pp.8, 13 and 18 at the following items:-

- L.101. Unpromising hero (male Cinderella).
- L.131. Hearth abode of unpromising hero (heroine).
- L.311. Weak (small)hero overcomes large fighter.

- For comments on the circumstance that the motif of the youth, who remains amongst the ashes by the fireside and

does not show his greatness until he becomes adult and is needed for an important event, seems to echo memories the general custom amongst aboriginal tribes that a youth became a full member only after undergoing an initiation ceremony, see Jan De Vries, Heldensagen, (1962), 215 and, concerning the initiation ceremony generally, the same author's Heldenlied en Heldensage, 203 ff. (English translation, Heroic Song and Heroic Legend, 220 ff.) - both works cited above.

- (11) Russian Primary Chronicle, 120.
- (12) BSH, p.7, ll.15-16.
- (13) Russian Primary Chronicle, 120.
- (14) "Die Varägersage", 158 ff.
- (15) I Samuel, XVII.
- (16) "Die Varägersage", 161 ff. It is odd that Stender-Petersen constantly refers to Björn as Bjarni.
- (17) Great Prince of Kiev from 1019 to 1054, married, as second wife, in 1019 Ingigerd, daughter of Olaf Skötkonung, King of Sweden.  
- See S.H.Cross, "Yaroslav the Wise in Norse Tradition", Speculum IV (1929), 177-97.
- (18) Russian Primary Chronicle, 134.
- (19) Ibid.
- (20) Ibid.
- (21) Ibid., 135.
- (22) For Mstislav, see Russian Primary Chronicle, 255-6 (Note 147) and general references there.
- (23) Edited by Guðbrandur Vigfusson and C.R.Unger. See Vol. II (1862), 118-34.

(24) Russian Primary Chronicle, 131 ff., 252-3 (Note 126).  
S.H.Cross, "Yaroslav the Wise in Norse Tradition",  
186-90.

(25) Russian Primary Chronicle, 134.  
S.H.Cross, "Yaroslav the Wise", 186-90.  
O.I.Senkovski, "De Islandske Sagaer i Deres Forhold  
til den Russiske Historie", Annaler for Nordisk  
Oldkyndighed og Historie (1847), 50.

(26) Flateyjarbók II. (1862), 127.  
- Of the other three, two were named Þórðr and the  
other Astkell.  
Senkovski (op.cit., p.50) considered that the Eymundar  
Þáttur was composed from the oral report of these five  
Icelanders and went so far as to maintain :

"Da Sagaerne dersteds allerede i det 11te Aarhundrede  
havde Afskrivere, der bare Omsorg for deres Opbevaring,  
saa blev sandsynligviis de fem Udvandredes Beretning  
ganske ordlydende optegnet."

(27) Edited by Emil Olson, S.G.N.L. XXXIX (1912)  
- The early part of this late saga is clearly taken  
from the Eymundar þáttur and Gardaketill, Eymundr's  
companion in the Þáttur is the companion of the latter's  
reputed son, Yngvar, in his saga. See Olson,  
Yngvars saga víðforla, XCII-XCIII.  
- A recent discussion of Yngvar and his ill-fated  
journey to the land of the Saracens (Serkland) and of  
the numerous Swedish runestones relating thereto is  
to be found in Elias Wessén, "Historiska Runindskrifter",  
Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademiens  
Handlingar. Filol.-Filos. Serien VI (1960), 30 ff.

- (28) Den Oldnorske og Oldislandske Litteraturs Historie II (1920-1924), 418-9, 779-80.
- (29) The year of Vladimir's death (See Note (2) above). Eymundr did not go to Russia until after he had learnt of Vladimir's death. "Eymundar þáttur", Flb. II, 119 ff. and see Russian Primary Chronicle, 252-3.
- (30) BSH, p.7, l.14.
- (31) Flb. II, 126.
- (32) For further examples, see "Saga Ólafs konungs Tryggvasonar", Forrnanna Sögur. (1825), 199 and "Saga Haralds Gilla", Forrnanna Sögur VII (1832), 189.
- (33) BSH, p.49, ll.24-6.
- (34) Edda Snorra Sturlusonar (1952), 239.
- (35) ÍF III, 179.
- (36) Ibid, LXXVIII.
- (37) "Das Schwert Mering", 297.
- According to De Bøor, Meringr may be another name for Goth.-Cf. inter alia, skati marinka (on the Rök stone). - See also in this regard Kemp Malone, "The Theodoric of the Rök Inscription", Acta phil. Scand. IX (1934-1935), 76-84; Elias Wessén, "Runstenen vid Røks kyrka", Kungl. Vitterhets Akademiens Handlingar. Filol.-Filos. serien V (1958), 46; Lis Jacobsen, "Rokstudien", ANF LXXVII (1961), 10.
- Wessén, referring to Theodoric the Ostrogoth, says:-  
"Han kallas också skati Meringa (r.11) 'den främste av Meringar.' Man har med skäl sammanställt detta med ett uttryck i den fornengelska dikten 'Deors klagan' (v.18): Peodric ahte britig

wintra Meringa burg 'Teoderik ägde under 30 år Märingars borg.' Märingar var ett namn på Teoderiks släkt. Hans fader hette Theodemer (Piudamers), och även dennes två bröder hade namn på - mers: Valamer (Walamers) och Vidumer (Widumers). I den senare diktningen har Märingar fått en allmännare betydelse och brukas som ett appellativum 'berömda män' (till adj. marr)."

(38) Edda Snorra Sturlusonar, 234.

(39) ÍF III, LXXIX.

(40) Op. cit. 419.

De Boor's view, however, is supported by W.H.Vogt: "Die Bjarnar saga hitdoelakappa", 56.

(41) Appendix III, p.119,11.12-13.

(42) BSH, p.16, 11.9-10.

(43) Sigurður Nordal, "Formáli", ÍF III, LXXIX.

(44) Ibid.

(45) Hans Kuhn, "Kappar og Berserkir", Skirnir CXXIII (1949), 111.

- "Sifðustu menn, sem fengu viðurnefnið kappi og nokkuð kveður að, eru þeir nafnar Björn Ásbrandsson Breiðvíkingakappi og Björn Arngeirsson Hítðlakappi."

- But Björn Breiðvíkingakappi received his title rather earlier than did his namesake.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DATE OF ORIGIN OF THE SAGA.

I. Literary Relations.

In determining the date of origin of a saga, so far as this is possible, special regard must be had, not only to indications of age in its language, but also, and more especially, to evidence of its literary relations with other sagas. Indications of age are very often obliterated by the linguistic changes effected by succeeding generations of scribes whereas literary relationships will almost always remain apparent.

In discussing literary relations, it must be remembered that this is a two-way traffic. The saga in question will not only have been affected by older works but will itself have influenced others written subsequently. All this has a good deal of bearing on dating the work under discussion but the matter is further complicated by the fact that certain sagas have most probably been rewritten at least once, with the result that the version which has been preserved for posterity may be comparatively late but undoubtedly contains passages which are much older. Grettis saga is a case in point. A late but rewritten saga may therefore show traces of apparent influence from an earlier saga but the particular incident may already have been present in a primitive version of the former, which actually predated the preserved version of the latter. In such a case the influence could actually have flowed in quite the opposite direction from that in which, on the face of it, it appears to flow.



Not every resemblance between sagas can be brought under the heading of literary relations. Tricks of style and expressions which are common to Old Norse literature as a whole and motifs which are frequently found, but which have no bearing on the action of the saga beyond the incident of which they form part, are, for example, not properly to be classed as evidence of literary relationships.

The phrase, "geingur á milli bóls og höfuðs",<sup>(1)</sup> applied to Þórðr's beheading of Björn, is an example of the former. The same expression occurs in Guðmundar saga dýra, where the principal party is also named Þórðr. There we read :

"Þórðr var úti ok spurði, hvat þeir hefði at gert. En þeir sögðu áverka við Ögmund ok líf ok hann vildi prestsfund.

Þórðr kvað þat ekki nema slægð hans ok kvaðst mundu hafa gengit milli bols ok höfuðs, ef hann hefði við verit."<sup>(2)</sup>

Despite the curious resemblance and the temptation to see some connection between the two incidents, there is no good reason for regarding the similarity as other than coincidental.

As an example of a stereotyped incident or motif which can in no wise prove or suggest a literary relationship, one may quote the favourite device of the warrior who, when a spear is hurled at him, catches it in the air and hurls it back at his assailant, often with dire results to the latter. In Biarnar saga we read :-

"Þorvalldur Eyðsson skytur spíoti að Byrni þegar er hann Nær til hans, Biorn tok spíotid á lopti og sendi aftur

thil Eiganda, þad kom a Porvalld midianng og fiell hann daudur til Jardar." (3)

Examples from other sagas are too numerous to quote and could be selected at random. (4) Phrases and incidents such as these were part of the vocabulary and stock-in-trade of all the saga authors and no special significance can be attached to their use, beyond that of serving as an adornment to the tale being told.

The literary relations of a saga may be said to be divisible into four groups which, however, overlap to some extent. These may be briefly described as follows :-

- A. Common saga or literary motifs.
- B. Motifs common to a group of sagas.
- C. Cases of direct resemblances between individual sagas or poems, possibly involving borrowings.
- D. Cases where direct references are made to characters in another saga.

When these groupings are applied to the literary relations of Bjarnar saga, we find the following :-

- A. Common saga or literary motifs.
1. The Icclander at foreign courts.

The exploits of the Icelandic hero, who is also frequently a poet, at foreign courts, furnish an extremely common motif in the sagas. No doubt such deeds were often greatly exaggerated, to increase the importance of their fellow-countrymen in the eyes and the ears of the Icelandic public, the readers and auditors of the sagas. Nevertheless, when reference is made to a literary motif in Icelandic literature, one is not concerned with its historical truth

but merely with its frequency as a motif.

In this case, its frequency is such that there would be little point in tracing all the occasions here especially as there seldom can be any question of direct literary influence having been exerted. This view is all the more attractive, if we accept that Icelanders who, from necessity of trade had to be great travellers, would inevitably from time to time have made their appearance at courts, especially in Norway, even if not to the extent claimed in the sagas. What would thus have been a generally known and ever present fact and theme in the minds of the saga authors would consequently not owe its existence to literary influence.

Occasional influence there would no doubt be, however. In the case of Gunnlaugs saga this influence appears to be unquestionable and resemblances between this saga and Bjarnar saga in the descriptions of the reception of the respective heroes at royal courts are too close to be coincidental.

In Bjarnar saga Björn travels to Norway to the court of Earl Eric with a recommendation from his kinsman, Skúli Þorsteinsson, who is at that time, according to the saga, residing at his ancestral property at Borg. The earl receives Björn well.<sup>(5)</sup> In Gunnlaugs saga Skúli is actually at the court when Gunnlaugr arrives and Skúli first recommends him to the earl and later at this same meeting saves him from the earl's wrath.<sup>(6)</sup> Björn M. Ólsen<sup>(7)</sup> points out that the author of Gunnlaugs saga probably got the idea

from Bjarnar saga of having Skúli act as an intermediary between Earl Eric and Gunnlaugr. Since the action in Gunnlaugs saga is supposed to take place a few years before that in Bjarnar saga, it was reasonable to assume that Skúli, who had fought on the side of Earl Eric at the Battle of Svöld in the year 1000, would still have been with Eric when Gunnlaugr visited the earl soon afterwards, whereas, when Björn arrived about five years later, Skúli was back in Iceland, at least according to Bjarnar saga.

There are verbal resemblances between the above-mentioned scene in Gunnlaugs saga and that in Bjarnar saga, when Þórðr has joined Björn at the earl's court. When Þórðr arrives, the earl asks Björn if he knows Þórðr, in the same way as he had asked Skúli who Gunnlaugr was. Björn recommends Þórðr as Skúli had recommended Gunnlaugr, although in different terms.<sup>(8)</sup> However, at a later date, the earl calls Þórðr to his presence and asks whether he knew Björn and why Skúli should have sent Björn to him. Þórðr praises Björn and then asks the earl in turn a question concerning Björn's age and provides the answer himself. We read :-

“Þórðr mælti. hafi þer nockut spurt eptir huersu gamall maðr Biörn er. Ecki segir jarl. Þórðr mælti hann er nu xvijj vetra.”<sup>(9)</sup>

In Gunnlaugs saga, on the other hand, it is the earl who asks the question about Gunnlaugr's age and Gunnlaugr replies.

“Jarl mælti : :... eða hve gamall maðr ertu, Íslendingr?” Gunnlaugr svarar : ‘Ek em nú átján vetra,’ segir hann.”<sup>(10)</sup>

The verbal similarity here can scarcely be coincidental and must almost certainly be due to the literary influence of Bjarnar saga upon Gunnlaugs saga.

It is worth noting in passing also that when Gunnlaugr arrives at the earl's court, he is accompanied by a certain Auðunn festargarmr, possibly a Norwegian, referred to in Laxdoela saga probably more correctly as Auðunn festargarmr.<sup>(11)</sup> This Auðunn was known to the earl. In Bjarnar saga, when Björn arrives at the court of King Olaf,<sup>(12)</sup> he is also accompanied by an Auðunn, this time surnamed bakskiki and hailing from the Vík. There is of course no question of this Auðunn being identical with his namesake mentioned in Gunnlaugs saga, where it is clearly stated<sup>(13)</sup> that he is the same as the one mentioned in Laxdoela saga, although this could be an interpolation. However, it is possible that the author of Gunnlaugs saga, reading in Bjarnar saga of Auðunn bakskiki accompanying Björn into the presence of King Olaf, decided to make the other Auðunn, whom he knew of from Laxdoela saga, the companion of Gunnlaugr when he visited Earl Eric.

In addition, we read in Bjarnar saga that, before Björn left King Olaf to return to Iceland, the latter gave him an elaborate cloak, skickiu vandada.<sup>(14)</sup> In Gunnlaugs saga, it is told that, after Gunnlaugr had recited a poem in his honour to King Ethelred of England, the king gave him as a reward for the poem "skarlatsskikkju skinndregna innum beztum skinum ok hlaðbúna í skaut niðr".<sup>(15)</sup>

There seems little doubt that this incident is derived

from King Olaf's gift of a cloak to Björn in Bjarnar saga. This becomes all the more certain when the subsequent history of the two cloaks is considered, as will be referred to later in this chapter.

Gifts of cloaks, swords, rings, etc. by foreign potentates to Icelanders, whether poets or otherwise, as rewards for their verses or services or merely as marks of friendship, are common enough in the sagas and direct connections between one and the other reference of this kind would be few. For instance, in Bjarnar saga, it is stated that :

"hinn atta dag iola gaf Eiríkr jarl maala mǫnnum sínum sem sidr er höfðingia til í öðrum löndum. hann gaf Birni gullhring þann er stóð haalfa mörk ok naut hann at þui wasklæika síns. ok Skula frænda síns. Þordi gaf hann sverð godan grip at kvæðis laumum". (16)

In the much later Þorleifs Þáttr jarlsskálds Þorleifr composes a drápa for King Sveinn Forkbeard of Denmark, as Þórðr was to do for Earl Eric. The king and all those that heard praised both the poem and its recitation. Then in words not unlike those in Bjarnar saga :

"Könungr gaf Þorleifi at kvæðislaumum hring þann, er stóð mörk, ok þat sverð, er til kom hálf mörk gulls, ok bað hann lengi með sér vera". (17)

There is undeniable resemblance here which may denote literary influence but equally may arise from a common use of set phrases in standard circumstances.

Finnboga saga, a late saga which has borrowed its motifs from more than one source and has particularly been

shown to have been influenced by Gunnlaugs saga, (18) has within the space of a couple of pages two cases of royal or princely gifts to Finnbogi, but in neither case as a reward for a poem. First from Earl Hákon of Hlaðir :

"Jarl gaf honum gullhring þann, er stóð mörk, ok skikkju, inn bezta grip, ok veri þat tignum manni samilig gjöf at þiggja". (19)

Secondly from King Jón of Greece, presumably John I Tzimisce, Emperor of Byzantium (969-976) :

"Konungr gaf Finnboga gullhring, er stóð tíu aura, sverð ok skjöld, ina beztu grip". (20)

At the same time, the king lengthened Finnbogi's name and called him Finnbogi inn rammi. This is reminiscent of King Valdimarr's gift to Björn of the sword Maringr :

"Pui var Biörn síðan kappi kallaðr ok kendr wid herað sitt". (21)

As was mentioned earlier, King Olaf later gave Björn "skickiu vandada". There are therefore reasons for thinking that Finnboga saga has in the quoted passages been influenced by Bjarnar saga. This impression is strengthened when one compares the following additional passage from Finnboga saga with two quoted earlier from Bjarnar saga and Gunnlaugs saga :

"Konungr segir : 'Hversu gamall maðr ertu?'  
Finnbogi segir : 'Ek em nú átján vetra gamall.'" (22)

It is perhaps proper also to quote here the continuation of the passage in this context from Gunnlaugs saga together with a passage in another place in Finnboga saga. In Gunnlaugs saga, Earl Eric replies :

"'Pat lét ek um mált', segir jarl, 'at þú verðir

eigi annarra átján.' Gunnlaugr mælti ok heldr lágt : 'Bið mér engra forboena,' segir hann, 'en bið þér heldr.' (23)

In Finnboga saga, in an exchange between Alfr aftrkamba and Finnbogi, Alfr asks :

'eða hversu gamall maðr ertu?' Finnbogi segir : 'Ek em seytján vetra.' Alfr mælti : 'Vertu eigi annarra seytján vetra jafnmikill ok sterkr sem þú ert.' Finnbogi segir : 'Pat er sem verðr til þó, enda muntu dauðr áðr.' (24)

One can hardly doubt the dependence here of Finnboga saga on Gunnlaugs saga and possibly through the latter on Bjarnar saga. In the earlier quoted passages concerning the gift of a ring and a sword and the value of the ring, dependence on Bjarnar saga seems more direct.

Other examples of gifts by foreign princes to Icelanders could be adduced here, but the above are sufficient to illustrate the point.

## 2. Dreams and dream verses.

Dreams, sometimes accompanied by verses, are of frequent occurrence in the sagas and may exhibit similarities and follow a regular pattern, without it being possible to discern literary relationships with any certainty. They are a literary device suitable to a superstitious age and serve an admirable purpose. They foretell and foreshadow future events, introduce an element of mystery and the supernatural, generate excitement and anticipation in the reader or listener and altogether add adornment to the story. Their chief purpose is perhaps to imbue the tale with the sense of fate, of something against which the hero may and does valiantly fight, something which, despite his resistance, is



inescapable. The reader knows what will inevitably happen, all the more so as the meaning of the dream is frequently interpreted minutely for him. What he is interested in is principally not what will happen, but how it will happen. The author of the saga thus displays his skill in completing the pattern of the story, of which the dream forms an important strand.

In Bjarnar saga dreams are mentioned on four separate occasions and on the last two occasions are illustrated by verses, two of the finest in the saga.

All the dreams are either by Björn himself or concern him. On the first occasion, he has been staying with his aunt Þórhildr and her husband Arnórr. When Björn is about to leave, Þórhildr tells him that he should not cross Beruvíkrhraun except as one of a party of twelve men, because she has dreamt that Þórðr would ambush him there. (25) Björn ignores her advice but she sends reinforcements after him just the same in the shape of her husband and eight others. In the event the ambush fails.

The remaining three occasions relate to dreams by Björn himself. In the first case, he has been staying with a certain woman named Þorbjörg, who had invited him for the sake of friendship. On the third night he had cried out in his sleep and, when he woke up, the housewife asked him what he had dreamt, and why he had cried out in such a way in his sleep. Björn replied that it had seemed to him that six men were attacking him and that he was in dire need of assistance. Þorbjörg then makes the curious reply that they were Manna fylgiur 'fetches of men', who were evilly disposed

towards him and she advises him not to go anywhere until they had made sure that there was no hindrance to his journey or no one was lying in wait for him or at least he should return a different way from the one he came. Björn promises to do as she says and take the other road but of course takes the shortest way home just the same. On the way he is ambushed by Þórðr and five other men. Björn kills one of his assailants and the others give up the attack. (26)

Georgia Dunham Kelchner points out (27) that this dream is a rarity in that the six men who Björn dreamt were attacking him are themselves described as "fetches of men". This is extremely unusual since the fetch or fylgia is normally in the shape of an animal and, since these are attacking fetches, it would be reasonable to expect them to be in the shape of wolves. G.D.Kelchner does mention, however, (28) that in Gísla saga Gísli dreams shortly before his death that he is attacked by many men, the leader of whom, who was howling a great deal, appeared to be wearing a wolf's head. This was then apparently a fetch in human shape apart from his wolf's head. (29)

There are numerous cases of attacks by wolves in dreams. To mention only two, there is first Gísli Þorgautsson's dream in Heiðarvíga saga, where he dreams that he was attacked by many wolves and was hard put to deal with them. (30) Further, in Droplaugarsona saga, Helgi Droplaugarson has an evil dream, crying out in his sleep, and, being asked what he had dreamt, subsequently says that he and his brother had been attacked by eighteen or twenty wolves. He is warned that he will be ambushed and he is advised to avoid

the danger by staying with the person warning him. Helgi answers that he will travel as he had intended so to do. (31)

Both these dreams have some analogy to Björn's dream mentioned above, except that the attacking figures are in the shape of men and not men in the shape of wolves. Helgi's dream, which G.D.Kelchner does not mention amongst the examples she gives, is the closer in analogy. Like Björn he cries out in his sleep, is asked what he has dreamt, is warned of ambush and is advised to avoid the danger, which advice he chooses to ignore, with fatal results in Helgi's case, although not in Björn's. There is the further analogy that Björn had stayed three nights with Þorbjörg and on the third night had had the evil dream and cried out in his sleep. It is said that on the night when Helgi had his evil dream and cried out in his sleep, he had woken up three times in that one night. Heiðarvíga saga and Droplaugarsona saga, like Bjarnar saga, are reckoned early sagas with Heiðarvíga saga the earliest of the three.

In the next chapter of the saga it is told that Björn had gone to stay with his sister and had been there for three nights. (32) Every night he dreamt what seemed to him to be of importance. Before they parted, his sister asked him what their contents had been and he told her in the remarkable verse, "Draum dreymput nv Nauma", etc. (Verse 30) that he had dreamt, in effect, that he would be put in danger of his life, both his hands would be bathed in blood, swords would be broken and his own sword, famous Mæringr, would be reddened in his hands. (33) It is not recorded what his sister said in reply to this but, on the way home, Björn

is attacked again by Þórðr, this time with nine followers. Björn receives several wounds but narrowly manages to escape after killing two of his attackers with a single spear-throw.

Finally, on the morning of his death, Björn tells his wife Þórdís that he had been troubled by dreams the night before and that he had often dreamt in such a fashion but that this one was the worst of all. Þórdís warns him that he should not go abroad that day since his enemies were all about him. He replies in tones reminiscent of Cæsar's reply to Calpurnia : "Ecki lat ek drauma raða forum minum." She warns him again and once more asks him what he has dreamt about. He replies in another remarkable verse, "Vnndr er ef ecki benndir", etc. (Verse 34), in which he speaks of prophetic disir giving him a sign and of the helmeted valkyrie of God calling him home in every dream. In vain his wife tries again to dissuade him from leaving the house and he departs to his death. (34)

Dream verses and dream women are not rare in Old Norse literature but the greatest concentration of them is to be found in Gísla saga. In this saga we read of the two dream women, the better and the worse, who constantly came to Gíslí in his dreams. Particularly it is said on one occasion that Gíslí dreamt that the better woman came to him. She appeared to be riding on a grey horse and asked him to go with her to her house and he accepted that offer, she saying later that he would go and dwell there in wealth and prosperity when he died. Then he awoke and uttered three verses related to what he had dreamt. (35) In the first of these (Verse 25 of Gísla saga), Gíslí speaks of the woman

who asks him to ride home with her on her grey horse.

\*Heim bauð með sér sínum  
saum-Hlökk gróum blakki,  
. . . . .  
. . . . . lofskreyti ríða.\*

In these lines Gísli describes himself as lofskreytir, a kenning for a scald. This reminds one vividly of the valkyrie of God who in Verse 34 of Bjarnar Saga :

\*heim or huerium draumi  
hialm fallinn bydr skalldi". (36)

Both verses indicate the approaching death of the poet and both have a curious mixture of heathen and Christian belief with a female figure, well epitomized as a "valkyrie of God", inviting the poet home to another world after death. The contents of the three verses in Gísla saga are particularly poignant, having regard to Gísli's unhappy and desperate situation as a hunted outlaw but grandeur as well as simplicity are also present in Björn's verse, perhaps even to a greater extent, as the tension slowly builds up and the tale approaches its inevitable and tragic climax. It is generally agreed that Gísla saga is later than Bjarnar saga and it also seems likely that these particular verses in Gísla saga are not genuine, although this is a matter for dispute. There is therefore every likelihood that Verse 25 of Gísla saga has been influenced by Verse 34 of Bjarnar saga, particularly as it seems fairly evident, as will be referred to below, that Bjarnar saga has influenced Gísla saga in at

least two other places.

When prophetic disir are considered, the three women come to mind who appeared to Þorsteinn Síðu-Hallsson in his three dreams before he died. In each of these dreams one of the women spoke a verse and the purport of the dreams was to prophesy his death at the hands of his Irish thrall. (37) More appropriate perhaps are Glaumvör's words in Verse 27 of Atlamał, when she tells her husband Gunnarr of her dream, prophetic of his death. She dreamt that dead women had come there that night. They wished to choose him and invited him to their benches. She declared that he was now parted from his disir ("aflima orðnar þér disir"): Gunnarr agrees that this means that he has only a short while to live, but it is now too late to change his plans. (38) He is, in other words, just as fated as Björn was when he dreamt of the "valkyrie of God" inviting him home on the night before his death and spoke of "prophetic disir" giving him a sign. Neither Gunnarr nor Björn can change their intention to go forth, although they know that they are inevitably going towards their deaths.

It is characteristic of the dreams in Bjarnar saga that they all warn of impending danger or death to the hero of the saga. They do not foretell the future in a general sense, as in Þorsteinn's dream in Gunnlaugs saga (39) and in Guðrún's dream of her four husbands in Laxdoala saga. (40) although these also foretell death to a certain extent, but not that of the dreamer. The dreams in Bjarnar saga may, however, be regarded as typical of saga dreams, in the atmosphere that they convey.

3. Warning women.

Closely linked with the motif of the dream is that of the warning woman, frequently found in the sagas. It is, of course, also possible on occasions for the person giving the warning to be a man instead.

In Bjarnar saga there are three instances of a warning being given, each time by a woman. Two of these instances have already been mentioned above in connection with dreams. These are when Þórhildr warns Björn not to cross Beruvíkrhraun without a strong party of followers and Þorbjörg warns him not to return home the way he came or else to make sure that no one was lying in wait for him.

The third instance occurs when Þórðr rides to Hólmr to invite Björn to come and stay with him for the winter. (41) It is said that Þórðr spoke with fair words. Þórdís, Björn's mother, was present and she warned Björn, telling him that the smoother Þórðr talked the falser he would think and that Björn should not trust him. Arngeirr, Björn's father, who throughout the saga does not display a great deal of intelligence, opposed his wife and argued that Björn should go and that Þórðr could be believed. The result was that, as usual, the warning goes unheeded, and Björn went to stay with Þórðr, with unhappy results.

Rolf Heller in his Die Literarische Darstellung der Frau in den Isländersagas (42) lists instances of warnings in the sagas and points out that these conform to a pattern. The warning of danger or that something will go wrong is followed straightaway by its rejection. The person who is warned evidently feels that he will display weakness if he

takes heed of the warning. Accordingly he disregards it and plunges straight into misfortune. Like the dream motif with which it is so often linked, the purpose of the warning motif is to increase the hero's stature and to introduce an element of tension into the story.

Heller<sup>(43)</sup> also draws attention to the number of cases where the woman who gives the warning only appears in the saga in this particular scene and for this one object. This is the case with both Þórhildr and Þorbjörg in Bjarnar saga, although it is not so obvious in the case of Þórhildr, Björn's aunt, who has quite a lot to say for herself. In fact, before her actual dream, she had been anxious for Björn's safety and had pressed her son Þorfinnr upon him.

4. The slayer takes his enemy's head with him.

After Þórðr had slain Björn, he took his victim's head and bound it to his saddle-strap, letting it hang by his saddle.<sup>(44)</sup> He then rode off with it thus.

Grettir suffered a fate somewhat similar to that of Björn. After he had been slain, Þorbjörn Öngull struck off his head and declared that he would take it away with him, as he would then be able to claim the price that had been put upon it.<sup>(45)</sup> Whether he tied it to his saddle-strap or not is not recorded. It is said, however, that he and his companions preserved it in salt throughout the winter.<sup>(46)</sup>

In Fóstbroeðra saga, we read that when Þorgeirr Hávarsson was slain, "Þórarinn ofsi hjó höfuð af Þorgeiri ok hafði í brött með sér."<sup>(47)</sup> Later, when Þórarinn rode south, "hann hafði höfuð Þorgeirs í belg við slagálar sér til ágætis síns."<sup>(48)</sup> On the other hand in the version of this



story which is related in Pórarins þáttur in Ljósvetninga saga, the following is told of Pórarinn : "ok hjó hann af Þorgeiri höfuðit ok hafði með sér til Eyjafjarðar ok lagði þat í salt, er hann kom heim." (49) Combining the two versions we have a treatment of Þorgeirr's head which accords with both that given to Björn's head and to that of Grettir. Since Fóstbroeðra saga is accounted one of the earliest of the sagas and Pórarins þáttur is regarded as late, it is possible that Fóstbroeðra saga has influenced Bjarnar saga in this regard and probable that the additional treatment meted out to Þorgeirr's head in Pórarins þáttur is derived from Grettis saga.

Nevertheless, the motif is very common and its repeated appearance need not be traced back to direct influence of one saga on another. Nordal comments (50) that it seems probable that it is of foreign origin and this assumption is lent support by the fact that it appears in both Karlamagnús saga and Þiðreks saga, both of which compilations are derived from foreign originals.

In Karlamagnús saga, Oddgeir danskí slays Burnament. "Síðan tók Oddgeir höfuð Burnaments og batt við slagálar sér og reið á fund Karvels og konungsdóttur og færði þeim höfuðið." (51)

Similarly in Þiðreks saga, Þiðrekr af Bern kills Þiðrekr Valdimarsson and cuts off his head. Then we read : "Mú gengr Þiðrekr komungr til síns hests ok hefir höfuð Þiðreks Valdimarssonar í hendi sér ok knýttir við sínar slagálar ok ríðr mí sömu leið." (52)

One of the earliest examples of this motif, however, is to be found in Orkneyinga saga, where it is related :

"Nu uard þar hardr bardagi ok æigi langr adr Melbrigdi jall fellr ok allt hans foruneyti. en Sigurdr jall let festa hófud þeirra vid slagalar til ágætis ser". (53)

Orkneyinga saga and Fóstbroeðra saga are both reckoned to be very early and to date from about 1200 and one of these may have influenced the other directly, especially when one notes the wording "vid slagalar til ágætis ser" of the one and "við slagálar sér til ágætis sigrs síns" of the other.

As mentioned above, influence of Fóstbroeðra saga or, for that matter, Orkneyinga saga on Biarnar saga is possible, but the actual words in the latter saga, "Þordur tok hófud Biorns, og batt vid alar sier liet þar hanga vid sodul sinn", have rather more in common with those quoted above from Karlamagnús saga.

Whether this motif appeared in these sagas when they were first composed or whether it was interpolated later from a foreign source, perhaps Karlamagnús saga, cannot definitely be determined, but the latter may be judged unlikely.

The motif may still be of foreign origin but yet not be purely literary. There is no reason why Icelanders and other Scandinavians in the service of the Greek Emperor or the Grand Princes in Russia may not either have observed personally or learned of what may well have been a fairly common practice in Southern lands, whereby the severed head of an enemy became a trophy, a symbol of victory, something that might be exhibited throughout the countryside and thus demonstrate the apparent superiority of the slayer. News of

this practice could have been brought to Iceland and later it could have been adapted as a saga-motif.

To conclude, one can distinguish two stages of the motif. The first and probably the older is the fastening of the head to the saddle-strap, as in Fóstbroeðra saga, Orkneyinga saga, Biarnar saga, Karlamagnús saga and Piðreks saga. This does not give the impression of being specifically Norse.

Then in Pórarins þáttur and also in Grettis saga we have the second stage, the preservation of the head in salt throughout Winter. This refinement is in all probability Icelandic in origin and a direct literary relation between the two references is most likely.

Quite a different motif relating to the severing of an opponent's head is that found in Bárðar saga Snafellsáss<sup>(54)</sup> and Grettis saga,<sup>(55)</sup> where a mound-dweller is slain and his head cut off and placed by his thigh. This appears to be exclusively associated with the laying of draugar and is evidently quite unconnected with the motif just discussed.

##### 5. Klámhogg.

The klámhogg or "blow of shame" is also of fairly frequent occurrence, usually consisting of the slashing off of one's opponents' buttocks, naturally enough from the rear. Hence the name given to the blow, since it would be implied that the victim had been struck in the act of running away.

In Biarnar saga Þórðr meant to promise Björn that he would "hann hoggua klam hoggi", but through a slip of the tongue referred to it as "klækiz hogg".<sup>(56)</sup> Later we read :

"Hú er það sagt að Þórður hið til Biorns, og beyt af honum Þjóknappana, og fellur Biorn þa." (57) In this case, Þórður certainly struck Björn from behind but there was no question of the latter fleeing. Björn was surrounded by his enemies, severely wounded, so much indeed that he was unable to stand and was obliged to continue the fight on his knees. Björn got no dishonour from the blow and Þórður no honour. The blow was a cowardly one and deserved the term klækishögg rather than klámhögg.

Biarnar saga therefore is an exception in this respect. In the Flateyjarbók version of Fóstbroeðra saga Þormóður Kolbrúnarskáld dealt the peasant who had mocked at the wounded followers of King Olaf a klámhögg as he turned to go. "Þat högg kom á bakit, ok hjó hann af honum báða Þjóknappana." (58)

In Hallfreðar saga Ávaldi surprises the viking Söti at night. "Ávaldi hjó með sverði til Söta ok af honum báða Þjóknappana". The Flateyjarbók version adds "ok var þat banasár". (59) In Vatnsdœla saga Jökull and Þorsteinn, the sons of Ingimundur, pursue the evildoer, Þorgrímar. "Þorgrímar hljóp undan til árinna. Jökull kom sk svá nær, at sverðit tók til hans ok af þat, er nam, enn þat váru Þjóknapparnir báðir allt við bakhlut." (60)

The motif is not confined to the Sagas of Icelanders, but also seems to be found in Sturlunga saga. In Þorgils saga ok Hafliða, Már and Hrafn have done Hneitir a grave wrong. He pursues them and they attempt to cross a river. Már gets across but, as Hrafn is about to follow him, "koma þeir Hneitir at ok höggva Hrafn framan á Þjóknappana, ok fellr hann við sárit áfram". (61) Since, however, it is not

said that the buttocks were taken off, this may not properly be a klámhögg and is perhaps not connected with the other cases.

Influence of one of these sagas on the other is not excluded but neither is there any real reason to assume it. The motif is general enough and seems likely to be Scandinavian in origin. The interesting thing about its occurrence in Biarnar saga is that, whereas normally the klámhögg brings shame to the recipient, in that case the shame rebounds onto the donor.

#### 6. Father and son combat.

The combat of father and son with each other, without both parties being aware of the true relationship, is one of the most widespread motifs in literature and may truly be termed international. Its most famous examples are the conflicts between Hildebrand and Hadubrand in the Hildebrandslied, Odysseus and Telegonos in the Greek legend, Sohrab and Rustem in the Persian tale and Cuchulainn and Conlai in the Irish story. In all of these cases except that of Odysseus and Telegonos it is the father that slays the son.

There are many other examples, some where the father slays the son, others where the father himself is the victim and a third category where a fatal result does not occur, owing to mutual recognition in time. These are well documented in various places and it is not necessary to give any general résumé of them here. (62)

Some account must be given, however, of the employment of the motif in Icelandic literature. In Bjarnar saga, Kolli, supposedly the son of Þórðr, but who Björn had hinted was actually his son, takes part in the final attack on Björn.

"Peir socktu hann nu so fast, og Eingi meir enn Colli. Biorn mælti, fast sækir þu mig J dag Kolli seigir Biorn, Ey veit eg huorjum J er ad þyrna seigir hann, so er og seigir Biorn Moder þyn mun þetta fyrer þig hafa lagt, ad þu skillder mier hardasta adgongu veyta, Enn sia þykiunst Eg ad annad mun þier betur giefid, enn ættwysinn. Kolli seigir, Ey þyki mier þu þad snemma sagt hafa ef mier er nockur vandi a vid þig, og þegar geingur Kolli burtt og hættir adsokninne." (63)

Accordingly we have here the father-son combat where the father is aware of the relationship but the son is not. The son, however, on being advised of the true situation, immediately desists from attacking his father and steps aside.

The case is otherwise in Kjalnesinga saga, which probably dates from the early fourteenth century, where we find the solitary example in Old Norse literature of a son killing his father in such a contest. Jökull, the son of Búi and a Norwegian giantess, Fríðr, arrives in Iceland and presents himself to his father. Búi refuses to acknowledge him as his son but challenges him to a wrestling match to prove his claim. Jökull accepts with reluctance. In the ensuing contest, which is a very strenuous one, Búi is finally brought to a fall and receives injuries from it which are so serious that he dies three days later. It is then said that

"Jökli þótti verk sitt svá illt, at hann reið þegar í brutt ok til skips, er búit var suðr á Eyrarbakka, ok fór þar utan um sumarit." (64)

This meeting of Jökull and Búi has therefore more in common with that of Odysseus and Telegonos, who also comes from abroad to an island to slay his father, than with that of Hildebrand and his son. Except that the outcome is reversed, there is also great similarity with the story of Cuchulainn and his son. Jökull, Telegonos and Cuchulainn's son each have mothers of supernatural origin, who each send their son to seek his father, each of whom lives on an island. As has been pointed out, it is likely that there is a close connection between the Irish and the Icelandic story and indeed there are other traces of Irish influence in Kjalnesinga saga. (65)

Other than that the general motif is employed and that the father is ultimately killed in both cases, there is no further resemblance between Bjarnar saga and Kjalnesinga saga at this point and it seems extremely unlikely that the author of Kjalnesinga saga owed anything to Bjarnar saga for the development of this idea, although there are other points of resemblance between the two works, as will be mentioned later.

So far as the incident in Bjarnar saga is concerned, it may be regarded as certain that its author made use of the general motif of the combat between father and son in order to add dramatic tension to his story, in which aim he has certainly succeeded. It is also probable that his inspiration was from no written source but may perhaps have been vaguely derived from the ancient Germanic heroic poem

of Hildebrand and his son, the tale of which must have been well enough known in Iceland in the thirteenth century.

That it was known is proved by the fornaldarsaga Ásmundar saga kappabana,<sup>(66)</sup> the material of which was also made use of by Saxo Grammaticus and which contains several verses which must go back at least to the early twelfth century.<sup>(67)</sup> In this saga the tragic fight between father and son has been altered to one between half-brothers, in which Hildibrandr Húnakppi is slain by Ásmundr kappabani. The original outcome of the duel and relationship between the participants is made evident, however, by the brief mention that, shortly before his death, when a berserk's fury had come upon Hildibrandr, he met his son and straightaway slew him.<sup>(68)</sup>

There is also a version of the father-son combat in Landnámabók, where it is told concerning a settler, Evarr Ketilsson and his son Véfröðr, but with no serious result. There is no difference to speak of between the text in Hauksbók and in Sturlubók. In the former we read :

"Vefrodr kom vt sidar i Gaunguskarz ár ós ok geck nordann til faður sins ok kenndi Evarr hann ei. Þeir glimdu sva at vpp genngu stockar allir i husumum adr Vefrodr sagdi til sin."<sup>(69)</sup>

It is unlikely that this anecdote had any influence on Biarnar saga. It has much more in common with the episode in Kjalnesinga saga with the arrival of the son in Iceland from Norway, the failure of the father to recognize his son although the son obviously knows his father and the violent wrestling of the two with each other. In Landnámabók we are



not told which of the two was getting the best, although we may suspect it was the son. In any event, Véfröðr reveals his identity and his father clearly has the sense to call a halt then.

A similar case of wrestling between a father and a son where again a tragic ending is prevented by identities being revealed is found in the fornaldarsaga Ans saga bogsveigis,<sup>(70)</sup> but this does not merit discussion here, as there is no reason for thinking it connected in any way with Bjarnar saga.

#### 7. The disinterring of bones.

The custom that when, for one reason or another, a church was abandoned and a new one founded, the bones in the old graveyard were dug up and taken to the new site to be reburied there is referred to in quite a number of sagas. Frequently it is the occasion for some comment on the contents of the grave in question.

Thus in Bjarnar saga it is related that when, a long while after his death, Björn's bones were taken up and brought to another church, the silken thong, which had been given to him by King Olaf and which had been buried with him, was found undecayed about his leg, although everything else had decayed.<sup>(71)</sup>

This anecdote is told rather more fully in the AM 61 fol. and Tómasskinna manuscripts of Óláfs saga helga, which contain a very short Þáttur relating to Björn, printed as Appendix III at the rear of the text. In this it is said :

"Biorn uar grafinn aa Uöllum. þuiat þar uar þa kirkia. huildi Biorn þar lengi síþan. þar til er staðr efdiz at Husa felli. var þa upp tekin kirkian aa Uöllum. ok grafinn garðrinn ok aull bein færð i Hitar dal þau er þar hófðu iórðut uerit. Biorn hafði i klæðum uerit niðr settr. Ok er bein hans uoro upptekin þa uar alt hollid hans fuit. ok óll klæði sua at engan stað sa. nema su ein silki ræma er Olafur konungur hafði att. hun uar heil ok usókut sua sem hun hefði alldri i iorð komit." (72)

The purpose of this anecdote, as will be pointed out later in another context, is merely to illustrate the sanctity of King Olaf and for that reason the story of the taking up of the bones is introduced.

As mentioned above, however, reference to the removal of bones is not uncommon and in Egils saga the tale is told how, when the church at Hrisbrú was taken down and a new one built at Mosfell, the churchyard was dug up and under the altar the bones of a man were found. These were much greater than the bones of other men and they were thought to be those of Egill. (73)

In Grettis saga it is told that Grettir was buried at the church at Reykir and then is added in an interpolation :

"ok þat til marks, at Grettir liggr þar, at um daga Sturlunga, er kirkja var foerð at Reykjum, váru grafin upp bein Grettis, ok þótti þeim geysistór ok mikil." (74)

Eyrbyggja saga relates that, when the churchyard at Sálingsdalstunga was dug up, the bones of Snorri goði were

taken up and brought to the new church. Guðný Böðvardsdóttir, the mother of Snorri Sturluson, was present "ok sagði hon svá frá, at þat varí meðalmanns bein ok ekki mikil." The bones of Snorri's uncle, Börkr digri and of his mother, Þórdís, the sister of Gísli Súrsson were also disinterred and there are similar comments on their size and nature. (75)

There is a brief reference also at the end of Flóamanna saga to the movement of the bones of the hero of the saga, Þorgils, and of two others, when the church where they were buried was moved but no comment concerning the nature of the bones is made. (76)

Accounts of the disinterring of bones thus add an antiquarian flavour to the saga and give added semblance of veracity. Accordingly, although the tale regarding Björn was clearly introduced to demonstrate King Olaf's sanctity, it also serves to fix approximately the date of the removal of the bones and the discovery of the still intact silken thong by referring to the foundation of the church at Húsafell. Laxdæla saga mentions Brandr Þórarinnsson, "er setti stað at Húsafelli" and this appears to have been round about 1170. (77) Later in Bjarnar saga when the building by Björn of a church at Vellir and its dedication to the apostle Thomas is referred to, a certain Rúnólfr Dagsson is given as the authority. (78) This is apparently Rúnólfr Dálksson the priest, mentioned in Sturlunga saga as being alive about 1170. (79) It is likely therefore that Rúnólfr Dálksson should also be regarded as the authority for the anecdote concerning the silken thong, as being a story likely to appeal to a cleric. In addition

he may well have been present at the removal of the bones from the churchyard at Vellir, since he was apparently still alive when the church at Húsafell was founded. Whether a silken thong was actually found in the grave or not is impossible of determination but, if the story actually originated with Rúnólfr, it seems a little difficult to accuse him of complete fabrication. The later statement that the thong was the belt of a mass-garment at Garðar on Akranes may well be an addition of the author's or, if it was in the church in Rúnólfr's day, there is no guarantee that it would still have been there fifty years later.

8. The Sword without which the hero is lost.

Swords of strange or of supernatural origin, swords with special names and swords to which strange properties are attached, repeatedly appear in Old Norse literature. One thinks of Tyrfingr in Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks, Sköfnungr in Hrólfs saga kraka, Kórmaks saga, and other sagas, Fótbitr in Laxdoela saga and Blaðnir and Jarðhússnaut in Flóamanna saga, to mention only a few.

The sword Mæringr which Björn possessed is in many ways such a sword, although it seems to belong to a special category, the sword without which the hero will be lost, a motif which seems to be mythical in origin.

When Freyr sends Skírnir to Jötunheim to woo for him the fair giantess Gerðr, Skírnir asks for not only a horse but also :

"ok þat sverð  
es sjalft vegisk  
við jötna stt." (80)

Freyr agrees and thus parts with his sword, a weapon that was so good that it fought of its own accord. As a result Freyr was without his sword, when he fought with the giant Beli and was obliged to use a hart's horn to kill him.<sup>(81)</sup> Much more serious than that, he still lacked the sword when he came face to face with the firegiant Surtr at Ragnarök, for as Snorri says :

"Pat verður hans bani, er hann missir þess ins góða sverðs, er hann gaf Skirni."<sup>(82)</sup>

In Droplaugarsona saga a man named Þorbjörn is mentioned, who was good at sharpening swords. Helgi Droplaugarson asked him to sharpen his sword for him, whilst he was away on a journey. Þorbjörn lent Helgi another sword in the meantime.<sup>(83)</sup> Subsequently Helgi was attacked by a great party of his enemies and, despite his heroic resistance, he finally succumbed to superior numbers, being greatly hampered by the lack of his own good sword, in the place of which he had only an inferior substitute. We read : "En Helgi hjó hvárki fara né smara, en sverð þat, er hann hafði, dugði ekki."<sup>(84)</sup> and again :

"Helgi ... hjó til Hjarranda, ok kom á lærit. En sverðit beit ekki, þegar beinsins kenndi, ok svaddi ofan í knésbótina, ok varð hann af því sári óvigr ... Pat er mál manna, at skemmri mundi hafa orðit fundr þeira Hjarranda, ef Helgi hefði haft sverð sitt."<sup>(85)</sup>

In Bjarnar saga we read that one Autumn Þorfinnr Þvarason went to visit his father "og hafði hann sverð Biorns Mæring, Enn Biorn hafði vopn hans."<sup>(86)</sup> When Björn went out on the last morning of his life to cut the manes of the

horses which he had given to Þorsteinn Kuggason, he was thus obliged to take Þorfinnr's sword with him, inferior as it was. Björn was well aware of its deficiency, for when he learned that attackers were coming towards him, "hann bra sverðinu er Þorfinnur Þuara son átti, og mælti, Jllt sverð á hier godur dreingur, seigir hann." (87)

Subsequently, when Dálkr attacked him, it is said : "Enn Biörn bregdur sverðinu Þorfinz, er hann hafði heimann haftt og hoggur á fót Dalcki, so hart að fóturinn brotnaði, enn eþ beyt og varð Dalckur övgygur." (88)

The resemblance between Droplaugarsona saga and Bjarnar saga at this spot is very close. In both cases we have the ambush preceded by an evil foreboding but disregarded dream, the attack by overwhelming odds, the good sword replaced by an inferior substitute, and the blow at the opponent's leg which does not bite but merely causes damage that puts the other out of the contest. Droplaugarsona saga is also reckoned an early saga but perhaps a little later than Bjarnar saga. The description of the use of the sword is also a little more elaborate in the former work and, if influence has been exercised here by one saga on the other, it would seem likely that Bjarnar saga is the donor.

Even if this should be so and it is by no means certain, the whole concept seems to be that of a sword which has peculiar and special value, in the possession of which its owner is well-nigh invincible, but of which he is almost unaccountably deprived by some strange aberration of fate at the crucial hour of his greatest need. In its stead he has a poor substitute, which avails him little, although he

puts up a valiant fight. Like Freyr, both Helgi and Björn are without their good swords when they need them most. Despite the loss, each is undaunted but "Pat verðr hans bani."

### 9. Miracle tales.

Miracle tales demonstrating the sanctity of King Olaf Haraldsson, St.Olaf, are frequent in Óláfs saga helga and the story of the silken thong which Björn acquired as a gift from King Olaf falls into this category and hence does not need a great deal of special comment. We are told in Biarnar saga that :

"Biorn hafdi avallt þessa Reym vm fót sinn á medann hann Lifdi, Og med henne var hann nidur grafinn. Og þa myklu sydar er Bein hans voru vpptekinn og færd til annarar kyrkiu, þa var su hin sama Røma ofúinn, vm fótlegg Biorns, enn alltt var annad fúid, og er það nu Messu fata Lindi J Gordum a Akranesi." (89)

The version of this anecdote which is found in the Þáttr of Björn and Þórðr in the Bæjarbók manuscripts of Óláfs saga helga differs very little from the above, but the details given in the short þattr concerning Björn which is contained in AM 61, fol. and Tómasskinna show some variation on the theme. The text of this Þáttr is printed as Appendix III and the relevant portion has been quoted earlier in this chapter. (90)

The account in the saga states that, at the time when it was written, probably somewhere around 1215 to 1220, the silken thong which had been taken up undamaged from Björn's grave was the belt of a mass garment in the church

at Garðar on Akranes. If this were true, one would expect that the inventory of the church at Garðar dating from about 1220 would list this item but this is not the case.<sup>(91)</sup> It is clear enough that the story is related to demonstrate the sanctity of King Olaf, for the páttir in AM 61, fol. goes on to add :

"Nu syndiz í þessum atburð mikill heilagleikr Olafs konungs. at sa einn lutr uar ofwiN j iorðo aa beinum Biarnar er helgaz hefði af likama Olafs konungs."<sup>(92)</sup>

Whether the story in the páttir is older than that found in the saga itself is uncertain, but there seems no real reason why it should be, except that it preserves what appears to be the true or at least certainly more plausible account as to how Björn came by his sword Maringr. Otherwise the páttir displays abbreviation in some ways but considerable expansion towards its end, with the conclusion placing all the credit on King Olaf's holiness in that, through the silken thong having been hallowed by contact with the former's body, it had subsequently been made proof against perishing.

Miracle tales and supernatural interventions are associated not only with St. Olaf, but also with Olaf Tryggvason, who, because of his attempted conversion to Christianity of the Norwegians, enjoyed a reputation with Icelandic clerics almost as great as that of the later Olaf, whose conversion of the country was much more permanent.

For example, in Bárðar saga Snæfellsáss, when Gestr Bárðarson is fighting the fearsome draugr Raknarr, he is in dire need of aid.

\*Pá hét Gestr á þann, er skapat hafði himin ok



jörð, at taka við trú þeirri, er Óláfr konungr boðaði, ef hann kemist í burtu lífs ór hauginum. Fast herti Gestr þá á Ólaf konung, ef hann mætti meira enn sjálfum sér, þá skyldi hann duga honum. Eftir þat sá Gestr Ólaf konung koma í hauginn með ljósi miklu. Við þá sýn brá Raknari svá, at ór honum dró afl alt. Þá gekk Gestr svá fast at, at Raknarr fell á bak aftr með tilstilli Óláfs konungs." (93)

It transpires that King Olaf was still alive at this time, despite his miraculous appearance in the mound in Helluland, but in a much earlier saga, Hallfreðar saga, Olaf Tryggvason appears to Hallfreðr in a dream the night before he is due to fight a duel with Griss. The king warns Hallfreðr not to fight in a bad cause. The next day Hallfreðr meets men riding up, who inform him of the death of King Olaf some time before. As a consequence, Hallfreðr does not fight the duel and a settlement is arranged. (94)

The purpose of all these tales is to illustrate the sanctity of the two namesakes and there is no reason to think that they are in any way dependent upon each other, given the general intention behind episodes of this nature.

B. Motifs common to a group of sagas.

These are not general and largely indiscriminate motifs, as are those described under Group A, but are more specialized motifs, by which a group or groups of sagas are linked. They fall into two main categories, which are :-

1. The bride who promises to wait three years for her lover after he goes abroad.
2. The rival poets.

These two themes are, however, often closely intertwined, since the lover for whom the bride promises to wait is sometimes also a poet and it is his rival poet who more or less unfairly secures her hand whilst the other is away. It is true that not all brides who are waiting three years are waiting for poets, nor are all poets rivals, nor do they all have unhappy love affairs. Nevertheless, in a group of sagas, of which Bjarnar saga is one, poets do get involved in this way and it is therefore fitting that these themes be treated together as one. This may be termed the "triangle" theme and appears to be traceable to a definite source.

1. Skáldasögur and Astarsögur.

Bjarnar saga falls into two categories or groups of Family Sagas, that of Skáldasögur and Astarsögur, to use the terms employed by Bjarni Einarsson in his book, Skáldasögur.<sup>(95)</sup> In other words, tales dealing with the lives of poets and tales in which the main or a major theme is an affair of the heart, almost always an unhappy one.

Not infrequently a saga may fall into both categories, as does Bjarnar saga, but this is by no means always the case. One can instance Gísla saga Súrssonar, Egils saga and Fóstbroedra saga, which each have a poet for hero or, in the case of the latter, a principal character, but, although love is by no means always excluded, cannot be termed Astarsögur in the meaning reserved for the latter.

On the other hand, both Laxdoela saga and Porsteins saga hvíta may, with some reserve, be safely included amongst

the Astarsögur but are certainly not Skáldasögur.

The Astarsögur, which term seems more appropriate for the present purpose than that of Skáldasögur, even when referring to those sagas which fall into both classes, may be said to fall into three distinct groups, even though these groups have points of mutual resemblance. Each group consists of two sagas.

The first two groups, again to use Bjarni Einarsson's terms,<sup>(96)</sup> may be referred to as Húrvetnskar sögur and Borgfirzkar sögur, from the districts in which the principal actions of the sagas coming under these different headings take place. The third group may conveniently be termed Miscellaneous.

In Group A we have Kormáks saga and Hallfreðar saga. These sagas, and particularly Kormáks saga, despite its manifest charm, may perhaps be regarded as mere frames set around a multitude of verses, in which the verses form the pegs upon which to hang the story. They each centre around an unhappy love affair and its consequences, a most peculiar romance in which the hero fails to marry his sweetheart principally through his own irresolution, supernatural intervention notwithstanding. In this they have nothing to do with the sagas in the two other groups and, in fact, their points of resemblance are relatively few.

Group B contains Bjarnar saga Hitdoelakappa and Gunnlaugs saga ornstungu. These two sagas have many common features and are clearly closely related. They both treat of the rivalry of two poets, both at home and abroad and

both in respect of the exercise of their art and for the hand of the same woman. In both sagas the hero is promised the hand of his sweetheart and in both he goes abroad and it is agreed that the girl will wait for him three years but, after that period has elapsed and her betrothed has not returned to Iceland, her father will then be free to marry her to another. In both cases the hero is delayed and does not return within the prescribed time. Consequently his rival pleads his own case and is successful in obtaining the girl's hand. In Gunnlaugs saga, however, Hrafn practises no deceit but merely takes advantage of Gunnlaugr's failure to return to Iceland within the agreed time, in order to press his own suit. Þórðr, on the other hand, not only takes advantage of Bjorn's failure to return but in addition bribes merchants to report Bjorn's death abroad and so provides a double reason to ensure his own success in obtaining Oddný's hand.

Þórðr's conduct, therefore, is far more reprehensible than Hrafn's, but otherwise the pattern is a fairly similar one. Continued rivalry and exchange of verses is the result in both cases with a tragic end to the quarrels. Gunnlaugr and Hrafn fight and Hrafn slays Gunnlaugr through treachery but loses his own life in so doing. Þórðr, on the other hand, brings about Bjorn's death through overwhelming weight of numbers and, giving the already severely wounded Bjorn his death-stroke after dealing him a cowardly blow from behind, he escapes with his own life, although forced to pay heavy compensation afterwards. Neither Helga nor Oddný ever recover from the deaths of their former betrothed, although both live on for a good many years.

In Group C may be placed two sagas which are in many ways very different from each other, Laxdoela saga and Porsteins saga hvíta. Both, however, are linked with each other and with the Astarsögur in general, in that they fit into the broad pattern as outlined in those sagas in Group B. In Laxdoela saga, Kjartan asks Guðrún to wait for him for three years when he goes abroad and, before he returns, his kinsman and rival, Bolli, who has been in Norway with him and returns to Iceland beforehand, spreads a false report about him and manages to win Guðrún's hand for himself, with results that are fatal first to Kjartan and later to Bolli himself. As appears at the end of the saga, despite her four marriages, it had been Kjartan, whom she did not marry, that Guðrún had loved the best.

In Porsteins saga hvíta, Porsteinn faðri asks for the hand of Helga and then decides to go abroad, the marriage to take place on his return. He falls ill and is shamefully treated by a false friend, Einarr, who returns to Iceland and like Þórðr, in Biarnar saga, bribes a Norwegian merchant to report Porsteinn's death abroad. In this way Einarr manages to obtain Helga for himself. Later, Porsteinn returns to Iceland, slays Einarr and, despite some vicissitudes, eventually succeeds in marrying Helga, even though they are obliged to leave Iceland and settle abroad.

Laxdoela saga is later than Biarnar saga and in the former the story of the unhappy love-affair and its consequences would appear to have been influenced by the Sigurd poems in the Edda and perhaps by Völsunga saga, the triangle having acquired a fourth side (Hrefna-Guðrún Gjúkadóttir).<sup>(97)</sup> Björn, of course, marries in Biarnar saga,

also, as does Kjartan in Laxdoela saga, but Þórdís is no Hrefna, let alone Guðrún.

As for Þorsteins saga hvíta, there seems little doubt that its situation referred to above is modelled on that in Gunnlaugs saga and in Bjarnar saga, but with a quite different dénouement. It is further set apart, in that it is generally reckoned as later,<sup>(98)</sup> is an Austfirðinga saga and is closely related to Vápnfirðinga saga. Indeed, its Helga is a mere epigone of Gunnlaugr's Helga, a copy still more bloodless than the original.

The three year absence pattern is also to be found in other sagas, which are neither Ástarsögur nor Skáldasögur, and it does not necessarily have unhappy results, for example in two sagas which are undoubtedly young, at least as they stand in their present form, Flóamanna saga<sup>(99)</sup> and Þórðar saga hreðu.<sup>(100)</sup> There is also a two year period mentioned at another point in the latter saga.<sup>(101)</sup>

Another late saga, Kjalnesinga saga, also deserves a brief mention in this context. This saga has something in common with those in Group C above but is hardly to be termed an ástarsaga, since its themes are various and borrowed from numerous sources. Þúi, who had abducted Ólof vana the previous year, goes abroad and Ólof is to wait for him for three years. During that time, enemies of Þúi bring a false report to Iceland that he had died in Norway. Ólof is then kidnapped by Kolfiör, Þúi's rival, but, when Þúi returns to Iceland a year later, he slays Kolfiör and rescues Ólof. He refuses, however, to have anything more to do with her, since she has been contaminated by Kolfiör, and,

curiously enough, she subsequently marries one of the two brothers who had previously spread the false report of Búi's death.<sup>(102)</sup> Kjalnesinga saga thus appears to owe to the Astarsogur proper the general idea surrounding the three year absence period and the false report of the lover's death but has developed it in quite a different way.

The principal source, however, for the triangle theme between Bjorn, Þórðr and Oddný in Bjarnar saga appears to be Ivars Þáttur Ingimundarsonar, one of the many Þáttir to be found in the codex of Kings' Sagas known as Workinskinna.<sup>(103)</sup> In Workinskinna it is entitled "Fra Eysteini konungi ok Ivari".<sup>(104)</sup>

Here we have the tale of an Icelandic poet, Ivarr Ingimundarson, who was in high favour with Eysteinn, King of Norway. His brother Porfinnr also went to Eysteinn's court and was well treated for his brother's sake. Nevertheless he was discontented because he was not regarded as being as good a man as Ivarr and for this reason he decided to return to Iceland. Before the brothers parted, Ivarr said that Porfinnr should take a message to Oddný Jónsdóttir for him to the effect that she should wait for him and not marry anyone else, since he thought more of her than of any other woman. However, when Porfinnr arrived in Iceland, he decided instead to ask for Oddný's hand for himself and obtained it. Ivarr arrived in Iceland himself a little later and was very distressed to learn that his brother had behaved so badly towards him. As a consequence, he returned to Norway and was again well received by King Eysteinn, who enquired closely concerning the cause of his unhappiness and finally managed to console him.

The purport of this little story is made clear by its opening words,<sup>(105)</sup> in that it is intended to show how fine a man King Eysteinn was and how kind and thoughtful he was towards those who were dear to him. Nevertheless, the similarity of its main theme to that found in a number of the Family Sagas discussed above and particularly in Bjarnar saga is evident at a glance. True, there are certain differences. Þorfinnr is not a poet himself and he is Ívarr's brother, unlike the position in Bjarnar saga, where Þórðr is quite unrelated to Björn and is a rival poet of long standing. Furthermore, Ivars þáttur has no tragic ending.

It is, in other words, the mere bare bones of the theme so finely developed in Bjarnar saga and, with variations, in later sagas. However, the similarities are striking. We have the two Icelanders at the court of a king of Norway, one of whom is jealous of the other. And at least one is a poet and a relatively celebrated one at that.<sup>(106)</sup> We have once more the case of the message entrusted in good faith to the rival who is returning to Iceland and who is, unknown to the sender of the message about to betray that faith by himself wooing and marrying the girl who was, in the fashion destined to become time-honoured, to await the sender's return to Iceland and meanwhile marry nobody else. We have again the arrival in Iceland too late of the sender of the message, only to find his sweetheart already married and finally, and surely most important of all, we have the name of that sweetheart, Oddný. The fact that in Ivars þáttur she is referred to as Jóansdóttir and in Bjarnar saga as Þorkelsdóttir proves nothing other than that it was natural that the author of Bjarnar saga



should make some change in her name, whilst retaining it in part. After all, to keep the same name precisely would have been too obvious. It was not the same Oddný and more than a century separated the periods in which the two were supposed to have lived. Moreover, the name Jóan would surely have been impossible in tenth-century Iceland.<sup>(107)</sup> However, it is significant that neither Oddný Porkelsdóttir nor her father Porkell are mentioned anywhere else other than in Bjarnar saga<sup>(108)</sup> and there seems little doubt that Oddný Jóansdóttir was the model for her namesake, and not the reverse.

As well as in Morkinskinna, Ivars þáttur is also to be found in somewhat different form in three Heimskringla manuscripts, Jöfraskinna,<sup>(109)</sup> Frissbók (Codex Frisiamus)<sup>(110)</sup> and Eirspennill<sup>(111)</sup> but not in the main Heimskringla manuscript, Kringla. The Morkinskinna codex is from the late thirteenth century, but its original text is considered to date from about 1210.<sup>(112)</sup>

However, it is clear that some at least, if not all, of the approximately 30 þáttir now contained in Morkinskinna were not in the original manuscript, for the following reasons. The sagas of Magnús góði and Haraldr harðráði are contained in Flateyjarbók in a similar version to that in Morkinskinna but not all the þáttir relating to these sagas are preserved in the former.<sup>(113)</sup> Since the tendency of the compiler of Flateyjarbók was to include as much material as he could find, it would seem that the relevant portions taken from Morkinskinna were copied from a manuscript of the latter which was earlier than the codex now preserved in the Royal Library in Copenhagen.<sup>(114)</sup> Furthermore, Fagrskinna,<sup>(115)</sup>

which is regarded as having been written shortly after 1220 and the later chapters of which have been principally based on Morkinskinna, does not contain any þettir, although it contains a particularly large number of scaldic verses. Even though the author of Fagrskinna had a tendency to abridge in the latter part of the manuscript, it seems unlikely that he would deliberately have omitted all the þettir in Morkinskinna, if that compilation had included many at that time. The inference, therefore, is that about the year 1220 few if any þettir were included in Morkinskinna and that the majority of them at least were interpolated during the next sixty years or thereabouts. Despite this, the general view is that many of the þettir are very old and it would seem that some may even date from about 1200, if not earlier. (116)

Jöfraskinna and Eirspennill (both dating from about 1325) and Codex Frisianus (written soon after 1300) are later than Morkinskinna, from which they contain interpolations (117) and it is therefore reasonable to assume that they derived their versions of Ivars þáttur from a version of Morkinskinna. It should be noted, however, that these manuscripts do not mention the names either of Oddný Jónsdóttir or of Ivarr's brother, Þorfinnr.

Bjarni Einarsson (118) considers that Ivars þáttur, which is generally reckoned to have been written early in the thirteenth century, is of such a nature that it probably belonged to the saga of King Eysteinn from the beginning. Its style and language also point rather to an older period than a younger. In this regard, the comment of Finnur Jónsson in the Samfund edition of Morkinskinna is pertinent :

"Teksten er sproglig ret gammel (ec sęc, ec sitc)." (119)

One might also instance the use of ek in the first sentence of the páttir in the phrase, "er nv mon ec segia". (120)

Bjarni Einarsson adds (121) that it would be unlikely that the subject of this páttir would have been used to so little account in a short páttir after one or more Sagas of Icelanders had been written with this theme. Accordingly the páttir would be the older and would indicate the earliest stage of the theme's development and, in his opinion, can probably be traced directly to a foreign prototype, the story of Tristan, the man who is sent to another land to ask for the hand of a woman on behalf of a relative and who himself falls in love with the woman. Furthermore, another part of the subject-matter of the páttir is also to be found in the story of Tristan, that is to say, he stays for a while with a foreign sovereign who does his best to make him forget his love-sickness and finally his efforts succeed. (122)

The argument that Bjarnar saga is derived from Ivars páttir is, of course, impossible of proof and a case could be made for the opposite view. In the absence of satisfactory evidence, any opinion must necessarily be subjective and, on this score, it is difficult not to regard Bjarni Einarsson's thesis as an attractive one. In support of it, one may cite the fact that Ivars páttir was probably written less than 100 years after the supposed occurrence of the events described therein and this is some argument, however tenuous, for the greater likelihood of their veracity. One cannot use the same argument about Bjarnar saga.

It is obvious, however, that, if the theme of Ivars Þátr is derived from the story of Tristan, it cannot originate from Brother Robert's Tristrans saga of 1226, but must go back to an earlier oral version or to acquaintance with the Anglo-Norman original. In any event, there seems little reason to doubt that the story of Tristan was well known in learned circles in the North by the beginning of the thirteenth century or perhaps even earlier.

Points of resemblance between Tristrans saga and Bjarnar saga are few and are confined almost entirely to the triangular situation referred to above and which, in any case, Bjarnar saga appears to have received by way of Ivars Þátr. For example, as was the case with Tristram and Ísönd, Björn and Oddný carried on a liaison with each other after marriage to another. However, although Björn stayed with Þórðr and Oddný for some time, this was not to the extent that Tristram stayed with Markis and Ísönd. Gunnlaugs saga, on the other hand, with its air of chivalry and romanticism, has much more of the atmosphere of Tristrans saga and the same can be said in like or even greater measure about Laxdoela saga.

Bjarnar saga, on the other hand, has a quite different atmosphere and is a real Icelandic farmer's saga, apart from the traditional opening chapters describing the exploits of the hero in foreign parts. To be sure, the incident of the dragon slain by Björn and the slaying by him of the "giant" Kaldimarr in the earlier part of Bjarnar saga have much of the atmosphere of similar legendary exploits in Tristrans saga. However, to classify these as examples of a direct or even indirect influence from Tristrans saga

seems at best a doubtful proposition. These are rather to be regarded as typical examples of adventures of Icelanders abroad and have much more in common with the fornaldarsögur.

The ultimate fates of the heroines do, however, present a common factor. Isönd dies of a broken heart because of Tristram's death; Helga dies of sickness years after Gunnlaugr has died, with the cloak that he had given her spread out before her; Oddný pines and is never happy again after Björn has been killed. Her fate is the more prosaic but it is also the more plausible and realistic, in line with the greater realism generally shown in Bjarnar saga.

The line of progression therefore appears to be from Ivars páttir Ingimundarsonar to Bjarnar saga with possible side influences on both from the Tristan legend, through Gunnlaugs saga and Laxdoela saga with their obvious direct influence from Tristrams saga ok Isöndar itself down to Porsteins saga hvíta, a kind of by-product of the genus, and culminating in such diverse and scattered vestiges as are to be found in Flóamanna saga, Porðar saga hreðu, and Kjalnesinga saga, which have little in common with the earlier sagas other than the three year absence motif.

## 2. The Noble Moringer.

Some mention should also be made of the tale of the Noble Moringer related in the late mediæval German ballad of the same name,<sup>(123)</sup> since, as Hans Naumann points out in his article "Morungen, Björn und Gunnlaug",<sup>(124)</sup> there are a number of points of resemblance between the story told in the ballad and Bjarnar saga in particular.

The story of the Noble Moringer concerns two German minnesingers of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, Heinrich von Morungen and Gottfried von Neifen. Morungen is devoted to St. Thomas and decides to go on a pilgrimage to him in India. He confides his beloved wife to the care of his trusted friend and vassal, Neifen and says that she is to wait for him for seven years. As the period laid down draws to a close, Neifen spreads the rumour that Morungen is dead and woos the lady himself. She gives way and the wedding day is set but Morungen returns through the miraculous aid of St. Thomas on the very day itself. He enters the hall in disguise and sings a song,<sup>(125)</sup> in which he reproaches his lady for her faithlessness. She is much moved and has him given a goblet of wine to drink, into which he slips his wedding-ring. He then returns the goblet with the ring in it to her and by this she recognizes him. The wedding is brought to naught and all ends happily.

Naumann refers to the resemblances between the story of the Noble Moringer and Bjarnar saga in the following terms :-

"Man beachte die folgenden gemeinsamen Punkte der beiden Versionen; die zwei befreundeten Dichter, von denen der eine, der den hl. Thomas so besonders verehrt, die Frau hat, in die sich dann auch der andre verliebt; die Auslandsfahrt, das falsche Gerücht, das der andere ausstreut, um in den Besitz der Frau des Freunds zu gelangen; das Ringmotiv; die fast oder ganz vollzogene Hochzeit, aber die Fortdauer der alten Liebe. Die interessanten kleinen Modifikationen täuschen wohl darüber

nicht hinweg, dass es sich hier um die gleiche Geschichte handelt." (126)

The story of the Noble Moringer is one in which use is made of the familiar situation, in which the husband returns in the nick of time to prevent his wife marrying the unwelcome or perhaps welcome suitor, the husband's death having been presumed (cf. the return of Odysseus). (127) There is no doubt of the resemblances referred to by Naumann, but it appears a somewhat bold statement to claim that the same story is dealt with in both the German ballad and the Icelandic saga.

In any case, Naumann admits that the ballad cannot be earlier than about 1270 to 1280, (128) considerably later than the composition of Bjarnar saga. Even this date seems likely to be too early, as the Volklied is a somewhat late form of mediæval literature. Gustav Ehrismann (129) refers to the ballad "Vom edelen Moringer" as a late Spielmannslied from the middle of the fifteenth century and his view must be regarded as carrying great weight. Naumann therefore concedes that it is not possible to derive Bjarnar saga from the ballad or its prose form in the Zimmerische Chronik, (130) also of the fifteenth century, but assumes that both may go back to a common oral tradition of the returning husband, the poet devoted to St. Thomas. In this tradition Heinrich von Morungen may not originally have featured, although indeed his name has been preserved through the centuries as much by the ballad as by his verses.

No doubt there may have been such an oral tradition in Germany in the late twelfth century (131) but that it was

identical with the tradition behind Bjarnar saga, is, to say the least, extremely unlikely. The distance between South Germany and Iceland is a great, although admittedly not insuperable, barrier. The resemblances in the two stories are apparent but the differences are greater. Even where the resemblance exists, this may well be due to coincidence. It is undeniable though that both traditions may ultimately owe something to the memory of an old West European or perhaps rather Indo-European motif of a returning husband, the husband who returns home in humble disguise,<sup>(132)</sup> yet it must be emphasized that, in the Icelandic saga, Björn is neither the husband nor does he return in disguise. False reports and recognition by means of a ring are surely not rare motifs in literature generally<sup>(133)</sup> but the common devotion to St. Thomas is certainly striking. Nevertheless, this by itself is insufficient to demonstrate a close relationship between the Möringerballade and Bjarnar saga.

C. Direct resemblances between individual sagas and poems.

1. Similarities in verses to those of other sagas and poems.

In examining the verses of Bjarnar saga there are numerous occasions where a distinct similarity is found between certain of those verses and other poetical products of Old Norse literature. Often only occasional lines are involved but this resemblance can extend to entire stanzas. It is therefore necessary to take in order the works with which a literary relation of this kind is or appears to be implied, although the order is not necessarily chronological or according to importance.



(1) Gunnlaugs saga.

Gunnlaugs saga is closely related to Biarnar saga and some of its other associations have already been discussed. The verses on the whole, however, of Gunnlaugs saga, do not show much similarity to those of Biarnar saga, other than in some mythological allusions, common to scaldic verse and some other verbal similarities to be discussed now.

The principal of these is in Verse 24 of Gunnlaugs saga. After Hrafn and Gunnlaugr had slain each other in a duel, Ömundr, Hrafn's father, dreamt that his son came to him all covered in blood and uttered a verse. In the fifth and sixth lines of the verse Hrafn says :-

blóðug hykk í blóði  
blóðgögl of skör stóðu. (134)

This should be compared with Verse 38 of Biarnar saga, in the fifth and sixth lines of which Þórðr says regarding Björn :-

þar liggur Biörn enn Birni  
blodgaugl of skaur stöðu. (135)

One is struck here by precisely the same words being used in the sixth line of each verse. Þórðr says that ravens stood over Björn's head; Hrafn thinks that they stood over his own head. In Þórðr's verse we have an example of the kind of repetition device typical of his poetry : Biörn enn Birni. The composer of the verse attributed to Hrafn also uses a repetition device of a different kind, where the emphasis is on blood : blóðug .... blóði blóðgögl. This is underlined in the following lines

where the poet speaks of a "wound-greedy" bird of prey wading through a river of blood (no doubt in the wounds that Hrafn had received). The employment of repetition devices is clear here and for that matter also in the first half of the verse, which is an example of iðurmáltr hátttr, as in Verse 47 of Háttatal. The use of the expression blóðgögl of skör stóðu is in terms of the prose context of both sagas merely one of poetic imagery.

What are we therefore to make of the appearance of exactly the same line in both verses? This, that the verse attributed to Þórðr appears likely to be genuine, whereas the one put into the mouth of the dead Hrafn is patently not genuine and very probably composed by the saga author for the occasion. There are good grounds for regarding Gunnlaugs saga as later than Bjarnar saga and it seems more than probable that Verse 38 of the latter has been the model for Verse 24 of the former, with its lavish use of imagery in relation to the ravens, even to the extent of transferring one line completely from one verse to the other.

Verses 18 and 23 of Gunnlaugs saga also show an affinity with Verse 21 of Bjarnar saga. In the latter, supposedly composed by Björn after he had slain the two kinsmen of Þórðr's who had lain in ambush for him, Björn speaks of slaying them and in the sixth line he says: "beyt eg J tuau leggi". (136) The prose neither confirms nor contradicts this statement.

The same idea of swords biting legs in two appears, however, in Verses 18 and 23 of Gunnlaugs saga. In Verse 18, before the duel on the islet in the Þxará between Gunnlaugr

and himself, Hrafn comments that "búin es egg í leggi". (137)

In Verse 23, after the later duel in which Gunnlaugr and Hrafn kill each other, Gunnlaugr speaks to his father in a dream and, referring to Hrafn, says "hvöss kom egg í leggi". (138)

In the duel Gunnlaugr does actually cut off Hrafn's leg and, for this reason, it seems very likely that Verse 18 is not genuine, seeing that the dream-verse, Verse 23, cannot be by Gunnlaugr, any more than the succeeding dream-verse, Verse 24, can be by Hrafn. It is quite possible, however, that the line in Verse 18 gave the saga-author the idea both for the incident in the prose and for the line in Verse 23. The possibility that Gunnlaugs saga has been influenced by Biarnar saga seems, on the other hand, just as probable.

This possibility is strengthened when one compares the first line of Verse 23, "Vissak Hrafn, en Hrafní" with the fifth line of Verse 38 of Biarnar saga, "þar liggur Biorn enn Birni".

Before leaving Gunnlaugs saga, a brief mention should be made of Verse 21 of that saga attributed by the author to Þórðr Kolbeinsson. (139) It is said to be from a poem, which Þórðr composed about Gunnlaugr and is stated to verify the statement in the prose that, before he could get at Hrafn, Gunnlaugr first slew Hrafn's companions, Grímr and Óláfr. It is now generally accepted that this verse is not by Þórðr but is much later than the period to which it is ascribed and either by the author of Gunnlaugs saga himself or a third party. (140)

(ii) Kormáks saga.

Some of the verses in Kormáks saga bear verbal resemblances to some of those in Biarnar saga, particularly

so far as kennings are concerned and Jan de Vries has especially drawn attention to this.<sup>(141)</sup> Since Kormáks saga is almost certainly older than Bjarnar saga and, moreover, Kormákr lived at an earlier period than Björn, the verses of Kormákr would be likely to be the pattern for those of Björn and not the reverse, unless the resemblances can be ascribed to common scaldic vocabulary as, indeed, is very likely in most cases.

Nevertheless, attention can be drawn to the following examples :-

(a) The kenning handar fasta Hrist in Verse 2 of Bjarnar saga compared with lauka brims Hrist in Verse 3, handar bála Hlín in Verse 59 and handar girðis Hlín in Verse 81 of Kormáks saga. The second and the third of the three are particularly similar kennings to that in Bjarnar saga, the second being identical in meaning.

(b) In Verse 9 of Bjarnar saga, hattar halland is used as a kenning for a "head", whereas one finds Nattarstallr with the same meaning in Verse 78 of Kormáks saga.

(c) Rindr is used as the basic word of a kenning for a woman in Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga. It is similarly used in Verses 4 and 77 of Kormáks saga, but little attention need be paid to this, since mythological kennings are frequent with Kormákr and indeed with Björn. Similar uses of Hlín, Gefn and Ilar, for example, may be adduced in both sagas and, as mentioned above, use of a common scaldic stock appears to be the answer here, rather than influence of one saga or scald upon another.

Of these names Ilmr gives at first sight the impression of being set apart from the others, since it is mentioned neither in Gylfaginning nor in Skáldskaparmál proper. However, in the Nafnapulur listed behind the latter in most editions of Snorra Edda<sup>(142)</sup> it is counted amongst the names of goddesses. Whether Snorri knew the name of Ilmr as that of a mythological person or not, its usage clearly appears to be old. In Kormáks saga Ilmr is mentioned in four verses, 6, 15, 33 and 58 and it seems unlikely that all of these verses are not genuine. Be that as it may, in Verse 3 of Hrómundar þáttr halta,<sup>(143)</sup> also reckoned old, Ilmar ialmr is found as a kenning for "battle". Here Ilmr is the name of a valkyrie. We find a combination of both meanings for Ilmr in Verse 34 of Biarnar saga, where, although Ilmr by itself signifies "goddess", it features as the basic word in a kenning for "valkyrie", armlegiar orma Ilmr. The curious mixture of paganism and Christianity in this verse makes it likely to be genuine and a reflection of the transition period in Iceland in the early part of the eleventh century.

Referring to such names as Ilmr, Rudolf Meissner comments :

"Die Unsicherheit die besonders später sich bei der Zuweisung zu Asinnen, Walkuren, Riesinnen zeigt, beweist das Alter dieser Namen. Sie müssen in Volksglauben gelebt haben, ehe sie die Dichter verwenden konnten."

(d) Verse 16 of Biarnar saga is an interesting one for purposes of comparison with more than one verse in Kormáks saga. As corrected, the first half-verse reads as follows :

Suo flaker Ullur of alla  
oddz bodgiefnar Loddu  
hin er Liota fal lyti  
linbedz sæng Jnnann.

The first line of this verse reminds one of the fifth line of Verse 44 of Kormáks saga, "koma mun Ullr, þótt elli", and the first line of Verse 50, "Kominn es Ullr við elli". Both these verses are attributed to Holmgöngu-Bersi. The word bodgiefnar in the second line forms part of a kenning which includes the name of a valkyrie, Gefn, which is also found in Verses 33, 73 and 76 of Kormáks saga. Linbedz Lodda is most probably a somewhat peculiar kenning for a woman; linbedr being a regular kenning by itself for "gold", whilst Lodda is apparently the island of that name in Rogaland in Norway. In Verse 19 of Kormáks saga, lodda forms part of a very complicated kenning for a sword-blade and in Verse 53 linnbeðr is used as part of another kenning for a woman, linnbeðjar Gnó. Each of these points by itself does not amount to much but, when all appear in one half-verse in Biarnar saga, the inference is fairly strong that borrowing from Kormáks saga has taken place. Such borrowing would be possible if the author of Verse 16 of Biarnar saga were well acquainted with the verses in Kormáks saga and even more so if the author of Biarnar saga itself composed Verse 16, since he might have had access to a manuscript version of Kormáks saga and could have made use of the latter's verses.

(e) In the Third Grammatical Treatise<sup>(145)</sup> the last two lines of Verse 43 of Kormáks saga (there attributed to Bersi) are also preserved but are there ascribed to a certain Björn. The possibility exists that Björn Hitdoelakappi is meant but this can only be a mere assumption.<sup>(146)</sup> It is of interest though that these two lines -

nu lætk, at þar þrjóti,  
Pórrþór, vinun óra.

- contain an old form for Þórðr, also to be found in Verse 20 of Bjarnar saga. The last two lines of this verse, which lines in fact contain the Pórrþór form as well, are also quoted in the Third Grammatical Treatise.<sup>(147)</sup> In addition, the first line of Verse 43 of Kormáks saga, "Mér helt Yggr und eggjar" may be compared with the third line of Verse 30 of Bjarnar saga, "koma man Yggr a eggjar".

(f) In the last line of Verse 31 of Bjarnar saga, Björn speaks of Þórðr in these terms :

sytie hann vesalstur Manna.

As a variation on the theme, Kormákr describes Þórólfr thus in the fourth line of Verse 74 of Kormáks saga :

fnasi hann vesalstr manna.

(g) Finally, morðvondr is found as a heiti for a sword in Verse 37 of Bjarnar saga and also in two successive verses of Kormáks saga, Verses 31 and 32, but this is not considered to be in itself of much weight. It acquires a little more importance, however, when taken into consideration with the other items referred to above.

(iii) Eyrbyggja saga.

The relationships between some of the verses attributed to Björn Hítloelakappi in Bjarnar saga and some of those ascribed to Björn Breiðvíkingakappi in Eyrbyggja saga are very close and there is also a close resemblance between the circumstances in which they are uttered in both sagas. The two Björns were the last of the kappar in Iceland<sup>(148)</sup> and a good argument could be made that one, at least, of the two never existed. If we are to make a choice in this regard, more probably we should decide against Björn Breiðvíkingakappi, even though he was supposed to have belonged to an earlier generation than his namesake.

In Eyrbyggja saga the story is told how Björn Ásbrandsson Breiðvíkingakappi paid attention to Púriör, the sister of Snorri goði and wife of Þóroddr skattkaupandi, and she returned his love. We have here another "triangle" story of a different kind, which resulted in several unsuccessful attempts being made on Björn's life and finally his leaving Iceland for good. The saga contains seven verses by Björn. Two of these, Verses 27 and 28, are so close to two verses of Bjarnar saga, Verses 29 and 12 respectively, that more than mere literary influence appears to be implied.

Shortly after returning from an earlier sojourn abroad, in which he had served with the Jomsvikings and acquired the title of Kappi, Björn attended an assembly and there came into conversation again with Púriör, which none thought surprising, as they had not seen each other for a good many years. There were quarrels amongst the men at



the assembly and one man was severely wounded. He was carried under a bush and bled so much that there was a pool of blood in the bush. A curious incident now occurred. Puriör's son, Kjartan, a small boy about ten years old, ran up to the bush carrying a little axe and bathed the axe in the blood. Subsequently Þórör bligr, Björn's friend, asked him how he and Puriör had got on in their conversation. Björn said it was satisfactory. Then Þórör asked him whether he had seen the boy Kjartan that day, the son of Þóroddr and Puriör. "I saw him", said Björn. "What did you think of him?" asked Þórör. Then Björn uttered the following verse (Verse 27) :

Sák, hvar rann í runni  
runnr at fenris brunni  
oegilegr í augum,  
iðgliki mér, brikar;  
láta þeygi þrjótar  
þat barn vita Mornar,  
hesta hleypti rastar  
hlunns, sinn fœður kunna.

At this statement that the boy who resembled Björn did not know who his own father was and the consequent implication that Björn himself was the father, Þórör said : "What will Þóroddr say now? Which one of you two owns the boy?" Björn then uttered another verse (Verse 28) :

Þá mun þoll en mjóva  
Þórodds aðalbjóra

fold unni mér fólðu  
fannhvít, getu sanna,  
ef áttgöfug ætti  
auðbrík sonu glíka,  
enn emk gjarn til Gunnar  
gjalfrelda, mér sjölfum.

He thus indicated that Þuríðr would prove the guess of her husband concerning the parenthood of the boy if she had other sons resembling Björn and added that he was still fond of her. Þórðr then advised him to cease paying attention to Þuríðr. (149)

These events in Eyrbyggja saga must be compared with the story told in Bjarnar saga. Björn Arngelrsson stayed with Þórðr Kolbeinsson and his wife Oddný over winter but relations between the two poets became steadily worse and they took turns to compose satirical verses about each other. Finally Björn sat next to Oddný one evening and added insult to injury by uttering a verse to Þórðr (Verse 12), in which he said that Oddný would prove the guess of her husband if she had a son by Björn and resembling Björn. For comparison with Verse 28 of Eyrbyggja saga the corrected text of Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga is set out hereunder :-

Pa mun þunnrar Bláiu  
þoll westarla vnd faillum  
Rindur wekur mig mundar  
mannz synz getu sanna  
eff giste son sata  
sunnu marz vid Runne  
von hietk riettrar raunar  
ryklundud mier lykan.

It may be seen that the sense of both the verses is generally very similar, allowing for certain lines that do not correspond and which may be said to be principally padding and allowing for the fact that in one saga the child in question is already ten years old and there is talk of possible others. The situations described are therefore really quite different, despite the similarity in sense. Nevertheless, there can be no real argument that the verses are not related, although not to the extent that the previous verse in Eyrbyggja saga (Verse 27) is related to a much later verse in Bjarnar saga (Verse 29).

The child whose parentage was in dispute in Verse 12 was some years old when Björn came one day to the Autumn assembly. The boy Kolli ran about there and he was exceedingly handsome. Björn asked whose son he was and was told that he was the son of Þórðr Kolbeinsson and was called Kolli. Björn then uttered a verse (Verse 29), the corrected text of which is as follows :-

Leyt eg hvar rann hia runne  
runnur dockmara Gunnar  
ægiligur J augum  
ad gliki mier vyka  
queda preyendr þeigi  
þad Barn vita Mournar  
Heita humra Brautar  
hlunz synn fodur kunna.

It is added that there was no change made in Kolli's paternity, although Björn seemed to allude to his views concerning it in his verses from time to time.

A comparison of the above verse with Verse 27 of Eyrbyggja saga makes it plain that we have here two versions of the same verse which have deviated to a small extent from each other. Unlike the other two verses referred to above, this is not merely a question of one verse being influenced by the other. In Verse 27 of Eyrbyggja saga and Verse 29 of Bjarnar saga there are three lines which are identical, a fourth very nearly so and the remainder very close to each other in sense.

The relationship of these four verses has been a matter of dispute for scholars for a considerable time, especially since the publication of Boer's edition of Bjarnar saga over seventy years ago. Boer himself gave the priority to Björn Híttoelakappi but considered that, when the two sagas came to be written, both verses existed in different versions and people only remembered that a Björn was the composer. His conclusion was that the verses stood in correct relationship to the story in Bjarnar saga but did not do so in Eyrbyggja saga and that the author of both verses was Björn Híttoelakappi. (150)

Gering in his edition of Eyrbyggja saga four years later expressed an opinion totally opposed to that of Boer's, when he declared that in his view there was not the slightest doubt that both verses had been taken over by Bjarnar saga from Eyrbyggja saga. He considered that this was proved by the whole character of Bjarnar saga, which had filched motifs from various other sagas. In Gering's view, the more detailed and colourful prose narrative of the incident in Eyrbyggja saga amply demonstrated which was the copy and which the original. (151)

Gering's arguments have not been generally followed. Finnur Jónsson agreed that Verse 27 of Eyrbyggja saga and Verse 29 of Bjarnar saga represented one verse but gave the priority to Bjarnar saga. He did not agree, however, that Verse 28 of Eyrbyggja saga was ever identical with Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga but in this case was of the opinion that there were always two verses and that Björn Hitdoelakappi himself consciously or unconsciously copied the verse of his namesake but of course made certain changes.<sup>(152)</sup>

Einar Ól. Sveinsson<sup>(153)</sup> and Sigurður Nordal<sup>(154)</sup> agreed generally with Finnur Jónsson in his conclusions, except that, whilst being of the opinion that Verse 27 of Eyrbyggja saga and Verse 29 of Bjarnar saga represented independent versions of the same verse, it was entirely uncertain which of the two namesakes had been the composer. Jón Helgason accepted these two verses as an example of a verse which in the oral tradition had split into two variants.<sup>(155)</sup>

Finally Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(156)</sup> draws attention to most of these arguments and points out that the fact that Eyrbyggja saga contains a different text and has more to say about the various incidents does not assist towards determining the authorship of the verses. He also points out that Björn Breiðvíkingakappi is not mentioned anywhere apart from Eyrbyggja saga and there is thus good reason to doubt whether he ever existed. The case is quite different with Björn Hitdoelakappi and there is no valid reason to doubt his existence.

Bjarni's argument is an attractive one. Reluctant as one may be to accept the romantic story of Björn

Breiðvikingakappi as fictional and his verses as spurious, including the charming Verse 24, "Guls mundum vit vilja", etc., it must be admitted that Eyrbyggja saga is later than Bjarnar saga and, so far as the story of Björn Breiðvikingakappi is concerned, its very romanticism makes it suspect. It seems then reasonable to conclude without any attempt at certainty that the author of Eyrbyggja saga, whilst making many necessary changes to suit his story, modelled the character of Björn Breiðvikingakappi on that of Björn Híttoelakappi to the extent of the love for another's wife, the adultery, the first name of the hero, the title of kappi gained abroad and named after his district and one verse completely plagiarized and another very much so. Their patronymics, Arngeirsson and Ásbrandsson are also not dissimilar and there is not much difference between the names of the two deceived husbands, Þórðr and Þóroddr. When all these things are taken together, it becomes difficult to believe that Björn Ásbrandsson was anything but a fictional character and his story equally fictional, his prototype being Björn Arngeirsson, which does not of course guarantee the extent to which the latter's story as related in his saga is founded on fact.

What is said above is lent additional force when one considers Verse 29 of Eyrbyggja saga in comparison with Verses 1 and 16 of Bjarnar saga. In Eyrbyggja saga Björn Breiðvikingakappi had been caught in a storm and become soaked and later found shelter in a cave for three nights. In Verse 29 he speaks about what Þuríðr would think if she knew that he was lying frozen in a cave. On the other hand,

in Verse 1 of Bjarnar saga Björn Hítloelakappi speaks of what Oddný would wish to do if she knew that he was very near, to her in a tent.

The relevant portions of each verse in each case are the last four lines and they are quoted alongside each other below for comparison :

Verse 29 Eyrbyggja saga.

ef eld-Njörun öldu  
einn vissi mik steina  
hirðipoll í helli  
hafviggs kalinn liggja.

Verse 1 Bjarnar saga.

ef hórskorðan hærði  
harðlaner at verim  
Görðumz fręgr med flórða  
flæina wald í tialli.

Boer<sup>(157)</sup> has pointed out that Verse 16 of Bjarnar saga contains a kenning for a woman, hrannblackz holnjörun, which is similar to the kenning, öldu eld-Njörun in Verse 29 of Eyrbyggja saga. This has some validity but the reading hrannblackz holnjörun is the result of emendations, since the manuscripts have hromblackz holmorun. Whether there is a connection here or not, however, there seems little doubt that the resemblance between Verse 29 of Eyrbyggja saga and Verse 1 of Bjarnar saga is more than a casual one and there is here a further case of literary relationship between the sagas. It is perhaps significant that the three verses in Eyrbyggja saga which show decided literary relationship with verses in Bjarnar saga form one successive group, Verses 27, 28 and 29. It seems that, once the author of Eyrbyggja saga had decided upon borrowing from Bjarnar saga, he gave full rein to his inclinations.

(iv) Fóstbroeðra saga.

Sigurður Nordal<sup>(158)</sup> has drawn attention to the similarity of certain lines in Verses 25 and 36 of Bjarnar saga to those in the first half of Verse 13 in Fóstbroeðra saga. Verse 13 is part of the Porgeirsdrápa attributed to Þormóður Kolbrúnarskáld and deals with the sudden slaying of Gautr in his tent by Þorgeirr. The second half of the verse is not relevant for the present purpose but the first half runs as follows :

Gaut veitk at son Sleitu  
snarfengr með lið drengja  
hölör við harðar deildir  
hjördjarfan nam fjörvi.

Verse 25 of Bjarnar saga relates to the slaying by Björn of Þorsteinn Kálfsson, after the latter had attempted to murder him. Björn says in the first half of this verse :

Kalffz veyt eg son sialfann  
suerda godz á roðnum  
ræddu kapp ne kuiddu  
Klifz Jorua nam eg fíorui.

The similarity between the first and fourth lines of this verse and the same lines of Verse 13 of Fóstbroeðra saga is obvious and can scarcely be accidental. To this must be added that the second line of Verse 13 is practically identical with the final line of Verse 36 of Bjarnar saga, "snarfeingz með lið dreingia". Verse 36 is Björn's last verse in the saga and is supposed to have been composed by



him shortly before his death but there seems good reason for concluding that it may be in its wrong place in the text and have actually been composed at an earlier date, assuming, of course, that it is genuine, of which there is no guarantee.

There is no guarantee that Verse 25 of Bjarnar saga and Verse 13 of Fóstbroeðra saga are genuine either. Indeed it has been argued that the whole of the Porgeirsdrápa is spurious. The opposite view has also been held.<sup>(159)</sup> If the three verses in question could be proved to be all spurious and, better still, all by the respective authors of the sagas in which they are to be found, the solution could be regarded as an easy one, for Fóstbroeðra saga is recognized as being older than Bjarnar saga and, in such case, the lines in the two verses of the latter saga could be safely considered to have been derived from Verse 13 of Fóstbroeðra saga. This is providing that this verse was not interpolated into the text of Fóstbroeðra saga at a later date, since this saga was probably expanded subsequent to its original composition.<sup>(160)</sup>

The question is, however, not an easy one and Nordal himself offers no solution. Indeed, like so many problems connected with saga research, it is improbable that it can ever be satisfactorily resolved. As mentioned, Fóstbroeðra saga is one of the oldest of sagas and precedes Bjarnar saga in composition, if not in its final form, but chronologically the Porgeirsdrápa is taken to be a little later than the verses composed by Björn. The difference in years is so slight, however, that, at the time of the composition of the Porgeirsdrápa, Björn's verses could have been still so well known and so fresh in the mind of Þormóður that influence would

have been easy. The question, whichever way one looks at it, perhaps boils down to this; is it easier to compose one verse from two or two from one? There is no certain answer. However, it is thought that, if one is dealing with verses heard orally, it would be much more likely that scraps of two verses might have been combined to compose one new verse or part of a verse. The opposite might well be more likely if one is dealing with a written text, which could be used as a mine to be fossicked through at leisure. Of course, the author of Bjarnar saga might not have had a written text of Fóstbroeðra saga in front of him as he wrote. He may have read it some time in the past or merely heard it read or told aloud. This would put a different complexion on the matter and make deliberate plagiarism less likely. On the balance of probabilities, however, it seems that Verse 13 of Fóstbroeðra saga has been influenced by the two verses of Bjarnar saga rather than the other way round.

The first line of Verse 24 of Fóstbroeðra saga :

Undr's hvi eigi kenndu

also is reminiscent of the first line of Verse 34 of Bjarnar saga :

Vnndr er ef ecki beandir

but this may be merely coincidental. If there is a connection, the same problem applies as referred to above, but the probability again seems to be that Þormóðr has been influenced, possibly unconsciously, by the opening line of a verse by Björn that is not only very fine but for that reason may have become very well-known and thus likely to stick in the mind of the hearer.

(v) Gísla saga.

The relationship between Verse 34 of Bjarnar saga and Verses 25 to 27 of Gísla saga has been discussed above in the section dealing with dreams and dream-verses.

(vi) Hallfreðar saga.

Bjarni Einarsson<sup>(161)</sup> has pointed out some similarity in the situation described in Verses 18 and 19 of Hallfreðar saga to that in Verse 16 of Bjarnar saga, where Björn tells how Þorðr does not allow his wife room in the bed. Verses 18 and 19 of Hallfreðar saga indicate that Hallfreðr considered that Kolfinna only reluctantly allowed her husband Griss into her bed. In Bjarnar saga Björn says :

lofa eg Prudar hag þydrar,  
þornz

whilst in Hallfreðar saga (Verse 18) Hallfreðr makes a very similar comment :

leyfik ljossa vífa  
lund.

Both verses praise the woman's condition or nature and in Bjarnar saga at least the praise must be taken as ironic.

Hallfreðar saga and Bjarnar saga have other literary connections and there appears to be little difference in their respective ages. Hallfreðr's verses are, however, earlier than Björn's and it appears that Verse 16 of Bjarnar saga may thus owe something to Verses 18 and 19 of Hallfreðar saga, following also the argument referred to above that, in cases of oral influence, it would be easier to compose one

verse from parts of two other verses, rather than the reverse.

It should also be noted that the phrase, "ægiligur J augum", which is the third line in Verse 29 of Bjarnar saga and, as mentioned previously, also in Verse 27 of Eyrbyggja saga, is very close to the third line of Verse 2 of Hallfreðar saga, where we find a slight variation, "oegilig fyr augum". This may point to some influence but is much more likely to illustrate the common use of a set phrase.

(vii) Grettis saga.

The relations of Bjarnar saga with Grettis saga are fairly widespread and are discussed further below. At this point, however, it is sufficient to refer to the apparent connection between Verse 35 of Bjarnar saga and Verse 48 of Grettis saga.

In Verse 35 of Bjarnar saga, Björn says that, before he should flee over Mýrar before a man, his sword should be brandished in his hand.

enn firir einum runne  
ægis dyrs of Mýrar  
uondr skal hialz or hennde  
hrockua fyrr en ek stockua.

Grettir in Verse 48 of Grettis saga speaks of a certain Gísli, who ran trembling before him over Mýrar, bereft of advancement and honour.

en fyr mér of Mýrar  
margnenninn dag þenna,  
fremð 's hann firrör ok soembum,  
fisandi rann Gísli.

The second last line of Grettir's verse recalls Þórðr's description of Björn in the second last line of Verse 31 of Bjarnar saga, when he referred to Björn as being bereft of truth and reason :

sannj firrdur og suinnu.

Relationship here is more doubtful but such seems very probable, in so far as the fleeing over Mýrar is concerned.

The incident of Grettir's pursuit of Gísli occurred when Grettir was hiding in Fagraskógafjall under the protection of Björn and the verse, if genuine, would therefore precede Verse 35 of Bjarnar saga, if, as said in the saga, it was composed by Björn on the morning of his death. There are grounds, however, for thinking that it is misplaced in the saga and was probably composed on an earlier occasion, assuming, of course, that it is also genuine. Grettis saga, in any event, is later than Bjarnar saga, much of it a good deal later, and many of the verses most likely spurious. There is therefore good reason for thinking that the priority in age should be given to the verse in Bjarnar saga, even if it should not actually be by Björn. The whole sense of Verse 48 of Grettis saga, in any case, gives the impression that it was composed by the author of that part of the saga to fit in with the story.

(viii) Baldrs draumar.

In the Eddaic poem known generally as Baldrs draumar but also as Vegtamskviða there is a distinct reminiscence in Verse 11 of certain lines in Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga. In the latter Björn speaks of a woman westward under the fells

bearing a son and he refers to the woman as mundar Rindr. The woman of course is Oddný.

In Verse 11 of Baldrs draumar the prophetess speaks of Rindr who will bear a son Váli in the halls of the west. He will be the avenger of Baldur. The first two lines state simply :

Rindr berr Vála  
í vestrsölum,

whilst the first six lines of Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga read :

Þá mun þunnrar Blæiu  
þoll westarla vnd faullum  
Rindr wekur mig mundar  
mannz synz getu sanna  
eff giste son sata  
sunnu marz vid Runne.

In both verses we have a woman referred to as Rindr who bears a son in the west. Sophus Bugge<sup>(162)</sup> drew attention to this eighty years ago and gave his view of the origin of the phrase, í vestrsölum. This, whether correct or not, has no bearing on the matter in question here. It seems most probable that in these lines of Bjarnar saga we have an echo of the lines from Baldrs draumar. As has been pointed out earlier, Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga is also connected with Verse 28 of Eyrbyggja saga but the lines reminiscent of Baldrs draumar are not to be found in the verse in Eyrbyggja saga. Accordingly, whatever the priority between this verse and Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga, the former can be left out of consideration here.

Einar Ol. Sveinsson<sup>(163)</sup> has made it clear that the age of Baldrs draumar is very uncertain but that most scholars now consider it not to date from heathen times and that it is probably not earlier than the twelfth century. If this is so, and assuming a connection between Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga and Verse 11 of Baldrs draumar, this would almost certainly demonstrate that the former is not by Björn, since it is hard to credit that the Eddaic verse would have been the recipient of the influence and not the donor, although this cannot be excluded. Nevertheless, since the age of Baldrs draumar is so uncertain, no definite conclusion can be arrived at. There is, however, quite persuasive argument to be adduced that Baldrs draumar has exercised influence upon Verse 12 of Bjarnar saga, that this latter verse is not genuine, being later than the eleventh century, and that, for that matter, Verse 28 of Eyrbyggja saga is not genuine either, although, due to the absence from the latter of the lines relating to Baldrs draumar, this would not necessarily follow. Indeed, an argument could be made out that Verse 28 of Eyrbyggja saga was the earlier, was indeed genuine and that subsequently the author of Bjarnar saga took this verse and combined it with Verse 11 of Baldrs draumar producing from this mélange Verse 12.

(ix) Arnórr jarlaskáld.

In the last two lines of Verse 2 of Bjarnar saga Björn refers to the forward movement of a ship in these words :

skid verd eg skridar beida  
skorðu . . .

These should be compared with the words of Arnórr Þórðarson jarlaskáld in the third and fourth lines of Verse 9 of his Hrynhenda (Magnúsdrápa) (164) :

skiði vas þá skriðar of auðit

skorðu .....

Arnórr Þórðarson was a son of Þórðr Kolbeinsson and was a young boy at the time of the quarrel between his father and Björn. Nordal<sup>(165)</sup> says that Arnórr doubtlessly knew Verse 2 of Bjarnar saga, which Björn had composed about Arnórr's mother. There seems little doubt that there is here a case of influence of one verse on the other. Arnórr was a celebrated poet and his Magnúsdrápa in hrynhent measure is justly famous.<sup>(166)</sup> If Verse 2 of Bjarnar saga should not be genuine, this would imply that it had been subject to influence from Arnórr's poem. However, there is little reason to believe that it is not by Björn and that this particular verse should have been remembered by Arnórr and that he should have borrowed from it many years later would not be surprising.

## 2. Prose similarities to text of other sagas or poems.

In the prose text of Bjarnar saga there are numerous similarities in wording to the text of other sagas and poems. The most important of these have been noted by Nordal<sup>(167)</sup> and Bjarni Einarsson.<sup>(168)</sup>

When Þórðr invites Björn to stay with him for the winter, Þórdís, Björn's mother, dissuades him, saying :

"hugdu suo að Biörn seigir hun, að þú flárra mun Þordur hyggja sem han talar sliettara, og tru þu honum ey."<sup>(169)</sup>



Earlier Oddný had said to Þórðr :

"Eg hugda þig vera godam dreing, Enn þu ert fullur aff lygi og Lausung." (170)

These seem to be borrowings from Verse 45 of Hávamál, where the following counsel is given :

Ef þú átt annan,  
þanns þú illa trúir,  
vildu af hánum þó gótt geta,  
fagrt skalt mæla,  
en flátt hyggja  
ok gjaldalausung við lygi.

Þórðr says later, to a suggestion by Oddný that he is lying : "Ey verdur einn eydur alla." (171) This cryptic remark, which seems likely to be a proverb and must be taken as meaning that the breaking of one oath does not void all other oaths, seems to be an echo of the lines of the poet, Sighvatr Þórðarson, in the eighth verse of his Vestrfararvísur (172) :

Eið láta þú ýtir  
einn, þótt varak seinni,  
jarðar alla verða  
ofnis mildr, en vildak.

There are several instances in Hallfreðar saga, where the wording is sufficiently close to that of Biarnar saga in similar incidents to warrant special attention. Bjarni Einarsson discusses these instances fairly thoroughly

and here it is principally sufficient to set them out in succession in the order in which he mentions them :

Bjarnar saga :

"oc er Biorn kom af anne skaut Kolbeinn sonur Pordar spjoti yfir ana til Biorns oc kom J lar hanum en Biorn toc spjotid oc skaut yfir ana til þeira oc vard madr firir oc flaug igegnvm hann oc toc Kolbein Pordar son er sat at baki hanvm oc hofdu badir bana þar skilir med þeim ferr Biorn heim." (173)

Hallfreðar saga :

"Þá váru þeir Hallfreðr komnir á miðja ána. Þá skaut Gríss spjóti til Hallfreðar, en hann tók á lopti ok skaut aptr til Gríss, en Einarr brá við þxi; spjótit kom fyrir brjóst Einari, ok fekk hann bana . . . Ok skilðu við þat." (174)

Bjarnar saga :

"Pordur mælti, ad riettu mattu kappi heyta seigir hann." (175)

Hallfreðar saga :

"Óláfr konungr mælti : 'Sannliga máttu heita vandræðaskáld . . . ." (176)

Bjarnar saga :

"Porðr . . . var skald mikit . . . ecki var Porðr mick winnsall af alþyðu. Þuiat hann potti vera spottsamr . . . ." (177)

Hallfreðar saga :

"Hallfreðr . . . var snemma mikill ok sterkr . . . skáld var hann gott ok heldr niðskár ok margbreytinn; ekki var hann vinsæll." (178)

Bjarnar saga :

"Riedz Biörn þa i skip með kaupmonnum þessum. feck Skuli frendi hans ok fadir hans honum goðan farar syri sva at hann var vel semdr af at fara með goðum monnum." (179)

Hallfreðar saga :

"Óláfr at Haukagili fýsti mjök Hallfreð, frenda sinn, utan at fara; - 'skal ek fá þér fé, svá at þú megir vel fara með goðum monnum.' Fadir hans fýsti hann mjök utan at fara." (180)

The similarities in the above examples, both as to situation and phraseology, are, although of varying quality, sufficient to indicate a more than probable connection between the two sagas. Bjarni Einarsson appears to believe that Hallfreðar saga has been the model for Bjarnar saga in this regard, but it is by no means certain that Hallfreðar saga

is the older of the two.<sup>(181)</sup> The opposite could also be the case and, in any event, there is unlikely to have been much difference between their respective dates of composition. However, if Hallfreðar saga has served as the model, this would, as Bjarni Einarsson says, explain why Þórðr ambushed Björn at the Hítará when Björn did not have to cross the river on his way back from Knarranes to Hólmr.

The likelihood that Bjarnar saga has been influenced by Hallfreðar saga is, however, increased, when one considers the former's similarities with Kormáks saga, a saga in the same group as Hallfreðar saga and one that is probably older than both the latter and Bjarnar saga.<sup>(182)</sup> The verse similarities have already been noted but there are also some verbal correspondences between Kormáks saga and the prose text of Bjarnar saga.

The first to be noted is not precisely a verbal similarity but rather one of incident. Þórðr and his followers are robbed of their goods in the Brenn Isles on the way back from Denmark. In Kormáks saga Þorvaldr tinteinn and his followers are robbed of their goods in the Brenn Isles on their way to Denmark.<sup>(183)</sup> The circumstances are different and the story is told more extensively in Bjarnar saga, but, when reduced to its essentials, the only difference is that, in the one case, the voyage was proceeding to Denmark, in the other, returning from that country. The incident seems to have been possibly derived by Bjarnar saga from Kormáks saga, changed and amplified, but, since the Brenn Isles were evidently a well-known haunt of vikings, nothing can be certain about this.

A fairly close verbal resemblance is found when Oddný in Bjarnar saga says :

"Sic eg þa almakligann mann til" (184)

and Bersi in Kormáks saga says :

"Sé ek manninn makligan til". (185)

There is no resemblance between the incidents, however.

The expression toeja tanna 'to be cheerful', which occurs in Bjarnar saga when it is said of Oddný that she "tæddi alldrej sydan tanna", (186) also is found twice in Kormáks saga in verses. In Verse 44 the first line reads :

"Nú hefk, en tæk tanna" (187)

and in Verse 51 the fifth and sixth lines are :

"trauðla mák of tæja  
tanna, silki-Nanna". (188)

Since this is an idiom, it is difficult, however, to know whether much importance can be placed upon its use in both sagas, except in association with the other items mentioned previously.

Some mention may also be made here of the last day of Þorbjörn Brúnason in Heiðarvíga saga, although some of the incidents relate to motifs discussed earlier. Þorbjörn had an evil dream the night before, which he related to his house-carle at his request, together with two verses, which he thought that he had composed in his sleep. In his dream he thought he had his good sword, which was not now in his possession and, when he hewed with that sword, his broke in pieces. Later we learn how Þorbjörn fights desperately to the last, even though his foot has been cut off at the ankle. (189)

Heiðarvíga saga is perhaps the earliest of sagas and influence

on Bjarnar saga, so far as the description of Björn's last day is concerned, seems very probable. Again this is not so much a case of verbal resemblance, as of similarity of incident.

There is also some verbal similarity between Bjarnar saga and the comparatively late saga, Kjalnesinga saga, in describing the entrance of the hero into the presence of a king of Norway, although the wording and situation are stereotyped and probably should not be considered evidence of literary relations. In Bjarnar saga we read :

"Þeir Biorn geingu xii. saman J hollina, þa er kongur sat yfer dryckiu . . . Biorn gleck fyrir kong og kuaddi hann vel. Kongur spyr huor hann sie hann seigir til syn." (190)

In Kjalnesinga saga it is told :

"Fór Búi til Prándheims . . . ok er hann kom til Steinkera, þá gekk hann fyrir komung, er hann sat yfir borðum, ok kvaddi hann vel. Konungr spurði, hværr sá væri inn mikli maðr. Búi sagði til allt it sanna." (191)

Later in Bjarnar saga Björn says to King Olaf that, out of respect for the king, he had not killed Þórðr, and adds :

"enn það mundi hann reyna, eff við fyndunst, og ættr þu ey hlut J," (192)

whilst in Kjalnesinga saga, when King Harald asks Helgi and Vákr if they know Búi :

"'Já,' sögðu þeir, 'þat mundi hann reyna, ef þér værið eigi svá nær'." (193)

It seems that, taking into consideration other points of resemblance between Bjarnar saga and Kjalnesinga saga, the author of the latter saga may well have made use of the former, as he has indeed done in respect of other works.

Bjarnar saga undoubtedly also has relations with Egils saga and the above-quoted episode of Björn's appearance before King Olaf may be compared with that of Egill before Eric Bloodaxe at York:

"Konungur sat yfir borðum; Arinbjörn bad þa ganga inn tólf menn, nefndi til þess Egil og tju menn aðra ; . . . Síðan ganga þeir inn; gekk Arinbjörn fyrir konung og kvaddi hann; konungur fagnaði honum ok spurði, hvat er hann vildi . . . konungur . . . mælti : 'Hví vartu svá djarfr, Egill, at þú þorðir at fara á fund minn?'" (194)

In Bjarnar saga King Olaf had said of Björn :

"Kongur kuad hann djarffann mann vera, er hann þordi á hanz fund ad fara." (195)

It can hardly be doubted that a relationship exists here and very likely this is a case of influence of Bjarnar saga on Egils saga.

In Eyrbyggja saga the attempted assassination of Arnkell by Þorleifr reminds one, both verbally and otherwise, of the attempted slaying by Þorsteinn of Björn in Bjarnar saga. In the latter saga we read :

"hann reyddi vpp auxina og villdi fara J hoffud Þyrne, Enn Biorn rann vnder hoggid, . . . og tok vm Þorstein midianng og höf vpp á bringu sier, honum vard laus auxinn og fiell hun nidur, sydann keyrdi Biorn hann nidur

Og eigi þyrmiliga, suo ad honum war lytilz vant, og tekur vm Barcka hanz og kyrrekier til þess ad hann var daudur." (196)

In Eyrbyggja saga Arnkell had laid down a small axe. Then :

"Porleifr tók hana upp ok reiddi skjótt yfir höfuð sér ok hugði at setja í höfuð Arnkatli. En er Arnkell heyrði hvininn, hljóp hann undir höggit ok hóf Porleif upp á bringu sér . . . felldi hann Porleif svá mikit fall, at honum helt við óvit, en óxin hraut ór hendi honum, ok fekk Arnkell hana tekit ok setti í höfuð Porleifi ok veitti honum banasár." (197)

Gering in his edition of Eyrbyggja saga (198) regarded Porsteinn's attack on Björn as having been patterned on Porleifr's attack on Arnkell. Nordal (199) considered that Gering had not put forward any convincing arguments that there was any connection between Eyrbyggja saga and Bjarnar saga, but, if there was, it was much more probable that the influence proceeded from Bjarnar saga. Since Eyrbyggja saga is later than the latter, there can hardly be any doubt about that, assuming that a connection exists, which, on the evidence of the above excerpts from both sagas, does appear to be the case.

Gísla saga has more than one resemblance to Bjarnar saga and Björn K. Þórólfsson has pointed out (200) that the scene where Þorkell refuses to allow his wife Ásgerðr in bed with him (201) has probably been influenced by that in Bjarnar saga where Þórðr does not give Oddný any room in the bed, so that she has to sit up all night. (202)



This is treated in Verse 16 by Björn and briefly in the preceding prose. Gísla saga develops the idea much further, but it seems likely that Bjarnar saga provided the inspiration

3. Casting of slain enemy's head before mother of victim.

The motif of the casting of the slain enemy's head before the victim's mother is one that has much in common with those of tying the head to the saddle-strap or carrying it around preserved in salt, discussed earlier. Since, however, it is not so much a motif common to sagas in general, as one that may rather involve a borrowing by one saga from another, it is discussed here instead of under Group A.

After Þórör had struck off Björn's head and tied it to his saddle-strap, he and his companions rode to Vellir, where Þórör reported the slaying to Björn's parents, Arngeirr and Þórdís. He untied the head from his saddle-strap and cast it before Þórdís, asking her whether she knew it. She replied that she knew it and so might he, for he had often gone in fear of that same head when it had been attached to its body. He should go and take it to Oddný, who would think that head better than the miserable little one that was wagging on his own neck. (203)

Something similar is found in Grettis saga.

Þorbjörn Öngull, Grettir's slayer, brings to Bjarg Grettir's head, which he had preserved in salt throughout the winter. He and his followers walk into the living-room and set the head down on the floor in front of Grettir's mother. There is no greeting but Öngull utters a verse, observing that Grettir's head would have been rotten before this but that

he had preserved it in salt. Whilst he spoke, Grettir's mother was silent. After that she uttered a verse, in which she told Óngull that, had Grettir been alive, they would have fled before him like sheep before a fox. (204)

Grettir's mother, thus, like Björn's mother, defies her son's slayers and expresses her contempt for them. Since Grettis saga is later than Bjarnar saga, it may be that the incident in the former is derived from that in the latter saga, particularly as no great reliance can be placed on the authenticity of the two verses. There are, however, sufficient differences to make this assumption doubtful, although Bjarnar saga and Grettis saga are otherwise associated.

In Eyrbyggja saga the head of a slain man was produced for a different purpose and in a different manner, when Þorgerðr exhibited in a dramatic way the head of her slain husband, Vigfúss, to Arnkell, to spur him into prosecuting her case against her husband's slayers. (205)

#### 4. Legendary motif of flying dragon.

Dragons are creatures principally to be found in fornaldarsögur and the only accounts of the slaying of a flying dragon in the Family Sagas are in Bjarnar saga and Njáls saga. In Bjarnar saga it is told that, when Björn was on a voyage with Canute the Great, the king's men were attacked by a flying dragon, which Björn thereupon slew. (206) The story is told in some detail in this case but in Njáls saga we simply read that in Aðalsýsla (in Estonia) Þorkell hákr slew a flying dragon. (207) No further details are given but

this information forms part of a general résumé concerning Porkell's adventures abroad. Prior to slaying the dragon, he had been in Bálagarðssiða, reputedly in South-West Finland, where, after a desperate fight with a fabulous creature known as a finngákn, he had succeeded in killing the monster.<sup>(208)</sup> Still earlier he had slain an enchanter in the forests of Jämtland and then raided in the Baltic.<sup>(209)</sup> One cannot help feeling that these details, so briefly given in Njáls saga, may once have been described more fully in a saga now lost about Porkell hákr himself.

It has been pointed out by Björn Sigfússon<sup>(210)</sup> that there is much in common between the reputed adventures abroad of Björn Hitdoelakappi and those of Porkell hákr and also in the fate that befell them both after their return and their settling down to the life of small farmers in Iceland, where the contrast between the brilliance of their former exploits in foreign parts and the pettiness of their parochial quarrels at home is striking. This statement is certainly true, particularly when it is also remembered that both made a last heroic stand against overwhelming odds, Björn against Þórðr and twenty-three others; Porkell hákr against twenty assailants led by Guðmundr inn ríki.<sup>(211)</sup> It is therefore quite likely that Björn's adventures have been the model for those of Porkell, but, when one considers the different treatment of Porkell as a character in Njáls saga and in Ljósvetninga saga and the difference in style of these sagas, one is tempted to believe that the influence has been derived through a lost Porkels saga háke and not directly from Biarnar saga.

5. Gift of a cloak.

There are numerous points of resemblance between Bjarnar saga and Gunnlaugs saga, which amply demonstrate the close connection between the two sagas. There is little doubt that these features were borrowed from Bjarnar saga by the author of Gunnlaugs saga, who then treated them in his own way.

None of these features is perhaps more striking, so far as its treatment in Gunnlaugs saga is concerned, than the gift of a cloak by the hero to his beloved after she had become the wife of another man and the subsequent effect of the gift.

Both cloaks were originally royal gifts to the hero. When Björn was with King Olaf, the latter gave him skickiu vandada <sup>(212)</sup> 'a finely woven cloak'. Similarly, when Gunnlaugr was with King Ethelred of England, the latter gave him a cloak of scarlet as a reward for a poem. In keeping with the more florid style of Gunnlaugs saga, this cloak is fully described as "skarlatsskikkju skinndregna inum beztum skinum ok hlaðbúna í skaut niðr". <sup>(213)</sup>

Later on in Bjarnar saga, when Björn was about to leave Hítarnes after his stay with Þórðr and Oddný, it is said that he gave Oddný the cloak Þordar Nautr. <sup>(214)</sup> There is no mention anywhere in the saga that Björn had acquired a cloak as a gift from Þórðr or a cloak that had previously belonged to Þórðr. There has possibly been some confusion with the pelliz kyrtil hlaðbvinna, which Þórðr had received from King Olaf <sup>(215)</sup> and which the king later awarded to Björn, although it is there termed gudvefiar kyrtil. <sup>(216)</sup> Apart from

the fact that a skikkja and a kyrtill are not the same, it is expressly stated much later in the saga that Björn gave this kirtle to Porfinna, the wife of Porsteinn Kuggason. Nothing could be clearer than the following :

"Porfinnu gaf Biorn Gullhring og Gudvefiar kyrtill er Olafur kongur hafdi giefed. Pordi Kolbeinssyne, og hann giordi til handa Byrne epter Rán J Brenn eyum." (217)

There can thus be no doubt that the cloak Pordar Nautr, which Björn gave to Oddný was not identical with the gudvefiar kyrtill, which had once belonged to Pórör. It is also highly unlikely that Pórör ever gave Björn a cloak and one must conclude that the name Pordar Nautr is an error on the part of the saga author, brought about by some mental confusion with the gudvefiar kyrtill and that the cloak which Björn gave to Oddný was the cloak which he had received from King Olaf, who of course had also on another occasion given the kirtle to Pórör.

To return to Gunnlaugs saga, we read that, when about to leave the wedding feast of Hrafn and Helga, Gunnlaugr gave Helga "skikkjuna Aðalráðsnaut, ok var þat gersimi sem mest." (218) There is thus no question of the identity of that particular cloak.

In passing, it should also be mentioned that in Hallfreðar saga King Olaf of Sweden gave Hallfreðr a pellsskikkja as a reward for a drápa, together with a ring and a helmet. (219) After he returned to Iceland, Hallfreðr wanted to give this cloak Konungsnautr to Kolfinna, who also was married to another man, Griss, but she would not accept the gift. (220) The cloak and indeed the other royal

gifts were ultimately destined to be put to strange use, for, when Hallfreðr died, they were put into the coffin with him. It was thrust overboard and came ashore on Iona, in the Hebrides. There the valuables finally came into the possession of the monks, who made from the ring a chalice, from the cloak an altar cloth and a candlestick out of the helmet. (221)

There seems to be a link here between the three sagas and one is also reminded of the famous silken thong in Bjarnar saga that became part of a mass garment in the church at Garðar on Akranes.

In Bjarnar saga there is no further mention of the cloak, after it had been given to Oddný. Not so the cloak which Gunnlaugr gave to Helga and the result of that gift is discussed in the next section.

#### 6. The result of a gift.

Before dealing with the result of the gift of the cloak in Gunnlaugs saga, it is necessary to mention another gift to Oddný of an article which had been in Björn's possession, the effect of which on Oddný was almost as fatal as that of the cloak ultimately was on Helga. Again, the different effects illustrate the difference between the tone of the two sagas, the one more sober, the other more romantic.

When Þórðr and his followers had slain Björn, they went first to Hólmr and Kálfr illviti gave to Þórdís, Björn's wife, the necklace which Björn had been wearing. She, however, asked if Þórðr were there and, being answered

in the affirmative, went out and threw the necklace at him, telling him to take it to his wife, Oddný, for a keepsake. (222) When Þórðr got back to Hitarnes, he gave Oddný the necklace which Björn had owned. As soon as she saw it, she fell back in a faint. Even when she recovered, the shock had been so great that her health was permanently affected. No matter what Þórðr did to try and alleviate her suffering, she continued to pine and was never cheerful again, although she still lived a long while in that state. (223)

The fate of Helga in Gunnlaugs saga is somewhat differently described, in a more sentimental, less matter-of-fact style. After Gunnlaugr and Hrafn had slain each other, making Helga a widow, she was married to Porkell Hallkelsson, although there was little love on her part, since she never forgot Gunnlaugr, even though he was dead. It is said that it was Helga's greatest pleasure to spread out the cloak Gunnlaugsnautr and gaze upon it for a long time. Finally their farm was stricken by an epidemic and Helga fell ill but would not go to bed. One Saturday evening she was sitting in the kitchen, resting her head in the lap of her husband, Porkell, when she sent for the cloak Gunnlaugsnautr.

"And when the cloak was brought to her, then she sat up and spread the cloak out in front of her and looked at it for a while. And then she sank back into the arms of her husband and was then dead." (224)

This description is particularly touching, but perhaps no more so than that of Oddný's condition in Bjarnar saga, especially when one considers how the author even manages to arouse the sympathies of the reader for Þórðr,

in his despair at Oddný's state and for his largely vain efforts to console her. Psychologically, this is better motivated but the romantic scene in Gunnlaugs saga undoubtedly impresses itself on the mind more as a picture. Also it has the definite advantage of being the last scene in the saga and that is thus the impression with which the reader is left and which he carries in his memory when he closes the book. It is otherwise with Bjarnar saga, for, after we have read of the illness of Oddný, there follows the lengthy scene of the prosecution of the case against Þórðr and his subsequent discomfort, of a different kind to that of his wife's. This serves to erase previous impressions to a certain extent, whereas in Gunnlaugs saga the death-scene of Helga must remain fresh.

The author of Gunnlaugs saga has used one motif, the cloak. In Bjarnar saga, on the other hand, we have two mingled, first the cloak and then the necklace, with some side-effects from the kirtle. The very fact that these mingled motifs have been so deftly combined into one in Gunnlaugs saga should go far to prove, if no other factors existed, that Gunnlaugs saga is the later of the two sagas and that it owes the idea of this story of the gift of a cloak and its effect on the recipient to Bjarnar saga.

## 7. Trénið.

Trénið, the erection of poles of scorn (niðstengar) or the carving in wood of likenesses of men with a view to exposing them to contempt or doing them a harm, is frequently mentioned in the sagas. It often implies sexual aberration



on the part of the object of the níð, stemming from an accusation of cowardice, from which implications of effeminacy and homosexuality would naturally follow. In Egils saga, however, it appears merely to be a form of sorcery, accompanied by magic incantations, with the intention of alarming the land-spirits, so that they would drive King Eric and Queen Gunnhildr out of Norway. With that view Egill erected a hazel pole, upon which he set a horse's head, turning it towards the land. He uttered an incantation and carved it in runes on the pole. (225)

Possibly this was the original object of níð and the other and more usual meaning, the association with the state of being ragr, was a later development. In varying degrees, this is the implication of the trénið in Biarnar saga, Gisla saga, Vatnsdoela saga and Reykdoela saga.

The latter two cases are rather different from the others. In Vatnsdoela saga Jökull raised a pole, on the end of which he carved the head of a man and runes containing a pronouncement of the cowardice of Finnbogi and Bergr. Afterwards he killed a mare and placed its head on the pole and turned it towards Borg, where Finnbogi lived. (226) Here there is no accusation of sexual aberration nor is it much more obvious in the example in Reykdoela saga, although this is probably intended there. In this case, the booth of Skúta at the Althing is moved in front of a privy and a pole raised up and a man's head carved on its end. (227)

Accusation of homosexual behaviour is much more explicit in Bjarnar saga and in Gisla saga and it seems likely that the former case has influenced the latter. The description of the nið and of its consequences in Bjarnar saga is quite extensive. It is said that two men, presumably wooden posts carved in the likeness of men, were found in Þórðr's landing-place. One had a blue hood on its head and was no doubt meant to represent Þórðr. They stood bent over one behind the other and men agreed that the lot of neither of the two who stood there was a good one but that of the one who was in front was still worse. This in all probability was the figure representing Þórðr, to whom the woman's part had been assigned, the greatest insult of all.<sup>(228)</sup> Björn then composed a verse, the niðvísa (Verse 20) about this situation and this did not improve matters at all, with the result that Þórðr summoned Björn to the Althing and intended to prosecute him there. The matter was however settle beforehand and Björn had to pay compensation.<sup>(229)</sup>

In Gisla saga Skeggi tells his smith Refr to make likenesses of Gísli and Kolbjörn and adds :

"ok skal annarr standa aptar en annarr, ok skal nið þat standa ávallt, þeim til háðungar."

This had occurred when Skeggi had gone onto an islet prepared for a pre-arranged duel and had found neither Gísli nor Kolbjörn had arrived to fight with him. The carving of the trémenn would thus be an accusation both of cowardice and homosexual relations on the part of Gísli and Kolbjörn.

It does not appear that these figures were actually carved, for Gísli heard what was said, appeared on the scene and fought the duel with success. (230)

The two cases of níð or intended níð reported in Bjarnar saga and in Gísla saga exhibit similarities which are not to be found so obviously in those contained in other sagas. We read in both cases of representations of men in wood, suggestions of homosexuality in both cases and also in both cases a pronouncement aloud, in Gísla saga in prose in a type of formula, which is reminiscent of those in Egils saga and Vatnsdoela saga, and in Bjarnar saga in the form of a níðvísu. In addition, both examples of trénið took place or were to take place by the sea. That the author of Gísla saga got the idea for this scene from Bjarnar saga is extremely probable.

#### 8. Quarrels at horse-fights.

Horsefighting was a popular pastime in ancient Iceland and quarrels at these events must have been frequent. Accordingly, allusions to such happenings in the sagas could hardly as a rule be taken as evidence of literary influence. The quarrel at the horse-fight in Bjarnar saga is therefore unlikely to be connected with any similar quarrel in another saga.

In Bjarnar saga a horse-fight had been arranged and Björn was urging his horse on with a thick staff in his hand. Þórðr was riding by the ring of men and looking on, when he suddenly rode his horse into the ring and thrust his spear into Björn's shoulder-blade. At that Björn

turned round, raised his staff and struck Þórðr beside the ear, knocking him off his horse. Before there was time for any more to happen, men ran between and parted them and things were then quiet for a time. (231)

In Njáls saga there is a somewhat similar quarrel, arising also out of an unprovoked attack. Gunnarr's horse was fighting that of Þorgeirr and Kolr and the latter decided to drive their horse at Gunnarr's in such a manner as to cause Gunnarr to fall. He, however, was too quick for them, with the result that they both fell over on their backs with their horse on top of them. In the ensuing struggle Gunnarr seized Kolr and hurled him to the ground, knocking him out. Þorgeirr thereupon struck out the eye of Gunnarr's horse and Gunnarr then knocked Þorgeirr unconscious with his staff. After Gunnarr had had his maimed horse destroyed, Þorgeirr got onto his feet again, took his weapons and attempted to attack Gunnarr but was prevented, there being a great throng of men around. Accordingly nothing further happened at that time. (232)

Although we have in both sagas an unprovoked attack, a quarrel, a blow with a staff, the protagonists being parted by the onlookers and peace being patched up for the time being, it is unlikely that the much more extensive description in Njáls saga is in any way dependent upon that in Bjarnar saga. It is much more probable that both stories are in no way connected with each other.

9. Fighting with mane-shears.

However common fighting between participants and onlookers at horse-fights may have been, it seems hardly likely that fighting with mane-shears can have been of frequent occurrence. Therefore, if we find a description of such an incident in more than one saga, it is reasonable to suppose that one of these episodes owes something to the other.

Björn's heroic defence, after his sword had failed him, with the mane-shears that he had taken with him to cut on Hvítingshjallar the manes of the horses which he had given to Þorsteinn, is a splendid piece of literature, whether true or not. It would not be surprising if it had inspired or influenced the author of another saga.

In Þorskfirðinga saga, otherwise known as Gull-Þóris saga, we find another description of defence with mane-shears, this time, however, using the case of the shears. In this saga, the sons of Helgi, Frakki and Bljúgr, together with their two followers, ambush Þórir at Hjallar, a farm in Þorskafjörðr. We then read :

\*Peir urðu þess varir, at Þórir fóu at skera mæn  
á hrossum sínum ok Guðmundr sonr hans með honum.

Peir Frakki ok Bljúgr fóru til móts við þá ok kom Bljúgr  
fyrst at. Hann lagði þegar til Þóris, sem hann var at  
manskurðinum ok hafði hengt skjöldinn á hlið sér. Lagit  
kom í skjöldinn ok rendi af út ok kom á nára hestinum,  
ok þar á hol. Fell hann þegar dauðr niðr. En Þórir  
snerisk við fast ok laust Bljúg með skarahúsanum ok kom

í ennit, en hann fell á bak aftr ok varð hola fyrir húsnum. Bað hann þá Guðmund gæta hans. Þórir tók þá sverð sitt ok hljóp á mýrina ok vá þar Frakka; hét þar síðan Frakkamýrr." (233)

The other three assailants are likewise killed by Þórir and his son, the place where each slaying took place receiving its name from the victim.

There are naturally differences between the episodes as told in the two sagas and the results of the conflicts are notably different. The odds against the hero in Porskfirðinga saga were in any case so much less as to make a more favourable outcome much more probable. There are, however, a number of similarities between the stories related in the two sagas. In both sagas we have the hero going out with mane-shears to cut the manes of his horses and, most notably of all, in both sagas at a place called Hjallar. A youth accompanies the hero in both cases, although in Bjarnar saga the boy takes no part in the fight. In Porskfirðinga saga Þórir's son finishes off two of the attackers himself. In both sagas a blow goes through the hero's shield and in both he uses the mane-shears as a weapon, except that in Porskfirðinga saga the skarahúsi 'shears' case is used instead. Whether the shears were put back in the case first or not is not related but one would doubt whether there would have been time for that. It is perhaps also worth noting that Þórir pursues Frakki onto the swamp and kills him there, on Frakkamýrr. In Verse 35 of Bjarnar saga, which Björn is said to have uttered

as he left his home-field that day on his way to Hvítingshjallar he speaks of his intention not to "flee over Mýrar".

According to both Kálund and Benedikt Sveinsson, in the form in which it is now preserved Porskfirðinga saga can scarcely be older than from about 1300. (234) In any event, it would be considerably later than Bjarnar saga. The probability is therefore very strong that the story of the mane-shears in Porskfirðinga saga owes its inspiration to the much more famous episode in Bjarnar saga, although the treatment of the idea in both cases is very different.

10. The fosterfather Ingialdr.

When Bjorn returned to Iceland, we read that :

"Pordys Arngeyrr og Ingialldur, fara til skipz og hitta Biorn verdur þar fagna fundur með þeim, og bioda Byrne thil syn og kuadust nu werda honum fegner sogdu nu Langtt hafa werid funda a milli, hann kuadst fara mundi thil faudur synz." (235)

Pordys is an emendation, as the text in AM 551 d a, 4to reads Pordur, which is quite obviously wrong, since one cannot visualize Pórðr having gone to the ship to meet Björn, whereas the latter's mother, Pórdís, might easily have done so. This, however, is not the important feature of the passage, the significant word being the name Ingialldur. There seems every reason to believe that here we have the name of Björn's fosterfather, who, like Björn's father, upon meeting Björn at the ship, invites him to stay with him, since it is such a long time since they had met.

Björn chooses to stay with his father, Arngeirr, and his mother, for that matter.

It is clear that Skúli Þorsteinsson, with whom, according to the saga, Björn was brought up at Borg until he went abroad at the age of eighteen years, was not Björn's fosterfather, for, when Björn captures Þórðr in the Brenn Isles, the latter tells him that Skúli is dead, but that both his father and his fosterfather are still alive. (236) This is quite apart from the obvious confusion in the saga between Skúli and his father, Þorsteinn Egilsson.

It would, of course, be possible to put forward an argument that Björn's fosterfather was actually Þorsteinn and, since the fosterfather survived Skúli's death, according to the saga, this would merely imply a genuine chronological error on the part of the author. It does not, however, explain why there is no mention of Þorsteinn in the early part of Bjarnar saga, when describing Björn's stay at Borg with Skúli. If Þorsteinn were the fosterfather, one would expect him to have been mentioned there, even in the Bejarbók version and, accordingly, it seems very improbable that Þorsteinn was Björn's fosterfather, even if one makes allowance for the author of Bjarnar saga not being familiar with the chronology of Egils saga.

It seems therefore logical that Ingjaldr was Björn's fosterfather and that Björn was with him before he went to Borg to stay with Skúli. Ingjaldr is not mentioned anywhere else in the saga, either before or afterwards, but it is quite possible that he might have been mentioned in the lacuna and much more probably in the original beginning of



the saga from which the reduced version contained in the Bæjarbók has been taken. In any case, his name is brought in without further ado, as if he had been introduced properly earlier on. There is therefore no reason not to conclude that Ingjaldr was Björn's fosterfather.

Whichever is the older of the two, Bjarnar saga, as mentioned previously, has links with Hallfreðar saga. A further such link is that the fosterfather of Hallfreðr's father, Óttarr, was also called Ingjaldr. This Ingjaldr lived on the island Ylfi in Hálogaland and was burnt in his house by vikings, his son Ávaldi and fosterson Óttarr narrowly escaping. (237)

Vatnsdoela saga, which is later and has more than one connection with Hallfreðar saga, also features an Ingjaldr, who was a farmer said to live in Hefni, also reputedly an island in Hálogaland. (238) This Ingjaldr became the foster-father of Ingimundr gamli, who may be said to be the principal character in the saga.

There seems little reason for doubting that the Ingjaldr from Hálogaland, who was Óttarr's fosterfather in Hallfreðar saga, was the model for the Ingjaldr, also from Hálogaland, the fosterfather of Ingimundr in Vatnsdoela saga, particularly when it would appear that there never has been an island called Hefni in Hálogaland. (239) The fact that, in each of the three sagas referred to, the fosterfather of the hero, or, in one case, of the father of the hero, is named Ingjaldr, leads to the suspicion that the name may be derived from the one source. If this were Bjarnar saga, it would imply that, in that saga's original state, Ingjaldr

played a much more prominent role than he does in the form in which we have it now. There is reason for thinking, however, that Hallfreðar saga is probably the older of the two and, in any event, the evidence is not strong enough to suggest that the use of the name in Bjarnar saga is anything more than coincidental.

D. Cases where direct references are made to characters in another saga.

It is convenient to include in this group those cases where direct references are made in Bjarnar saga to characters appearing in other sagas, those where there are references in other sagas to characters of Bjarnar saga and, thirdly, a general discussion of the connections of Bjarnar saga with Landnámabók. The first two categories overlap to a certain extent and division between them must perforce be more or less arbitrary.

1. References to characters of other sagas.

In dealing with characters who appear in other sagas, it seems reasonable to exclude from any specific discussion those who principally feature in the Kings' Sagas. Under this heading come Earl Eric, his brother Earl Sveinn, his son Earl Hákon and, in addition, King Olaf. So far as Earls Sveinn and Hákon are concerned, mention of them in Bjarnar saga is very brief and merely related to King Olaf's seizure of power from them in Norway. These details agree with those to be found in the Kings' Sagas or what may have been general knowledge and serve to help fix the chronology of Bjarnar saga. It is reasonable to assume that the author

of Bjarnar saga obtained the information from the same sources which were used by the author of Fagrskinna, for example.

Earl Eric and St. Olaf appear extensively in the Kings' Sagas and also in other Family Sagas, the former, for instance, in Gunnlaugs saga and the latter in Fóstbroeðra saga. The roles of these rulers in Bjarnar saga have been broadly discussed above, when dealing with Miracle Tales and Icelanders at foreign courts and further treatment here is unnecessary. It was in any event open to authors of Family Sagas to introduce foreign potentates into their stories to lend colour and interest and in an attempt to add historical verisimilitude and many saga authors took advantage of this.

Porkell Eyjólfsson plays a part at the end of Bjarnar saga as Þórðr's representative in the action against him for the slaying of Björn.<sup>(240)</sup> Porkell also appears earlier in the saga when he pleads Þórðr's case before King Olaf<sup>(241)</sup> and he is named in the beginning of the saga as a man always much in favour with the king when he was abroad. His marriage to Guðrún Ósvífrsdóttir, whose fourth husband he was, is there specifically mentioned.

Because of his marriage to Guðrún, Porkell is a principal character in Laxdoela saga. This saga is later than Bjarnar saga, but, since Porkell came from a well-known family and was a man about whom many traditions must have been current, there is no reason for thinking that Laxdoela saga is in any way dependent on Bjarnar saga in this respect, unless it be in the way in which Porkell is introduced in

both sagas. The similarity of the language used is apparent from the following : Biarnar saga :

"nefnir þar til fyrstan agiðtan mann Porkel Eyjulfsson er atti Guðrunu Osuifrs ðottur. Þuiat i þenna tíma war Porkell i fðrum ok war iafnan med Olafi konungi vel virðr þa er hann var vtan landz" (242)

Laxdoela saga :

"I þenna tíma var i forum Porkell Eyjólfsson; hann var frægr maðr ok kynstórr, ok var hann mikill vinr Snorra goða. Hann var ok jafnan með Þorsteini Kuggasyni, frænda sínum, þá er hann var út hér." (243)

A connection between these two passages is accordingly possible, but any conclusions that might be drawn would be, at best, dubious, since the passage from Biarnar saga comes from the þáttur in Bæjarbók and the first chapter of this þáttur obviously consists of a considerable rewriting of the beginning of Biarnar saga to fit in with Óláfs saga helga. There is therefore no guarantee that the passage now to be found in Biarnar saga existed in its present state or at all in the saga in its original form. Bearing this in mind, it is probably more likely that Laxdoela saga would have exercised some influence on the þáttur in Bæjarbók, rather than the contrary. It was, in any case, well-known from Óláfs saga helga that Porkell was amongst those Icelanders counted as good friends and retainers of King Olaf. (244)

Grettir Ásmundarson is briefly mentioned in Bjarnar saga, where we read :

"Enn Biorn og þeir fedgar, biuggu þa á Völlum, ofann fra Wollum er Grettis bæli, og var Gretter þar J raufinne, þann wetur er hann var med Byrne, Enn hann biö þa á Vollum, þeir logdust ofann epter anne, og voru kallader Jaffn stercker menn - "(245)

Grettir's stay under Björn's protection is much more fully told in Grettis saga and discussion of this episode is deferred until dealing below with references in other sagas to characters of Bjarnar saga.

Immediately after the passage concerning Grettir in Bjarnar saga comes the statement that Björn had a church built at Vellir and dedicated to St. Thomas, about whom he composed a good drápa. The authority for this information is given as Rúnólfur Dagsson. This matter has been discussed above, when treating of the removal of bones from one church to another, and it was there mentioned that no doubt Rúnólfur Dálksson is meant, a distinguished priest referred to in Sturlunga saga. This reference to a character of another saga is accordingly hardly so much a matter of literary relations as an attempt to give authority for an item of some importance and, whether founded on fact or not, is hardly likely to be related to the details concerning Rúnólfur in Sturlunga saga.

In Bjarnar saga it is told that on one occasion Þórðr gave protection to two outlaws and had them lodged in Hraundalr with a certain Steinólfur.<sup>(246)</sup> Grettis saga tells

how Steinólfr Þorleifsson from Hraundalr joined in an attack on Grettir, with the organisation of which Þórðr Kolbeinsson was associated. In this attack Grettir slew Steinólfr. (247)

There is little doubt that this is the same Steinólfr and possibly the latter owes his mention in Grettis saga to the incident in which he features in Bjarnar saga. In that saga it is further told that, when Björn learned that Steinólfr was sheltering Þórðr's outlaws, he rode from home to Steinólfr's summer-dairy and met a man named Eiríkr in Grjótdálr, whom he bribed to let him know when the outlaws left Steinólfr. (248) In Landnámabók, (for instance, in Sturlubók), we read :

"Steinólfr het madr er nam Hraundal huorutveGja allt til Griotár at Leyfi SkallaGrims. hann var fadir Þorleifs er Hraundalir er frá komner." (249)

Steinólfr in Bjarnar saga and Grettis saga is clearly the son of this Þorleifr and the grandson of Steinólfr, who settle Hraundalr. A comparison of this passage and neighbouring passages in Sturlubók with the episode in Grettis saga referred to above indicates the extent to which Sturlubók has been made use of in Grettis saga to provide characters who take part in this particular attack on Grettir.

In this attack Þórðr's son, Arnórr the poet, the future jarlaskáld, plays a leading but not very distinguished part. Arnórr, many of whose verses have been preserved in the Kings' Sagas, is mentioned on one occasion in Bjarnar saga, when Þórðr asked his sons, Arnórr and Kolli,

how they liked an exchange of verses which had just taken place between him and Björn. In contrast to Kolli, Arnórr replied disapprovingly. (250)

The fact that Arnórr plays a role in Grettis saga need not imply any influence from Bjarnar saga in this regard and, in fact, probably there was none. Arnórr was a well-known poet and it would have been quite logical for the author to have introduced him into Grettis saga in the circumstances in which he did, despite his youth at the time. This, of course, might have partly accounted for his failure to distinguish himself.

## 2. References in other sagas to characters of Bjarnar saga.

Both Björn and Þórðr are mentioned in other sagas, but principally in the episode in Grettis saga referred to above. It would seem that the author of this part of Grettis saga has made use of the brief statement in Bjarnar saga, which was probably based on one of the traditions concerning Grettir, and has considerably expanded it.

Whereas Bjarnar saga states that Grettir spent one winter in Grettisbæli, whilst Björn was living with his father at Vellir, Grettis saga states that Grettir was three years in Fagraskógafjall and that Björn was living at Hólmr at the time. (251) Grettisbæli was the name of Grettir's refuge in Fagraskógafjall but whether the expansion of the one year into three owes anything to oral tradition or is merely an invention of the author of Grettis saga cannot be determined. The latter, however, seems very likely.

It is certain that a good deal is owing to Bjarnar saga and Landnámabók. The episode in Grettis saga begins by relating Björn's descent and informing the reader that Björn was a great chief and a tough one and constantly lent his protection to outlaws.<sup>(252)</sup> Björn agreed to give Grettir refuge in the nearby mountain and from there he plundered the district for provisions and caused great inconvenience to the men of Mýrar. It is then told that Þórðr Kolbeinsson lived in Hítarnes at that time and that he was a good poet; furthermore that there was great enmity between Björn and Þórðr.

The saga goes on to tell that Grettir and Björn displayed much prowess and states that it is said in Bjarnar saga that they were called equal in their capacity for performing feats of strength. However, Grettis saga declares that most people considered that Grettir had been the strongest man in the land at that time. It also enlarges upon the information in Bjarnar saga that Björn and Grettir swam down the Hítará from Vellir by stating :

\*Peir Grettir ok Björn lögðusk í einu eptir allri Hítará ofan frá vatni ok út til sjávar. Peir foerðu stéttir þær í ána, er aldri síðan hefir ór rekit, hvárki með vatnavoxtum né ísalögum eða jöklagangi.\*<sup>(253)</sup>

Þórðr made more than one attempt to get rid of Grettir, but these efforts failed miserably. However, the fact that friends and kinsmen of Björn were also amongst those slain by Grettir when the Mýramenn attacked him and



that they had suffered from his depredations finally began to make his presence in the neighbourhood embarrassing to Björn. As a consequence Björn agreed to send Grettir away, when the third winter should be over. Accordingly although Björn retained his friendship for him, Grettir left Mýrar in the following summer.

Just as the author of Grettis saga has expanded Grettir's stay in the Mýrar district from one year to three, he has also expanded the statement in Bjarnar saga that Björn and Grettir swam down the Hítará from Vellir into a much more comprehensive declaration that they swam the whole length of the river from Hítarvatn to the sea. In addition, they placed stepping stones in the river, which no force of water, ice or glacier had since been able to remove.

Björn has here been associated with typical feats of strength attributed to Grettir, many of which have become attached to place names or natural features throughout Iceland. Halldór K. Laxness is perhaps the latest of those who have pointed out the impossibility that Björn and Grettir could have swum the whole length of the Hítará, almost 33 kilometres in all. Apart from the length of the swim, Laxness states that anyone following the course of the river can see that it is practically shallow, fordable everywhere and is not fit for swimming except in certain pools. On top of that it is fast flowing over rocks and reefs, intermingled with sandbanks and occasional waterfalls. Accordingly, it would need a great deal of faith for anyone to believe that, even in times of great flood, the river

would ever be deep enough to make the feat attributed to Björn and Grettir at all possible. (254)

Apart from Grettis saga, Björn receives very little mention outside his own saga and, of course, the short páttir in Óláfs saga helga referred to previously. In a passage in the Stockholm 18, 4to manuscript of Gunnlaugs saga concerning those of the Mýramenn who were descended from Egill Skallagrímsson, Björn is named amongst those of the family who had been great poets. (255) In addition, Article 14 of the twenty-eight short articles from the Óláfs saga of Styrmir the Wise which are contained in Flateyjarbók briefly mentions Björn as being one of the Icelanders who were retainers of King Olaf and in high favour with him. (256)

There seems little doubt that both these references are derived from Bjarnar saga, or, in the case of Styrmir's articles, perhaps from information supplied by Rúnólfr Dálksson, to whom Styrmir was related. This information need not have been oral but could have been in the form of a brief written account of Björn's life left by Rúnólfr, which could have been the basis of Bjarnar saga. So far as the passage from the Stockholm manuscript of Gunnlaugs saga is concerned, it seems fairly sure that this is an interpolation. Whether this is the case or not, in any event Gunnlaugs saga is clearly later than Bjarnar saga.

Pórör Kolbeinsson is mentioned once in Gunnlaugs saga, (257) where, as referred to earlier, a verse is attributed to him on what appears to be doubtful authority. Here the author of Gunnlaugs saga seems to have made use of Pórör's name to give greater veracity to his account of

Gunnlaugr's death. It would not have been necessary for him to have had Bjarnar saga in mind at the time, for Þórðr was well-known as a poet from other sources. For example, verses of his are quoted in the Kings' Sagas and Snorra Edda and Oláfs saga helga names him amongst the Icelanders who were retainers of King Olaf. (258)

Skúli Þorsteinsson plays a prominent part in the earlier portion of Bjarnar saga, according to which Björn stays with Skúli at Borg for five years until he is eighteen. Skúli then arranges for his passage to Norway and recommends him to his friend Earl Eric.

In the vivid scene in Gunnlaugs saga where Gunnlaugr appears before Earl Eric and, by his bold words, draws down upon himself the earl's wrath, Skúli is present as the retainer of the earl, by whom he was highly regarded. Skúli intercedes for Gunnlaugr and gets him safely out of the country. (259)

Apart from verses of his preserved in Snorra Edda and the Kings' Sagas, there is little mention elsewhere of Skúli. In the passage previously referred to from the Stockholm manuscript of Gunnlaugs saga, he is numbered amongst the many talented men descended from Egill. Later, at the end of the first chapter of Gunnlaugs saga, he is named as the eldest of the sons of Þorsteinn Egilsson and his wife Jófríðr. (260)

Skúli is furthermore mentioned twice in Egils saga; first, when he is named as being the second of the eight legitimate sons of Þorsteinn. (261) Then, secondly, at the very end of Egils saga it is stated :

"Þorgeirr, sonr Þorsteins, var þeira sterkastr broeðra, en Skúli var mestri; hann bjó at Borg eptir dag Þorsteins, föður síns. Skúli var lengi í viking; hann var stafnbúi Eiriks jarls á Járnbardamum, þá er Óláfr konungr Tryggvason fell; Skúli hafði att í viking sjau orrostur." (262).

The discrepancy between the statement in Gunnlaugs saga that Skúli was the eldest of the sons of Þorsteinn and Jófríðr and that in Egils saga that Skúli was the second is accounted for by Nordal by the fact that the actual eldest son, Grímr, was killed at the age of ten years and Skúli would therefore have been the eldest at the time when Gunnlaugs saga begins. (263)

The author of Gunnlaugs saga therefore seems to have got his facts and his inspiration concerning Skúli from Egils saga, although it is by no means certain that, when composing the scene in which Skúli averts from Gunnlaugr the earl's wrath, he did not have in mind the statement in Bjarnar saga by Skúli that the earl was his friend.

However, there is no doubt from a historical point of view that the author of Bjarnar saga has confused Skúli Þorsteinsson and his father Þorsteinn Egilsson. At the period when Björn was, according to the saga, being brought up by Skúli at Borg, (264) Þorsteinn was the master there and Skúli was in all probability abroad on viking expeditions, the time of his return to Iceland being unknown. There is little doubt that the author has made a quite unintentional error, due probably to the fact that he knew that Skúli had

been with Earl Eric at the Battle of Svöld<sup>(265)</sup> but that he was not with Eric when Björn went abroad.<sup>(266)</sup> Furthermore, he may perhaps have known that Skúli was with Eric when Gunnlaugr ormstunga visited the earl's court some five years before<sup>(267)</sup> but, as Gunnlaugs saga is reckoned later than Bjarnar saga, this is at best dubious. A reasonable conclusion appears to be that Þorsteinn is meant whenever Skúli is referred to in Bjarnar saga, but that it is just possible that, as Guðbrandur Vigfússon suggested, Skúli was Björn's foster-brother.<sup>(268)</sup> Thus, when Þórðr reported to Björn in 1016 that Skúli had died but that his father and his fóstri were alive,<sup>(269)</sup> he was in fact reporting the death of Þorsteinn the previous year but that Skúli, Björn's foster-brother, was still alive. This seems hardly tenable though, because it seems evident that, by the word "fóstri", foster-father is meant and indeed it is surely obvious that the fóstri who gave Björn upon his return the dog V...., which he had thought much of before he left Iceland,<sup>(270)</sup> was his foster-father, who most probably was the same Ingjaldr who went with the others to the ship to meet Björn on his return.<sup>(271)</sup> Sigurður Nordal comments<sup>(272)</sup> that this dog was probably called Vigi, as was the famous dog of Olaf Tryggvason, and adds that it must have been extremely old when given to Björn, since the latter had been away for twelve years. For the rest, Skúli Þorsteinsson, as is made clear in a recent article,<sup>(273)</sup> is a rather shadowy figure, about whom remarkably little is known, despite his participation in stirring events and his poetic ability.

Porsteinn Kuggason, whose visit to Björn at Yuletide has such momentous consequences and who forcefully and successfully prosecutes the case against Þórðr and his accomplices for Björn's slaying, appears quite extensively in several other sagas. In Grettis saga he makes a number of appearances.<sup>(274)</sup> On one occasion he sends Grettir south to Mýrar, as the result of which he takes refuge with Björn, as discussed above. Later in the saga we read that Grettir learns of the slaying of Porsteinn, which had taken place the previous Autumn.

Porsteinn is mentioned several times in Laxdoela saga<sup>(275)</sup> but principally in the scene where, accompanied by Þorkell Eyjólfsson, he attempts to purchase land from Halldórr Ólafsson. This ends in a quarrel, with Halldórr making the following remarkable declaration to Porsteinn that, before he would sell him the land :

"Bolþx mun standa í hofði þér af inum versta manni ok steypa svá ofsa þinum ok ójafnaði."<sup>(276)</sup>

Finally in Eyrbyggja saga it is said in the last chapter that, during the twenty years that Snorri goði lived in Tunga :

"hafði hann fyrst heldr ofundsamt setr, meðan þeir lifðu stórbokkarnir, Porsteinn Kuggason ok Þorgils Hölluson ok enn fleiri inir stóerri menn, þeir er óvinir hans varu."<sup>(277)</sup>

Nordal,<sup>(278)</sup> in his "Formáli" to the Fornrit edition of Bjarnar saga, has extensively and persuasively discussed the case for a lost Porsteins saga Kuggasonar, just as there was apparently once a Þorgils saga Höllusonar, referred to in Laxdoela saga, but now lost.<sup>(279)</sup>

Porsteinn was undoubtedly a tough and overbearing man, as all four sagas in which he is mentioned bear witness. He was nothing if not forceful. His appearance in Bjarnar saga brings about a remarkable change in the tone and complexion of the story. This lifts the tale out of the doldrums of petty parochial quarrels into which it had been in danger of sinking still further and puts it on the road to its superb climax.

It seems very doubtful whether Porsteinn's appearances in the three other sagas owe anything to Bjarnar saga, although they themselves may have some mutual relationships in this regard. In any case, since Grettis sagg has Porsteinn sending Grettir south to Mýrar to take refuge with Björn, it would seem that the author of Grettis saga has here had access to some source other than Bjarnar saga, for in the latter saga Grettir stays with Björn before Porsteinn becomes acquainted with or, at least, friendly with Björn.

The actual manner of Porsteinn's death is not recorded, but one may infer from what evidence there is in the sagas that the powerful and unscrupulous chieftain, Snorri goði, in all probability was behind it, just as he despatched an assassin armed with an axe to kill Þorgils Hölluson,<sup>(280)</sup> who also, upon the evidence of Eyrbyggja saga, stood in his way. Like Guðmundr inn ríki, Snorri brooked little opposition in his neighbourhood. Halldórr's prophecy in Laxdoela saga probably affords us the clue and it is not unlikely that Porsteinn was killed by the axe of an outlaw, at the instigation of Snorri. In any event, the frequent mention of Porsteinn in the sagas, the fact that his

activities in Bjarnar saga bear so little relation, except in their forcefulness, to his activities in the other sagas, and the fact that the actual end of his life is in none of them detailed leads the reader to the belief that there must once have existed a complete written account of his life. A man, who could inspire such fear and respect in his neighbours and who could enforce a settlement the like and magnitude of which had seldom been seen in Iceland, can scarcely have lacked his own saga.

### 3. Connections with Landnámabók.

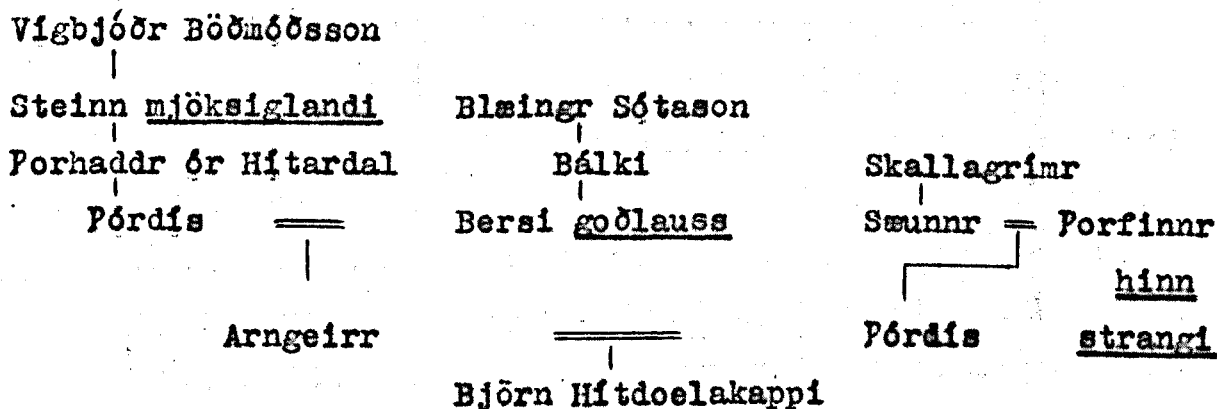
The connections of Bjarnar saga with Landnámabók can be principally divided into two sections; those relating to Björn and those relating to Þórðr. The actual subject of the saga is in no wise referred to in any of the versions of Landnámabók. Consequently, reference to the latter work is mainly a question of seeking to establish or verify the family descent of the two principal characters of the saga. A few of the other characters are also briefly mentioned in Landnámabók, but not a great deal turns on this.

#### (a) Descent of Björn.

Björn's family tree is comprehensively given in both the Sturlubók and Hauksbók versions of Landnámabók. Hauksbók is slightly fuller in this regard but there is no essential difference between the two versions, so far as this matter is concerned.

Landnamabók gives the descent of Björn as set out in the table following :





The above table omits collateral branches and the ancestors of Skallagrímr. For example, Hólmgöngu - Bersi was a second cousin of Björn, being also a great-grandson of Báلكi Bláingsson and Landnámabók lists a great number of descendants of Þorhaddr Steinsson through his son Þorgeirr. Chief amongst these in the Hítardalr area in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries were Þorleifr beiskaldi Þorláksson, his grandson Þorlákr Ketilsson and the latter's son, Ketill prestr Þorláksson.

Biarnar saga, as it now stands, does not tell us a great deal about the ancestry of Björn. It says merely that he was the son of Arngeirr and of Þórdís, who was the daughter of Þorfinnr strangi and of Sæunnr, the daughter of Skallagrímr.<sup>(281)</sup> There is little doubt that the original beginning of the saga would have furnished considerably more details, but, since neither these nor information concerning the ancestry of Þórðr were of great interest to the compiler of the Bæjarbók version of Óláfs saga helga, he omitted this material.

We have to turn to Landnámabók for more comprehensive information and there in Hauksbók we read :

"Balki het madr svn Blæsings Sotasonar af Sotanesi. hann bardizt a mót HaRraldi konungi i Hafrsfirdi. hann for því til Islandz ok nam Rutafiord allann ok bio i Bæ. hans svn var Bersi Gudlaus er nam Lánnga vatsdal ok bjo a Torfhvalastodum. hans systir var Geirbiorg er atti Forgeirr meldunn i Tungufelli. þeira svn Veleifr gamli fadir Holmgaungu - Bersa. Bersi Godlaus atti Þordisi dottur Þoraddz or Hitardal ok fylgdu henni heiman Holms lond ok bio hann þar síþan. þeira svn Arngeirr er atti Þuridi dottur Þorfinns ens stranga. þeira svn Biorn Hitdala kappi. modir Þuridar var Sæudr dottir Skallagrims." (282)

Þuríðr is an error for Þórdís, for half a page later Hauksbók adds :

"Þorfinnr en strangi het merkismadr Þorolfs Skallagrims svnar. Hanum gaf Skallagrímur Sæunni dottur sína ok land fyrí vtann Langa til Leirulækjar ok upp til fialls. ok til Alft ár. hann bio aa Þorsi. þeira Dottir var Þordis modir Biarnar Hitdala kappa." (283)

So far as it goes, Bjarnar saga therefore agrees with Landnámabók and, since the original opening of the saga is no longer preserved, it is impossible to tell whether Bjarnar saga made use of Landnámabók or whether the reverse applied. It seems, however, reasonable to assume, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that Bjarnar saga may have been the borrower. This of course presupposes the existence of a Landnamabók version at that time.

It is noteworthy that Björn's grandmother, mother and wife are all named Þórdís. His wife, however, is not mentioned in Landnámabók nor in other sources, nor is his brother Ásgrímur nor his father's sister Þórhildr, let alone her husband Arnórr Þvari and their son Þorfinnr. Neither is there any mention of Björn's sister who lived in Knarrarnes and to whom he uttered Verse 30, concerning his evil dream.

Björn's wife, Þórdís, is said in the saga to be a second cousin of Þorfinna Vermundardóttir, the wife of Þorsteinn Kuggason.<sup>(284)</sup> This cannot be verified from Landnámabók or anywhere else, but Nordal has pointed out that, since both Björn and Þorfinna were descended from Skallagrímur, the author of the saga may have become confused and have transferred the relationship to Þorfinna from Björn to his wife Þórdís.<sup>(285)</sup>

(b) Descent of Þórðr.

Landnámabók gives two different versions of the ancestry of Þórðr, Sturlubók and Hauksbók disagreeing on this score. Sturlubók traces Þórðr's descent from Auðr in djupúðga and her son Þorsteinn rauðr and states :

"Auðr gaf dottur Þorsteins Raudz Þorhilldi Eysteini Meinfret syni Alfs or Ostu. Þeira son var Þorðr fadir Kolbeins fodur Þorðar skallz ok Alfr i Daulum."<sup>(286)</sup>

Earlier we read concerning the descendants of Auðr's Scottish freedman Erpr :

"Erpi syni Mellduns íalls er fyrr var getet gaf Audr frelsi ok Saudafells laund. fra honum eru Erplingar komner. Ormr het son Erps. ANar GuNbiorn fadir Arnoru er atti Kolbein Pordarson." (287)

Combined, the decent, according to Sturlubók, is as set out in the following table :

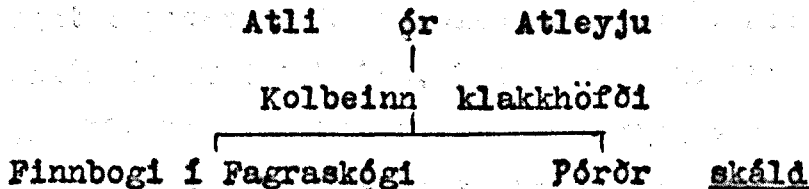
Meldun jarl   Erpr   Gunnbjörn   Arnóra	Alfr ór Ostu   Eysteinn <u>meinfretr</u> _____   Pórör   Kolbeinn _____   Pórör <u>skáld</u>	Þorsteinn <u>rauðr</u>   Þórhildr
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This descent agrees with Bjarnar saga, as far as the meagre information there given regarding Pórör's ancestry is concerned. In the saga we read again and again that he was Kolbeinsson and, on one occasion, we have the additional information that his mother was called Arnóra. (288) On top of that, towards the end of the saga Þorkell Eyjólfsson is referred to as Pórör's kinsman. (289) Both Þorkell Eyjólfsson and Þorsteinn Kuggason were third cousins of Pórör, all three being great-great-grandsons of Þorsteinn rauðr.

On the other hand, Hauksbók has a totally different ancestry for Pórör Kolbeinsson. It says :

"Kolbeinn klackhofði Atla svn or Atleyiv af Fiolvm for til Islandz ok keypti lond oll millim Kalldár ok Hitar ár fyri neðan Sandbreckv ok bio a Kolbeins stoðvm. hans svn var Finbogi i Fagra skogi ok Þorör skáld." (290)

This is briefly illustrated as follows :-



The above passage concerning Kolbeinn klakkhöfði and his sons is not to be found in Sturlubók and, due to a lacuna in Hauksbók, the history of the descendants of Auðr and of their settlement in the Breiðafjörður area is interrupted in that compilation and it cannot be known whether Hauksbók also recorded a Þórðr skáld amongst that particular family.

There is thus a conflict between Sturlubók and Hauksbók, since, although there may conceivably have been two persons named Þórðr Kolbeinsson living in Iceland and even in the same part of Iceland at the same time, it is highly unlikely that both of them would have merited the title of skáld. We thus have to try and decide which of the two versions is the correct one.

On the face of it, this would appear to be that of Sturlubók, since it agrees more closely with what little information about Þórðr can be gleaned from Biarnar saga. However, Haukur presumably obtained the details concerning Kolbeinn klakkhöfði and his sons from the older and now lost Styrmisbók and Kolbeinn is said to have bought land between the Kaldá and Hitará; that is, land on which Þórðr's farm at Hitarnes was situated, even though Kolbeinn himself dwelt at Kolbeinsstaðir, on the other side of the Kaldá.

There is, however, no reason why it should be thought improbable that Kolbeinn should, after buying land on one side of the Kaldá, later move to the other side, presumably leaving his first property to his son or sons. At any rate, he is at least stated to have taken up land in the area in question, whereas it is not stated how the other Þórðr Kolbeinsson, referred to in Sturlubók, moved south from the Breiðafjörður area.

In addition, the fact that in Bjarnar saga Þórðr is said to have had an uncle, his mother's brother, in Roskilde, whose heir he was <sup>(291)</sup> and also two kinsmen from the Vík, who were related to him on his father's side, <sup>(292)</sup> would appear to imply that his family had only comparatively recently come to Iceland. This is, of course, providing that one can lend much credence to the statement of these relationships. In this regard, the tale concerning Hrói the Wealthy from Hróiskelda is particularly suspect.

The fact that both Sturlubók <sup>(293)</sup> and Hauksbók <sup>(294)</sup> also record Þorhaddr Steinsson as settling between the Kaldá and Hítará seems to point to some conflict between the traditions of the people of Hítardalr and those of Hítarnes. However, it is said that Þorhaddr took up land, whereas Kolbeinn klakkhöfði came out later and bought land. It may therefore be that Kolbeinn bought some land from Þorhaddr or his family and the conflict may therefore be no more than apparent.

The question is one that cannot be definitely resolved but Nordal<sup>(295)</sup> and, following him, Jón Jóhannesson,<sup>(296)</sup> is of the opinion that the Hauksbók version of the ancestry of Þórðr the poet is the more accurate. The reasons given for this view are sufficiently convincing to make it extremely probable. Broadly, the argument is as follows :

Styrmisbók would have recorded the fact that there were two men named Þórðr Kolbeinsson living at the same time, one descended from Þorsteinn rauðr and the other the son of Kolbeinn klakkhöfði of Kolbeinsstaðir. This latter Þórðr would have been the only one of the two to be termed skáld. These details would presumably have been known to the author of Bjarnar saga, who appears to have been either descended from or connected with the family of Þorhaddr Steinsson, the landnámsmaðr of Hítardalr. In any case, even a cursory reading of the saga reveals a considerable bias in favour of Björn. If, as seems possible, by the thirteenth century there had arisen a dispute between the descendants of Þorhaddr Steinsson and those of Kolbeinn klakkhöfði as to who actually settled the area between the Hítará and the Kaldá, it would be in the interests of the author of Bjarnar saga to exalt the pretensions of the side which he favoured by tracing Þórðr's ancestry to complete outsiders, instead of to the rival settler.

Kolbeinn klakkhöfði would thus have been eliminated from Bjarnar saga, if he had ever featured therein, even in a possible oral form, and Sturla, when compiling his Landnámabok from Styrmisbók and other traditions and sources

and noticing the conflict between Styrmisbók and Bjarnar saga as to the ancestry of Þórðr the poet, would have consequently also eliminated the paragraph concerning Kolbeinn klakkhöfði and his family from his own compilation and attached the epithet skáld to the other Þórðr Kolbeinsson, the descendant of Þorsteinn rauðr.

Hauksbók, on the other hand, comparing Sturlubók and Styrmisbók, restored the omitted passage, but, as stated above, because of a lacuna in Hauksbók, it is impossible to know whether that compilation also termed the other Þórðr Kolbeinsson skáld.

The above argument is a logical one, although it cannot by any means be said to be proven. In any event, without impugning the likely accuracy of Hauksbók in this regard as against Sturlubók, it is not necessary that the apparent attribution in Bjarnar saga of the ancestry of Þórðr to the descendants of Þorsteinn rauðr be due to deliberate falsification, in an attempt to obliterate the fame of Kolbeinn klakkhöfði. The very fact that Þórðr's celebrated son was named Arnórr would provide a ready excuse for the saga author believing that Þórðr was that same Þórðr, whose mother was called Arnóra, the grandson, in other words, being named after his grandmother. Nevertheless, this fact is not of sufficient weight to invalidate the previous argument, as Arnórr was a common enough name. However, it does serve to explain how the author of Bjarnar saga could easily have made an error concerning the ancestry of Þórðr Kolbeinsson the poet and, for that matter, Sturla could also have made the same mistake.



So far as Finnbogi í Fagraskógi is concerned, who Hauksbók says was the brother of Þórðr skáld and son of Kolbeinn klakkhöfði, there is no mention of him anywhere else. However, it is interesting that Sturlubók gives the name of one of the seven sons of Þorgeirr Þorhaddsson from Hítardalr as Finnbogi.<sup>(297)</sup> In Grettis saga<sup>(298)</sup> Finnbogi the son of Þorgeirr Þorhaddsson from Hítardalr was amongst the Mýramenn who attacked Grettir, when he was in that area under the protection of Björn. It is said that Grettir wounded Finnbogi severely in the fight. Nordal<sup>(299)</sup> suggests that this Finnbogi Þorgeirsson may have been identical with Finnbogi í Fagraskógi but this can be no more than mere supposition.

Neither Þórðr's wife, Oddný, nor her father Þorkell Dufgísson are mentioned anywhere in Landnámabók and, as remarked before, there is good reason to believe that both of these characters are inventions of the saga author.

(c) Other characters mentioned in Landnámabók.

Þorkell Eyjólfsson, Þorsteinn Kuggason and his wife, Þorfinna Vermundardóttir, are each mentioned once in Landnámabók.<sup>(300)</sup> Apart from those referred to in the last two sections, the only other Icelander mentioned in the saga who would appear to be identifiable with any certainty in Landnamabók is Þorgeirr Steinsson at Breiðabólstaðr, who is stated to have been visited by his kinsman, Þorsteinn Kuggason, and who tried to dissuade Þorsteinn from travelling southwards that winter.<sup>(301)</sup> Even then the saga author has clearly confused names.

In the first place, it is clear that Þorgestr Steinsson is meant. Þorgestr was the brother of Þorhaddr Steinsson, who settled Hítardalr, and he is frequently mentioned in Landnámabók.<sup>(302)</sup> Nevertheless, it is scarcely possible that Þorgestr could have been still living at Breiðabólstaðr at the time referred to in Bjarnar saga, since he would then have been perhaps 100 years old. As Nordal points out,<sup>(303)</sup> the author of the saga has almost certainly confused Þorgestr with his son Steinn, who was lögsgumaðr from 1031 to 1033. This is further indicated by the fact that, although there is no evidence for kinship between Þorgestr and Þorsteinn Kuggason, the latter was first cousin to Steinn Þorgestsson, his mother being Arnóra, daughter of Þórðr gellir and sister of Þorkell kuggi, father of Þorsteinn Kuggason. Steinn Þorgestsson is mentioned in both Hauksbók<sup>(304)</sup> and Sturlubók<sup>(305)</sup> and there is little doubt that it was he to whom the author of Bjarnar saga was referring, under the guise of Þorgeirr Steinsson.

## II. Language of the Saga.

Since Bjarnar saga is preserved only in manuscripts of the seventeenth century or later, apart from two vellum leaves (and these no earlier than the late fourteenth century), it is scarcely to be expected that the language of the saga would exhibit many signs of age. It would be natural for successive scribes throughout the centuries to effect gradual changes, minor though many of them might be, to modernize the language and possibly to

some extent the syntax as well. Style, however, is less easily altered and it is therefore not surprising to find the saga showing more apparent evidence of antiquity in style than in vocabulary.

Evidence of influence on the saga by riddarasögur or Southern romance in general is on the whole negative and there is no borrowing from this source in vocabulary, such as occurs in Laxdoela saga and Grettis saga, for example. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the author of Biarnar saga was not affected by Brother Robert's translation of Tristrans saga or anything of a similar nature. As referred to previously, however, some indication of influence from fornaldarsögur or riddarasögur, even if only through oral sources, does seem to be afforded by the episodes of the slaying of the flugdreki and of the fastening by Þórðr of Bjorn's head to his saddlestrap.

There are several indications in the language of the saga which seem to point to age, notably an occasional use of of instead of the later prepositional form um<sup>(306)</sup> and the curious negative form þvigit,<sup>(307)</sup> which Einar Ólafur Sveinsson describes as a form that is "very rare indeed".<sup>(308)</sup>

We are on less sure ground when we come to other items, although taken into consideration collectively, they appear to lend support to the argument that Biarnar saga is one of the earlier sagas.

Clerical style may be an indication of age in a saga but firm conclusions cannot be reached on this score, since, although Icelandic clerics would naturally have written before laymen, they would have continued to write,

although their style would have changed through the centuries. (309) Einar Ól. Sveinsson has pointed out that in Latin writings places were frequently introduced by phrases such as in loco qui dicitur, which were translated into Norse as í þeim stað er heitir or something similar. (310) Since there are a good number of instances of this in Heiðarvíga saga, (311) although they occur to a lesser extent in other sagas, their occurrence seems likely to be an indication of age. According to Einar Ól. Sveinsson, there are two examples in Bjarnar saga, both in the following passage:

"Nu er frá þui að seigia að Kalffur Jllviti keypti sier land fyrir vestann Hytardalz heidi, þar sem heyter Selár dalur, þar má kalla tuo bæi, og heiter að Hurdar baki annar." (312)

It is doubtful, however, whether the second of these may justly be regarded as an example of this usage.

The use of ek and, to a lesser degree, vér in a saga, apart from in dialogue, also denotes age, since it was not the usual practice of the authors of the Family Sagas to bring their own personality to the fore, unlike authors of Latin works. Ek occurs once in Bjarnar saga at the beginning in the sentence commencing, "en þui get ek ecki þeira smagræina", (313) but, since this comes from the þáttur concerning Björn in Bæjarbók, the words are those of the adapter of the material and not of the author of Bjarnar saga. The saga has vér once in the phrase, "þott vier kunnnum ej að greina" (314) and perhaps something might be made out of this.

In Bjarnar saga we frequently find phrases introducing chapters such as "Fra þui er nu ad seigia"; "Nu er þad sagt"; "Nu er fra þui ad seigia", etc. These are common in the sagas and hardly indicate age, although they may very well derive from oral tradition and the phraseology of the story-teller.

As mentioned above, the classical saga does not as a rule permit the intrusion of the personality of the author. Digressions which conflict with artistry may therefore perhaps be regarded as representative of a stage prior to the period in which such narrative perfection had been achieved. Comments during the narrative and in the midst of a sentence upon characters or upon their actions may be regarded as examples of such digressions. Such a comment in Bjarnar saga, which Einar Ól. Sveinsson regards as an example of an archaic mode of expression,<sup>(315)</sup> is the following :

"Miog hefur verid sem Þorsteirn riedi einn giordinnj, þegar Þorkiell hafdi Þordi komid vndann sektum frænda synum Enn eckj spardi hann fie til sak bota, þuiat arid var til."<sup>(316)</sup>

Somewhat curious is the fact that in Bjarnar saga Björn's appearance is not described until towards the end, when dealing with the last day of his life. Björn leaves the house on his way to cut the manes of his horses and his dress and weapons are described, the author then adding :

"Biorn var mikill madr uexti oc uisann oc frecknottr raudskeggiadr skrof hárr oc dapr eygdr oc manna best vigr."<sup>(317)</sup>

Such a complete description at this late stage almost certainly demonstrates that Björn was not, as was customarily the case in the sagas, fully described when first introduced. Since the original beginning of the saga is lost, this, of course, cannot be verified. Comparison may, however, be made with Gunnlaugs saga, where Gunnlaugr is very extensively described at the time of his introduction.<sup>(318)</sup> This is something, however, which undoubtedly depended on the author's preference and he was obviously entitled to depict his hero's appearance at a time when such would prove most effective and dramatic; witness the remarkable description of Egill in the presence of King Athelstan in Egils saga.<sup>(319)</sup> Björn's description when it occurs is certainly effective, but, unlike that of Egill, appears a little out of place and almost an afterthought.

Biarnar saga is uneven in composition and the style of the central third of the saga often appears awkward and unclassical. Particularly so is the comment made to Björn by his aunt Þórhildr, when he visited her at Saxahváll, that she had a son there called Þorfinnr.<sup>(320)</sup> It goes without saying that Björn could have been in no doubt as to the existence and name of his cousin.

Certain elliptical expressions in the saga have the appearance of age. Examples of these are the following :

Ey verdur einn eydur alla.<sup>(321)</sup>

ej vm slycktt sætt.<sup>(322)</sup>

Wedrid wesnadi ad eins, enn Nattmyrkur a wid sig.<sup>(323)</sup>

As has been remarked earlier, the first of these is to be found in the eighth Verse of Sighvatr's Vestrfararvisur and this may well be its source, although it must also have existed as a proverb. All these concise phrases may be compared with similar ones in Heiðarviga saga, such as eigi má ófeigum bella,<sup>(324)</sup> Nýsir fjarri, en nær sjaldan,<sup>(325)</sup> and many others of a like nature.<sup>(326)</sup>

Björn M. Olsen has listed a number of words in Heiðarviga saga that he regarded as old.<sup>(327)</sup> Amongst these he included deila, deild and tæja.<sup>(328)</sup> Deila, in this sense of portioning out food, is found in Bjarnar saga in the phrase, "og mun honum leyðast ef deilidur er verdurinn."<sup>(329)</sup> The whole scene in which this line occurs, recounting how Þórðr and his household were obliged to go short of food owing to the amount Björn gave to his dog, makes an impression of age. It is not the type of scene that one would readily associate with or expect to find in the later classical sagas. The same applies to several others of the scenes in the central portion of Bjarnar saga, which concern themselves with the parochial squabbles of the two protagonists.

Tæja or toeja is an old form of tjá with various meanings, according to Cleasby-Vigfússon, including those of 'help, avail, show'.<sup>(330)</sup> In Bjarnar saga it is found in an expression, which undoubtedly seems to be old, "og tæddi alldrej sydan tanna",<sup>(331)</sup> referring to the fact that Oddný was never happy again after Björn's death. As was mentioned previously, the expression tæja tanna is also found in Kormáks saga. In Bjarnar saga, tæddi is an obvious emendation for the ræddi of the manuscript, which

implies that seventeenth-century and later scribes, at any rate, no longer understood the phrase properly.

Corruptions in the text of a saga often make it difficult to decide whether words and phrases are archaic or have merely become impaired in the transmission. Such is the case with the emended phrase fatt og gneypt a in Bjarnar saga,<sup>(332)</sup> concerning the coolness and antipathy that had developed between Björn and Þórðr. AM 551 d a, 4to has far or neypura, which is obviously corrupt. Gneypr here seems to have the sense of 'on bad terms' and, as Nordal says,<sup>(333)</sup> there may be some confusion between gneypr and greypr. In Egils saga, for example, we read: "hann sat uppréttr ok var gneyptr mjök."<sup>(334)</sup> Some manuscripts have greypr and both forms would make good sense, either that Egill's head was bent forward a good deal or that he was very angry.

So far as archaic words in the verses are concerned, these may very well demonstrate the age of the verses but they are naturally no proof of the age of the saga itself, unless one could successfully argue that the author of the saga wrote the verses as well. Even then one could go further by contending that, if a saga author were capable of composing verses and attributing them to a poet who lived or was supposed to have lived centuries before, he would be just as capable of not only writing verses in an antique style, but also of making use of archaic words as well, to make the former appear more genuine.



Björn M. Olsen expressed the view that, although Bjarnar saga was probably written after 1200 but before 1250, the date was more likely to have been nearer 1250 than 1200, since he regarded the style as not being particularly old. Yet he was also ready to concede that the vellum, which was the basis of the paper manuscripts of the saga, was comparatively young and it was quite possible for the style and language to have been somewhat modernized by scribes during the period between the date of writing of the vellum and that of the original composition of the saga. (335)

Nordal, (336) on the other hand, considered that the unevenness of the style of Bjarnar saga indicated that, although the author probably knew some of the earlier sagas, including those of the Þingeyrar school, and was thus able to profit from them, he was not acquainted with the works of Snorri and could not use them as his models. Bjarnar saga, therefore, would have been written early, that is, before 1230, but there was no reason to place it earlier than 1215 to 1220.

### III. Authorship.

References to source-men are few in the Family Sagas and it is in fact disputable whether there did exist people who could be correctly so described. (337) Nevertheless, it is hardly credible that a considerable body of oral tradition of some kind or another did not exist up to the time when the sagas came to be put into writing and accordingly every reference, however slight, to a person from whom a particular

item of information is accounted to have been derived, can scarcely be fictitious.

The only such reference in Bjarnar saga is to Rúnólfr Dagsson, <sup>(338)</sup> who, as stated before, is almost certainly that Rúnólfr Dálksson who appears to have been the most noteworthy cleric in the Hítardalur area during the twelfth century and who survived until at least 1170. <sup>(339)</sup> It would therefore appear that the author of the saga had received either directly from Rúnólfr, or perhaps more probably at second-hand, information that Björn had caused a church to be built at Vellir and had it hallowed to St. Thomas the Apostle and that furthermore Björn had composed a fine drápa about the saint, nothing of which unfortunately has been preserved.

It is of course possible but rather unlikely that the author of the saga had more information from Rúnólfr than merely the details concerning the church and the drápa dedicated to St. Thomas, but, if there had been more, it is not unreasonable to assume that there would have been a further attribution to Rúnólfr. The latter was a priest and naturally details concerning the Church would have interested him most. It is even a matter of doubt as to how much else of traditions relating to Björn he would have thought worthwhile preserving, but this is mere speculation. At any rate, it is obvious that the tradition concerning St. Thomas would have been one capable of being easily handed down but the mere fact that it could be remembered in relation to Björn gives some warrant for the latter's fame.

However, it is unhappily no warrant for its truth, as not a line of the drápa has survived and such a tale may easily have come to be told of a man around whom the story of the miraculous silken thong had grown. Whether this story too was handed down by Rúnólfur Dalksson, as seems not unlikely, cannot be determined but, however that may be, it is one that is wholly in the miracle tradition relating to St. Olaf and the purpose of which is to glorify the latter and increase the impression of his sanctity.

The conclusion is reached by Nordal<sup>(340)</sup> that Bjarnar saga may have been written under the auspices of Þorlákr Ketilsson and his son Ketill Þorláksson the priest (and subsequently law-speaker), who were the most important men in the Hítardalur district during the period when the saga in all probability was written. Þorlákr left Hítardalur for Kolbeinsstaðir in 1220 and Ketill moved from the area in 1224 and it might therefore be assumed that the saga was written by that latter date and very probably earlier. Nordal, in fact, considers that most probably Ketill may have written down the story at his father's dictation in some way or other.<sup>(341)</sup> This is, of course, an unprovable theory but not beyond the bounds of possibility. It is made more attractive when the kinship between Ketill's mother Guðlaug and Rúnólfur Dalksson is considered. Guðlaug's father, Eyjólfur Guðmundsson gassinanns, was first cousin to Rúnólfur.<sup>(342)</sup> In this way a channel of information to Þorlákr and Ketill would have been provided. We must also remember that they were direct descendants of Þorhaddr ór Hítardal, who was Björn's great-grandfather and accordingly

they may well have been recipients of a tradition concerning their great kinsman, which had been carried down in the family of the Hítðælir.

This theory would provide a clerical authorship for the saga and indeed there are several indications in the text to support this<sup>(343)</sup> but nevertheless the evidence can hardly be regarded as conclusive and is certainly hardly as strong as, for example, is the case with Vatnsdoela saga.<sup>(344)</sup> There is, moreover, much in Bjarnar saga that seems to militate against the possibility of clerical authorship and one need in this regard only instance the triangular theme involving Björn, Þórðr and Oddný and the obvious liking of the author for describing scenes and incidents of violence. Nevertheless, it would be an extremely rash statement to maintain that clerics in Iceland in the thirteenth century were averse to writing about secular matters and deeds of violence. Certainly, to judge from Sturlunga saga, the participation by clerics themselves in illicit love affairs and quarrels resulting in the shedding of blood were not of particularly rare occurrence.<sup>(345)</sup> The weight must therefore be on the side of clerical authorship, as it surely must in the case of most of the Family Sagas, if only because of the greater amount of leisure and superior education which would generally have been afforded to the priest as opposed to the layman in the Sturlung age.

Clearly the author had an exceptionally good knowledge of the Hítardalur area, despite one or two apparent errors, such as Björn's swimming across the Hítará to escape

his enemies when there should have been no need to go near the river on his way from Knarrarnes to Hólmr<sup>(346)</sup> and Arngeirr's becoming lost when on his way from Hólmr to Knarrarnes and also unnecessarily crossing the river and ending up at Þórör's farm at Hítarnes.<sup>(347)</sup> It is quite possible, however, that these errors were in both cases either deliberate on the part of the author or merely caused through carelessness, since his principal aim was no doubt to ensure greater effect and greater tension in the story and this he has certainly achieved, not only in the case of Björn's dramatic escape across the Hítará when assailed by greatly superior numbers in the ambush on the river bank but also by making Arngeirr's untoward and untimely appearance at Hítarnes the main contributory cause of the death of his own son.<sup>(348)</sup> By these incidents the author has greatly heightened the drama of the story and beside this achievement mere fidelity to strict geographical and topographical accuracy fades into insignificance.

It may, in any event, be regarded as unlikely that the traditions of the Hítardalur district would have been preserved by any other than an author hailing from the area itself or, at the very least, writing at the dictation of a native of the region. The middle section of the saga especially is full of various episodes dealing with the rivalry and mutual bickering of Björn and Þórör, the preservation of which must surely be due solely to oral tradition, unless we assume that the author invented them. They are occasionally somewhat disjointed and awkwardly told but it cannot be maintained that any of these incidents are

without relevance to the main theme. All of them, even, for instance, the quarrel at the horse-fight, serve to accentuate and illustrate the irreconcilable enmity between Björn and Þórðr and lead up to the inevitable and tragic conclusion.

Because of their very nature it seems rather difficult to believe that some of these incidents have been invented and even more difficult to believe that they would have been invented by an author not native to the area. The plentiful use of local colour speaks against such an argument and, in spite of their blemishes, they convey an impression of truth. This is, however, admittedly a somewhat subjective viewpoint, but, despite this, there appears to be good reason for believing that the author of the saga had lived in the locality described.

#### IV. Conclusion.

So far as the authorship of Bjarnar saga is concerned, the only safe conclusion at which one can arrive is that it is hardly likely that it will ever be determined with any certainty. In this Bjarnar saga is on a par with all or almost all of the other Family Sagas. Perhaps one might make an exception in some degree for Egils saga, in respect of which a more or less convincing case has been made out for Snorri Sturluson as its author.<sup>(349)</sup> One could hardly say the same for any of the other Family Sagas, although scholars have frequently made their guesses. There are few secure clues and little sound basis for such detective work, however, and, absorbing though it may be, the saga authors are likely

to continue to preserve the anonymity which they deliberately adopted. All one can say, therefore, in this regard concerning Bjarnar saga is that Nordal's suggestion is certainly as good as any other and, although impossible of proof, probably no more likely a one will ever be put forward. In any event, it would seem most probable that the author was a native of the Hítardalur area and that he was a cleric, who, however, obviously had a very strong interest in secular affairs. It also seems likely that he made use of details handed down, perhaps in a written although condensed form, by Rúnólfur Dálksson. Further than this little can be said concerning his identity.

As has been said above, the language of the saga, due to the lateness of the manuscripts in which it has been preserved, does not disclose much evidence which would assist in determining its age, although what does exist would at least appear to point to a date somewhere in the first half of the thirteenth century. In order to endeavour to arrive more precisely at the date of origin of the saga, it is thus necessary to draw conclusions from the literary relations which have been discussed.

It has there been shown that Bjarnar saga has apparently been influenced by other sagas and has itself influenced a still greater number. In two or three cases it is arguable which saga was the donor of the influence and which the recipient.

It would be idle to contend that Bjarnar saga was of the same age as Heiðarvíga saga or Fóstbroeðra saga, which scholars unite in agreeing are the oldest of the

Family Sagas, dating from about 1200 and perhaps even a little earlier. It has however been argued from the general unevenness of its style, particularly in the central portions, that it is amongst the earliest of the Family Sagas and that it was preceded only by Heiðarviga saga and Fóstbroeðra saga and perhaps also by Kormáks saga and Hallfreðar saga. (350) The literary relations discussed would appear to support this contention.

The connections between Bjarnar saga and Kormáks saga seem to demonstrate that the former has been influenced by the latter and indeed a comparison of the prose styles of the two sagas makes it apparent that Bjarnar saga belongs to a later period in the development of the art of saga-writing. In Kormáks saga the verses are to a much greater extent pegs on which the story is hung, whereas the prose in Bjarnar saga plays on the whole a much more important role. The exception is the section dealing with Björn's stay at Hitarnes with Þórðr, where the prose is obviously built up round the verses.

It is extremely difficult to decide whether Hallfreðar saga is older than Bjarnar saga or not, but, on the balance of probabilities, it also appears to belong to an earlier stage and to have been amongst those works which the author of Bjarnar saga may to some extent have used as models. The difference in age between the two sagas must, however, have been comparatively slight.

The same largely applies to Droplaugarsona saga but here, on the other hand, Bjarnar saga seems slightly the older of the two, with any influence that there may be proceeding from it. There is also a possibility that



Bjarnar saga may be younger than Egils saga, (351) but this seems very improbable, since no reference is made to this saga in the former nor is any other indication given that the author of Bjarnar saga knew Egils saga. This might be expected, if the latter were the older of the two, since both stem from approximately the same broad geographical area. An argument for the author of Bjarnar saga not knowing Egils saga is that, had he done so, he could hardly have made the obvious mistake of confusing Skúli Þorsteinsson and his father Þorsteinn Egilsson.

So far as sagas such as Gísla saga, Eyrbyggja saga, Gunnlaugs saga, Laxdoela saga and others are concerned, these are all clearly later than Bjarnar saga and the literary influence which has been demonstrated proceeded from Bjarnar saga and not the reverse. Influence from Bjarnar saga appears in fact to have extended over quite a long period of time, when one considers such works as Finnboga saga, Grettis saga and Kjalnesinga saga, which qualify as late sagas.

Einar Ól. Sveinsson in the Fornrit edition of Kormáks saga and Hallfreðar saga reckoned the latter to be not much older than 1220 and perhaps even younger. (352) Since he was of the opinion that Kormáks saga was the older of the two, it would therefore be older than 1220. (353) Perhaps it would accordingly be reasonable to date Kormáks saga to about 1210.

Differing opinions have been given as to the likely age of Droplaugarsona saga, but Jón Jóhannesson in the Fornrit edition came to the conclusion that it had been composed somewhere in the first four decades of the

thirteenth century.<sup>(354)</sup> Possibly this might therefore imply a date of from about 1225 to 1230.

So far as Egils saga is concerned, Nordal regarded it as having probably been written by Snorri early in the period between 1220 and 1235, thus probably about 1220 to 1225.<sup>(355)</sup>

Accordingly, if, after considering the literary relations of Bjarnar saga, we deem it to be later than Kormáks saga but earlier than Droplaugarsona saga and Egils saga, we arrive at a period later than 1210, but earlier than 1220 to 1225, in fact, probably about 1215 to 1220. If we were to accept that it was also older than Hallfreðar saga, one could probably settle for a date around 1215. However, since on balance the literary connections of the two sagas seem to indicate that Hallfreðar saga is the slightly older of the two, both sagas having possibly been composed within a year or two of each other, it would therefore seem that one should date Bjarnar saga to about 1220. This would agree with what evidence can be gleaned from the language of the saga and would also fit in with Nordal's attribution of its possible authorship to Ketill Þórláksson. Since Ketill died as late as 1273,<sup>(356)</sup> a date earlier than 1220 might be likely to be too early.

There is, of course, as has been stated above, no real evidence that either Ketill or his father Þórlákr was the author, likely as it may seem. No conclusions are safe when attempting to date sagas without convincing primary evidence, but the only reasonable conclusion

concerning the date of origin of Bjarnar saga, having regard to the evidence available, points to a date around 1220, with the author likely to have been a cleric and a native of the Hítardalur area.

NOTES.

- (1) BSH, p.67, 1.13.
- (2) Sturlunga saga I (1946), 180.
- (3) BSH, p.65, 11.18-21.
- (4) See e.g. IF XII (1954), 331, 430-31.
- (5) BSH, p.3.
- (6) IF III (1938), 68-70.
- (7) "Om Gunnlaugs saga Ormstungu", D.Kel.  
Danske Vid. Selsk. Skr. 7. Række, hist. og fil.  
Afd. II, 1 (1911), 33.
- (8) BSH, p.4. 11.7-10.
- (9) BSH, p.4. 11.27-9.
- (10) IF III, 69.
- (11) IF V (1934), 158-9.
- (12) BSH, p.15.
- (13) IF III, 64.
- (14) BSH, p.18, 1.16.
- (15) IF III, 71.
- (16) BSH, p.5, 11.8-12.
- (17) IF IX (1956), 219.
- (18) Bjorn M. Olsen, "Um Íslendingasögur", Safn til sögu Íslands VI (1937-9), 340-41.
- (19) IF XIV (1959), 287.
- (20) Ibid, 289.
- (21) BSH, p.9, 11.7-8.
- (22) IF XIV, 287-8.
- (23) IF III, 69.
- (24) IF XIV, 277.

- (25) BSH, p.35, 11.15-18.
- (26) BSH, pp.48-9.
- (27) Dreams in Old Norse Literature and their Affinities in Folklore (1935), 22.
- (28) Ibid, 23.
- (29) See IF VI (1943), 105.
- (30) IF III, 293-4.
- (31) IF XI (1950), 161.
- (32) The motif of "three" is a separate motif on its own, widespread throughout the sagas and literature generally. It is the subject of an article by L.Alfred Bock, "Die epische Dreizahl in den Íslendinga sögur", ANF XXXVII (1921), 263-313; XXXVIII (1922), 51-83.
- (33) BSH, p.49, 11.15-26.
- (34) BSH, p.62, 11.13-27 to 63, 1-7.
- (35) IF VI, 94-6.
- (36) BSH, p.63, 11.3-4.
- (37) "Draumr Forsteins Síðu - Hallssonar", IF XI, 322-5.
- (38) Atlamál, 28.
- (39) IF III, 53-5.
- (40) IF V, 88-91.
- (41) BSH, pp.20-21.
- (42) Saga II (1958), 90-92, 156.
- (43) Ibid, 90-91.
- (44) BSH, p.67, 11. 23-4.
- (45) "Grettis saga", IF VII (1936), 262.
- (46) Ibid, 264.

- (47) IF VI, 210.
- (48) Ibid, 211.
- (49) IF X. (1940), 144.
- (50) IF III, 203, footnote.
- (51) Karlamagnis saga og kappá hans I (1950), 232.
- (52) Piðreks saga af Bern II (1951), 413.
- (53) Flateyjarbók I (1860), 222.
- (54) Íslendinga sögur XXXVII (1930), 58.
- (55) IF VII, 58, 122.
- (56) BSH, p.66, 11.17-20.
- (57) BSH, p.67, 11.10-11.
- (58) IF VI, 272-3.
- (59) IF VIII (1939), 139-140.
- (60) Ibid, 80.
- (61) Sturlunga saga I, 18-19.
- (62) See the references given in IF XIV, XVI.
- (63) BSH, p.66, 11.28-30 to 67, 1-6.
- (64) IF XIV, 42-3.
- (65) Ibid, XVI-XVII.
- (66) Zwei Fornaldarsögur (1891), 79-103.
- (67) See Jan de Vries, Altnordische Literaturgeschichte II (1942), 163-4, 445-7.
- (68) Zwei Fornaldarsögur, 98.
- (69) Landnámabók (1900), 62.
- (70) Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda I (1943), 401-32. See pp. 428-36.
- (71) BSH, p.18, 11.11-14.
- (72) Appendix III, Vol. II, p.119, 11.15-23.
- (73) IF II (1933), 298-9.
- (74) IF VII, 269-70.

- (75) ÍF IV (1935), 183-4.
- (76) Íslendinga sögur XXIII (1926), 70.
- (77) ÍF V, 227; Dipl. Isl. I (1857-76), 217, 725.
- (78) BSH, p.38, 11.14-16.
- (79) Sturlunga saga I, 103-104.
- (80) Skirnismál, 9. See also Edda Snorra Sturlusonar (1952), 51.
- (81) Edda Snorra Sturlusonar, 52.
- (82) Ibid, 87.
- (83) ÍF XI, 157-8.
- (84) Ibid, 163.
- (85) Ibid, 164.
- (86) BSH, p.59, 11.13-15.
- (87) BSH, p.64, 11.13-14.
- (88) BSH, p.66, 11.12-14.
- (89) BSH, p.18, 11.10-15.
- (90) P. 322.
- (91) See Dipl. Isl. I, 417-18.
- (92) Appendix III, Vol. II, p.120, 11.1-3.
- (93) Íslendinga sögur XXXVII, 58.
- (94) ÍF VIII, 191-2.
- (95) Bókautgáfa Menningarssjóðs (Reykjavík, 1961).
- (96) Skáldasögur, p.49.
- (97) Íslensk Fornrit V, XLVI.
- (98) ÍF XI, IX-X.
- (99) Íslendinga sögur XXIII (1926), 15.
- (100) ÍF XIV, 183.
- (101) Ibid, 215.
- (102) Ibid, 25, 37-41.

- (103) Edited by Finnur Jónsson, S.G.N.L. LIII (1932).
- (104) Morkinskinna, 354-6.
- (105) Ibid, 354.  
- "I þeim lvt ma marca er nu mon ec segia hver  
dyrþar maþr Eysteinn konungr var e. hve mioc hann  
var vinholtr. oc hvggvemar eptir at leita vip sina  
astmenn hvat þeim vere at harmi."
- (106) See concerning Jvarr Ingimundarson's poetry, inter alia,  
Jan de Vries, Altnordische Literaturgeschichte II,  
51-3; Finnur Jónsson, Den Oldnorske og Oldislandske  
Litteraturs Historie II (1920-24), 58-9.  
- His only extant work, the lengthy Sigurðarbolkr,  
is to be found in Finnur Jónsson, Den norsk-islandske  
Skjaldedigtning, (1912-15) A I, 495-502; BI, 467-75.
- (107) See Hermann Pálsson, Islensk Mannanöfn (1960), 115.  
- "Fyrsti Íslendingurinn, sem virðist hafa borið  
þetta heiti, var Jón biskup Ögmundsson hinn helgi,  
en hann var fæddur um miðja 11. öld. Áhrif hans  
hafa eflaust valdið einhverju um útbreiðslu nafnsins  
hérlandis."
- (108) Except of course in the páttir relating to Björn and  
Pórðr in the Bæjarbók version of Óláfs saga helga.  
Neither father nor daughter are referred to in any  
version of Landnámabók. Bjarni Einarsson points out  
(Skáldasögur, 63) that the fathers of at least four  
sought-after women in the sagas were named Porkell,  
an item suspicious in itself. (See also Skáldasögur,  
235).



- (109) Jöfraskinna, like Kringla, was burnt in 1728 and is now only represented by copies.
- (110) Edited by C.R.Unger (Christiania, 1871).  
- "Bogen er efter al Sandsynlighed skreven i Norge af en Islænder ved Begyndelsen af det 14<sup>de</sup> Aarhundrede." ("Forord" p.III).  
- The Frissbók version of Ivars þáttur is somewhat abridged, compared with that in Morkinskinna and does not mention the names of either Ivarr's brother or of Oddný Jóansdóttir. Instead we read very briefly : "Ivarr svaraði. Þvngligar er farit herra. broðir minn á þessa konv." (p.290).
- (111) Eirspennill (AM 47 fol.) was edited by Finnur Jónsson (Kristiania, 1916). Like Frissbók and Jöfraskinna, this manuscript was written in Norway, and its version of Ivars þáttur resembles closely that in Frissbók.
- (112) Peter Foote : "Introduction" to Heimskringla : Sagas of the Norse Kings (Everyman's Library, 1961), xvii.  
- There are also grounds for placing it a little after 1217, the year Skule was made Jarl. See Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson : Om de norske kongers sagaer (1937), 136.
- (113) Morkinskinna, IX-X.
- (114) Gl. kgl. sml. 1009 fol.
- (115) Edited by Finnur Jónsson, S.G.N.L. XXX (1902-1903).
- (116) See G.Turville-Petre : Origins of Icelandic Literature (1953), 218; Jan de Vries, Altnordische

Literaturgeschichte II, 257.

- (117) Peter Foote : "Introduction" to Heimskringla,  
op.cit. p.XXIX.
- (118) Skáldasögur, 50.
- (119) Morkinskinna, XXIX.
- (120) Ibid, 354.
- (121) Skáldasögur, 50-51.
- (122) Tristrans saga ok Ísöndar, edited by E.Kolbing (1878)  
74-5. See also Joseph Bédier's retelling of the  
Tristan story in English translation by Hilaire  
Belloc : Tristan and Iseult (1961), 73-4 and  
Icelandic translation by Einar Ól.Sveinsson :  
Sagan af Tristan og Ísól (1955), 86-7. - Also the  
same episode of the little fairy dog with the magic  
bell round its neck, the tinkling of which makes  
Tristan forget his sadness, is to be found in  
Gottfried von Strassburg : Tristan (Translation by  
A.T.Hatto, 1960), 249-50.
- (123) Alte hoch - und niederdeutsche Volkslieder, edited  
by Ludwig Uhland (Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1845).  
"Moringer" is No.298 at pp.773-83.  
- The ballad contains 280 lines, made up of 40  
verses of seven lines each.  
- For a retelling of the story, see Ottmar F.H.  
Schönhuth : Historie von dem edlen Moringer  
(Reutlingen, N.D. [1865] ). - It has been  
translated by Sir Walter Scott. See his "The Noble  
Moringer. An Ancient Ballad" in Poetical Works of

Sir Walter Scott (Macmillan & Co., London, 1890), 430-35; also his "Introduction" to The Betrothed (A. & C. Black, Edinburgh, 1871), 3-6.

- (124) Paul und Braunes Beiträge LXXII (Halle (Saale) 1950), 386-92.
- (125) Actually two verses by Walther von der Vogelweide. See Naumann : Paul und Braunes Beiträge, 392.
- (126) Ibid, 388.
- (127) Odyssey, Books XVII-XXII.
- (128) Paul und Braunes Beiträge LXXII, 387.
- (129) Geschichte der deutschen Literatur bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters, Zweiter Teil : Schlussband (1935), 238.
- (130) Edited by Dr. K.A. Barack : Volume I Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, XCI, (Tübingen 1869) - The story of "Der edle Moringer" is at pp.286-91. In it Moringer is sometimes written Moringen and Neifen often called Neufen.
- (131) Naumann, op.cit., 391, states that the medieval Latin writer, Caesarius von Heisterbach, related about 1220 a story concerning the knight Gerhard von Hohenbach, a great devotee of St. Thomas, who decided upon a pilgrimage to this his patron saint. His wife was to wait for him for five years. The devil (!) in the service of St. Thomas arranged for the knight's return, at the moment when the new wedding was about to take place. Use is made of the ring-motif; the wife had believed her husband to be dead but now she returns to her old love.

Heinrich von Morungen himself is supposed to have set out on his long journey through the Holy Land to India between 1197 and 1202, when he was about fifty years old. - See August Closs, The Genius of the German Lyric (1965), 31. Closs suggests that by India probably Persia is meant.

- (132) Stith Thompson : Motif-Index of Folk Literature (1955-1958), Vol.IV, p. 432 at the item :-  
- K 1815. 1. Return home in humble disguise.
- (133) See Stith Thompson, op.cit; Vol. III, p.383, at these items :-  
- H 94. Identification by ring.  
H 94.3. Identification by ring dropped in pitcher of wine.  
H 94.4. Identification by ring dropped in glass(cup) of wine.
- (134) IF III, 105.  
(135) BSH, p.68, 11.9-10.  
(136) BSH, p.36, 1.22.  
(137) IF III, 94.  
(138) Ibid, 104.  
(139) Ibid, 101.  
(140) Ibid, XLV; "Om Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu", 49-50; Skáldasögur, 262-3.  
(141) Altnordische Literaturgeschichte I (1941), 197,199.  
(142) Edda Snorra Sturlusonar, 233.  
(143) IF VIII, 313.  
(144) Die Kenningar der Skalden (1921), 404.

- (145) Björn M. Ólsen, "Den Tredje og Fjerde Grammatiske Afhandling i Snorres Edda", S.G.N.L. XII (1884), 22,89
- (146) See Skáldasögur, 58, for some discussion of this.
- (147) "Den Tredje og Fjerde Grammatiske Afhandling", 15,70.
- (148) Hans Kuhn, "Kappar og Berserkir", Skírnir CXXIII (1949), 111.
- (149) IF IV, 107-109.
- (150) R.C.Boer, Bjarnar Saga Hitdoelakappa (1893), XXXI-XXXIII.
- (151) Altnordische Saga-Bibliothek VI (1897), XXIII-XXV.
- (152) Finnur Jónsson, "Sagaernes Lausavísur", Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie (1912), 44-5.
- (153) IF IV, VIII.
- (154) IF III, LXXIII-LXXIV.
- (155) "Norges og Islands Digtning", Nordisk Kultur VIIIB (1953), 107.
- (156) Skáldasögur, 247-252.
- (157) Bjarnar saga Hitdoelakappa, 95.
- (158) IF III, LXXIII.
- (159) IF VI, LIX.
- (160) See J.C.M.Kroesen, Over de Compositie der Fóstbroeðra Saga (1962), passim, but especially pp.8-11, 142-7.
- (161) Skáldasögur, 253.
- (162) Studier i de nordiske Gude - og Heltesagns Oprindelse (1881-9), 216-7.
- (163) Islenskar Bókmenntir i Fornöld I (1962), 286.
- (164) Finnur Jónsson, Skj., B I, 308.
- (165) IF III, 124.
- (166) See G.Turville-Petre, Origins of Icelandic Literature

- (1953), 147-50; Lee M. Hollander, The Skalds  
(1947), 177-83.
- (167) IF III, 138-9.
- (168) Skáldasögur, 244-55.
- (169) BSH, p.20, 11.26-8.
- (170) BSH, p.19, 11.8-10.
- (171) BSH, p.21, 1.15.
- (172) Skí., BI, 228. See also "Njáls saga", IF XII, 43.
- (173) BSH, p.50, 11.9-14.
- (174) IF VIII, 186-7.
- (175) BSH, p.46, 11.4-5.
- (176) IF VIII, 155.
- (177) BSH, p.1, 11.6-12.
- (178) IF VIII, 141.
- (179) BSH, p.2, 11.19-22.
- (180) IF VIII, 150.
- (181) See IF VIII, LXXIII-LXXIV.
- (182) For the age of Kormáks saga, see IF VIII, CV-CVII.
- (183) IF VIII, 296.
- (184) BSH, p.22, 11.2-3.
- (185) IF VIII, 261.
- (186) BSH, p.69, 1.26.
- (187) IF VIII, 255.
- (188) Ibid, 264.
- (189) IF III, 291-2, 303.
- (190) BSH, p.15, 11.15-18.
- (191) IF XIV, 27-8.
- (192) BSH, p.16, 11.27-8.
- (193) IF XIV, 28.

- (194) IF II, 179-80.
- (195) BSH, p.15, 11.20-21.
- (196) BSH, p.40, 11.19-25.
- (197) IF IV, 97-8.
- (198) Altnordische Saga-Bibliothek VI, XXIII-XXV.
- (199) IF III, LXXXIX.
- (200) IF VI, XX.
- (201) Ibid, 32-3.
- (202) BSH, p.29.
- (203) BSH, p.68, 11.21-9 to 69,1.
- (204) IF VII, 265-6.
- (205) IF IV, 69.
- (206) BSH, p.10, 11.17-24.
- (207) IF XII, 303.
- (208) Ibid, 302-3 and footnotes.
- (209) Ibid, 302.
- (210) IF X, VI ("Formáli" to Ljósvetninga saga).
- (211) Ibid, 51-2.
- (212) BSH, p.18, 1.16.
- (213) IF III, 71.
- (214) BSH, p.30, 1.5.
- (215) BSH, p.12, 1.10.
- (216) BSH, p.16, 1.8.
- (217) BSH, p.58, 1.27 to 59, 1-3.
- (218) IF III, 90.
- (219) IF VIII, 179.
- (220) Ibid, 185.
- (221) Ibid, 199.
- (222) BSH, p.68, 11.13-19.

- (223) BSH, p.69.
- (224) IF III, 107.
- (225) IF II, 171; see Bo Almqvist, "Norrön Niddiktning I", Nordiska Texter och Undersökningar XXI (1965), 89-118: 215-21.
- (226) IF VIII, 91.
- (227) IF X, 228.
- (228) See Eric Noreen, "Studier i Fornvästnordisk Diktning, Andra Samlingen", Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift (1922) - Filosofi, Språkvetenskap och Historiska Vetenskaper 4,42.
- (229) BSH, p.32, 11.23-8 to 33, 1-16.
- (230) IF VI, 10-11.
- (231) BSH, p.46, 11.27-9 to 47, 1-8.
- (232) IF XII, 150-51.
- (233) Islendinga sögur XVII (1924), 32-3.
- (234) Ibid, V; S.G.N.L. XXVI (1898), XVII-XVIII.
- (235) BSH, p.19, 11.13-17.
- (236) BSH, p.14, 11.9-10.
- (237) IF VIII, 135-6.
- (238) Ibid, 17.
- (239) Ibid, footnote.
- (240) BSH, pp.71-3.
- (241) BSH, p.12, 11.4-6.
- (242) BSH, p.1, 11.3-6.
- (243) IF V, 171.
- (244) O.A.Johnsen and Jón Helgason, Den Store Saga om Olav den Hellige I (1941), 325-6, 330, 331.



- (245) BSH, p.38, 11.10-14.
- (246) BSH, p.45, 11.10-12.
- (247) IF VII, 195-7.
- (248) BSH, p.45, 11.12-16.
- (249) Landnámabók (1900), 146.
- (250) BSH, p.46.
- (251) IF VII, 186-99.
- (252) Ibid, 186.
- (253) Ibid, 187-8.
- (254) Halldór K. Laxness, "Lítil samantekt um útilegumenn",  
Tímarit Máls og Menningar X (1949), 88.
- (255) IF III, 51, footnote.
- (256) Flateyjarbók III (1868), 244; Den Store Saga om  
Olav den Hellige II (1941), 690.
- (257) IF III, 101.
- (258) Den Store Saga I, 325-6.
- (259) IF III, 68-70.
- (260) Ibid, 52.
- (261) IF II, 276.
- (262) Ibid, 300.
- (263) IF III, 52, footnote.
- (264) BSH, pp. 1-3.
- (265) Fought in the year 1000, where Earl Eric was the victor,  
together with King Sweyn of Denmark and King Olaf of  
Sweden and in which Olaf Tryggvason lost his life.
- (266) At that time Skúli was probably on a viking expedition.  
See "Egils saga", IF II, 300.
- (267) IF III, 68-70.

- (268) Guðbrandur Vigfússon, "Um Tímatal í Íslendinga Sögum í Fornöld", Safn til Sögu Íslands I (1856), 458.
- (269) BSN, p.14, 11.9-10.
- (270) BSN, p.19, 11.23-4.
- (271) BSN, p.19, 1.14.
- (272) IF III, 136 footnote.
- (273) Cecil Wood, "Skáli Þorsteinsson", Scandinavian Studies XXXVI (1964), 175-88. The extant fragments of Skáli's poetry are extensively discussed herein.
- (274) IF VII, 90-94, 156-8, 172-4, 185, 219.
- (275) IF V, 83, 113, 158, 171, 218-21, 222.
- (276) Ibid, 220.
- (277) IF IV, 180.
- (278) IF III, LXXXI-LXXXIII.
- (279) IF V, 199.
- (280) Ibid, 197-9.
- (281) BSN, p.1, 11.14-15.
- (282) Landnámabók (1900), 21.
- (283) Ibid, 22.
- (284) BSN, p.50, 11.21-2.
- (285) IF III, 180, footnote.
- (286) Landnámabók (1900), 159.
- (287) Ibid, 158.
- (288) BSN, p.42, 11.4-5.
- (289) BSN, p.72, 11.27-8.
- (290) Landnámabók (1900), 23.
- (291) BSN, p.4, 11.1-3; p.11, 1.29.
- (292) BSN, p.33, 11.18-20.

- (293) Landnámabók (1900), 146.
- (294) Ibid, 22, 34.
- (295) IF III, LXIV-LXIX.
- (296) Gerðir Landnámabókar (1941), 89-90.
- (297) Landnámabók (1900), 146.
- (298) IF VII, 196-7.
- (299) IF III, LXVIII.
- (300) Landnámabók (1900), 29, 159.
- (301) BSH, p.51, 11.6-10.
- (302) Landnámabók (1900), 34, 35, 155, 156.
- (303) IF III, 181 footnote.
- (304) Landnámabók (1900), 34.
- (305) Ibid, 155.
- (306) BSH, p.47, 1.21. - "of aptaninn."  
BSH, p.49, 1.27. - "of for Biorns".  
- It is noteworthy that both these examples occur  
in the vellum fragment, AM 162 F, fol., and are not  
to be found in AM 551 d a, 4to, where "of" is replaced  
by "vm".  
- See generally Peter Foote, "Notes on the  
Prepositions of and um(b) in Old Icelandic and  
Old Norwegian Prose", Studia Islandica XIV (1955),  
esp. 78-9; also Einar Ól. Sveinsson, Dating the  
Icelandic Sagas (1958), 98-100.
- (307) BSH, p.32, 1.24.
- (308) Dating the Icelandic Sagas, 102.
- (309) On this subject, see Dating the Icelandic Sagas, 109.
- (310) Ibid, 110.
- (311) IF III, 264, 265, 266, 319, inter alia.

- (312) BSH, p.38, 11.26-8; see Dating the Icelandic Sagas, 110.
- (313) BSH, p.1, 11.20-21.
- (314) BSH, p.65, 1.30 to p.66, 1.1.
- (315) Dating the Icelandic Sagas, 121.
- (316) BSH, p.72, 11.26-9.
- (317) BSH, p.63, 11.11-13.
- (318) IF III, 59.
- (319) IF II, 143.
- (320) BSH, p.34, 11.13-14.
- (321) BSH, p.21, 1.15.
- (322) BSH, p.46, 1.21.
- (323) BSH, p.52, 1.9.
- (324) IF III, 243.
- (325) IF III, 259.
- (326) Jón Ólafsson from Grunnavík, who wrote down the first part of Heiðarviga saga from memory after its destruction in the great fire at Copenhagen in 1728, derived considerable assistance from a list which he had compiled of ancient words and forms of speech featuring in the original. - See IF III, CVII.
- (327) "Um Íslendingasögur", 210.
- (328) See IF III, 243, 250, 276, 277.
- (329) BSH, p.26, 11.18-19.
- (330) An Icelandic-English Dictionary (1957), 635, 647.
- (331) BSH, p.69, 1.26.
- (332) BSH, p.26, 11.1-2.
- (333) IF III, 145, footnote.
- (334) IF II, 143; see also footnote.
- (335) "Um Íslendingasögur", 111-12.

- (336) IF III, LXXXIX-XC.
- (337) See Theodore M. Andersson, The Problem of Icelandic Saga Origins (1964), 48-9, and especially Walter Baetke, Über die Entstehung der Isländersagas (1956), 32.  
- "Für das meiste, was die Erzählungen enthalten, gab es keine Gewährsmänner."
- (338) BSH, p.38, 1.16.
- (339) IF III, LXXXV, XCII.  
- In Sturlu saga, Rúnólfr is mentioned as staying with his son-in-law Óláfr prestr Sölvason. Rúnólfr is referred to as "göfugr kennimaðr" and as "inn mesti lærdómsmaðr ok höfuðprestr." - See Sturlunga saga I, 103. - He is also included in the Prestaskrá of 1143 attributed to Ari fróði. - See Dipl. Isl. I, 186, 191.
- (340) IF III, XCIII.
- (341) Ibid.
- (342) Ibid.
- (343) For example; "þuiad eþ var þá enn logtekinn fasta." (BSH, p.53, 11.22-3); "og var þar sungid annann dag Jola," (BSH, p.54, 1.30); "Þuiad nu wita menn gior enn fyrr huad giora skulu," (BSH, p.58, 11.18-19).  
On the other hand, Rudolf Meissner, Die Strengleikar (1902), 66, says of the second passage :-  
"Wenn man den satz so im zusammenhange sieht, sagt er nichts weiter als : am nächsten tag begann das weihnachtsfest, nämlich, wie es doch selbstverständlich ist im christlichen lande, mit gottesdienst und kirchgang."

- A comment of a similar nature could also be made in respect of the other passages quoted.

(344) IF VIII.

- See Jan de Vries, Altnordische Literaturgeschichte II, 401-405. Vatnsdoela saga shows strong evidence of clerical style and examples of Christian forgiveness of and solicitude for a murderer by his victim seem out of place in a tale set in heathen days.

(345) For example, the account in Islendinga saga of the priest Jón krókr, who became involved in a quarrel with one Ari, due to the latter begetting a child with the priest's wife Halldóra. The upshot of this was that the priest was lured into a trap and was murdered by Ari, a certain Guðmundr, and Sigurðr Ólafsson, the death of whose father the priest had caused. - See Sturlunga saga I, 338-9.

(346) BSH, pp. 49-50.

- See IF III, 179 footnote.

(347) BSH, p. 59.

- See IF III, 192 footnote.

(348) See IF III, XCI.

(349) See e.g. IF II, LXX-XCV.

(350) Sigurður Nordal, "Sagalitteraturen", Nordisk Kultur VIII B, 235 ff.

(351) Jan de Vries, Altnordische Literaturgeschichte II, 281. - "So hat die Egils saga auf die Bjarnar saga hitdoelakappa . . . . eingewirkt."

- But cf. Nordal, op.cit., p.241. "Et vigtigt alderskriterium er det, at forfatteren sikkert ikke har kendt Egils saga."

- (352) ÍF VIII, LXXIII.
- (353) Ibid, CVII.
- (354) ÍF XI, LXXXI.
- (355) ÍF II, XCIII.
- (356) Sturlunga saga II (1946), 338, 414.