

Link to this article:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/16bfuiyy0WCaDyrmeN50e3iDnr0Pa9AAMbp1OJHrTUXM/edit?usp=sharing>

<https://tinyurl.com/y76bdz99>

A stemma of *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, and a case study of saga-anthologisation

Alaric Hall, Hervin Fernandez-Aceves, Ian Simpson, Katelin Parsons, and Sheryl McDonald Werronen

Abstract

This article publishes the first stemma of the manuscripts of the fifteenth-century Icelandic romance *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, taking in fifty-eight of the sixty-one known witnesses. It capitalises on digitally-native publication to publish all underlying data, presenting a fully open-data approach to stemmatics. The article shows how the post-medieval transmission of the saga supports previous claims about how Icelandic sagas in this genre circulated, but also takes manuscripts containing *Sigurgarðs saga* produced in the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries in the Dalir region of Iceland as a case-study for a methodologically novel investigation of how scribes went about anthologisation. Refining previous work on the manuscript filiations of *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*, *Sigurðar saga turnara*, *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar*, *Nítíða saga frægu*, and *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*, and making the first outline of a stemma of *Nikulás saga leikara*, the study gives our first systematic insight into how the scribes of the eighteenth-century manuscript Rask 32 assembled their anthology, and how their work influenced subsequent anthologies that drew material from that manuscript.

Keywords

stemmatics, riddarasögur, manuscript studies

1. Introduction

The study of the scribal culture of post-medieval Iceland has progressed in leaps and bounds in recent years, propelled by an inspiring series of summerschools taught at the Arnamagnæan institutes of Reykjavík and Copenhagen (Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir 2009) and by doughty progress in producing online catalogues and digitisations of Iceland's complete manuscript heritage (primarily through the website Handrit.is). That manuscript heritage is large, due to Lutheran Iceland's relatively high literacy; a market too small to support commercial literary printing until the nineteenth century; and the conservatism of

the Icelandic language, which means that medieval prose texts have remained readily intelligible into the present day. Particular attention has been directed to the closely related genres of medieval Icelandic romance (*riddarasögur*) and heroic adventure stories set in pre-Conversion Scandinavia (*fornaldarsögur*), which were popular from the thirteenth century into the twentieth, pre-eminently through Kalinke and Mitchell's 1985 *Bibliography of Old Norse-Icelandic Romances* and the recent *Stories for All Time* catalogue of *fornaldarsaga* manuscripts. Over the last fifteen years, a series of Ph.D. theses and books have assembled detailed case studies of the material philology of Icelandic manuscripts containing *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur* (Lansing 2011; Hufnagel 2012; Love 2013; McDonald Werronen 2016; Kapitan 2018; Lavender 2020) and of the people who copied those sagas over the half-millennium and more during which they circulated in manuscript (for example Davíð Ólafsson 2009; Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon 2010; Parsons 2020). Whereas some other saga genres came to be well represented in print during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, most romance sagas became widely available in Iceland in print only late in the nineteenth century, if at all, encouraging the continuation of manuscript culture into the twentieth century, and giving us an especially large and interesting archive of manuscripts to work with. Thus our capacity to understand *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur* both as nodes in the social relations of the people who transmitted and consumed Icelandic literary culture and as literary texts in their own right is expanding dramatically.

Corresponding to these trends, recent research exhibits a renewed appreciation of the value of understanding a text's stemma — the 'family tree' by which we can map which of a text's manuscripts served as exemplars for which subsequent copies. Once imagined primarily as a tool for reconstructing the lost archetype of a given text, the stemma is increasingly used as a device for understanding not the origin point of a text, but its subsequent history: stemmas can enable us to map, for example, who was copying from whom, or precisely what alterations each scribe made to his exemplar as he read and copied it (cf. Haukur Þorgeirsson 2017, 51–55; Lavender 2020, 73–131 is one virtuosic example of what can be achieved through this approach). Such research has been facilitated by the digitisation of manuscripts, use of spreadsheets, and deployment of software originally designed for phylogenetic analysis in the biological sciences (for Iceland specifically, see Hall and Parsons 2013; Kapitan 2017; Hall and Zeevaert 2018). The present publication is a case study in these approaches, applying them to *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, a romance-saga close in style to the *fornaldarsögur*, composed around the third quarter of the fifteenth century. *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* is among the medieval Icelandic sagas with the largest number of surviving manuscripts. We are aware of sixty-one witnesses (around twice as many as the average for a romance-saga); by the count of manuscripts in Kalinke and Mitchell's 1985 *Bibliography of Old Norse-Icelandic Romances* — which is now out of date but probably representative of the relative numbers — it is the seventh best attested romance-saga, and therefore a particularly informative example of how romance sagas were transmitted (Hall and Parsons 2013, figure 1

spreadsheet). Standing as a companion to Alaric Hall, Steven D. P. Richardson and Haukur Þorgeirsson's publication of a normalised text and translation of *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* (2013, based on Loth 1962–65, V 39–107), this article charts the saga's textual transmission for the first time.

Methodologically, this article is not relevant only to Iceland: Icelandic manuscripts constitute an exceptionally useful testing ground for methods that can be applied to manuscript traditions from elsewhere on the globe. Icelandic *fornaldarsögur* and romances generally survive in abundant copies, and tend to be transmitted in manuscripts that are dedicated to these genres (Hall and Parsons 2013, §1.3; Kapitan, Rowbotham and Wills 2017; cf. Kapitan 2021), while the vast majority of Icelandic manuscripts can be consulted in just two cities (Reykjavík and Copenhagen) and are made more accessible again by the exceptionally extensive digitisation of Nordic manuscript collections. Thus Icelandic saga-manuscripts constitute a rich and readily marshalled archive of a scribal culture. This makes it possible to test methodologies on Icelandic material with exceptional robustness and rapidity. The main methodological contribution of this paper is to demonstrate how, with the use of computer-assisted stemmatology, our knowledge of the stemmas of *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur* is now approaching the critical mass needed for us to comment not only on how individual sagas were transmitted, but on how the manuscripts that contained them were anthologised: whether a given manuscript represents the wholesale copying of an exemplar or an anthology drawn from multiple sources. The article investigates anthologisation by closely examining one branch of the *Sigurgarðs saga* stemma (manuscripts descended from Copenhagen, Arnamagnæanske Samling, Rask 32 4to) and integrating our new findings about that branch with a synthesis of existing knowledge and targeted new research concerning the transmission of *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*, *Drauma-Jóns saga*, *Hálfðanar saga Barkarsonar*, *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar*, *Nikulás saga leikara*, and *Sigurðar saga turnara*. In doing so, we produce an early case-study of what will be a step-change in our capacity to understand the literary habits of Icelandic scribes.

2. Manuscripts

We aimed to filiate all manuscripts of *Sigurgarðs saga* held in public collections, and those held privately if the opportunity happened to present itself. Our list of manuscripts was derived from Kalinke and Mitchell's bibliography of the Icelandic romance-sagas (1985), supplemented by systematic consultation of the catalogue of the National Library of Iceland (Páll Eggert Ólason 1918–37; Lárus H. Blöndal, Grímur M. Helgason, and Ögmundur Helgason 1947–96), electronic searches of the Handrit.is and Stories for All Time websites, and chance discoveries by Parsons. New manuscripts still come to light fairly frequently: in 2013, our count was fifty-three (Hall, Richardson, and Haukur Þorgeirsson 2013, 82); it now stands at sixty-one. The manuscripts which are included in our transcriptions and stemma, together with links to key online catalogue records currently extant, are the fifty-eight that follow. Unless otherwise stated in the discussions

below, information about the history of the manuscripts is sourced from these catalogue entries.

Table 1: manuscripts used in this study

Place	Collection	Shelfmark	handrit .is link	other link	date
Baltimore, Md	Johns Hopkins University	Ottenson 1		y	1798
	Héraðsskjalasafni				1862–6
Borgarnes	Borgarfjarðar	MS 14	y	y	7
Copenhagen	Arnamagnæan Institute	Rask 32	y	y	later
Copenhagen	Royal Library	NKS 1804 4to		y	C18
Copenhagen	Royal Library	Thott 978 2to		y	1681
	Cornell University, Fiske				late
Ithaca, NY	Icelandic Collection	Ic F75 A125 8vo			C17
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Einkaeign 19	y		C18
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	ÍB 165 4to	y	y	1875
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	ÍB 185 8vo	y	y	1778
					1770
					1740–6
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	ÍB 224 8vo	y	y	0
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	ÍB 426 4to	y		1877
					1828–3
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	ÍBR 38 8vo	y	y	1
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	IBR 44 8vo	y		1854
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	JS 411 8vo	y	y	C19
					1799–1
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	JS 632 4to	y	y	800
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 1217 4to	y	y	1817
					1869–7
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 1305 4to	y		8
					1864–7
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 1446 8vo	y		1
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 1500 4to	y	y	1880
					1760–1
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 1637 4to		y	800
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 1785 4to			1833
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 222 fol	y	y	1696
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 2316 4to		y	1850
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 2484 8vo			c. 1852
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 2786 8vo			1869
					1870–7
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 3165 4to	y	y	1
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 354 4to	y	y	C18
					late
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 3891 4to			C19
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 3938 8vo			1872

Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 3966 4to	y		1869–7 1
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 4070 8vo			1862
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 423 fol	y	y	C18 1868–6 9
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 4447 4to			1875
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 4718 4to	y		c. 1775-1
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 4825 4to	y	y	825 1868–7 4
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 4847 8vo	y		1870
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 4867 8to	y		1896
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 4977 8vo	y		C20
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 5480 4to	y		1913
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 5567 4to	y		1710–5 0
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 644 4to		y	C18-19
Reykjavík	National Library of Iceland	Lbs 998 4to		y	
Reykjavík	Magnússonar Stofnun Árna	AM 123 8vo	y	y	c. 1600
Reykjavík	Magnússonar Stofnun Árna	AM 167 fol	y		c. 1660
Reykjavík	Magnússonar Stofnun Árna	AM 556a, 4to	y		C15
Reykjavík	Magnússonar Stofnun Árna	AM 588m 4to	y		C17
Reykjavík	Magnússonar Stofnun Árna	AM 588n 4to	y		C17
Reykjavík	Magnússonar Stofnun Árna	AM 592a 4to	y	y	C17
Reykjavík	Magnússonar Stofnun Árna	GKS 1002 fol	y		1667 1871–9 0
Reykjavík	Magnússonar Stofnun Árna	SÁM 131	y		1867–6 8
Reykjavík	Magnússonar	SÁM 47	y		
Spanish Fork, Utah	Thor Leifson	Leifson 1			C19
Stockholm	Royal Library	Islandica Papp 4to 27		y	c. 1650 1600×5 0
Stockholm	Royal Library	Islandica Papp fol 1		y	1674
Stockholm	Royal Library	Islandica Papp 8vo 6		y	1690
Stockholm	Royal Library	Islandica Papp fol 66		y	1640–7 1
Stockholm	Royal Library	Islandica Papp 4to 17		y	
Winnipeg	University of Manitoba, Elizabeth Dafoe Library	ISDA JB3 6 8vo			C19

We also included in the stemma the 1884 popular edition, *Sagan af Sigrgarði frækna*, edited and published by Einar Þorðarson in Reykjavík. This is important both as a witness to lost manuscripts — Einar’s exemplar seems not to survive — and as the ancestor of extant ones.

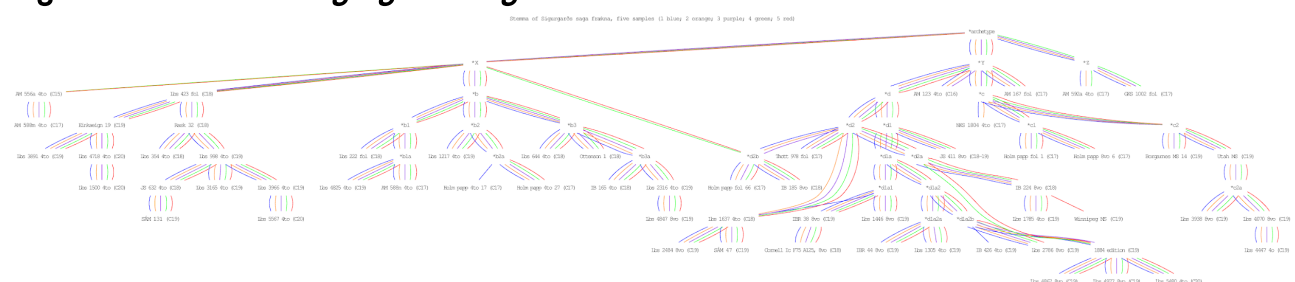
Omissions from our survey of which we are aware are as follows. The one publicly held manuscript that we have omitted is New Haven, Conn., Yale University, Beinecke Library, Z 113.82, dated to 1806: this was unavailable due to conservation when Hall visited U.S. collections. The two privately held manuscripts listed by Kalinke and Mitchell which we have not seen are Böðvar Kvaran, Tjaldanes, MS I 2.b (from 1911) and Jón Ófeigsson, Hafnarnes, Hornafjörður MS 1 (nineteenth-century). It is worth adding too that two manuscripts (Rask 31 4to and Lbs 2319 4to) contain a saga entitled *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* and are listed by Kalinke and Mitchell as containing the saga under discussion in this article, but in fact contain the saga usually known as *Sigurgarðs saga og Valbrands*.

Noteworthy inclusions are two North American manuscripts unknown to Kalinke and Mitchell. Winnipeg, Elizabeth Dafoe Library ISDA JB3 6 8vo has been described by Parsons (Hall and Parsons 2013, §4.1). The Spanish Fork, Utah manuscript is in the private ownership of Thor Leifson in Spanish Fork, Utah. The manuscript belonged to Thor’s grandfather and namesake (Sigurður Þorleifsson/S. Thor Leifson). It includes 5 sagas, the others being *Ajax saga frækna*, *Ála flekks saga*, *Nikulás saga leikara* and *Friðberts saga frækna*.

ISDA JB3-01-04

3. Stemma and methods

Figure 1: stemma of *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*



By far the most substantial labour represented by this article is manifested in Spreadsheet 1 and Figure 1. Figure 1 represents our conclusions in the familiar visual form of the *stemma codicum*. Spreadsheet 1 contains the data underlying this visualisation, fulfilling our commitment to open-data approaches to publishing. It summarises key information about the origin of each manuscript, including giving co-ordinates that can readily be used to make electronic maps and relational information that can readily be used to create

visualisations of our stemma. It publishes transcriptions of five sample passages spread through the saga from each of the fifty-eight manuscripts, producing a corpus of transcriptions totalling around 45,000 words. For heuristic purposes, it reconstructs a text for every node in the stemma where we infer a lost manuscript (though we have not ventured to reconstruct the text of the archetype, feeling that this is one step further than is useful given our shaky understanding of the top of the stemma). It numbers each alternative reading to facilitate computer analysis. In its .odt and .xlsx forms, the spreadsheet is colour-coded to indicate manuscript families and variants, but it is also provided in the highly future-proof .csv format.

The method for constructing the stemma was largely that described in Hall and Parsons (2013, on *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*) and Hall and Zeevaert (2018, on *Njáls saga*; cf. Zeevaert and others forthcoming). Although it is only now reaching publication, the present research on the stemma of *Sigurgarðs saga* was begun before the methodological articles just cited were published: the methodological questions raised by Hall's initial forays into establishing the first stemma of *Sigurgarðs saga* prompted those studies, which used past research to validate innovative methods for gathering, handling, and publishing stemmatic data. In 2013, we found that two samples totalling around 317 words enabled the independent production of a stemma largely consistent with the findings of past work (whose methods were not described, but can be taken as representing what has hitherto been seen as an acceptable standard in the field). Subsequent application of the same approaches to *Njáls saga* — whose stemma is complicated by a large number of fragmentary manuscripts and manuscripts with multiple exemplars — has largely enabled the replication of past research using samples between around 270 and 392 words. For *Sigurgarðs saga*, we produced a stemma on the basis of five samples, encompassing the beginning and end of the text, along with three other moments chosen for their literary interest and fairly even distribution across the text. In Loth's edition, these five passages together comprise 616 words in Loth's edition; in our data, the average sample length was 108 words. We created an independent stemma for each of the five samples, though where individual samples pointed in the same direction but did not offer enough evidence precisely to situate a manuscript in the stemma, the evidence of multiple samples was combined to produce the highest-resolution conclusion possible. The creation of our *Sigurgarðs saga* dataset will in future enable the systematic digital production of stemmas based on different numbers or subsets of samples, enabling objective assessment of how far different sample sizes produce different results, facilitating a deeper understanding of how large a sample researchers should expect to need reliably to filiate Icelandic saga-manuscripts. (Our anecdotal impression is that extra samples are helpful for improving the resolution of the stemma when handling conservative copying, and for demonstrating the occasional case where a manuscript draws on multiple exemplars, but that single samples are generally sufficient.) In 2013 we also made use of manuscript dating in determining the stemma: if the textual evidence suggested that manuscript A was the parent of manuscript B, but manuscript dating suggested that manuscript A was

produced later than manuscript B, we filiated the manuscripts as siblings, children of a lost manuscript. As we discuss in §5.3, however, manuscript dating is not always correct, and stemmatic evidence can usefully prompt investigation. In the present research, then, we have allowed IBR 38 8vo, thought to be from the nineteenth century, to stand as the parents Cornell Ic F75 A125 8vo, thought to date from the seventeenth.

The naivety of Hall's early data-collection regarding *Sigurgarðs saga* has some legacies in the present article. The *Sigurgarðs saga* transcriptions are diplomatic, but we struggled to maintain consistent approaches while working with varied scripts and sometimes semi-legible manuscripts over many years of discontinuous data collection (and indeed during the much more concentrated period of research represented in Hall and Parsons 2013). Thus although the evidence provided by diplomatic transcriptions is sometimes stemmatically useful (see §4 below), our palaeographical standards are not consistent enough for future researchers to make absolutely reliable use of the transcriptions as evidence for, for example, the use of abbreviations, or spelling variation between *ð* and *d*, *u* and *v*, or *i* and *í*. By the time of Hall and Zeevaert's work on *Njáls saga* (2018), we had opted for transcribing into standard modern Icelandic spelling, which makes it easy to ensure consistency, and moreover facilitates electronic analysis. We have left the *Sigurgarðs saga* dataset, however, in its loosely diplomatic form.

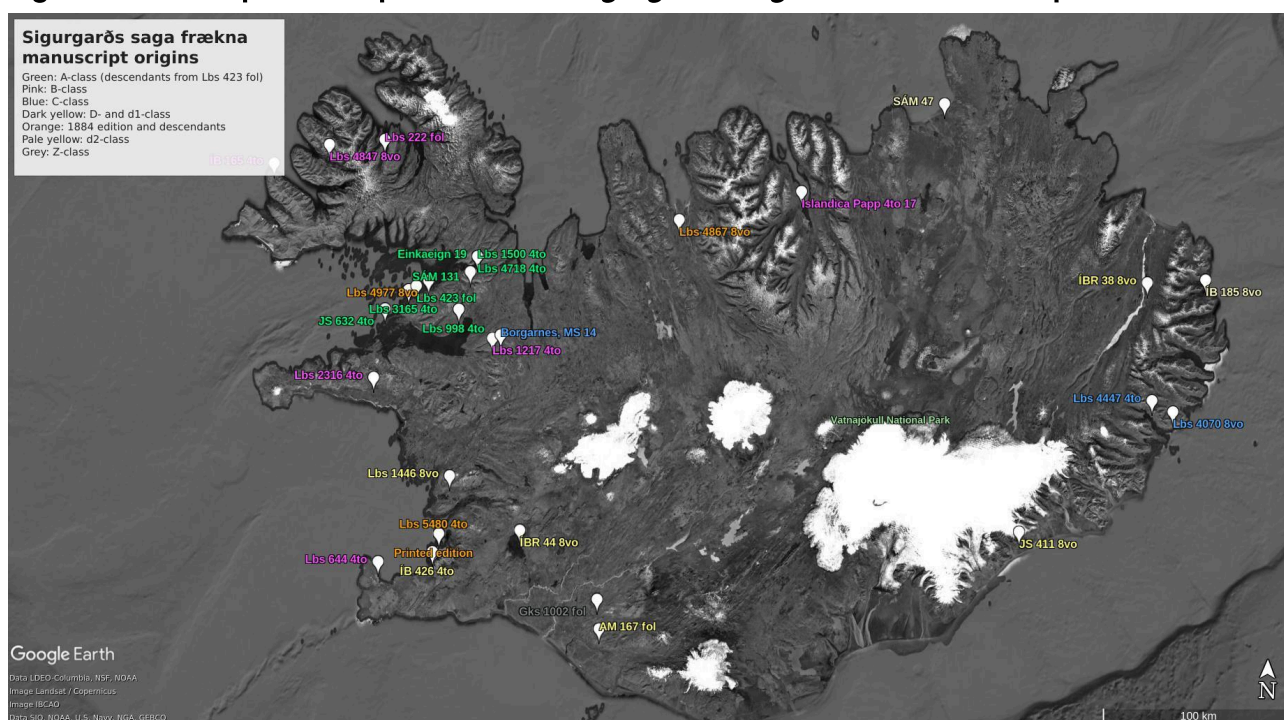
We also regret not selecting a sample from the short section where the earliest two surviving, fragmentary manuscripts (AM 556a 4to and AM 123 4to) overlap. Moreover, we found that our data for the seventeenth-century siblings AM 592a 4to (which is only partly legible) and Gks 1002 fol (which happens to be highly abbreviated for the first and last of our samples in particular) was insufficient to place them confidently in the stemma. We therefore cross-checked our samples for eight early manuscripts by tabulating the 151 occasions where Loth recorded an alternative reading in those manuscripts that she referred to for her edition (AM 556a 4to, AM 588m 4to, AM 167 fol, AM 123 8vo, AM 588n 4to) and adding the corresponding readings from three more early manuscripts (Lbs 423 fol, Lbs 222 fol, and Gks 1002 fol; Spreadsheet 2). This provided a cross-section of readings throughout the saga. This sample was perhaps not ideal: Loth's apparatus is certainly not comprehensive. Still, electronic stemmas produced using the whole dataset, only that part of the dataset where all manuscripts sampled are intact, and only those readings which we deemed likely to be significant, returned consistent results that showed clearly that the fragmentary AM 556a 4to and AM 123 4to, along with the sibling pair AM 592a 4to and Gks 1002 fol, are most likely independent witnesses to the archetype of *Sigurgarðs saga*.

We have also opted not to produce the kind of interactive HTML stemma presented in Hall and Parsons (2013) due to our present lack of an automated process to facilitate this otherwise onerous undertaking. Our experience publishing these with *Digital Medievalist* in 2013 also underscores the challenges of future-proofing even simple interactive publications: in updates to *Digital Medievalist's* website, these files were lost, and requests to fix them have not at the time of this publication succeeded (the stemmas remain

functional, however, in the preprint version at https://alarichall.org.uk/working_paper_on_stemmas_from_small_samples). But perusal of our spreadsheet nonetheless makes it relatively easy to check our conclusions, and the publication of our data there would at least make the production of an HTML stemma straightforward for future researchers.

4. How *Sigurgarðs saga* corroborates what we already thought we knew

Figure 2: known places of production of *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* manuscripts



The distribution of *Sigurgarðs saga* manuscripts in time and space is consistent with what has become a well established pattern for *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur*, a picture which began to come into focus with the work of Peter Springborg (1977) and has received much empirical backing in recent case-studies of saga-transmission, most conveniently expounded by Philip Lavender through his study of *Illuga saga* (2020, 73–131; cf. Hall and Parsons 2013, §1.3). The data and stemma published here provide one exceptionally fully evidenced case-study of this pattern.

The origins of the textual transmission of *Sigurgarðs saga* lie in the Middle Ages, but are otherwise murky, since few saga manuscripts can be localised during this period. Indeed, Hall and Parsons (2013, §43) found that although the sampling method they used was generally successful, it did not generate enough data to reach a reliable conclusion about the top of the *Konráðs saga* stemma, partly because the early manuscripts of the saga were fragmentary. Some other major stemmatic work on the romance sagas has indeed declined to speculate on the top of the stemma entirely (e.g. Slay 1997 and McDonald

Werronen 2014; 2016; cf. the studies listed in §5.1 below). The earliest manuscript of *Sigurgarðs saga* is the late fifteenth-century Eggertsbók (AM 556a 4to, once part of the same manuscript as AM 556b 4to — probably, as Lethbridge has suggested, the latter part), better known as the earliest manuscript of *Gísla saga Súrssonar* (Lethbridge 2012, 396). This manuscript lacks more than half of the beginning of the saga, while the second oldest, AM 123 8vo, from c. 1600, has a number of lacunae and quite a limited overlap with Eggertsbók. So the top of our stemma must be regarded as fairly arbitrary.

Our finding that the surviving medieval manuscript of *Sigurgarðs saga* is not the ancestor of most manuscripts is similar to conclusions drawn regarding other romance-sagas whose stemmas have already been surveyed in detail. It is not self-evident that this would have been so: assuming that Eggertsbók is the archetype of all surviving manuscripts would be a parsimonious interpretation and so is methodologically attractive. Hast identified Eggertsbók as the archetype of all surviving *Harðar saga* manuscripts (1960a, 1960b), and it is thought to be the archetype of all manuscripts of the shorter version of *Gísla saga* (Þórður Ingi Guðjónsson 2010, 108). Our conclusion, however, is in line with Loth's opinion (1962–65), as implied by her edition's use of Eggertsbók as the base text combined with a willingness to take readings from other manuscripts — not least on p. 197, line 17, where she draws on text from AM 123 8vo and AM 167 fol to correct what seems likely to have been an eye-skip omission from Eggertsbók (cf. Spreadsheet 2). Strikingly, Eggertsbók (and sometimes its only child, AM 588m 4to) call Ingigerður's kingdom *Taricia* instead of the well attested place name *Tartaria*: *Taricia* can easily be explained as a misreading of an abbreviated form of *Tartaria* like *Tart'ia*, potentially showing *c/t* confusion. Admittedly, a lost copy of Eggertsbók that corrected this reading to *Tartaria* could stand between Eggertsbók and other *Sigurgarðs saga* manuscripts, or copyists might independently have changed Eggertsbók's reading. Tellingly, however, some manuscripts also contain a scattering of archaic spellings in places where Eggertsbók lacks them. Such archaisms are not of a kind which are likely to have been produced by self-consciously archaising scribes (like the scribes of Lbs 222 fol, written in 1696, and ÍBR 38 8vo, written 1828–31, who wrote *-r* in preference to modern Icelandic *-ur* whether or not this was etymologically correct). These spellings are therefore unlikely to have been introduced by scribes whose copies descend from Eggertsbók, but rather to descend from other medieval exemplars. In particular, Lbs 423 fol, copied in 1733 at the behest of Bjarni Pétursson at Skarð á Skarðsströnd, has *üvine* (for standard modern Icelandic *óvini*), showing *ú-* for the prefix *ó-*, in §1; *at* (for *að*) in §§2 and 3; examples of *h*-loss in *lute* (for *hluti*) in §3 and *liöp* (for *hljóp*) in §4; and the Latinate accusative *Tartariam* in §3. ÍB 165 4to likewise has *uvine* and shows *h*-loss in has *r□t* (for *hraut*).

A good impression of the kind of lost manuscripts that might lie behind our surviving lines of stemmatic descent is perhaps given by AM 123 8vo (on which see Lavender 2020, 77–84), the saga's second earliest manuscript and a major witness to the earliest version of the saga. A rare example of a sixteenth-century saga manuscript, this no-nonsense octavo volume was made to be read. Copied onto vellum originally pricked for quarto

production, it is readily portable. In the century or so over which it was used before coming into the hands of Árni Magnússon, it was read almost to death, now being both dirty and fragmentary and bearing many marks of use, provoking only a laconic accession slip by Árni: 'aptanaf Tíodels sógu, af jlluga gridarfostra. Sigurgardz saga. af Drauma Jons. nockur æfintir. af þorsteini bæjarmagn. recentissima membrana' ('the latter part of *Tíodels saga*, [some] of *Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra*, *Sigrarðs saga*, of *Drauma-Jóns saga*, some exempla, and [some] of [the saga of] Þorsteinn bæjarmagn. A very recent parchment'). Given the state of AM 123 8vo, it is no surprise that other *Sigurgarðs saga* witnesses should be lost.

After about 1600, our understanding of the transmission of *Sigurgarðs saga* becomes much more detailed, and again consistent with other evidence. The saga begins to appear in scholarly, seventeenth-century copies associated with Icelandic humanism. Their production, as far as we can tell, was focused on a few centres of scholarship, particularly Iceland's two episcopal seats: Skálholt in the south and Hólar in the north (cf. Lavender 2020, 99–107 for the case-study of *Illuga saga*). One of the *Sigurgarðs saga* manuscripts that can be localised for this period is the monumental two-volume Gks 1002–3 fol, produced in the 1660s by Páll Sveinsson (1650–1703), based at the farm of Geldingalækur, about twenty-five kilometres south of Skálholt, for the wealthy farmer Jón Eyjólfsson of Eyvindarmúli, another twenty-five kilometres or so south-west of Geldingarlækur; subsequently rebound as a velvet-covered, gold-edged set, the volumes were presented to King Christian V of Denmark around 1690. This exceptionally late vellum production offers abridged and consequently innovative versions of its texts; Árni Magnússon's catalogue of its contents for the King offers a poker-faced but implicitly sceptical representation of *Sigrarðs saga* in an elevated Danish:

en relation om en kongeson af Ryssland, ved navn Sigurgard, som fick til egte Ingerd, kong Herculis daatter af Tartarien, oc blef der saa siden konge. denne Roman haver aldels intet hvor af mand kunde udleede hvad tiider dens auctor skulle hafur villet applicere den til

an account of a prince of Russia called Sigurgard, who succeeded in marrying Ingerd, the daughter of King Herculis of Tartarien, and thus became king there. This romance contains nothing from which one may deduce what period its author might have wanted to set it in.

Enough of the damaged, unlocalised, seventeenth-century AM 592a 4to can be made out to demonstrate that it shared a lost ancestor with Gks 1002–3 fol and that the pair comprise independent witnesses to the archetype of *Sigurgarðs saga*. The same milieu produced AM 167 fol, once part of a massive volume also comprising the present AM 123 fol, AM 163h fol, AM 163h fol and AM 164f fol, copied around 1660 by the scribe and poet Arnór Eyjólfsson (1642–95) at Flókastaðir, Rangárvallasýsla, around fifty kilometres south of Skálholt. AM 167 fol is again copied from a lost exemplar and independent witness to the *Sigurgarðs saga* archetype.

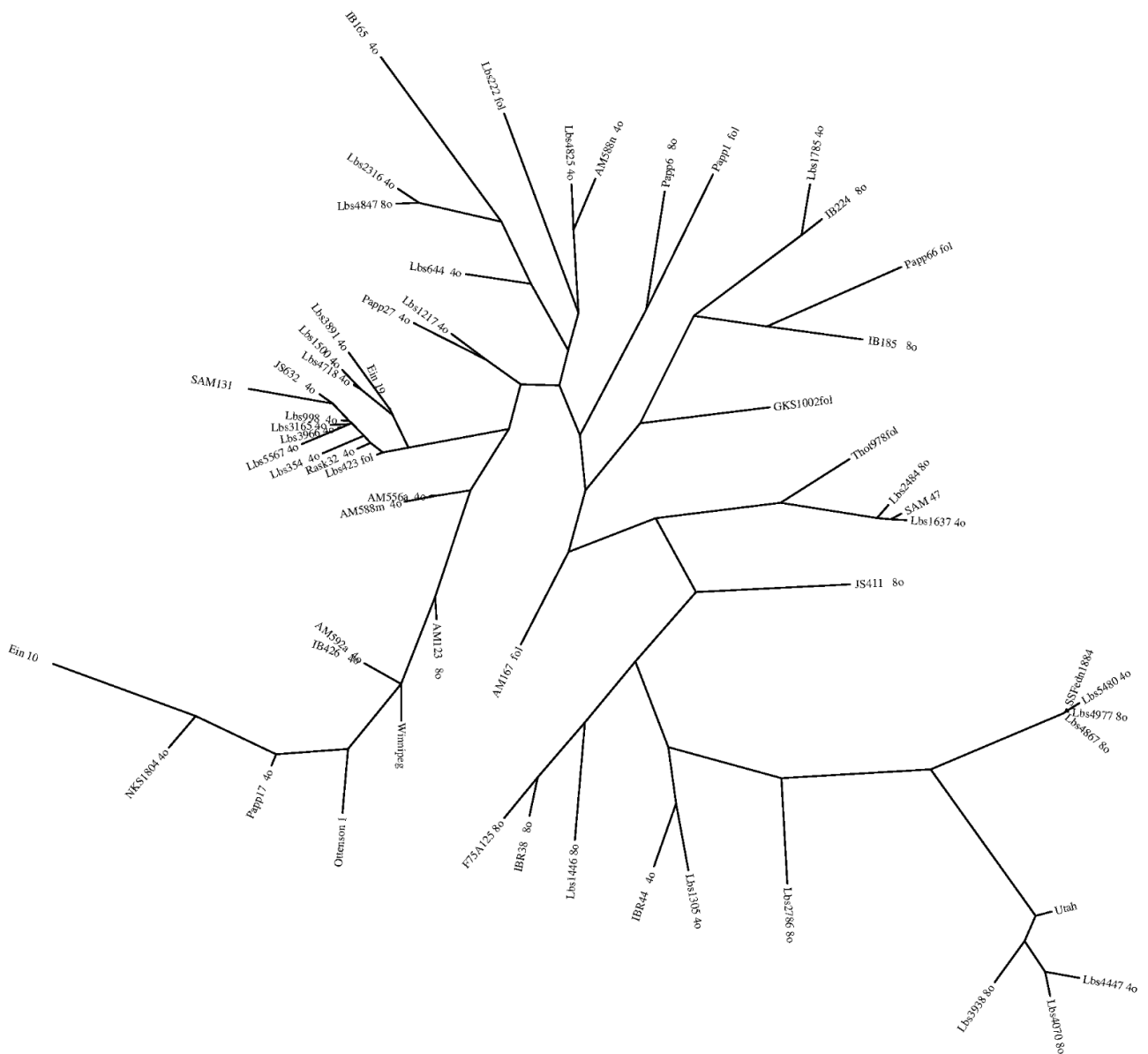
Associated with Iceland's other episcopal seat, Hólar, is Papp 17 4to: in this manuscript, from the second half of the seventeenth century, *Sigurgarðs saga* was copied by séra Þorlákur Sigfússon (d. 1693) of Glæsibær in Krækingahlíð, in Eyjafjörður, one fjord to the east of Skagafjörður, where the episcopal seat of Hólar lay. Some other parts of this volume were written by Brynjólfur Jónsson of Efstaland, Öxnadalur, about whom little is known but who certainly collaborated with Þorlákur Sigfússon and undertook commissions for Bishop Þorlákur Skúlason of Hólar (1597–1656) and probably Bishop Þorlákur's son and successor Gísli Þorláksson (1631–84) (Lansing 2011, 61). If our stemma is right, this too was based on a lost exemplar, but is one of a cluster of sixteenth- to seventeenth-century Y-class manuscripts, suggesting a bustling culture of copying and recopying.

This seventeenth-century humanist activity culminated in the activities of two scholars. On the one hand, Árni Magnússon (1663–1730), along with other collectors based in Continental Scandinavia, began collecting Icelandic manuscripts, removing them from circulation and copying on the island while also (generally) facilitating their preservation. This story would be consistent with how the parent-child pair of Eggertsbók and AM 588m 4to, and the sibling pair of Gks 1002 fol and AM 592a 4to, lack descendants, having been removed to Denmark in Árni's time. On the other hand, we see at the same time Magnús Jónsson í Vigur (1637–1702), a fishing magnate based in the Westfjords, undertaking and patronising manuscript production on a grand scale (McDonald Werronen 2016–18). To his patronage we probably owe the Lbs 222 fol manuscript of *Sigurgarðs saga*. This manuscript has left us no surviving copies, but represents the lively intellectual culture of the late seventeenth-century Westfjords which fed into eighteenth-century copying in the Dalir, just to the south. More investigation would be needed, but it is tempting to fit Papp 17 4to into a story where medieval manuscripts of *Sigurgarðs saga* were being gathered at Hólar in the seventeenth century, followed by similar activity in the Westfjords, which facilitated the production of a number of related manuscripts there over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Thus, from the seventeenth century, we transition into an eighteenth-century culture producing increasingly small, inexpensive reading copies of romance-sagas, and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century manuscripts account for most of those localised in Figure 2. In the west scribes drew directly on manuscripts produced under the aegis of Magnús and people like him, and both there and elsewhere they also drew on manuscripts now lost whose ancestry goes back to medieval or early modern copies (presumably because, unlike surviving examples, they remained in use in Iceland until they were worn out and discarded), perhaps mediated by men of lesser means but similar proclivities to Magnús. The most pronounced cluster in manuscript production in this period of of a-class manuscripts around the Dalir and Westfjords in the north-west of Iceland (cf. Lavender 2020, 107–22 on *Illuga saga*, which finds a similar north-western cluster). Not only is this related group of manuscripts tightly grouped in space, but they are especially closely related. This can readily be visualised through a computer-generated stemma in which

branch lengths are proportional to the number of differences between manuscripts. The fact that the a-class Dalir manuscripts are all so similar to one another either tells us that these scribes were exceptionally conservative copyists, or that an exceptionally large proportion of their manuscripts survive, whereas elsewhere intermediary copies in which textual changes built up incrementally have been lost (or both).

Much research has yet to be done before a map like Figure 2 can be interpreted in greater detail: its distributions may, for example, tell us more about where scribes were inclined to convey the autobiographical information we need to localise their manuscripts than about



where manuscripts were generally produced. We have not found a clear equivalent to the extensive cluster of textually-related *Nítíða saga* and *Illuga saga* manuscripts localised respectively by McDonald Werronen (2014; 2016, 25–59) and Lavender (2020, 107–22) to the Eastfjords, though the parent and child pair Lbs 4070 8vo and Lbs 4447 4to do attest to *Sigurgarðs saga* in that region in the 1860s. On the other hand, we can see a cluster of *Sigurgarðs saga* manuscript in the south-west.

By the late nineteenth century, we can see the impact of the 1884 printed edition. The fact that an edition produced in Reykjavík has close relatives in nineteenth-century manuscripts produced around the Reykjanes peninsula and not far to the north, in Borgarfjörður, suggests that the edition arose from a local scribal milieu in which manuscripts were circulating quite intensively. Yet the three descendants of the printed text, while all localisable, are also widely dispersed, hinting at the swift and broad distribution achieved by the printed text.

5. What *Sigurgarðs saga* can tell us that we didn't know

5.1 Studying the transmission of co-texts in the Rask 32-group

This section argues that, with the creation of a stemma for *Sigurgarðs saga*, we just about have a critical mass of knowledge to start to understand not only the stemmas of individual sagas, but to compare the stemmas of sagas that co-occur in multiple manuscripts in order to investigate the processes whereby scribes produced their anthologies. This is the beginning of a step-change in our study of medieval Icelandic scribal and literary culture. In addition to the present study, fairly comprehensive stemmas have now been attempted of the following romance-sagas: *Dínus saga dramláta* (Jónas Kristjánsson 1960), *Gibbons saga* (Page 1960), *Konráðs saga keisarasonar* (Zitzelsberger 1980, 1981, 1983; Hall and Parsons 2013), *Mírmanns saga* (Slay 1997), *Nítíða saga* (McDonald Werronen 2014, 2016), *Tíodels saga* (Ohlsson 2009), and *Viktors saga og Blávus* (Jónas Kristjánsson 1964). (For digitised versions of their stemmas see the file `stemma_SSF_KSK_DSD_GS_MS_VSB_TS.dot`.) Comparable work on *fornaldarsögur* is also relevant: for the present study, the stemma of *Hrólfs saga kraka* established by Desmond Slay is particularly important (Slay 1960, 1970, 1981, 1994). Although Icelandic romance-sagas tend strongly to appear in manuscripts containing other romance-sagas (Hall and Parsons 2013, §1.3; Kapitan, Rowbotham and Wills 2017; cf. Kapitan 2021), there are enough different sagas in this genre that even with these stemmas available there are too few co-occurrences of well understood sagas for us to say very much about how they travelled together. However, by far the most frequent companion to *Sigurgarðs saga* is *Nítíða saga*, the two usually co-occur in manuscripts whose *Sigurgarðs saga* text

descends from Lbs 423 fol. Moreover, manuscripts in this branch of the *Sigurgarðs saga* stemma frequently exhibit other overlapping content, each including some (and, in the case of Lbs 998 4to, all) of *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*, *Drauma-Jóns saga*, *Hálfdanar saga Barkarsonar*, *Hálfdanar saga Eysteinnssonar*, *Nikulás saga leikara*, and *Sigurðar saga turnara*. Although the transmission of these sagas is less well understood, existing research on them, abetted with some targeted new investigations produced for the present article, is sufficient for us to say something about how each scribe went about compiling the texts in his manuscript — or, as we should perhaps conceptualise the process, how each editor went about creating his anthology. Studying the literary and cultural meanings of the juxtaposition of texts in a given manuscript has in recent decades been a popular endeavour both in saga-studies and far beyond (for particularly relevant examples see Lethbridge 2012 on Eggertsbók, Lavender 2020, 77–91 on AM 123 8vo, and Hufnagel 2016a on Lbs 2319 4to; cf. Kapitan 2021). But, at least as far as romance-sagas and *fornaldarsögur* are concerned, such studies are seldom undertaken with much understanding of whether a scribe was copying their exemplar(s) more or less wholesale or selectively curating an anthology — and, if the latter situation holds, what texts they chose *not* to copy. Combining stemmatic research on multiple sagas helps us to fill this gap.

The present article explores the possibilities for studying anthologisation with a case study of one branch of the *Sigurgarðs saga* stemma where our stemmatic knowledge is now just about sufficient to make informed comment: the tight-knit group of Dalir manuscripts descended from Rask 32 4to, which we will refer to as the ‘Rask 32 group’, mapped in figure 4. The previous section, along with McDonald Werronen’s research on *Nítíða saga* (2014; 2016, 34–44) shows that most of the manuscripts in which *Nítíða saga* and *Sigurgarðs saga* co-occur belong to this group. The results of our investigations are summarised stemmatically in Figure 5, reference to which will make it markedly easier to follow the discussion below. Table 2 charts the overlapping content of *Sigurgarðs saga* manuscripts descended from the parent of Rask 32’s *Sigurgarðs saga* text, Lbs 423 4to, and the corresponding branch of *Nítíða saga* manuscripts, those descending in McDonald Werronen’s stemma from JS 166 fol.

Sigurðarðs saga frækna manuscript origins (Dalir)

Green: A-class (descendants from Lbs 423 fol)
 Pink: B-class
 Blue: C-class
 Dark yellow: D- and d1-class
 Orange: 1884 edition and descendants
 Pale yellow: d2-class
 Grey: Z-class

Locations marked on the map:

- Einkaeign 19
- Lbs 1500 4to
- Lbs 4718 4to
- SAM 131
- Lbs 4977 8vo
- Lbs 423 fol
- Lbs 3966 4to
- Lbs 3165 4to
- JS 632 4to
- Lbs 998 4to
- Borgarnes, MS 14
- Lbs 1217 4to

Google Earth

Image © 2021 Maxar Technologies
 Image © 2021 CNES / Airbus
 Image IBCAO

10 km

N

[illegible]

classmark	JS	Lbs	Lbs	Rask	Lbs	Lbs	JS	Lbs	Lbs	Lbs	SÁM	Lbs
-----------	----	-----	-----	------	-----	-----	----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

	166 fol	644 4to	423 fol	32	354 4to	998 4to	632 4to	1137 8vo	3966 4to	3165 4to	131	5567 4to
date	1678 –79	c. 1730 –40	1733	c. 1756 ×67	C18	1765 ×18 05	1799 –180 0	c. 1819 –20	1869– 71	1869 –71	1871 –72	1913
fragmentary?								x				
<i>Sigurgarðs saga frækna</i>		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
<i>Nikulás saga leikara</i>		x		x		x	x		x	x	x	x
<i>Nítíða saga frægu</i>	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x		
<i>Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu</i>			x	x	x	x	x				x	
<i>Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar</i>	x			x	x	x	x		x (rímur)	x		
<i>Drauma-Jóns saga</i>				x		x		x		x		
<i>Flóres saga og Blankiflúr</i>			x	x		x	x					
<i>Hálfðanar saga Barkarsonar</i>						x	x	x			x	
<i>Sigurðar saga turnara</i>			x	x		x	x		x (rímur)			
<i>Blómsturvalla saga</i>		x		x	x							
<i>Bærings saga</i>			x	x	x							
<i>Sturlaugs saga starfsama</i>			x	x			x					
<i>Bósa saga</i>			x									x
<i>Fertrams saga og Platós</i>			x			x						
<i>Jóns saga Upplendingakonun- gs</i>						x	x					
<i>Konráðs saga keisarasonar</i>						x	x					
<i>Jókuls þáttur Búasonar</i>									x	x		
<i>Rímur af Þorsteini Víkingsyni</i>									x	x		

A careful look at the stemma in Figure 5 emphasises the obvious point that although these manuscripts contain similar texts, those texts are not necessarily textually closely related.

No manuscript is a wholesale copy of another; a fact that our visualisations obscure, moreover, is that even where manuscripts contain the same texts, they do not usually contain them the same order. *Nítíðā saga* and *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* co-occur in Lbs 644 4to, and we might guess for this reason that the copies of these sagas in that manuscript are textually related to the cluster of other manuscripts containing these sagas; and indeed, if McDonald Werronen's stemma of *Nítíðā saga* is correct, both Lbs 644 4to and Rask 32 derived their text of *Nítíðā saga* from the same exemplar, JS 166 fol. But Lbs 644 4to and Rask 32 certainly took their texts of *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* from entirely different sources.

It would be nice to be able to comment with this degree of precision about all the sagas listed here, or at least those that co-occur most often. We are not yet quite able to do this, and the present case study is built around our detailed understanding of the transmission of *Sigurgarðs saga* and *Nítíðā saga*. But we have a rough idea of the stemmas of several of the other sagas, which enables us to guess whether sagas that co-occur with *Sigurgarðs saga* and *Nikulás saga* were transmitted on the same lines, and to undertake targeted stemmatic research without having to establish a complete stemma for each saga in which we are interested. McDonald Werronen and Kapitan's recent edition of *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamunda* (2018, 184) determined that of the nineteen manuscripts of the saga, all six listed here belong to the B-group (along with three others, and a further sub-group of three). Spaulding's 1982 PhD thesis made much of the difficulty of establishing a stemma for *Sigurðar saga turnara*, protesting that 'those trying to construct a stemma despair at the complexity of the interinfluence shown by ... groups of younger manuscripts ... No single manuscript can be definitely said to be a copy of one and only one precursor' (1982, 98). Spaulding's comments are better understood as the cry of a graduate student in pain than an accurate assessment of the manuscript situation. Despite her reservations, Spaulding situated the four manuscripts of *Sigurðar saga turnara* which fall into the Rask 32-group (along with Magnús Jónsson í Tjaldanesi's copy in Lbs 1503 4to, to which she could have added Magnús's earlier copy in Lbs 4940 4to) as belonging to a distinct group, closely related to the archetype of the saga (1982, 99, 108): the classic pattern for Dalir *riddarasaga* manuscripts. A young R. I. Page expressed anguish similar to Spaulding's as he grappled with the stemma of *Drauma-Jóns saga*, but found that the two of our group of manuscripts which he examined, Rask 32 and Lbs 998 4to, belonged in the same branch (1957, 32). We have cursorily checked the information provided by past studies of *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*, *Hálfdanar saga Eysteinsonar*, *Nítíðā saga frægu*, and *Sigurðar saga turnara*, and in all cases except *Hálfdanar saga*, the data either supports the presumption that the sagas were transmitted on the same lines as *Sigurgarðs saga* or, when the variation is insufficient to come to a conclusion (as is sometimes the case due to the tendency of Rask 32-group manuscripts to be very precise copies of one another), at least does not contradict it; in these cases, we have been satisfied provisionally to conclude that co-occurring sagas were indeed transmitted on the same stemmatic lines. Meanwhile, *Hálfdanar saga* offers a good example of the usefulness of partial stemmatic

information of uncertain precision, in this case Schröder's 1917 edition of *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar*. In our Rask 32-group of *Sigurgarðs saga* manuscripts, *Hálfðanar saga* co-occurs with *Sigurgarðs saga* in JS 166 fol, JS 632 4to, Rask 32, and Lbs 354 4to, hinting that they might have copied the saga from one another. But Schröder identified JS 166 fol and JS 632 4to as manuscripts of the A-recension of the saga and Rask 32 and Lbs 354 4to as belonging to the C-recension (1917, 71–72). A glance at the manuscripts shows that Schröder was right, with not only JS 166 fol and JS 632 4to, but also Lbs 998 4to, Lbs 3966 4to, and Lbs 3165 4to belonging, at least at the opening, to the A-recension whereas Rask 32 and Lbs 354 4to contain an altogether different version. Meanwhile, consultation of JS 166 fol reveals that it has a markedly different text from Rask 32. Since Lbs 998 4to and its relatives are, where we are in a position to check, very conservative copies of their exemplars, it seems clear that they are not copied directly from JS 166 fol but from another A-recension exemplar yet to be identified.

No research has hitherto been published on the stemma of *Nikulás saga leikara*. The saga survives in no medieval manuscripts (and so was omitted from Kalinke and Mitchell's 1985 bibliography of the genre), but does seem to have been part of the now fragmentary fifteenth-century manuscript Stockholm, Royal Library, Perg. fol. nr 7 (Sanders 2000, 17, 21). Either way, the saga is found in over sixty post-medieval manuscripts (in two main recensions), and was twice printed in popular editions: in Winnipeg by the Heimskringlu Prentstofa (1889) and in Reykjavík by Helgi Árnason (1912). This makes it a particularly widely attested saga, an interesting example of Canadian-Icelandic literature, and an unusually late example of Icelandic readerships for printed romance sagas. The saga was edited by Wick (1996), on whose work our own depends. Given the prominence of *Nikulás saga leikara* in the Rask 32-group, we have used the full *apparatus criticus* of Wick's 1996 critical edition — 2039 sites of variation — and the phylogenetic software Pars according to the methods described by Hall and Parsons (2013) to establish a stemma of the six manuscripts which she surveyed which is surely highly reliable (figure 6). We supplemented this by sampling chapter 1 of the saga in all those manuscripts which our work on *Sigurgarðs saga* and *Nítíða saga* situate in the Rask 32 group and, to ensure that the Rask 32 group is indeed a distinctive branch of the overall stemma, a further nineteen more or less randomly chosen manuscripts of the main recension accessible in Icelandic collections, along with Winnipeg, Elizabeth Dafoe Library ISDA JB3-01-04. The Pars-generated stemma based on this sample shows clearly that the Rask 32 group is indeed a distinctive group and that, compared with other manuscripts, its manuscripts are unusually conservatively copied, exactly as we would expect from the much more thorough studies of *Sigurgarðs saga* and *Nítíða saga* (figure 7). Again, then, it is reasonable to assume that *Nikulás saga* was indeed transmitted on the same lines, and the data shows no reason to doubt this. We have, therefore, integrated *Nikulás saga* into Figure 5, our stemma of the Rask 32-group, accordingly.

Figure 6: rooted computer-generated stemma of the six recension-one manuscripts of *Nítíða saga* collated by Wick 1996

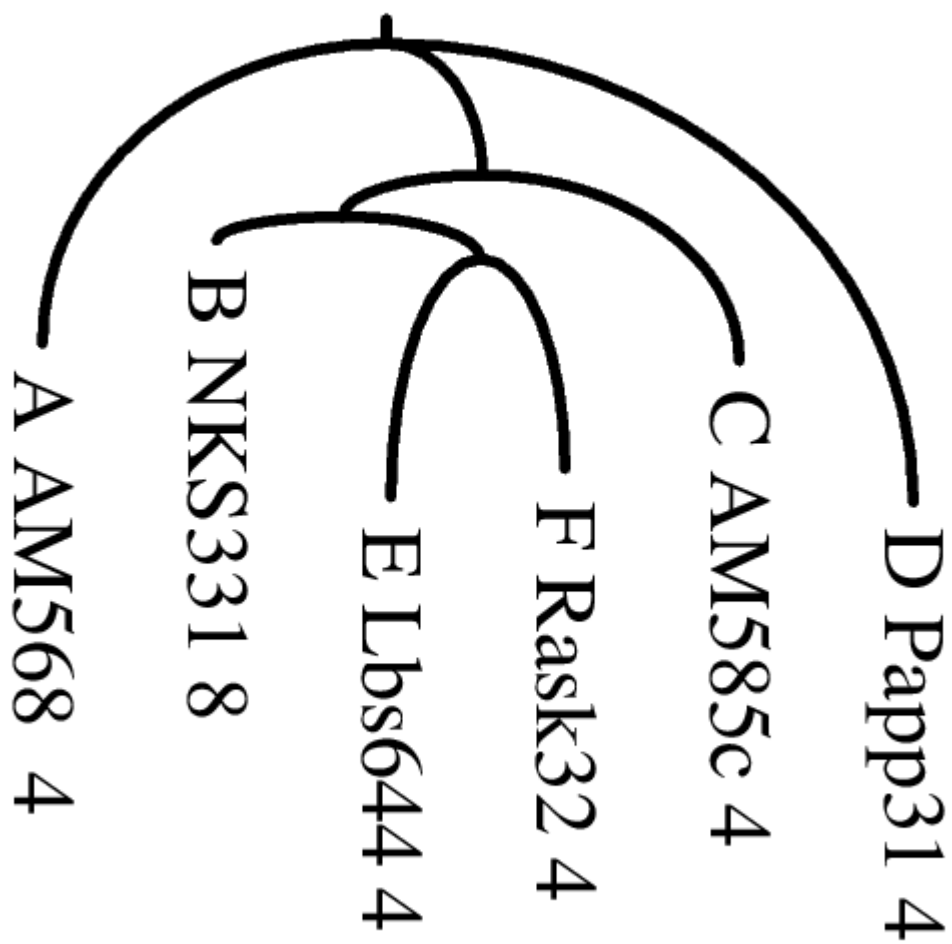
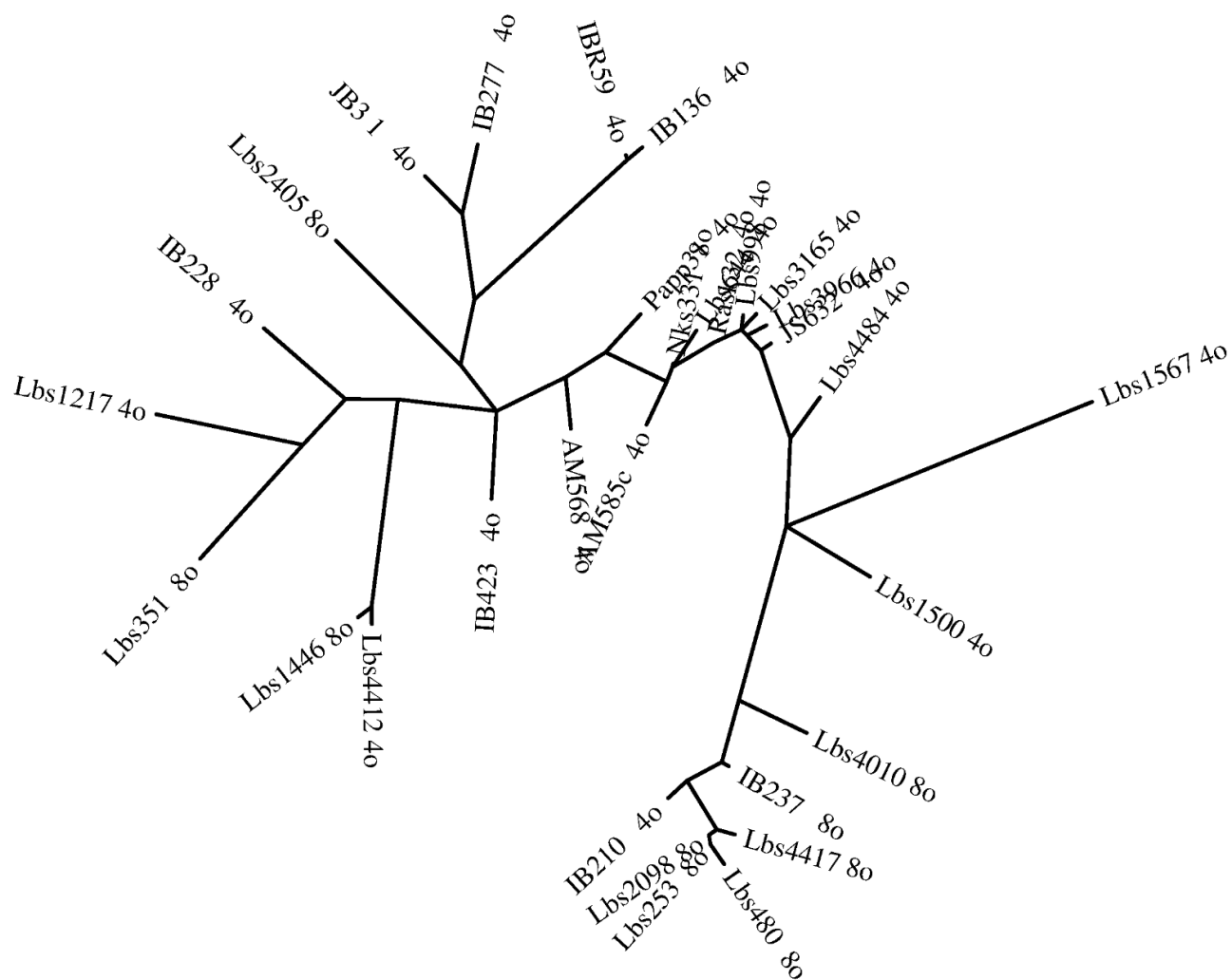


Figure 7: unrooted stemma of a sample of recension-one *Nikulás saga leikara* manuscripts



5.2 Rask 32 and its sources

Of the six sagas in Rask 32 on whose transmission we have some information, three (*Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, *Sigurðar saga turnara*, and *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*) seem to have been copied from Lbs 423 fol, a volume which was, according to the title page, ‘kostgæfilega samanhentur og tildreginn af Bjarna Péturssyni að Skarði á Skarðströnd þeim til tíma og dægrastyttingar er þvílík lofsverð æfintýri girnast að lesa og heyra. Árum eftir frelsarans fæðing MDCCXXXIII’ (‘painstakingly collected and assembled by Bjarni Pétursson at Skarð á Skarðströnd, for shortening the time and days of those who long to read and hear such praiseworthy examples. In the year 1733 after the Saviour’s birth’). Bjarni (1681–1768) was a rich and well educated collector and producer of manuscripts (Hufnagel 2016a, 395), successor to Magnús Jónsson í Vigur as the key literary patron of north-west Iceland in his time. As it stands, the contents of Lbs 423 fol are clearly divided into *konungasögur* (which comprise the first ten items in the collection) and romances and *fornaldarsögur* (which comprise the remaining ten). This conception may be reflected in the title page, which positions the volume as a ‘fróðlegur sagnafésjóður af Norvegsríkis einvaldskonungum allmörgum ... Samt þeirra lofsverðra hertoga, greifa, jarla og annarra trúfastra þénara’ (‘learned treasury of sagas on very many of the monarchs of the state of Norway ... together with their praiseworthy dukes, counts, earls, and other loyal servants’). Although all the sagas involve kings and their servants, the distinction drawn on the title page might reflect the fact that the protagonists of the second half are seldom kings (though they almost invariably become kings in the end). That said, the manuscript opens with the *konungasaga Heimskringla*, entitled ‘norsku konga króníka samandregin af Snorra Sturlusyni á Íslandi og hefst með Svíþjóðskóngum, hverja hann útfærir af Schytia eða Tartaríalandi’ (‘the chronicle of Norwegian kings edited in Iceland by Snorri Sturluson and beginning with the kings of Sweden, whose lineage he derives from Scythia or Tartaríaland’), so *Sigurgarðs saga* may have seemed a contiguous part of this history; at the back of the manuscript, a printed picture of a Turk conquering Constantinople is tucked in, emphasising readers’ interest in west and central Asia. At any rate, the romances and *fornaldarsögur* in the manuscript are continuous, rather than each starting on a new page, so we can be confident that we have them in the order that Bjarni had them written. So far, no surviving manuscript sources for the romances and *fornaldarsögur* in Lbs 423 fol have been identified: for *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, at least, Bjarni drew on a manuscript either lost or yet to be identified. We have noted some of the archaic features in the spelling of *Sigurgarðs saga* in this manuscript above: it is likely that its exemplar was a medieval manuscript or otherwise not far removed from one.

The history of Rask 32 itself has been helpfully explored by Silvia Hufnagel (2016b), who has analysed it alongside other saga manuscripts associated with its main scribe, Ólafur Gíslason of Hvítidalur, Dalasýsla (1727–1801), pre-eminently Rask 31 and Nks 1148 fol. Ólafur produced Rask 32 in collaboration with his father Gísli Jónsson (c. 1699–1781). Hufnagel concluded that, ‘as it must have been difficult to carry an unbound manuscript

back and forth several times without damaging or soiling it, it seems more likely that the two scribes lived under the same roof, or at least in close proximity to each other, when they took turns writing Rask 32. This would narrow down the possible time of origin to the years 1756 and 1765 when Ólafur was the assistant to his father' (2016b, §20). For the most part, we can be confident that we have the sagas in the order that Ólafur and Gísli put them together, as they are written continuously, notwithstanding changes of scribe. The exception is ff. 155r–74v. With the end of *Ragnars saga loðbrókar* on f. 154v, half the verso is, uncharacteristically, left blank, and *Sturlaugs saga starfsama* starts a new gathering at the top of f. 155r. The manuscript proceeds continuously from *Sturlaugs saga* into *Bærings saga*. The transition from the end of *Bærings saga* on f. 174v to the beginning of *Drauma-Jóns saga* on f. 175r involves a little empty space at the bottom of f. 174v and the end of a gathering; it also coincides with a shift from Ólafur's hand to Gísli's. But hereafter the manuscript is again continuous.

With the stemma of the Rask 32 group presented as Figure 5, we can first time glimpse the scholarship and discernment with which Ólafur and Gísli assembled their collection. It is not self-evident that they drew on multiple sources for their anthology: they were conservative copyists of their exemplars and it is conceivable that they aimed to replicate the contents of a source manuscript as faithfully as they replicated the text of each saga. The contents of Rask 32 are not obviously idiosyncratic and it is conceivable that they were copied wholesale from a single, seventeenth-century compendium. This was not, however, Ólafur and Gísli's approach. They clearly wanted to develop a large collection of romances and *fornaldarsögur*: they did not copy any of Lbs 423 fol's *konungasögur*, but they definitely copied from it *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, pretty certainly *Sigurðar saga turnara* and *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*, and potentially *Flóres saga og Blankiflúr*, *Sturlaugs saga*, and *Bærings saga*. They did not, however, copy these sagas as a block or even in the same order (with the possible exception of *Flóres saga og Blankiflúr* and *Sigurðar saga turnara*, which are a pair in both manuscripts). They could also have copied the (in)famously lewd *Bósa saga* (which is, moreover, a source for *Sigurgarðs saga*, emphasising the sagas' generic similarity; Hall, Richardson and Haukur Þorgeirsson 2013, 85–86) or the *exempla* (or *exemplum*-like) *Griseldis saga*, *Brita þáttur*, and *Lykla-Péturs saga og Magelónu fögru* — and indeed Ólafur did add *Griseldis saga*, whether from this source or another, into Nks 1148 fol — but for Rask 32 at least they elected not to. It looks like they were focusing on producing a volume of romances, secular in tone yet staying (unlike *Bósa saga*) on the right side of propriety.

Ólafur and Gísli also had access to JS 166 fol, which was compiled in the milieu surrounding Magnús Jónsson í Vigur in Ísafjörður in the Westfjords. From this, if McDonald Werronen is correct, they selected *Nítíða saga* and potentially *Hálfdanar saga Brönufóstra*. They did not, however, copy its text of *Hálfdanar saga Eysteinsonar*, preferring a C-recension manuscript which, if it survives, has yet to be identified. Since *Hálfdanar saga Eysteinsonar* is the first text in Rask 32, it is possible that Ólafur and Gísli copied it before they had access to JS 166 fol and that they would have chosen the JS 166 fol version if

they had had the chance: we cannot be certain that they were actively discriminating between two versions. At any rate, they also elected not to copy *Trójumanna saga*, *Vilmundar saga viðutan*, *Rémundar saga keisarasonar*, or *Orms þáttur Stórolfssonar* — though Ólafur did copy *Trójumanna saga* into Nks 1148 fol, possibly from JS 166 fol.

All the *Nítíða saga* manuscripts included in the present study, including Rask 32, belong to a version whose ending says that the protagonist of *Nikulás saga* is descended from Nítíða (McDonald Werronen 2016, 43). Ólafur and Gísli evidently wanted to complement *Nítíða saga* with *Nikulás saga*, and added the latter text accordingly. JS 166 fol could not, in its present state, have provided a text of *Nikulás saga*. Yet JS 166 fol is quite worn and was evidently in a fragile state whenever it was put into its present binding (apparently by Páll Pálsson stúdent, in the nineteenth century, since he copied out parts of the text lost during conservation), so we cannot be certain that no sagas have been lost from it. JS 166 fol also seems to be the parent manuscript for *Nítíða saga* to Lbs 644 4to, and the *Nikulás saga* texts in Rask 32 and Lbs 644 4to are also closely related and could share a parent, so the possibility that JS 166 fol once included *Nítíða saga* and *Nikulás saga* non-consecutively, giving them both to Rask 32 and Lbs 644, is attractive. But in JS 166 fol *Nítíða saga* ends with f. 190r and *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar* starts on the verso of the same folio, so *Nikulás saga* at least never followed *Nítíða saga* in JS 166 fol directly. At minimum, we can say that Ólafur and Gísli reordered their source to bring two related sagas together.

We can reconstruct a similar method behind Rask 31, copied entirely by Ólafur: one source was another major compilation by Bjarni Pétursson, this time Lbs 2319 4to, which is known to have given Rask 31 *Hrólfs saga kraka* and *Tíodæls saga*. Both manuscripts also contain *Sigurgarðs saga og Valbrands* which, unusually, they both entitle *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, so Rask 31 probably took that saga from Lbs 2319 4to too. And Lbs 2319 4to potentially also supplied Rask 31 with *Áns saga bogsvegis*, *Yngvars saga víðförla*, *Æfintýr af Perus meistara*, *Klári saga*, *Apollonius saga*, and *Haralds saga Hringsbana*. But, as in Rask 32, Ólafur supplemented his Bjarni Pétursson exemplar with a major seventeenth-century compilation produced in the Westfjords, this time by Magnús Jónsson í Vigur himself, ÍBR 5–6 fol, which supplied *Konráðs saga keisarasonar* and potentially also *Flóvents saga*, *Sigurðar saga þögla*, and *Elis saga ok Rósamundu*. At least one other manuscript must have supplied the manuscript's remaining five texts. If these inferences are correct, while Ólafur reordered the texts of his exemplars, he did first copy those sagas that he wanted from Lbs 2319 4to and then the ones he wanted from ÍBR 5-6 fol, suggesting that he worked through his source manuscripts sequentially rather than having them all available at the same time.

Overall, we can start to see the working methods whereby Ólafur Gíslason took the major seventeenth- to eighteenth-century editorial work of the magnates Magnús Jónsson í Vigur and Bjarni Pétursson and transferred it into a collection of less prestigious, generically more tightly focused anthologies containing *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur*. Provisionally, pending further stemmatic research, we can say that Ólafur probably used one large, folio

manuscript deriving from each of his predecessors as the main source for each of his quarto manuscripts, selecting significant groups of sagas from these, but also reordering them and supplementing them from other sources.

5.3 Lbs 998 4to and JS 632 4to

Rask 32 supplied *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, probably *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*, and possibly *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar* to the eighteenth-century Lbs 354 4to, about which little is as yet known. That manuscript contains many other sagas which Rask 32 could not have supplied, and the story of its compilation must await the further investigation of their transmission. But we can say quite a lot about how Rask 32 shaped its child Lbs 998 4to, and 998's own child, JS 632 4to. Rask 32 supplied a lot of sagas to Lbs 998 4to: *Sigurðar saga turnara*, *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*, *Drauma-Jóns saga*, *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, *Nítíða saga* and *Nikulás saga leikara*, and potentially *Flóres saga og Blankiflúr* and *Fertrams saga og Platós*. Lbs 998 4to also used Rask 31, certainly for *Konráðs saga keisarasonar* and potentially for *Yngvars saga víðförla*.

Lbs 998 4to is an even more conservative copy of its sources than Rask 32 is; moreover, while it did not copy Rask 32 wholesale or preserve the ordering of texts there, it is clearly more closely a replica of a single anthology than Rask 32 itself was. Intriguingly, Lbs 998 4to does contain a copy of *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar*, but did not copy this from Rask 32 (or for that matter from JS 166 fol). So there is also the possibility that Lbs 998 4to was intended largely to reproduce the editorial scope of Rask 32 but with the substitution of a copy of *Hálfðanar saga* viewed as superior by Lbs 998 4to's editors. Otherwise, while Lbs 998 4to does not copy all Rask 32's contents, it adds only sagas found in Rask 31, plus *Jóns saga Upplendingakonungs* and *Hálfðanar saga Barkarsonar*.

The similarity of Lbs 998 4to to its sources makes it hard to be certain how to filiate manuscripts that are similar to both, but the substantial body of evidence in our transcriptions of *Sigurgarðs saga* captures enough minor innovations in Lbs 998 4to which are shared by JS 632 4to, Lbs 3165 4to and Lbs 3966 4to, and enough distinctive innovations in each of the latter three manuscripts, that we can confidently position Lbs 998 4to's *Sigurgarðs saga* as the child of Rask 32 and the parent of JS 632 4to, Lbs 3165 4to and Lbs 3966 4to.

The history of Lbs 998 4to has as yet been little explored. In its present form, Lbs 998 4to opens with three probably nineteenth-century folios in the hand of either Guðlaugur Magnússon (1848–1917, first of Arnarbæli and then Hafursstaðir in Dalasýsla, and then of Árnesbyggð in Manitoba) or his brother Guðmundur Magnússon (1850–1915, of Breiðabólstaður, Dalasýsla). These folios contain a contents list and the beginning of *Yngvars saga víðförla*, presumably added because the beginning of the manuscript needed replacing. The original manuscript begins on folio 4r, in the main hand, a neat cursive (which occasionally shifts to Fraktur for direct speech). This hand has not previously been identified by the standard authorities, but clearly belongs to Ólafur

Jónsson (1722–1800), presumably writing at his farm of Arney, Dalasýsla: he is also the scribe of JS 632 4to and says so therein, as we discuss below. After the sixth line of f. 5r, partway through chapter two of *Yngvars saga*, the hand switches to a much larger and slanting cursive which continues to f. 9r where, two words into line 17, the hand returns to the main script. We believe, however, that these scripts belong to the same hand. The hand completes *Yngvars saga* and then *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*, *Jóns saga Upplendingakonungs*, *Flóres saga og Blankiflúr*, *Sigurðar saga turnara*, *Hálfðanar saga Barkarsonar*, and *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*, ending the latter partway down f. 61v.

So far in the manuscript, one saga starts immediately after the other ends, with no breaks in foliation. However, after *Ambrósíus saga*, the remainder of the folio is blank. Folio 62r is in a different hand and, to judge from the facsimile photographs at handrit.is, begins a new gathering; this hand contributes *Fertrams saga og Platós*. *Fertrams saga* ends on f. 87v with the colophon ‘og endum vér svo þessa sögu, af Fertram og Plató, skrifuð á Dritvík af Ólafi Sveinssyni árið 1805’ (‘and thus we end this saga of Fertram and Plató, written at Dritvík by Ólafur Sveinsson in the year 1805’), partly written in Fraktur and partly in cursive, which more or less completes the folio. This scribe is agreed to be Ólafur Jónsson’s son-in-law Ólafur Sveinsson of Purkey (1762–1845), Dalasýsla, evidently writing while working at the bustling fishing station of Dritvík on Snæfellsnes. Seeing both these Ólafar contributing to the same manuscript is no surprise: besides the elder being father-in-law to the younger, their co-productions also include ÍB 184 4to (a collection of *Íslendingasögur*, *fornaldarsögur*, and romance sagas from the last quarter of the eighteenth century), JS 633 4to (more sagas copied by the two men, at varying times from at least 1780 to 1822), and ÍB 112 4to (religious poems anthologised by Ólafur Jónsson in 1800 and both introduced and completed by Ólafur Sveinsson). The next folio, which belongs to the same gathering, continues in Ólafur Sveinsson’s Fraktur hand with *Drauma-Jóns saga*. The hand shifts briefly to cursive on ff. 90v–91r, but as far as we can tell it remains Ólafur Sveinsson’s; as far as we can tell from our small sample of *Drauma-Jóns saga* it was copied from Rask 32, like so many of the sagas copied by Ólafur Jónsson’s. *Drauma-Jóns saga* concludes with the end of f. 97v, with Ólafur spacing his writing to more or less fill the folio. Since 1805 was five years after the death of Ólafur Jónsson, it seems that Ólafur Sveinsson added these two sagas to the manuscript after Ólafur Jónsson completed it and they were not part of Ólafur Jónsson’s editorial plan.

From f. 98r, which may be the start of a new gathering, the main hand resumes, morphing briefly on f. 102r into a large and slanting hand, contributing *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinsonar*, *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, *Nítíða saga*, and *Nikulás saga leikara*. The final page of *Nikulás saga* more or less fills folio 137r. 137v is blank except for a cursive scribble written in a different hand up the margin which we have failed to read. Finally, a single bifolium is included, in the hand of the same one of the Magnússynir who added the material at the beginning of the manuscript. The first recto is a title page which ought to read ‘Sagan af Ljósvetningunum’ but lacks one of the requisite nine minims at the end of the word, with the following verso and recto containing text presumably from that saga.

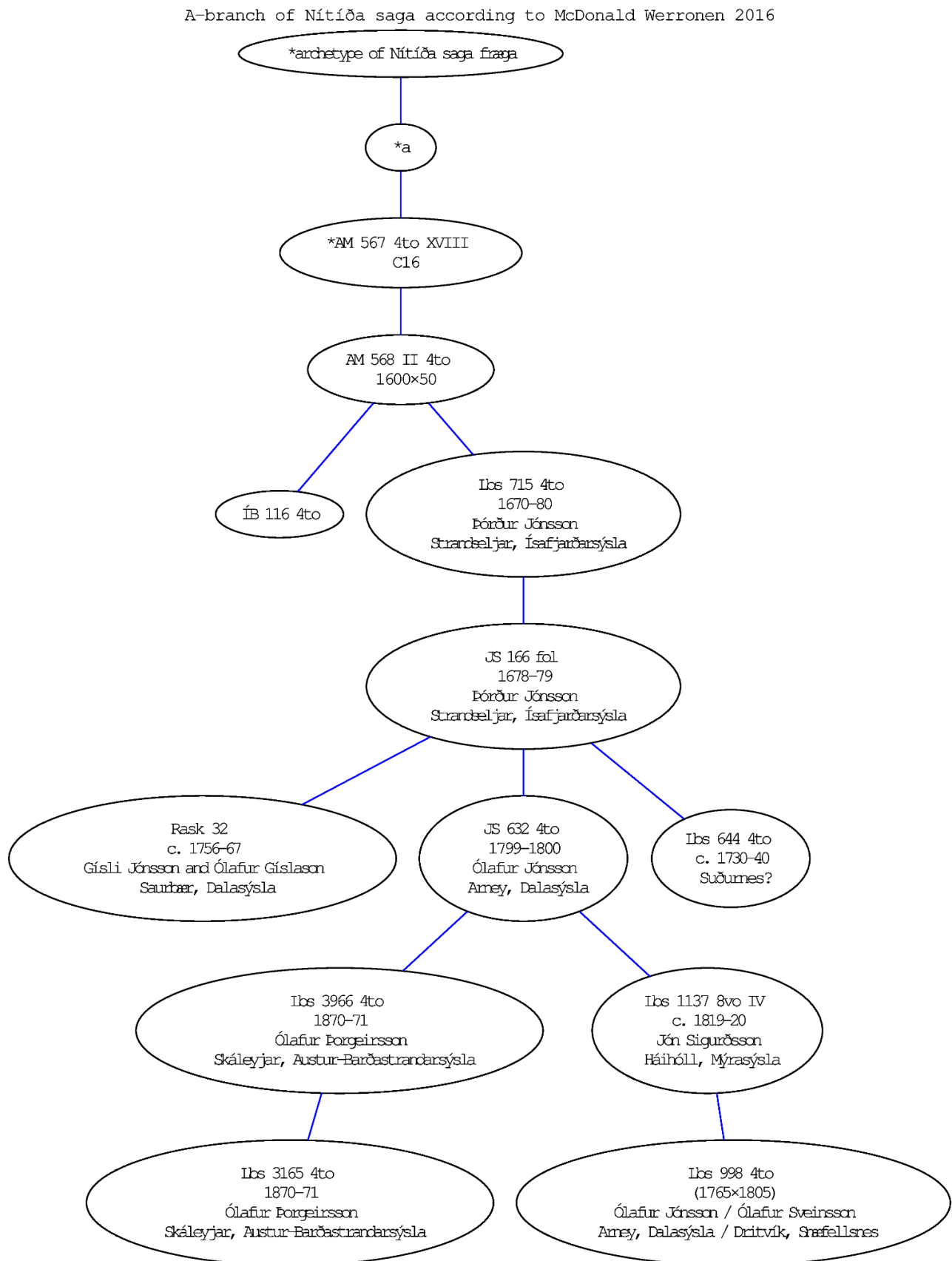
Having produced most of what is now Lbs 998 4to, Ólafur Jónsson copied most of it to produce JS 632 4to. On the first folio, he wrote a contents list and then added ‘saman tínt þeim til ánægiu um tíma, sem með þess konar dægrastytting vilja nýta það[?] af einsýnum og ut lifuðum, nær áttæðum karli á Purkey, við Skarðströnd byrjað 1799, endað 1800 af ÓLAFI JÓNSSYNI’ (‘gathered together for the enjoyment through time of those who wish to make use of it with this kind of passtime by the one-eyed and age-worn, nearly eighty-year-old man ÓLAFUR JÓNSSON on Purkey, by Skarðströnd, begun 1799, finished 1800’; f. 1v). In addition to the initial note, JS 632 4to concludes its copy of *Böðvars saga Bjarka* with ‘enduð 15. marsi 1800 af Ólafi Jónssyni 78 ára gömlum’ (‘finished 15 March 1800 by Ólafur Jónsson, 78 years of age’) on f. 245r. Tellingly, JS 632 4to contains all the sagas in Lbs 998 4to — albeit in an almost completely different order — apart from *Yngvars saga víðförla*, *Fertrams saga og Platós*, and *Drauma-Jóns saga*, the latter two of which were added to Lbs 998 4to by Ólafur Sveinsson after Ólafur Jónsson’s death. Following its Lbs 998 4to material, JS 632 4to goes on to add *Sturlaugs saga starfsama*, *Úlfs saga Uggasonar*, *Böðvars þáttur bjarka*, *Sigurðar saga fóts*, and *Huga saga serka ok Skaplars konungs*, from exemplars yet to be determined (*Sturlaugs saga* could have come from Rask 32 if Ólafur still had access to this in 1799–1800, but this is not assured).

Thus Ólafur Jónsson produced Lbs 998 4to, presumably on his farm of Arney, Dalasýsla, sometime in the thirty years or so following the completion of his main source, Rask 32, as early as 1765. In 1799–1800 he then used Lbs 998 4to as the main exemplar for a new manuscript, JS 632 4to. He kept all the texts from Lbs 998 4to, but seems not to have been concerned to preserve their sequence. Ólafur died in the same year as he completed JS 632 4to. The inside front cover of JS 632 4to contains the note ‘ég er Katrínar Þorvaldsdóttur á Hrapp. gefin 11/10.41. af Sg. Ól. Sveinssyni á Purk.’ (‘I belong to Katrín Þorvaldsdóttir of Hrappsey, given 11 October 1842 by Sg. Ólafur Sveinsson of Purkey’). This tells us that after Ólafur Jónsson’s death, not only Lbs 998 4to but also JS 632 4to came into the hands of Ólafur Sveinsson (like other manuscripts which Ólafur Sveinsson inherited, such as ÍBR 105 8vo). In 1805, Ólafur Sveinsson then copied *Fertrams saga* (from an as yet unknown source, but potentially Rask 32) and *Drauma-Jóns saga* (certainly from Rask 32, as far as our limited sample shows) into a new gathering and inserted those sagas into Lbs 998 4to.

The findings in this section entail some corrections to past research. Páll Eggert Ólafsson, in his catalogue of manuscripts in Iceland’s national library, dated Lbs 998 4to ‘á öndverðri 19. öld’ (‘to the beginning of the nineteenth century’ 1918–37, I 415 [no 1315]), while Handrit.is puts it at 1800–50. The manuscript is in fact mostly from between 1765 (the likely date of its exemplar’s completion) and 1799 (the date of its principal copy); presumably Páll Eggert was led astray by the 1805 date on Ólafur Sveinsson’s additions. Examining the relationship between the Lbs 998 4to and JS 632 4to texts of *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*, and followed Páll Eggert’s dating, Hall and Parsons noted that Lbs 998 4to could in theory be the parent of JS 632 4to but added ‘Lbs 998 4to apparently too late to be JS 632 4to’s exemplar’ ([HTML stemma](#)). This dating problem resolved, we can

confidently situate JS 632 4to as a child of Lbs 998 4to for *Konráðs saga* (as Zitzelsberger had previously: 1981), and this conclusion is reflected in Figure 5. In the same article, we were unsure as to whether Rask 31 was the parent or sibling of *Konráðs saga* in Lbs 998 4to, but the evidence amassed in this article leads us to concur with Zitzelsberger that Rask 31 is indeed the parent of Lbs 998 4to. Meanwhile, McDonald Werronen's 'possible rough stemma' of *Nítíðs saga* for the Rask 32 group was published with the caveat that 'where Lbs 644 and Rask 32 fit in relation to JS 632 and the later manuscripts is also uncertain, and it would require further detailed collation of larger text samples to unravel the intricacies of these relationships'. Notwithstanding these caveats, McDonald Werronen filiated the *Nítíðs saga* manuscripts described in this article as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: A-branch of *Nítíða saga* stemma according to McDonald Werronen 2016



We believe the data published in this article for *Nítíða saga*, alongside the extensive data for *Sigurgarðs saga*, are sufficient to show that our stemma is far more likely.

The copying of Lbs 998 4to from Rask 32 and of JS 632 4to from Lbs 998 4to emphasises the influence of Gísli Jónsson and Ólafur Gíslason's editorial decisions in Rask 32 on Ólafur Jónsson: Ólafur Jónsson did not feel bound entirely to replicate Rask 32, but he did elect mostly to copy its contents with little change into Lbs 998 4to and from there into JS 632 4to, somewhat as Gísli Jónsson and Ólafur Gíslason seem to have made extensive use of Bjarni Pétursson's editorial decisions in Lbs 423 fol. The changes which Ólafur Jónsson did make to the Rask 32 selection would bear closer analysis — not least his decision to replace the Rask 32 C-class text of *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar* with an A-class text. But the overall impression is that Ólafur Jónsson was happy with his predecessors' choices and, when he came to copy Lbs 998 4to, even happier with his own. Thus Lbs 998 4to is a good example of a manuscript which replicates the editorial decisions of a single main exemplar. These observations perhaps lend significance, however, to the fact that Ólafur Jónsson does not seem to have been concerned in what order he copied sagas into a manuscript, cautioning us against assuming that the sequence of texts in manuscripts was important to their editors and readers (or that it is useful evidence for making stemmas).

5.4 Lbs 3966 4to and Lbs 3165 4to

Not too long after the copying of JS 632 4to — probably in 1813–15 — Rask 31 and 32 were sold to Rasmus Rask and transported to Denmark, removing them from circulation in Iceland (Hufnagel 2016b). After Rask 31 and 32 were removed from Iceland, both Lbs 998 4to and JS 632 4to remained and continued to be copied. The stemmas of *Sigurgarðs saga* and *Nítíða saga* reveal three manuscripts drawing on Lbs 998 4to besides JS 632 4to (and fuller surveys of the stemmas of other sagas in Lbs 998 4to might of course reveal others). Two of the descendants of Lbs 998 4to were produced in 1869–71 by Ólafur Þorgeirsson (1826–94) of Skáleyjar, Austur-Barðastrandarsýsla: Lbs 3165 4to (156 folios, copied for Jón Jónsson of Purkey, 1812–88) and Lbs 3966 4to (280 folios, with no evidence for an intended audience other than Ólafur Þorgeirsson himself). The pages of these volumes are of the same size, meaning that Lbs 3966 4to is approaching twice the length of Lbs 3165 4to. In both cases, Ólafur selected some sagas from Lbs 998 4to. For the longer manuscript, he chose *Sigurgarðs saga*, *Nítíða saga*, and *Nikulás saga leikara*. Alongside these he included six *rímur* derived from other *riddarasögur* and *fornaldarsögur*, and in four cases he gave a hint as to their exemplars, revealing that he had access to an autograph copy of *rímur* composed by Magnús Jónsson (1763–1840) of the farm Magnússkógar, Dalasýsla, and at least one other manuscript, whose contents included work by Magnús. In the case of two of the *rímur* Ólafur could, if he had wished, have included the same story in saga form from Lbs 998 4to: *Rímur af Sigurði turnara* ('skrifaðar eftir tveim handritum árið 1869', 'copied from two manuscripts in 1869', f. 30r) and *Rímur af Hálfðani Eysteinnssyni* ('skrifaðar eftir eiginhandriti skáldsins en þó blökku og máðu', 'copied from an autograph manuscript by the poet, albeit dim and faded', f. 244r), both by Magnús Jónsson. To these three sagas and six *rímur*, Ólafur added some other poems

and, finally, two sagas not in Lbs 998 4to: *Ála flekks saga* and *Knúts saga heimiska*, both 'skrifaðar eftir einu handriti en ekki þó að öllu leyti réttu' ('copied from one manuscript, albeit not correct in all respects', f. 280v). Overall, then, we can see that Ólafur planned Lbs 3966 4to as a manuscript dominated by *fornaldarsaga* and *riddarasaga*-type stories, but it seems that he preferred to include stories in *rímur* form when he had the choice, and was also selective in the prose sagas he took from Lbs 998 4to, drawing prose material from at least two manuscripts.

The manuscript that Ólafur copied for Jón Jónsson, Lbs 3165 4to, is similar in scope and genre but contains somewhat different choices of material: the first hundred folios contain six *fornaldarsögur* and *riddarasögur*. Of these, five seem certainly to be from Lbs 998 4to: *Sigurgarðs saga*, *Nítíða saga*, *Nikulás saga leikara* (all included in Lbs 3966 4to), *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar* (included in Lbs 3966 4to in *rímur* form), and *Drauma-Jóns saga* (not included in Lbs 3966 4to). The remaining prose text is *Jökuls þáttur Búasonar*, presumably copied from the same source from which Ólafur copied it into Lbs 3966 4to. Ólafur followed these sagas with eight folios of short poems, and one of the Magnús Jónsson *rímur* that he had included in Lbs 3966 4to, *Rímur af Þorsteini Víkingssyni*. Thus this manuscript is not only shorter but more heavily weighted towards prose sagas: Ólafur used the prose *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar* from Lbs 998 4to rather than Magnús Jónsson's *rímur* adaptation.

Overall, we might conclude — provisionally to forming a fuller understanding of the copying of Lbs 998 4to — that Ólafur had a fairly clear sense of what his favourite Lbs 998 4to sagas were, and that Jón Jónsson of Purkey shared it. But Ólafur himself preferred *rímur* versions of the same stories where they were available, and chose to copy two prose sagas from a different manuscript rather than copy more extensively from Lbs 998 4to. Thus we can see him inheriting some of the editorial decisions that underlay the production of Rask 32, yet purposefully developing his own anthology.

We can probably glimpse a similar pattern in the other copy of Lbs 998 4to of which we are aware: the fragmentary Lbs 1137 8vo IV, the relevant fragment of which was copied around 1819–20 by one Jón Sigurðsson in Háihóll, Álftártungusókn, Mýrasýsla. Lbs 998 4to looks likely to have been the exemplar for at least *Nítíða saga* and *Drauma-Jóns saga* in Lbs 1137 8vo IV, and it might also have contributed *Hálfðanar saga Barkarsonar*. Yet the remaining three texts which we know to have been in this manuscript — *Hrollaugs saga og Ingibjargar*, *Vilmundar saga væna og Hrómundar blinda*, and a closing piece beginning *Maður skuli og mann læra* — came from elsewhere, suggesting a fresh round of editorial decisions. We cannot know whether Lbs 1137 8vo IV once contained *Nikulás saga leikara*, but it certainly did not follow *Nítíða saga* directly, suggesting that Jón was comfortable breaking the link between the sagas. Likewise, JS 632 4to gave at least *Sigurgarðs saga*, probably *Ambrósíus saga*, and possibly *Hálfðanar saga Barkarsonar* and *Nikulás saga leikara* to SÁM 131, copied by Guðbrandur Sturlaugsson (1821–97) at Hvítadalur (the same farm where Rask 31 and 32, now in Denmark, had once been produced) between 1871 and 1890. But Guðbrandur did not feel the need to keep *Nikulás saga* together with

Nítíða saga, dropping the latter, and he turned elsewhere for *Sigurgarðs saga og Valbrands*, *Ketlerus saga keisaraefnis* (by Jón Oddsson Hjaltalín, 1749–1835), *Úlfs saga Uggasonar*, and *Parmes saga loðinbjarnar* (by Jón Bjarnason, 1721–85). Moreover, the latter three of these are post-medieval romances: the range of compositions available to Guðbrandur were rather different from those which had determined the editorial decisions behind Rask 32, and perhaps Guðbrandur's interest in those more recent sagas also indicate that his tastes and interests were changing with the times, somewhat as Ólafur Þorgeirsson preferred relatively recent *rímur* to sagas.

6. Conclusions

In publishing the first stemma of *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, this study has established one of the most thorough accounts of the manuscript transmission of an Icelandic saga; the seventh reasonably thorough stemma of a medieval Icelandic romance; and, through the use of electronic publishing and open data, probably the most extensively and transparently evidenced one. We have provided extra evidence for a now quite well established master-narrative for the transmission of medieval Icelandic *riddarasögur* and *fornaldarsögur* in which medieval texts were copied in the seventeenth century by humanist scholars focused around Iceland's episcopal seats. Their activity was followed by a seventeenth- to eighteenth-century *translatio studii* to the Westfjords, which was in turn inherited from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries by a vigorous culture of local copying there and, even more so, slightly to the south in the Dalir. We have also been able to show localised nineteenth-century manuscript transmission in the south-west and the Eastfjords, followed by the geographically diverse distribution and copying of the 1884 printed edition of *Sigurgarðs saga*.

This study has also published the first sketch of a stemma of *Nikulás saga leikara* and slightly refined our understanding of the transmission of *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamundu*, *Sigurðar saga turnara*, *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar*, *Nítíða saga frægu*, and *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*. What these rougher but wider-ranging analyses have shown is that our understanding of the transmission of medieval Icelandic romances and *fornaldarsögur* is just starting to reach the level where we can understand not only the transmission of individual sagas from one manuscript to another, but also how at least eighteenth- and nineteenth-century scribes operated in their capacity as anthologists. With a case-studying of copying in the Dalir region, we have found no reason to think that any scribe copied an exemplar in its entirety, but we have been able to show examples both of large-scale adoption of earlier scribes' editorial choices and of much more selective combining of texts from multiple source manuscripts, as well as instances where a scribe accepted a former anthologist's choice of story, but substituted a different recension of that story from an alternative exemplar.

We have scarcely hinted here at the literary analyses that these findings might facilitate, but our publication of a stemma will allow future researchers to assess how different

editors adapted *Sigurgarðs saga* to their own tastes in ways that have hitherto been attempted in detail for sagas of this type by only a couple of commentators (McDonald Werronen 2016; Lavender 2020). For example, a glance at Spreadsheet 1 will show that the manuscript Héraðskjalasafn Borgarfjarðar, Borgarnes, MS 14 is among the most innovative versions of *Sigurgarðs saga* and — despite being a headache to filiate — its alterations to the saga can now be traced through comparison with its closest relatives among *Sigurgarðs saga* manuscripts. Borgarnes 14 was produced from 1862 to 1867 by Jóhannes Jónsson, a farmer in the Dalir, and emerges from our data as an interesting witness to one scribe who was given to a lively and innovative engagement with his source material.

We can also think with a new degree of confidence about what literary meanings might lie in the juxtapositions of sagas in manuscripts. Our case-study has suggested that copyists did not much care in what order they copied sagas into a manuscript: we think, at least, that the burden of proof now lies with those who would like to see literary significance in the sequencing of texts. But copyists clearly took a critical interest in what sagas they put into a given volume. To give a quite superficial but not uninteresting example, we have shown that the three sagas *Sigurgarðs saga frækna*, *Nítíða saga frægu*, and *Nikulás saga leikara* were probably brought together twice by independent anthologists in eighteenth-century Iceland (once in Lbs 644 4to and once in Rask 32); this collocation was sustained by Ólafur Jónsson at the end of the century in two manuscripts descended largely from Rask 32 (Lbs 998 4to and its child JS 632 4to), which is unsurprising because Ólafur adopted most of Rask 32's texts; but it was also sustained in the nineteenth century in two manuscripts, copied from Lbs 998 4to for different audiences, by Ólafur Þorgeirsson in 1869–71, in a context of greater editorial selectivity. The pairing of *Nítíða saga* and *Nikulás saga* surely reflects the fact that in this recension the latter is said to be the sequel to the former, showing an interest in uniting such paired sagas in anthologies; but perhaps the pairing of *Nítíða saga* with *Sigurgarðs saga* reflects the fact that *Nítíða saga* is the most clearly proto-feminist saga in the genre, while *Sigurgarðs saga* directly criticises its protagonist for his womanising, giving it a relatively feminist tenor (cf. McDonald Werronen 2016; Hall, Richardson and Haukur Þorgeirsson 2013, 94–100). That said, it is the pairing of *Sigurgarðs saga* and *Nikulás saga* that stood the test of time, with these two sagas remaining as a pair in SÁM 131 (1871–72) and Lbs 5567 4to (1913), and it would be worth investigating why. Many other such targeted and well-evidenced investigations await us now that electronic methods are making the extensive or even complete surveying of the manuscript transmission of whole saga-genres a practical undertaking.

Appendices

Files currently to be found at

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Ar3Fb6Mg-ZFXGa2NJoT0zleiLEmtqHqV?usp=sharing>)

1. Fundamental data

- Spreadsheet 1: *Sigurgarðs saga* transcriptions and data
 - SSF_spreadsheet_1_aligned_transcriptions_of_the_five_samples_and_data.ods
 - SSF_spreadsheet_1_aligned_transcriptions_of_the_five_samples_and_data.xlsx
 - SSF_spreadsheet_1_aligned_transcriptions_of_the_five_samples_and_data.csv
- Spreadsheet 2: *Sigurgarðs saga* variants from Loth and other early MSS (AM 556a 4to, AM 588m 4to, AM 167 fol, AM 123 8vo, AM 588n 4to, Lbs 423 fol, Lbs 222 fol, Gks 1002 fol)
 - SSF_spreadsheet_2_variants_from_Loth_and_other_early_MSS.ods
 - SSF_spreadsheet_2_variants_from_Loth_and_other_early_MSS.csv
 - SSF_spreadsheet_2_variants_from_Loth_and_other_early_MSS.xlsx
 - SSF_infile_loth_and_other_early_mss (derived from spreadsheet)
- Spreadsheet 3: *Nikulás saga leikara* variants from Wick 1996
 - NSL_spreadsheet_1_variants_in_Wick.ods
 - NSL_spreadsheet_1_variants_in_Wick.csv
 - NSL_spreadsheet_1_variants_in_Wick.xlsx
- Spreadsheet 4: *Nikulas saga leikara* variants from our sample of ch 1
 - NSL_spreadsheet_2_aligned_transcriptions_of_chapter_1.ods
 - NSL_spreadsheet_2_aligned_transcriptions_of_chapter_1.csv
 - NSL_spreadsheet_2_aligned_transcriptions_of_chapter_1.xlsx
- Stemmas for all well researched romance sagas
 - stemma_SSF_KSK_DSD_GS_MS_VSB_TS.dot
 - stemma_SSF_KSK_DSD_GS_MS_VSB_TS.ps

2. Derived files and images

- Figure 1: stemma of *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* (derived from Spreadsheet 1)
 - SSF_stemma.dot
 - SSF_stemma.ps
 - SSF_stemma.png
- Figures 2 and 4: known places of production of *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* manuscripts (derived from Spreadsheet 1)
 - SSF_kml_map_data.kml
 - SSF_known_places_of_MS_production.jpg
 - SSF_known_places_of_MS_production_(Dalir).jpg
- Figure 3: unrooted computer-generated stemma of *Sigurgarðs saga frækna* (derived from Spreadsheet 1)
 - SSF_infile_the_five_samples
 - SSF_unrooted_stemma_all_samples.ps
 - SSF_unrooted_stemma_all_samples.png
- Figure 5: stemma of selected sagas in the Rask 32-group
 - Rask_32-group_stemma.dot
 - Rask_32-group_stemma.ps
 - Rask_32-group_stemma.png

- Figure 6: rooted stemma of Wick's *Nikulás saga leikara* recension-one manuscripts (derived from Spreadsheet 3)
 - NSL_infile_wick_data
 - NSL_stemma_wick_data.ps
 - NSL_stemma_wick_data.png
- Figure 7: unrooted stemma of chapter 1 of a sample of *Nikulás saga leikara* recension-one manuscripts (derived from Spreadsheet 4)
 - NSL_ch_1_infile
 - NSL_ch_1_unrooted_stemma.ps
 - NSL_ch_1_unrooted_stemma.png
- Figure 8: A-branch of *Nítíðá saga* stemma according to McDonald Werronen 2016
 - NSF_a_branch_according_to_McDonald_Werronen.dot
 - NSF_a_branch_according_to_McDonald_Werronen.ps
 - NSF_a_branch_according_to_McDonald_Werronen.png

Bibliography

- Davíð Ólafsson. 2009. "Wordmongers: Post-Medieval Scribal Culture and the Case of Sighvatur Grímsson." PhD diss., University of St Andrews.
- Fox, Bethany. 2007. "The P-Celtic Place-Names of North-East England and South-East Scotland." *The Heroic Age* 10: <http://www.heroicage.org>.
- Hall, Alaric, Steven D. P. Richardson, and Haukur Þorgeirsson. 2013. "*Sigrarðs saga frækna*: A Normalised Text, Translation, and Introduction." *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies/Études Scandinaves au Canada* 21: 80–155.
- Hall, Alaric, and Katelin Parsons. 2013. "Making Stemmas with Small Samples, and Digital Approaches to Publishing them: Testing the Stemma of *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*." *Digital Medievalist* 9: <https://doi.org/10.16995/dm.51> [fully functional working paper at http://www.alarichall.org.uk/working_paper_on_stemmas_from_small_samples].
- Hall, Alaric and Ludger Zeevaert. 2018. "*Njáls saga* Stemmas, Old and New." In *New Studies in the Manuscript Tradition of Njáls saga: The Historia mutila of Njála*, edited by Emily Lethbridge and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, 179–203. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University.
- Hast, Sture, ed. 1960a. *Harðar saga*, Editiones Arnamagæanae, series A, 6. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- . 1960b. *Pappershandskrifternas till Harðar saga*, Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana, 23. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- Hufnagel, Silvia V. 2012. "*Sörla saga sterka*": *Studies in the Transmission of a Fornaldarsaga*. Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen, Faculty of Humanities.
- Hufnagel, Silvia. 2016a. "Texts and Contexts: Bjarni Pétursson and His Saga Manuscript Lbs 2319 4to (1727–1729)." *Scandinavian Studies* 88: 393–422.
- . 2016b. "The Library of the Genius: The Manuscript Collection of Rasmus Christian Rask." *Tabularia: Sources écrites des mondes normands. Autour des sagas: Manuscrits, transmission et écriture de l'histoire*, 17 November: <https://doi.org/10.4000/tabularia.2666>.
- Jónas Kristjánsson, ed. 1964. *Viktors saga ok Blávus*, Riddarasögur 2. Reykjavík: Handritastofnun Íslands.
- Kalinke, Marianne E. and P. M. Mitchell. 1985. *Bibliography of Old Norse–Icelandic Romances*, Islandica 44. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Kapitan, Katarzyna Anna, Timothy Rowbotham and Tarrin Jo Wills. 2017. "Visualising Genre Relationships in Icelandic Manuscripts." In *Digital Humanities in the Nordic*

- Countries, Second Conference: Conference Abstract*, edited by Daniel Brodén, 59–62. Gothenburg: The University of Gothenburg.
- Kapitan, Katarzyna Anna. 2017. "A Choice of Relationship-Revealing Variants for a Cladistic Analysis of Old Norse Texts: Some Methodological Considerations." In *International Symposium on Digital Humanities, 7–8 November 2016, Växjö, Sweden: Extended Papers*, edited by Koraljka Golub and Marcelo Milrad, CEUR Workshop Proceedings (CEUR-WS.org): Free Open-Access Proceedings for Computer Science Workshops 2021, 52–74. Aachen: CEUR-WS Team.
- . 2018. "Studies in the Transmission History of *Hrómundar saga Greipssonar*." PhD diss., Copenhagen University.
- . 2021. "Perspectives on Digital Catalogs and Textual Networks of Old Norse Literature." *Manuscript Studies: A Journal of the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies* 6: 74–97.
- Lansing, Tereza. 2011. "Post-medieval Production, Dissemination and Reception of *Hrólfs saga kraka*." PhD diss., University of Copenhagen.
- Lárus H. Blöndal, Grímur M. Helgason, and Ögmundur Helgason. 1947–96. *Handritasafn Landsbókasafns*, 4 vols. Reykjavík: Félagsprentsmiðjun.
- Lavender, Philip. 2020. *Long Lives of Short Sagas: The Irrepressibility of Narrative and the Case of Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra*, The Viking Collection: Studies in Northern Civilisation 25. [Odense]: University Press of Southern Denmark.
- Lavender, Philip, and others. 2020. "*Jarlmanns saga og Hermanns*: A Translation." *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies/Études Scandinaves au Canada* 27: 50–104.
- Lethbridge, Emily. 2012a. "Authors and Anonymity, Texts and Their Contexts: The Case of *Eggertsbók*." In *Modes of Authorship in the Middle Ages*, edited by Slavica Ranković, Papers in Medieval Studies 22, 343–64. Turnhout: Brepols.
- . 2012b. "The Place of *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar* in *Eggertsbók*, a Late Medieval Icelandic Saga-book." In *Uppruni og þróun fornaldarsagna Norðurlanda/The Origins and Development of the Legendary Sagas*, edited by Ármann Jakobsson, Agnete Ney, and Annette Lassen, 375–403. Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan.
- Loth, Agnete, ed. 1962–65. *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances*, Editiones Arnemagaeanae, series B, 20–24, 5 vols. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- Love, Jeffrey Scott. 2013. *The Reception of Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century*, Münchener nordistische Studien 14. Munich: Utz.
- McDonald Werronen, Sheryl. 2014. "Two Major Groups in the Older Manuscript Tradition of *Nítíða saga*." *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research* 38: 75–94.
- . 2016. *Popular Romance in Iceland: The Women, Worldviews, and Manuscript Witnesses of Nítíða saga*, Crossing Boundaries: Turku Medieval and Early Modern Studies 5. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- . 2016–18. "Icelandic Scribes: Scribal Networks in 17th-century Iceland. The Patronage of Magnús Jónsson í Vigur." <https://icelandicscribesproject.com>.
- McDonald Werronen, Sheryl and Katarzyna Anna Kapitan. 2018. "An Edition of *Ambrósíus saga og Rósamunda* Based on BLAdd 24 969." *Opuscula* 16: 179–215.
- Ohlsson, Tove Hovn, ed. 2009. *Tídelis saga*, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í Íslenskum Fræðum, rit, 72. Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar.
- Page, R. I. 1957. "Drauma-Jóns saga." *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 1: 22–56.
- . 1960. *Gibbons saga*, Editiones Arnemagnæanæ, Series B, 2. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- Páll Eggert Ólason. 1918–37. *Skrá um handritasöfn Landsbókasafnsins*, 3 vols. Reykjavík: Prentsmiðjan Gutenberg.
- Parsons, Katelin Marit. 2020. "Songs for the End of the World: The Poetry of Guðmundur Erlendsson of Fell in Sléttuhlíð." PhD diss., University of Iceland.

- Sanders, Christopher, ed. 2000. *Tales of Knights: Perg. fol. nr 7 in The Royal Library, Stockholm (AM 167 VIβ 4to, NKS 1265 IIc fol.)*, Manuscripta Nordica: Early Nordic Manuscripts in Digital Facsimile 1. Copenhagen: Reitzel.
- Schröder, Franz Rolf, ed. 1917. *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar*, Altnordische Saga-Bibliothek 15. Halle a. S.: Niemeyer.
- Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon. 2010. *Wasteland with Words: A Social History of Iceland*. London: Reaktion.
- Slay, Desmond. 1960a. *The Manuscripts of Hrólfs saga Kraka*, Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 24. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- . 1960b. *Hrólfs saga kraka*, Editiones arnamagnæanæ, series B, 1. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- . 1970. "Hitherto Unused Manuscripts of *Hrólfs saga kraka*." *Opuscula* 4: 260–68.
- . 1981. "More Manuscripts of *Hrólfs saga kraka*." In *Speculum norroenum: Norse Studies in Memory of Gabriel Turville-Petre*, edited by Ursula Dronke and others, 432–39. Odense: Odense University Press.
- . 1994. "Perhaps the Last *Hrólfs saga kraka* Manuscript," in *Strengleikar slegnir Robert Cook*, edited by Margrét Eggertsdóttir, 59–61. Reykjavík: Menningar- og Minningarsjóður Mette Magnussen.
- , ed. 1997. *Mírmanns saga*, Editiones Arnamagnæanæ, Series A, 17. Copenhagen: Reitzel.
- Spaulding, Janet Ardis. 1982. "Sigurðar saga turnara: A Literary Edition." PhD diss., University of Michigan.
- Springborg, Peter. 1977. "Antiqvæ historiæ lepores—om renæssancen i den islandske håndskriftproduktion i 1600-tallet." *Gardar: Årsbok för Samfundet Sverige-Island i Lund-Malmö* 8: 53–89.
- Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir. 2009. "To the Letter: Philology as a Core Component of Old Norse Studies." *Scripta Islandica* 60: 7–22.
- Wick, Keren H. 1996. "An Edition and Study of *Nikulás saga leikara*." PhD diss., University of Leeds.
- Zeevaert et al. Forthcoming. "A New Stemma of *Njáls saga*."
- Zitzelsberger, Otto J. 1980. "AM 567, 4to, XVI, 1^v: An Instance of Conflation?" *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 95: 183–88.
- Zitzelsberger, Otto J. 1981. "The Filiation of the Manuscripts of *Konráðs saga keisarasonar*." *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik* 16: 145–76.
- . "Six MSS of *Konráðs saga* Unlisted in Printed Catalogues." *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik* 18: 161–77.
- Þórður Ingi Guðjónsson. 2010. "Editing the Three Versions of *Gísla saga Súrssonar*." In *Creating the Medieval Saga: Versions, Variability, and Editorial Interpretations in Old Norse Saga Literature*, edited by Judy Quinn and Emily Lethbridge, 105–21. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark.