Elizabeth Ashman Rowe

Cultural Paternity in the Flateyjarbók *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*

Flateyjarbók is the name given to Gks 1005 fol., the largest and certainly among the most beautiful of all extant medieval Icelandic manuscripts, containing a number of exceptionally fine historiated initials and marginal drawings. The manuscript was given to Brynjólfur Sveinsson, bishop of Skálholt, by the farmer Jón Finnsson of Flatey in Breiðafjörður, whence its name. Brynjólfur presented it in turn to the king, Frederik III, and it subsequently passed to the Royal Library in Copenhagen, where it remained until being transferred to Iceland in 1971. Originally commissioned by Jón Hákonarson, a wealthy farmer who lived at Víðidalstunga in the Húnavatn district in the north of Iceland, Flateyjarbók was undoubtedly written somewhere in that area, either at Víðidalstunga or at the nearby monastery of Þingeyrar, or possibly to the east of Húnavatn, in Skagafjörður. It was begun by the priest Jón Þórðarson in 1387; his hand begins on folio 4 verso, originally the verso of the first leaf of the manuscript, and continues through the next-to-last line of the first column of folio 134 verso. On these pages he copied *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla, Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar,* and virtually all of *Óláfs saga helga.* Jón Þórðarson evidently left Iceland for Bergen, Norway, in the spring of 1388, and the work of continuing Flateyjarbók fell to another priest, Magnús Þórhallsson, whose hand begins on the last line of the first column of folio 134 verso and goes on until the end of the manuscript (apart from 23 leaves, now folios 188–210, which were added by Þorleifur Björnsson in the second half of the fifteenth century). Magnús also added three leaves to the front of the manuscript, leaving the new folio 1 recto blank, centering a brief foreword in the middle of folio 1 verso, and beginning the two-column format on folio 2 recto. On these pages he copied the poems *Geisli, Óláfs ríma Haraldssonar,* and *Hyndluljóð,* followed by an excerpt from a translation of Adam of Bremen's *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum,* the short narratives *Þáttr frá Sigurði konungi slefu* and *Hversu Nóregr byggðist,* and a genealogy of the kings of Norway. After finishing *Óláfs saga helga* for Jón Þórðarson, Magnús Þórhallsson copied *Sverris saga, Hákonar saga gamla,* excerpts from the *Óláfs saga helga* by Styrmir fróði, *Grœnlendinga þáttr* (also known as *Einars þáttr Sokkasonar*), *Helga þáttr ok*

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Úlfs, Játvarðar saga, and an annal he compiled himself. The annal seems to have been written continuously until its end in 1390, although there are fragmentary entries for 1391 through 1394, the year Jón Þórðarson returned to Iceland. Magnús was also responsible for the illuminations in the manuscript.

Ólafur Halldórsson (1990b) speculates that Flateyjarbók was originally intended as a gift for the young king of Norway, Olaf Hákonarson, and was supposed to contain only *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla* and the sagas of Olaf Tryggvason and St. Olaf. He shows that there was a connection in the popular mind between the king and his holy namesake, and he cites a contemporary story that St. Olaf appeared to Queen Margareta when she was in labor, declaring that she would not be delivered until her husband swore to uphold the laws that St. Olaf had held. The fact that Flateyjarbók contains all the sagas that were available about all the tributary countries under the power of the Norwegian king apart from Iceland strikes Ólafur Halldórsson as significant; he also reads Jón Þórðarson's afterword to *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla,* in which wise men are said to praise above all others those men who advance the cause of the church, as advice directed at the king. When the king died later that year, Flateyjarbók's original purpose as a gift to him lost its point. Ólafur Halldórsson conjectures that Jón Þórðarson thus became unemployed and decided to go to Norway, and that Jón Hákonarson later brought in the priest Magnús Þórhallsson to finish the manuscript.

Ólafur Halldórsson's hypothesis is an attractive one, and easy to elaborate on. If the first part of Flateyjarbók is an appropriate gift for a king named Olaf, it is also a gift with an implied purpose, that of encouraging the king to follow the example of his revered namesakes. Icelanders had presumed to advise a young king before; in chapters 15–16 of *Magnúss saga góða* in *Heimskringla,* Snorri tells how the vengeful behavior of King Magnús Óláfsson ended when his godfather, the Icelandic skald Sigvatr Þórðarson, recited a poem, the *Bersǫglisvísur* [Plain-speaking verses], in which he praises the laws of Jarl Hákon and urges the king to treat his people more mercifully. As it happens, Magnús Þórhallsson's hand appears in the manuscript named Hulda, which contains this saga. This leads Jonna Louis-Jensen (1968, 14–15) to suggest that Hulda was owned by Jón Hákonarson. Assuming that this manuscript had come into Jón Hákonarson's possession by 1387, when Flateyjarbók was begun, Jón would have owned and been familiar with this account of an Icelander's use of literature to influence his Norwegian king towards a greater respect for the law. Perhaps it even provided him with the idea for Flateyjarbók.

This article considers the nature of the advice that can be discerned between the lines of Flateyjarbók, particularly as it appears in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar.* It begins by surveying the places in which this advice might be manifested, namely, the texts that Jón Þórðarson added to his exemplar, and the introductions and conclusions that he himself is believed to have written.

A word should be said about the assumption that it is Jón Þórðarson rather

than Jón Hákonarson who is the "author" of this advice. Insofar as the advice is political, concerning the relationship between the Norwegian king and his Icelandic subjects, it might seem that the landowner is a more probable source than the monk. However, as will be demonstrated, the political message is presented in terms of salvation history, typology, and the religious connection between the two countries, so that it seems quite reasonable to ascribe the advice to the monk rather than the landowner. This argument holds true if Jón Þórðarson "created" the message merely by selecting certain preexisting sagas and þættir and interpolating them unchanged into his copy of his exemplar. If he actually revised his additions, as in certain cases is at least possible, then this assumption becomes more plausible still.

In compiling the Flateyjarbók redaction of *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar,* Jón Þórðarson simply continued the techniques of his predecessors. The so-called *Longest Saga of Óláfr Tryggvason* (ca. 1300) takes the *Óláfs saga* from *Heimskringla* and expands it with loans from *Óláfs saga helga,* the *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* of the monk Oddr Snorrason, and the following texts: material on the kings of Denmark, *Jómsvíkinga saga, Orkneyinga saga,* material on the settlement of Iceland, *Þorvalds þáttr víðfǫrla, Kristni þáttr, Rǫgnvalds þáttr ok Rauðs, Hallfreðar saga, Laxdœla saga, Ǫgmundar þáttr dytts ok Gunnars helmings, Færeyinga saga, Þorvalds þáttr tasalda, Sveins þáttr ok Finns, Þiðranda þáttr ok Þórhalls,* material on Greenland (from *Eiríks saga rauða, Landnámabók,* and *Heimskringla*), *Svaða þáttr ok Arnórs kerlingarnefs, Þórhalls þáttr knapps, Eindriða þáttr ilbreiðs,* and *Gauts þáttr.* This list is taken from the redaction in AM 61 fol. (Halldórsson 1982, 30), but in fact the redaction Jón Þórðarson is thought to have used is more closely related to the one in AM 62 fol., which abridges *Færeyinga saga, Hallfreðar saga, Jómsvíkinga saga,* and the material from *Landnámabók,* uses Gunnlaugr's Latin account of Olaf Tryggvason's missionary activities to expand some of the sections about the adoption of Christianity, and adds *Helga þáttr Þórissonar* and *Norna-Gests þáttr.* Jón expands this base text with still more þættir and excerpts from the lives of Olaf by the monks Oddr Snorrason and Gunnlaugr, and he copies the sagas in unabridged form from independent manuscripts. According to Finnur Jónsson's comparison of Flateyjarbók with AM 61 fol. and AM 62 fol. (Jónsson 1927, 149–69), Jón Þórðarson added *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla, Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds, Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts, Sǫrla þáttr, Hrómundar þáttr halta, Þorsteins þáttr skelks,* the end of chap. 406 of *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* (which he wrote himself), and *Orms þáttr Stórólfssonar.* He also added a sentence or two here and there, shortened some passages, and reordered many sections of his exemplar, evidently with a view towards improving the chronology.[1]

1. In his overview of Flateyjarbók's composition and history, Ólafur Halldórsson provides his own list of the texts that Jón added to the two Olaf sagas (1990a, 205). Although the article was written for a general audience and therefore lacks a detailed argument and supporting evidence, Ólafur's list serves as

The textual history of these narratives would appear to corroborate Finnur Jónsson's conclusions, as five of the þættir *(Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds, Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts, Sǫrla þáttr, Hrómundar þáttr halta,* and *Þorsteins þáttr skelks)* are found only in Flateyjarbók. The Flateyjarbók version of *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla* is the oldest preserved descendant of the A-branch archetype (Jensen 1983, LV–LVI). *Orms þáttr Stórólfssonar* is only found in two other manuscripts, both of which are derived from a lost manuscript closely related to Flateyjarbók (Faulkes [1968], 39–40). Apparently there was no prior association between *Orms þáttr* and *Óláfs saga;* Faulkes thinks it "likely that the *þáttr* was originally a separate story" ([1968], 40).[2]

Finnur Jónsson states that the version of *Óláfs saga helga* closest to the one in Flateyjarbók is that in AM 61 fol.; it might be hazarded that if the *Óláfs saga helga* of AM 62 fol. were extant it would be closer still, as is the case with *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar.* According to Finnur Jónsson's comparison of Flateyjarbók and AM 61 fol. (Jónsson 1927, 169–80), Jón's additions to *Óláfs saga helga* include excerpts from the life of St. Olaf by Styrmir fróði, the preface to chap. 9 (which he wrote himself), *Styrbjarnar þáttr Svíakappa, Hróa þáttr heimska, Eymundar þáttr hrings, Tóka þáttr Tókasonar, Eindriða þáttr ok Erlings, Fóstbrœðra saga* (the introductions and endings of the inserted sections of the saga he wrote himself), chap. 169, chap. 187, and the beginning of chap. 198 (all of which he wrote himself), the little story of the fisherman in chap. 224, the beginning of chap. 255 (which he wrote himself), *Vǫlsa þáttr,* and the beginning of chap. 305 (which he wrote himself). He also adds a few sentences here and there, revises the itinerary of Olaf's Viking years, and deletes material about the Icelander Bjǫrn Hítdœlakappi. Johnsen and Helgason note that Jón also changes the material that serves as an introduction to *Óláfs saga helga,* omitting everything that looks like a repetition of the introduction to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* (1941, 1031). His practice stands in contrast to AM 61 fol. and Bergsbók (Stock. perg. fol. no. 1), where the introductions to the two sagas are substantially the same. Johnsen and Helgason point out that in a number of places, Jón has expanded the last sentence

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an effective reminder that the complex textual history of Flateyjarbók is still far from clear. Jón evidently included texts of all lengths and degrees of historicity as relevant to the two Olaf sagas. The restriction of this article to a consideration of only the þættir is thus a doubly arbitrary one. Nonetheless, certain patterns can, I believe, be discerned in Jón's additions, even if the lines of demarcation are less definite than one might wish.

2. The narratives themselves are considered to be at least a quarter of a century older than the manuscript. *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla* is from the first half of the fourteenth century (Jensen 1983, XIV); *Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds* is from the end of the thirteenth century or the beginning of the fourteenth century (Vries 1967, 429; Kristjánsson 1956, XCIV); *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* is from ca. 1300 (Jónsson 1923, 756–57); *Sǫrla þáttr* is from the first half of the fourteenth century (Jónsson 1923, 830); *Hrómundar þáttr halta* is from the beginning of the thirteenth century (Vries 1967, 412); *Þorsteins þáttr skelks* is from ca. 1300 (Jónsson 1923, 752–53); *Orms þáttr Stórólfssonar* is dated by Finnur Jónsson (1923, 758) to ca. 1300, but Anthony Faulkes ([1968], 41) puts it in the second or third quarter of the fourteenth century. For synopses of these þættir, see the appendix of this article (24–26).

of a chapter by a few words in order to fill out the line and ensure that the space for the next chapter's rubric is not too large (1941, 1033). While these revisions fulfill a merely decorative purpose, Johnsen and Helgason judge that Jón's many interpolations, omissions, and shifts requiring new transitional sentences, which in places expand into longer statements praising St. Olaf, result in a redaction of the saga that is substantially different from the others, even though most of the saga is the same (1941, 1033).

Not surprisingly, Jón Þórðarson does not address his putative royal audience directly in any of his additions. What is unusual in an Icelandic scribe is that some of those additions explain the inclusion of certain texts and genres. For example, Jón copied *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla* into the manuscript before *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar,* and in his afterword, Jón says he added it because it teaches a valuable moral lesson (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:37–38). In his introduction to *Fóstbrœðra saga*, Jón says he added it because the story of St. Olaf's relationship with two of his Icelandic retainers illustrates the king's "grace and good luck" [gæzku ok giftu] (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 2:170). In his introduction to *Ásbjarnar þáttr Selsbana* (a þáttr found in Jón's exemplar of *Óláfs saga helga*), Jón takes the opportunity to comment on the presence of þættir in the king's saga at all. Even though in the beginning the relevance of a story *(ævintýr)* may not be clear, in the end they all come to touch on the honor and glory of St. Olaf (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 2:322). Apparently Jón thought that his choice of texts as appropriate additions to the sagas of the two Olafs might not be intelligible or self-evident. Jón's felt need for justification seems rather odd, in light of the fact that the sagas he was copying had been repeatedly expanded over the years. Yet his defensiveness turned out to be warranted, for the strikingly different editorial practices of Magnús Þórhallsson in his portion of Flateyjarbók are carried out in direct response to — and thus can be said to constitute a critique of — Jón's work.

As has been shown, Jón favors þættir and *ævintýri* as genres that could be understood tropologically as well as literally, and he has no compunctions about inserting such texts (and even entire sagas) into the kings' sagas he copies. In contrast, Magnús refrains from adding þættir and sagas to *Sverris saga* and *Hákonar saga.* Given his inclusion of the *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum* and Icelandic church annals conflated with a world chronicle, he seems to tend towards annalistic rather than typological historiography, and he apparently prefers religious texts such as *Geisli,* which are more edifying than entertaining. More importantly, Magnús's contribution seems to respond to Jón's, rather than simply following or continuing it. Not only does Magnús surround Jón's work with texts intended to preface and supplement it, but nearly every one of these additional texts corresponds to one of Jón's interpolated ones. For example, each scribe provides a *Grœnlendinga þáttr, ættartǫlur,* and a saga of a royal saint. Magnús's purpose seems to be to provide a rereading and a reversal of Jón's historiographic project: whereas Jón depicts the conversion of western Scandinavia

typologically, as a reenactment of world history *in parvo,* Magnús attempts to integrate the history of the region into the larger context of European history.

Eiríks saga víðfǫrla tells of a Norwegian prince who travels to Miklagarðr, where the king of the Greeks instructs him in the faith and persuades him to accept baptism. The prince travels onward and, arriving at the earthly paradise, comes to a tower in the air. He dreams of an angel, who lets him go back to Norway and tells him to tell people of his experiences, so that when the time comes for conversion, they will believe more readily. Jón is explicit about what he wants the reader to learn from *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla:* "the one who wrote this book . . . wishes each man to know that there is no true faith except in God" and that therefore those who fought for Christianity have accomplished better things and have received a better reward than pagans, whose reward of earthly fame is paltry compared to the Christian's reward of eternal life in heaven.[3] Jón's emphasis on the contrast between pagans and Christians seems anachronistic, coming as it does from the end of the fourteenth century, when Iceland had been Christian for nearly four hundred years. If Ólafur Halldórsson's hypothesis about Flateyjarbók being intended as a gift for King Olaf Hákonarson is correct, we must consider the implications of this moral being addressed to the young king.

Although it is tempting to try to read a contemporary allusion into Jón's valorization of those who fight for the freedom of the church, it does not seem likely that Jón would suggest to King Olaf that the Icelandic church should be "freed" from the foreign bishops appointed by his mother, Queen Margareta, especially considering that Jón seems to have enjoyed a good relationship with these bishops.[4] Rather, the lesson to be learned from *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla* seems to have

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3. Here is the complete text of Jón Þórðarson's afterword to *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla:* "En því setti sá þetta ævintýr fyrst í þessa bók, er hana skrifaði, at hann vill, at hverr maðr viti þat, at ekki er traust trútt nema af guði, því at þó at heiðnir menn fái frægð mikla af sínum áfreksverkum, þá er þat mikill munr, þá er þeir enda þetta hit stundliga líf, at þeir hafa þá tekit sitt verðkaup af orðlofi manna fyrir sinn frama, en eigu þá ván hegningar fyrir sín brot ok trúleysi, er þeir kunnu eigi skapara sinn. En hinir, sem guði hafa unnat ok þar allt traust haft ok barizt fyrir frelsi heilagrar kristni, hafa þó af hinum vitrustum mönnum fengit meira lof, en þat at auk, at mest er, at þá er þeir hafa fram gengit um almenniligar dyrr dauðans, sem ekki hold má forðast, hafa þeir tekit sitt verðkaup, þat er at skilja eilíft ríki með allsvaldanda guði utan enda sem þessi Eirekr, sem nú var frá sagt" [The one who wrote this book set this tale in it first because he wishes that each man should know that there is no true faith except in God, because although heathen men may get much fame from their deeds of valor, there is a great difference when they end the life of this world, since they have then taken their reward from men's praise for their accomplishments, but then they have the expectation of punishment for their violations and faithlessness when they knew not their creator. But those who have loved God and had all faith and fought for the privilege of holy Christianity have nevertheless received greater praise from the wisest men. And this, too (which is greatest), that when they have gone forward through the common door of death, which the flesh may not escape, they have taken their reward, that is to say, the eternal kingdom with Almighty God without end, like this Eiríkr, as was just described] (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:37–38).

4. Very little information exists about the scribes of Flateyjarbók, apart from their work for Jón Hákonarson. However, the evidence suggests that Jón Þórðarson was a supporter of Bishop Jón skalli Eiríksson. (Bishop of Hólar from 1357 to 1390, he was the first bishop to be consecrated at the pope's initiative. Named bishop of Greenland, he asked the pope to change his see to one in Iceland. Half the priests of northern Iceland protested, claiming that his identification documents were suspicious, and he

been simply that those who fought to establish Christianity in the North, like the two Olafs whose sagas followed, were greater heroes than Sigurðr Fáfnisbani or Helgi Hundingsbani. From there it is a short step to presume that Jón compiled the sagas of the two Olafs as he did not only in order to acquaint the king with the greatness of his forebears of the same name, but also to encourage him to emulate their example and avoid that of such evil pagans as Jarl Hákon of Hlaðir. As we shall see, the desired royal behavior combined spiritual greatness with a certain perspective on the relationship between Norway and Iceland.

This relationship is the focus of Jón's introduction to *Fóstbrœðra saga:*

> Guð drottinn, Jesus Christus, sá til þess þörf vára allra Norðmanna at velja oss slíkan formælanda sem svá kostgæfði með mikilli góðfýsi vára nauðsyn sem þessi skínandi geisli ok lýsanda ljósker, hinn heilagi Óláfr konungr Haraldsson, hverr at eigi at eins elskaði sinn undirgefinn lýð í Noregi, heldr ok jafnvel þá, sem á Íslandi byggðu, þá sem sóttu hans tign ok virðing, prýðandi hvern eftir því með veraldar virðingu, sem hann fann til felldan, suma með fégjöfum, en suma með nafnbótum. Gáfust ok þær raunir á, at þeir fengu mesta ást ok elsku af Ólafi konungi, sem guð elskuðu framast. Ólafr konungr unni mikit hirðmönnum sínum ok þótti sér í því mjök misboðit, ef þeim var með öfund misþyrmt, ok þeim öllum framast, er honum þótti mestr maðr í. Þykkir af því tilheyriligt at setja hér nokkurn þátt af hirðmönnum hans tveimr, Þorgeiri Hávarssyni ok Þormóði Bersasyni, er lengi váru með honum í mörgum mannraunum, þó at þeirra sé eigi jafnan við getit í sjálfri Ólafs sögu. Má af slíku merkja gæzku ok giftu Ólafs konungs, at hann veitti þat athald svá miklum óeirðarmönnum sem þeir váru fóstbræðr, at þeir elskuðu konunginn yfir alla menn fram. Urðu þeim ok síðan sín verk öll at frægð ok frama, þau sem þeir unnu í heiðr við konunginn, ok sýndu af sér ágæta vörn, dáð ok drengskap, áðr þeir enduðu sitt líf ok erfiði þessarar veslu veraldar. (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 2:170)
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> [The Lord God, Jesus Christ, saw our need — the need of all Northmen — to choose for us such a intercessor as thus with great goodness strove with our need, as this shining beam and light-shedding lantern, the holy King Olaf Haraldsson, who not only loved his subjects in Norway, but also equally those who lived in Iceland, those who sought his favor and esteem, decorating each one with worldly honors as he thought appropriate, some with gifts of money, some with titles. Experience also showed that those who loved God the most received the greatest affection and love from King Olaf. King Olaf loved his retainers dearly, and he took it very ill if they were treated maliciously, especially those whom he thought the most highly of. Because of this, it seems proper to set down here a certain þáttr about two of his retainers, Þorgeirr Hávarsson and Þormóðr Bersason, who were with him for a long time and in many perils, although they are not

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was sent back to the pope for better authorization. The case took thirteen years to be straightened out.) For one thing, Jón was associated with the see of Hólar over a long period of time: he is mentioned in two letters from Hólar, one dated 1377 and the other dated 1396. It is likely that he is the same Jón Þórðarson who was *ráðsmaður* (manager) of the Reynistaðr monastery in 1383, a position perhaps controlled by the bishop. Finally, Jón's six-year transfer to the Church of the Cross in Bergen — which ended when he returned to Iceland on the same ship that brought Bishop Vilchin to his new see of Skálholt — suggests that he was known to the bishop of Bergen, perhaps because Jón had been trained in Bergen or had served there previously. In any case, Jón's Norwegian connection seems to have been a positive one, implying that his long relationship with the Norwegian and Danish bishops of Iceland was equally so. See Westergård-Nielsen 1976, 440–41, and the sources cited there; also Halldórsson 1990a, 207–8. For general surveys of the Icelandic church at this time, see Helgason 1925; Þorsteinsson and Grímsdóttir 1990.

> always mentioned in Olaf's saga itself. From this one must notice the grace and good luck of King Olaf, that he showed that restraint to such terribly unruly men as those sworn brothers were, who loved the king above all other men. Also, all their deeds, which they performed in honor of the king and which showed their excellent defense, valor, and courage, afterwards brought them fame and renown before they ended their life and suffering of this wretched world.]

I do not think it is reading too much into this passage to suggest that the unruly sworn brothers synecdochically represent all of Olaf's Icelandic subjects. If so, then although Jón appears to be celebrating the "grace and good luck" [gæzku ok giftu] of St. Olaf, he is simultaneously suggesting that young King Olaf take a leaf from his namesake's book and reward his loyal (if unruly) Icelandic subjects, "some with gifts of money, some with titles."[5]

The double theme of religion and the relationship with Iceland observed in Jón's introduction recurs in the þættir he adds, where the importance of Christianity is rendered in a typological view of Scandinavian history. Scholars of Old Norse–Icelandic literature began in the 1980s to consider the conversion as central to our understanding of the medieval Scandinavian understanding of history (Ciklamini 1981; Weber 1981, 1986, 1987; Harris 1980, 1986). That is, it was realized that medieval historians understood the secular history of Norway and Iceland as patterned on the model of salvation history. Just as salvation history is divided into two ages by the Incarnation of Christ, so was Scandinavian history divided into a pagan age and a Christian age by the conversion around the year 1000. And just as events and people from the time of the old law could be understood as prefiguring the events and people of the time of the new law, so too could pagan Scandinavians be understood in a variety of ways as "pre-Christians." For example, *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* prefaces the narrative of Þorsteinn's conversion with the *Landnámabók* account of how Úlfljótr went to Norway and brought back the first laws of the Icelandic commonwealth. Critics have dismissed this addition (which possibly was made by Jón Þórðarson himself) as irrelevant and pointless (Vigfússon and Powell 1905, 582; Jónsson 1923, 756), but it can be argued that whoever changed the þáttr was trying to present Úlfljótr's new law-code as a pre-Christian one by associating it with the new law of Christ that Þorsteinn adopts in his conversion. The description of the Icelandic "heathen" law-code emphasizes its legal aspects, rather than its religious ones, and the temple toll is compared to a Christian church tithe, thus suggesting a typological relationship of prefiguration and fulfillment.

As Gerd Wolfgang Weber points out, the use of salvation history as a model for the pattern of secular history is not sacrilegious: "There is, according to St

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5. Jón drops a hint again in his introduction to the second interlaced section of *Fóstbræðra saga:* "Konungrinn Ólafr var harðla vinsæll af sínum mönnum sakir örleiks ok allrar atgörvi, eigi at eins í Noregi, heldr í öllum hans skattlöndum ok víða annars staðar" [King Olaf was very popular with his men because of his liberality and all his accomplishments — not only in Norway, but also in all his tributary lands, and widely in other places] (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 2:234).

Augustine's irrefutable authority in these matters, no such thing as 'profane' history. All *historia* occurs within the *tempus* [i.e., the period of time from the Fall of Adam to the Last Judgment] and thus forms part of God's divine plan" (Weber 1987, 98). The uses of such a view of history are obvious. Not only does it provide Christian Scandinavians with a meaningful history despite their geographic marginality, it provides a way to redeem their heathen heroes and ancestors from hell, where they would otherwise be suffering because of their ignorance of their maker. Moreover, the reinterpretation of certain signals from the older heroic tradition that allowed for this projection of contemporary — in this case, Christian — concerns onto the past was itself a mechanism that could be employed in the service of other types of concerns, as is argued below.

The generic affiliations of the þættir that Jón adds are for the most part determined by such typological thinking, and some entirely so. Jón draws particularly on two closely related subgenres, which were first identified by Joseph Harris (1980, 1986).[6] One, which Harris left unnamed but which could be called "pagan contact þættir," includes *Sǫrla þáttr, Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts,* and *Tóka þáttr,* as well as *Norna-Gests þáttr* and *Albani þáttr,* which were already in Jón's exemplar.[7] These þættir emphasize "the historical gulf between the Old and New Dispensations" (Harris 1980, 166) by means of the supernaturally lengthened life of the visiting stranger (Norna-Gestr, Tóki) or the supernaturally lengthened battle between Heðinn and Hǫgni (the *Hjaðningavíg*), which enables Christian men to gain first-hand knowledge of the past.[8] The second subgenre, which Harris calls "conversion þættir," includes *Vǫlsa þáttr,* as well as *Rǫgnvalds þáttr ok Rauðs, Sveins þáttr ok Finns, Svaða þáttr ok Arnórs kerlingarnefs, Þórhalls þáttr knapps,* and *Eindriða þáttr ilbreiðs,* which were also in Jón's exemplar. Conversion þættir "comprise as their central narrative moment a conflict or opposition of Christianity and paganism" (Harris 1980, 162).

Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar was a particularly fertile ground for typological narratives, since King Olaf, who began the process of converting Iceland and Norway, had been understood at least since the days of Oddr Snorrason as "prefigur-

6. Of Jón's other additions, Harris groups *Hrómundar þáttr halta* with the þættir that take place in Iceland and resemble miniature, feud-structured family sagas, *Þorsteins þáttr skelks* with the large and well-known group of "king and Icelander" þættir (see Harris 1972, 1976), *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* and *Orms þáttr Stórólfssonar* with the short biographies of Icelandic heroes comparable to the mytho-heroic sagas. *Styrbjarnar þáttr Svíakappa, Hróa þáttr heimska, Eymundar þáttr hrings,* and *Eindriða þáttr ok Erlings* have not been identified with any subgenres.

7. Harris does not include *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* with the pagan contact þættir, but it obviously forms part of this group. For an early argument that *Þorsteins þáttr* is a "highly propagandist Christian tale," see Binns 1953–57. The case of *Þorsteins þáttr* and *Sǫrla þáttr* illustrates some of the problems with the traditional definition of the mytho-heroic sagas. For all the narrative and thematic parallels between them, *Sǫrla þáttr* is called a mytho-heroic saga and *Þorsteins þáttr* is not, simply because the latter has an Icelandic protagonist. It would be preferable to have the primary designation of both be "pagan contact þáttr."

8. For a detailed analysis of the Hjaðningavíg and of *Sǫrla þáttr,* see Rowe 1989, 30–86.

ing" St. Olaf (who finished the conversion) in the same way that John the Baptist prefigured Christ. More accurately, we may say that typological narratives became interpolated into the history of the conversion precisely because this was the event that justified typological historiography in the first place, and not merely because the central figure of the saga was deeply imbued with typologically derived meaning. When the Flateyjarbók version of *Óláfs saga helga* is discussed at the conclusion of this paper, it will be argued that the thematic focus of the þættir Jón adds is nearly entirely on the workings of the new law, rather than on the differences between the old law and the new.

Jón's exemplar of *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* thus contained many þættir informed by Christian themes and structures, such as *Kjartans þáttr Óláfssonar* and *Norna-Gests þáttr.* Whether consciously or not, Jón's choice of þættir with which to expand the saga further seems to have been influenced by a similar typological orientation, with the result that these six texts which he added can best be understood within the context of *Óláfs saga*'s typological history. The first one, *Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds,* takes place in the days of the pagan Jarl Hákon of Hlaðir, when the release of the Scandinavians from the devil's power is not even a possibility glimpsed on the horizon. The second and third þættir, *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* and *Sǫrla þáttr,* serve to introduce the conversions of Iceland and Norway respectively, and accordingly show the pagan afterlife to be like hell before the harrowing — containing both good and evil spirits, with the good ones in need of a Christian to free them from their oppression. The fourth, fifth, and six þættir that Jón added *(Hrómundar þáttr halta, Þorsteins þáttr skelks,* and *Orms þáttr Stórólfssonar)* take place after the conversion and demonstrate the extent to which this event has changed the nature of reality in Iceland and Norway. *Hrómundar þáttr* (which takes place in Iceland) does not deal with the supernatural at all. *Þorsteins þáttr skelks* (which takes place in Norway) shows how Olaf protects those who trust in him from the devil. *Orms þáttr* (which ranges throughout Scandinavia and includes a pilgrimage to Rome) contains both helpful and harmful monsters, but nothing of the pagan deities. In the Christianized world of these þættir, Óðinn and the rest of the gods have vanished completely, and the dead are now depicted as inhabiting heaven or hell, rather than the magic islands, mountains, stones, and grave-mounds of pagan belief.

Medieval historians do not seem to have thought that the old dispensation was populated solely by virtuous pagans; rather, this period was often viewed with ambiguity and depicted in such a way as to show the happy necessity of the conversion. Gerd Wolfgang Weber thus understands the red- and blue-clothed *jarðbúar* of *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* as the spiritually positive and negative aspects of the heathen age (Weber 1986, 310), an interpretation we may extend to the two pagan heroes in hell that we learn about in *Þorsteins þáttr skelks,* where the "good" pagan hero Sigurðr endures his sufferings well, while the "bad" hero Starkaðr shrieks and bellows in pain (Harris 1976, 14; Lindow 1986, 266–67).

Þorsteinn's liberation of the good *jarðbúar* is the first step of freeing pagan man from the earthly tyranny of the devil; not until baptism can man be redeemed in the spirit. The synchronic representation of the positive and negative aspects of pagan man by the two *jarðbúar* brothers has its diachronic counterpart in the representation of the succession of paganism by Christianity in the successive generations of a family, as Paul Schach (1977) and Joseph Harris (1986) have pointed out. In *Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds,* Þorleifr and his siblings are the ill-fated older generation. His brothers' inability to avenge him is historically controlled; it is explained that they fail because "[Hákon] hafði þá enn eigi öllu illu því fram farit, sem honum varð lagit sér til skammar ok skaða" [Hákon had not then yet accomplished all the evil that was fated for him for shame and scathe] (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:237), i.e., the time had not yet come for the old law to be overturned. Þorleifr, whose poetry brings death to himself and others, is contrasted with the younger Hallbjǫrn, whose poetry brings him wealth and a high reputation. In *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts,* Brynjarr the *jarðbúi* is succeeded by his Christian namesake Brynjarr Þorsteinsson, and the proud Ívarr is contrasted with his humbler and more spiritual son. In *Sǫrla þáttr,* even Hǫgni, who at first seems pitiably victimized by the gods, appears in battle as a figure of wrath crowned with a helm of terror. Heðinn's sincere attempt to bring about a reconciliation surely marks him as the "improved" younger generation.

The placement of these þættir in salvation-historical time also governs their use of the imagery of hell. Þorleifr's *níð* seems to turn Hákon's hall into hell on earth: it is dark, weapons terrifyingly fight by themselves, and men experience physical torments. We may compare this with the "dökk dýflissa dáligra kvala með eymd ok ánauð utan enda" [dark dungeon of bad torments with misery and oppression without end] (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:229) of hell, to which Jón Þórðarson condemns Hákon eternally in the preface; it is as if Þorleifr were revealing the true nature of Hákon's hall. When the purely pagan world of *Þorleifs þáttr* yields to the pre-Christian world of *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* and *Sǫrla þáttr,* hellish places are limited to geographical sites associated with the pagan afterlife, such as the grave mound of Brynjólfr and his brother, or the island where the daily renewal of the battle between Heðinn and Hǫgni seems to parody life in Valhalla. However, the pagan characters trapped in the "anti-Valhalla" on Háey are not savoring the barbaric joys of eternal mayhem. With a grave, anxious face *(áhyggjusvip),* Heðinn complains of the great *atkvæði* (spell or judgment) and *ánauð* (oppression) which they suffer, and speaks of lifting Óðinn's curse in terms of *undanlausn* (release or redemption). The þáttr-author reinforces the hellishness of the Hjaðningavíg by referring to the curse as *áfelli* (damnation) and *skapraun* (trial, tribulation). In the entirely Christian world of *Þorsteins þáttr skelks,* hell is identified as such and appears to occupy its proper cosmographical position.

The operation of spiritual grace is similarly historically controlled. As Carol Clover has pointed out, the words for "(good) luck" or "(good) fortune" *(gæfa*,

gipta, *hamingja),* were "by the thirteenth century fully harmonized with the Latin complex of terms and notions referring to 'grace' *(gratia, donum, munus)"* (Clover 1985, 266). While Peter Hallberg has drawn attention to the fact that the fortune-words are very infrequent in specifically Christian texts and that when they do occur there, they have no special spiritual overtones (1973, 162–66), the reverse seems to be true for texts such as the added þættir, i.e., those which are not overtly didactic. Hermann Pálsson, in attempting to distinguish between pagan and Christian concepts of *gæfa,* lists five examples of kings endowing men with their own *hamingja* (Pálsson 1975, 141n18). In the þættir added to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar,* we most definitely have further examples not only of a king whose luck can be extended to one of his men, but of one whose "luck" cannot be anything other than synonymous with Christian grace. Attention is even drawn to the converse — the old-dispensation *Þorleifs þáttr* notes that King Sveinn tjúguskegg of Denmark has no *gipta* to protect his protégé Þorleifr. As will be argued below in the discussion of *Óláfs saga helga,* the situation described in *Þorleifs þáttr,* in which a Danish king cannot protect an Icelander from the hostility of the ruler of Norway, is the negative pagan inverse of the situation in *Auðunar þáttr vestfirzka,* in which an Icelander who has had a run-in with the Norwegian king finds that his luck has turned for the better once a Christian Danish king takes him under his wing.[9] The case of *Orms þáttr,* whose protagonist does not derive his luck from King Olaf, will be dealt with shortly.

Recognition of the use of typology, conversion stereotypes, and Augustinian notions of salvation history in Old Norse literature has led to the further recognition of the joint nature of religion and politics in the Middle Ages — a particular problem for Iceland, which for several centuries was a nation without a king (Harris 1986; Weber 1987). In the added þættir, Jón's emphasis on Olaf Tryggvason's power over pagan gods and evil demons joins religion and politics in two ways. The first way has to do with these texts' equation of economic oppression with the spiritual oppression of sin. Although salvation was viewed in economic terms throughout the Middle Ages, chiefly in the notion of Christ's paying off mankind's debt of sin by means of the Crucifixion, four of Jón's six added þættir characterize paganism as involving the forced payment of a tax or tribute. For example, in the purely pagan milieu of the *jarðbúar* of *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts,* the spiritual oppression of the good pagans is represented by their economic oppression by the bad ones. Each night Brynjarr and his fellows must pay his evil brother either one mark of gold, two of silver, or a treasure of equivalent value. Brynjarr says of his brother, "Hann veitir mér þungar búsifjar" [He is a bad neighbor to me]

9. The modern Icelandic emendation of the Flateyjarbók title of this text, *Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds* [The tale of Þorleifr Earls'-Poet] to *Þorleifs þáttr jarlsskálds* [The tale of Þorleifr Earl's-Poet], on the grounds that there is no reason to believe that the historical Þorleifr ever composed poetry for any other earl but Jarl Hákon misses the point of the narrative. See the discussion of *Hróa þáttr heimska,* p. 23.

(Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:280). In the same þáttr, spiritual redemption immediately leads to economic redemption; Þorsteinn is rewarded with twelve marks of silver and a magic piece of gold for freeing Brynjarr from the tyranny of his brother, and the first thing he does afterwards is to give the silver to his thrall companion to purchase his freedom with. The phrase "He is a bad neighbor to me" recurs in *Orms þáttr,* when the friendly half-troll Menglǫð says it of her monstrous half brother, Brúsi (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 2:10). She is explaining to Ormr how Brúsi rules an island that is better than her island, which she might be forced to leave. After Ormr kills Brúsi and Brúsi's mother, he gives the islands and most of the troll's treasure to a grateful Menglǫð, taking the less valuable part for himself.

Two of the added texts do not simply make a general equation between the two kinds of oppression, but specifically combine the spiritual burden of paganism with the particular economic oppression of Icelanders by Norwegians, thus hinting at the fourteenth-century Icelandic resentment of the Bergen merchants' monopoly on trade with Iceland. Icelandic ships were three times seized in Norway for contravening the monopoly (Þorsteinsson and Jónsson 1991, 136). In 1362, the royal agent in Hálogaland arrested Þorsteinn Eyjólfsson and his companions — who had come to plead a suit before the king — for contravening the monopoly, and he seized their ship and goods (Storm 1888, 279.1–6, 408.12–16). Like Þorleifr in his þáttr, Þorsteinn had set off from Iceland once before and was driven back by a storm, only reaching Norway on his second try (Þorsteinsson and Grímsdóttir 1989, 241; Arnórsson 1949–53, 29–30, 30n2). The fate of Þorsteinn's ship and goods is only slightly exaggerated in the Flateyjarbók version of *Þorleifs þáttr,* where Jarl Hákon hangs Þorleifr's crew, confiscates his wares, and burns his ship when Þorleifr refuses to let him determine to whom and for how much he will sell the goods he brought from Iceland. Judging from the texts mentioned by Jónas Kristjánsson in the introduction of his edition of the þáttr, these details do not seem to be original (Kristjánsson 1956, xciv). The earliest explanation of why Þorleifr composed the *níð* is found in the S-version of Oddr Snorrason's *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* (Stock. perg. 4º no. 18, fols. 35r–54v), which is dated to circa 1300 and thus predates the monopoly (Degnbol et al. 1989, 475). This text specifies only that Hákon burned Þorleifr's ship (Jónsson 1932, 71.27–29). There is no mention of the fate of the crew or the trading goods, as there is in Flateyjarbók, and I suspect that *Þorleifs þáttr* was deliberately revised in order to create a parallel with the 1362 incident.

The þáttr-redactor carefully makes Þorleifr's revenge fit Hákon's crime: Þorleifr pretends to eat greedily as a "punishment" for Hákon's greed in stealing his wares, and his spell making the weapons in Hákon's hall fight by themselves results in the death of some of Hákon's men, just as Hákon caused Þorleifr's men to be killed. The parallelism between Hákon's and Þorleifr's deeds is emphasized by the use of the word *vegsummerki* (traces of a [bad] deed) with regard to both (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:230.24, 234.6). But whereas the *vegsummerki* of

Hákon's deed leave Þorleifr unscathed, the *vegsummerki* of Þorleifr's deed appear on Hákon's body. To use the language of kennings, we may say that Hákon's burning of Þorleifr's ship is punished by Þorleifr's damaging the ship of Hákon's soul. This is not the only punishment Hakon will receive, of course; we know from Jón's preface to the þáttr that Hákon will go to hell when he dies. His damnation — not to mention the humiliation that he suffers from Þorleifr's *níð* — may well have struck late-fourteenth-century Icelandic audiences as particularly satisfying and deserved. Certainly Hákon, who combines apostasy with hostility towards Icelanders, functions as the antithesis of King Olaf.

The same audience might also have felt sympathetic sorrow when hearing of Þorleifr's death at the hands of the wooden golem that Hákon sends to Iceland to avenge that humiliation. Unlike Egill Skallagrímsson, another Icelander who declared *níð* against the ruler of Norway, Þorleifr — and the audience of Flateyjarbók — did not find Iceland to be a refuge from the long arm of the Norwegian king. A fourteenth-century audience might well have associated the Terminator-like assassin from Norway, who ignores the sanctions against killing at the Alþingi, with the *hirðstjórar* and *sýslumenn,* the king's representatives in Iceland, who abused their power with violence and extortion.

The figure of the confiscating Norwegian official is metamorphosed into that of the thieving Norwegian bully in *Hrómundar þáttr halta,* in which the Norwegian "traders" are suspected of being Vikings or robbers trying to sell their loot. *Hrómundar þáttr* may even have been reinterpreted by its fourteenth-century audience as a kind of allegory of Norwegian imperialism. Under duress, an Icelandic farmer agrees to give the Norwegian traders winter lodgings only if they swear an oath to obey the laws of the land, avoid aggressive behavior, and commit no crimes. They will receive shelter, but no food. (This last stipulation may have triggered memories of the lengthy Icelandic efforts to halt the export of food products during times of famine.) Instead, the Norwegians' leader seduces the farmer's daughter and is suspected of stealing and slaughtering a herd of horses to feed his party.[10] The Norwegians are outlawed, but on their way out of the country, the twelve burly Vikings attack the family of the man who accuses them — Hrómundr, his two sons, and his fifteen-year-old grandson — who defend themselves with farm implements and pieces of wood. The Norwegians' difficult behavior may well have struck a chord in Jón Hákonarson, who undoubtedly knew that in 1313 his grandfather, Gizurr galli, had run into some trouble with Norwegian traders at the market-harbor of Gáseyri, and was wounded so severely that it took him a year to recover. In 1315, he — like Hrómundr's surviving son, Hallsteinn — traveled to Norway, presumably to seek justice from the king (see Jóhannesson 1958, 302–8 and the sources cited there).

10. A similar motif is found in *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts,* in which the Norwegian Ívarr ljómi comes to Iceland on a trading voyage and seduces the sister of the man who provides him with winter lodgings.

The second way in which Jón Þórðarson's additions to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* unite the issues of religion, politics, and economics lies in their treatment of the question of cultural paternity. Since the foundation of their country, Icelanders had been concerned with genealogies and the deeds of their ancestors, in part to answer charges that the first settlers were the descendants of slaves. The Icelanders' anxiety about their origins led them to create a large body of texts establishing Iceland as the legitimate and even noble child of Norway. By the time Flateyjarbók was being written, however, the relationship between Iceland and Norway no longer seemed as natural or inalienable as it had in earlier centuries. King Magnús Eiríksson reserved the rule of Iceland for himself in 1355, and the subsequent association between Iceland and Sweden lasted until 1374 and loosened the formal ties between Iceland and Norway. The oath of homage to Olaf Hákonarson in 1383 was retrospectively felt to have begun the long attachment to Denmark. Even when the sovereign of Iceland was once more the same person as the ruler of Norway, the decline of Norwegian power and prosperity might well have filled Icelanders with a new sort of anxiety, a fear that the parent country had lost interest in or was abandoning its offspring.

A king's saga lends itself well to the treatment of such themes, as one medieval political metaphor represented the king as the father of his people. In the case of *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar,* the Christian content adds a further dimension; in imitation of Christ's command that Christians leave their parents to follow him, protagonist after protagonist leaves (or loses) his natural father to serve his spiritual father, King Olaf. Moreover, the narrative structure of the þættir specifically casts the acquisition of the spiritual father — and the concomitant privilege of giving one's life for him — as the compensation for worldly injuries suffered or the reward for feats of valor. For example, in *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts,* Þorsteinn's reward for slaying the trolls is not a gift of gold, land, a title, or the king's daughter, but the privilege of being able to follow King Olaf all his life and to die defending him at the battle of Svǫldr. In *Sǫrla þáttr,* Ívarr similarly receives no reward for ending the Hjaðningavíg, except for Olaf's praise and the opportunity to die in his service. In *Hrómundar þáttr halta,* Hallsteinn receives no compensation for the slaying of his father and brother but the privilege of becoming King Olaf's man and dying for him on the Long Serpent. In short, all these texts confound our expectations for their genres. In the case of the two þættir that resemble folktales or monster-slayer stories, we would expect the narratives to end with the hero being rewarded with treasure and a wife. In the case of the þáttr with an Icelandic-family-saga plot, we would expect the narrative to end with the restoration of social balance — the deaths of the kinsmen will be compensated for with money, or the sons of the feuding protagonists will respect each other and keep the negotiated peace settlement. With either genre, we would expect a picture of a functioning, continuing society. Instead we see a group that essentially commits mass suicide at the battle of Svǫldr. The reward that Jón Þórðarson holds out is truly the Christian

vision of the redemption of the individual soul, rather than the secular vision of a society harmoniously reproducing itself.

Jón and the þáttr-authors he uses do not neglect the political aspects of the notion of paternity. While Jón's exemplar included accounts of Norwegians leaving their fathers (e.g., *Sveins þáttr ok Finns*), his own emphasis on Icelanders leaving their fathers for King Olaf foregrounds the relationship between the two countries. In *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts,* the acknowledgment of the illegitimate Þorsteinn by his natural father coincides with his baptism and acknowledgment by his spiritual father, King Olaf. The picture of the illegitimate Icelandic son forcing the proud Norwegian father to acknowledge him (both because of his accomplishments and because the point of Þorsteinn's sword is aimed at Ívarr's chest) must have been a satisfying one for Icelandic audiences in the fourteenth century.

The fantasy of paternal acknowledgment undergoes a further development in Jón's next addition, *Sǫrla þáttr,* which deals with the same characters as *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts.* This text depicts the recuperation of the natural father. That is, once Þorsteinn has proven himself, as related in his þáttr, it is his father's turn to do so next. Armed with the sword his son had once threatened to use against him and protected with the good luck of his king, Ívarr ljómi puts an end to the Hjaðningavíg, lifting Óðinn's curse and earning Olaf's praise. Jón's second and third additions to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* thus reaffirm the filial relationship between Iceland and Norway through the agency of Olaf Tryggvason. The fourth through sixth additions to *Óláfs saga* restage the progression outlined above. *Hrómundar þáttr* relates another story of the loss of the Icelandic natural father and his replacement with King Olaf; *Þorsteins þáttr skelks* demonstrates the benevolent coexistence of Olaf's paternalism and the Icelanders' self-will; and the remarkable *Orms þáttr* transcends the power of Olaf altogether.

This last addition of Jón's to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* depicts an Icelander who is not only a greater fighter than the champions of the Long Serpent we have met in the earlier added þættir — Þorsteinn uxafót, Ívarr ljómi, Hallsteinn Hrómundarson, and Þorsteinn skelkr[11] — but who has also outgrown the role of son of the Norwegian father. Ormr proves himself to be stronger and luckier than his Danish sworn brother, successfully calls on God and St. Peter — rather than Olaf — to aid him against monsters, is said to have *hamingja* that is not attributable to the king, and he misses the battle of Svǫldr because he was on a pilgrimage to Rome. After Ormr demonstrates to Jarl Eiríkr how he would have defended the Long Serpent had he been on it, the jarl concludes that in that case, the ship never would have been captured. The implication is that Ormr could have saved Olaf

11. In addition to his general prowess, Ormr specifically surpasses two of the champions in their specialties: he outdoes Þorsteinn uxafót in using a ship's boom, and he handles Einarr þambarskelfir's mighty bow as if it were a toy. Faulkes comments that the Einarr episode seems a little tame, coming after Ormr's other exploits ([1968], 30), but it is conceivable that Jón added this episode to show how Ormr surpassed the Norwegian champions as well as the Icelandic ones.

from defeat, or in other words, that an Icelander — no longer characterized as a son, as he was baptized in Iceland, not in Norway by Olaf — has the power to save the agent of spiritual salvation himself. *Sǫrla þáttr*'s recuperation of the natural father is thus paralleled and expanded in *Orms þáttr* into at least the possibility of the recuperation of the spiritual father. *Orms þáttr* is also generically expanded; unlike most þættir, which usually treat a single episode of a man's life, *Orms þáttr* resembles the family saga in its chronological range, beginning in the days of Haraldr hárfagr and ending after the reign of Olaf Tryggvason.[12] In terms of the Icelandic abandonment anxiety hypothesized above — that the parent country had lost interest in its offspring — *Orms þáttr* offers a reassuring vision of an Iceland that has grown out of its childhood dependence on the fatherland and that can now assume its proper "adult" position as a member of European Christendom.

Jón Þórðarson seems to have chosen or (possibly) revised these six þættir to form two linked groups or cycles of three. *Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds, Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts,* and *Sǫrla þáttr* form one sequence that moves from the time of paganism through baptism to the post-baptismal defeat of pagan gods and monsters, and the erasure of the signs of their presence. There is an escalation of evil from a wooden man to trolls and finally to Óðinn himself, and a corresponding escalation of the role of Olaf Tryggvason, from complete absence to a distant benevolence, and finally to a close presence that even through an agent is stronger than Óðinn. *Hrómundar þáttr halta, Þorsteins þáttr skelks,* and *Orms þáttr Stórólfssonar* form a similar sequence. The role of Olaf Tryggvason again completes the trajectory from absence to a close presence, ending in *Orms þáttr* by being transcended altogether. Both groups of þættir enact the progression from the loss of the natural father and his replacement by Olaf as spiritual father to the recuperation of the natural father, which in *Orms þáttr* is superseded by the possibility of the rescue of the spiritual father.

The similar dynamics of the two groups of þættir are set up by the parallels between the pairs of beginning and middle þættir. The pair of ending þættir contains fewer parallels; instead, these texts demonstrate what the conversion has and has not changed. The þættir that begin their respective sequences — *Þorleifs þáttr* and *Hrómundar þáttr* — both depict the wretchedness that prevailed in Olaf Tryggvason's absence. Their plots describe Icelandic resistance to the economic oppression of evil Norwegian pagans and the unjust suffering that results from it. In both narratives, compensation is merely hinted at, and that only for the next

12. *Orms þáttr Stórólfssonar* also comments on saga genres in its many borrowings and loans, as the þáttr-author seems to be trying to paint Ormr as surpassing heroes such as Qrvar-Oddr, Grettir Ásmundarson, and Egill Skallagrímsson. The imitation of *Qrvar-Odds saga* becomes unintentionally ironic, for Oddr is depicted in his saga as a pre-Christian hero, which makes Ormr a post-pre-Christian. Again, it is possible that Jón noticed this aspect of *Orms þáttr* and was inspired to rework it so that Ormr would be depicted as surpassing the Long-Serpent champions as well as the other heroes. The historicization of the first part of the þáttr with loans from *Landnámabók* resembles the first part of *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts,* whose account of Úlfljótr is also drawn — by Jón? — from *Landnámabók.*

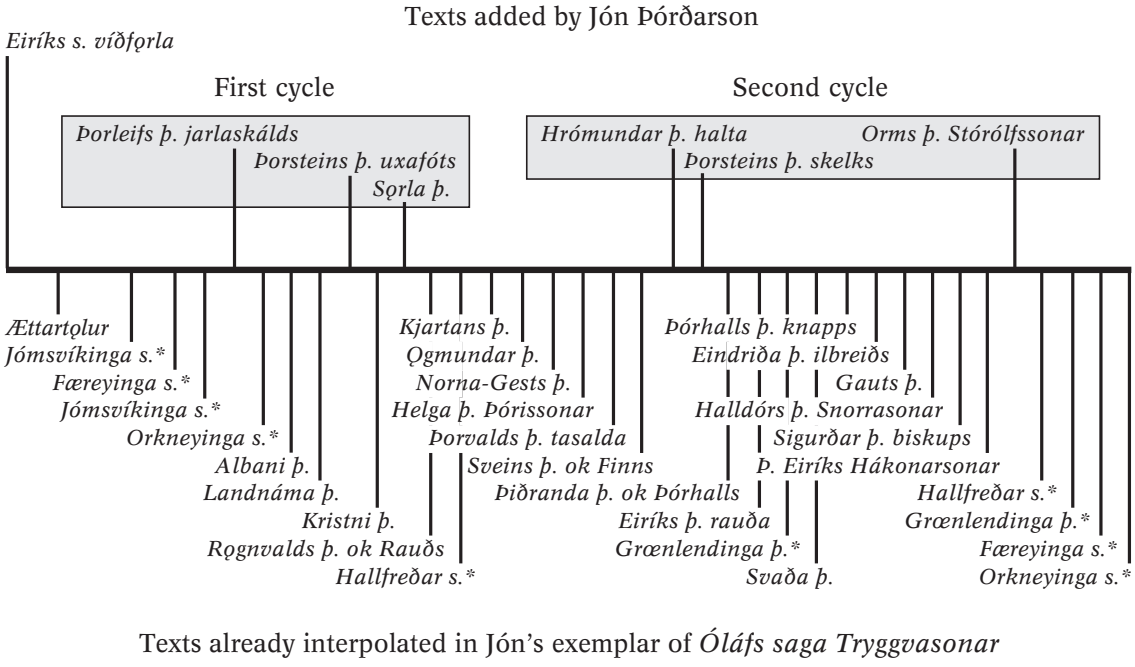

Fig. 1. Texts interpolated into the Flateyjarbók *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar.* Asterisks indicate the first and last segments of the independent sagas that are interlaced with the chapters of *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar.* Note that *Orkneyinga saga* and *Færeyinga saga* do not end in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* but continue into *Óláfs saga helga.* For *Kristni þáttr* and *Kjartans þáttr Óláfssonar,* only the first of the interlaced segments is indicated.

generation: the shepherd Hallbjǫrn gains the gift of poetry on Þorleifr's gravemound, resulting in good and goods, and Hallsteinn Hrómundarson joins the court of Olaf and dies defending him on the Long Serpent. Both þættir depict the figure of Miðfjarðar-Skeggi as the protector or teacher of the protagonist. The pagan-age *Þorleifs þáttr* has Miðfjarðar-Skeggi help Þorleifr by teaching him magic, but *Hrómundar þáttr,* inserted into *Óláfs saga* after the account of the conversion, has Miðfjarðar-Skeggi use the laws of Iceland to exile those who rob his countrymen. The two middle þættir both recount the experiences of good and bad pagans in the afterlife. In the prebaptismal section of *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts,* the evil pagans oppress their good brothers and demand tribute from them, a practice that the designated pre-Christian Þorsteinn is able to end. In the postbaptismal *Þorsteins þáttr skelks,* good and bad pagans alike are discovered to be suffering in hell. Both Þorsteinns are saved from danger by their faith in Olaf and his religion, and both are rewarded by being privileged to serve Olaf for the rest of their lives and to die for him on the Long Serpent. In addition to the similarity of names linking the two narratives, part or all of both take place on the Norwegian farm called Reina. The two final þættir tell how Christian heroes make use of their "good luck" to put an end to a conflict between monstrous pagans in an island setting. Ívarr ljómi's luck comes from Olaf, and like the other Long Serpent heroes, he is privileged to live and die with him. Ormr, never a retainer of Olaf's, calls on

God and St. Peter, and while he is not present at the battle of Svǫldr, it is judged that if he had been there, the Long Serpent would not have been captured. The differences between *Sǫrla þáttr* and *Orms þáttr* are partly those of their respective typological ages: the pagan gods have been replaced by monsters, and the combination of factors working towards the oppression of the Icelanders has lost its spiritual component. However, further differences between these two þættir suggest that the meaning of Olaf Tryggvason for the Icelanders is more than just religious: at the end of the first cycle, Olaf Tryggvason's power is shown to be greater than that of Óðinn himself, but at the end of the second, Olaf Tryggvason has been eclipsed as a source of power — the protagonist calls on God and St. Peter instead. And the protagonist, too, is radically changed; in *Sǫrla þáttr* he is the Norwegian father whose achievements equal those of his Icelandic son, but in *Orms þáttr* he is the Icelandic son who surpasses the retainers of Olaf in his physical accomplishments and who has no need for Olaf's spiritual aid.

The structural parallels and thematic development of the added þættir suggest that they were carefully chosen and — perhaps — reworked to convey their morals as emphatically as possible. Jón's placement of these six texts within *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* seems equally purposeful; see figure 1.

Þorleifs þáttr is inserted well ahead of the first þáttr in Jón's exemplar and serves to introduce Olaf's defeat of Jarl Hákon and conquest of Norway. Significantly, it is the first embedded narrative with an Icelandic protagonist; this not only emphasizes by example Hákon's evilness, but also suggests that the religious-economic relationship that inextricably links Iceland and Norway is nearly as old as Iceland itself. *Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts* and *Sǫrla þáttr* occur close together and quite a bit later in the saga. As is discussed above, they are themselves a pair of linked þættir, partly as a result of their function of introducing the two conversions. The second cycle of þættir forms a chiasmus with the first cycle. *Hrómundar þáttr* and *Þorsteins þáttr skelks* occur one chapter apart in the second half of the saga. Like *Þorleifs þáttr* at the beginning, *Orms þáttr* is placed almost at the end of the saga; it and the end of *Hallfreðar saga vandræðaskálds* form the Icelandic reaction to the fall of King Olaf.

As Joseph Harris observes in his discussion of Icelandic typological perspectives, "The categories of secular and sacred turn out to be at very least intricately interwoven" (1986, 200). This is certainly true for Jón Þórðarson. His dependence on Christian doctrine and his particular belief in the spiritual power of Olaf Tryggvason turn out to be inseparable from his Icelandic perspective, which includes a strong sense of Norway as the fatherland. In *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar,* he establishes the basic difference between the old dispensation and the new — pagan rulers demand tribute, but Christian kings bestow grace — in terms of the relationship between Iceland and Norway. When his examination of the economic oppression of sin yields in *Óláfs saga helga* to the exploration of the economics of charity, the political context remains the same. As noted above, Jón Þórðarson's

revisions to *Óláfs saga helga* are more extensive and complex than his additions to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar,* so limits of space preclude a full-scale analysis here, but a brief look at the first two þættir added to *Óláfs saga helga* will serve to illustrate this theme.

Styrbjarnar þáttr Svíakappa and *Hróa þáttr heimska* are a pair of þættir inserted into the account of Olaf Haraldsson's suit for the hand of the Swedish princess Ingigerðr. Their purpose seems to be to illustrate the nature of the Swedish court and introduce Þorgnýr the law-speaker, who will persuade the Swedish king to accept the Norwegian king as his son-in-law. However, these texts also tie the sagas of the two Olafs together, for they pick up the themes introduced in some of the þættir added to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* and develop them further.

> *Styrbjarnar þáttr Svíakappa* (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 2:146–49) tells of an unpleasant young Swedish prince who becomes the leader of the Jomsvikings. He makes war on the Danes, which the Danish king Haraldr Gormsson settles by promising the young man one hundred ships and the hand of his daughter. However, Styrbjǫrn shows up with a vast fleet and forces the king to give him two hundred ships and himself as a hostage. Styrbjǫrn leads his army back to Sweden, where he intends to challenge his uncle, the king. He has sacrificed to Þórr for victory, but his uncle has sacrificed to Óðinn and has promised ten years of his life if he wins. When the Swedish king casts the spear Óðinn has given him over the opposing army, crying "Óðinn has you all," Styrbjǫrn and his men are destroyed by a landslide. Haraldr Gormsson and the Danes escape.
>
> *Hróa þáttr heimska* (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 2:149–58) makes major characters out of what were supporting roles in *Styrbjarnar þáttr:* Þorgnýr the lawman, and three brothers who are the unpopular advisors to the Swedish king. Hrói is a Dane who is much better at making money than he is at keeping it. He goes to King Sveinn Haraldsson and proposes that they form a trading alliance, since the king's good luck is sure to outweigh his own bad luck. The king agrees, and Hrói soon becomes a rich man. Eventually Hrói is desirous of testing his luck again, and he breaks off the partnership with Sveinn, although the king advises against it. Hrói takes a ship full of his own cargo to Sweden, where one of the king's advisors soon gets the best of the deal, and the other two bring unfounded charges against him. Hrói's one friend is the daughter of Þorgnýr, who tricks her father into providing Hrói with advice. When the case against Hrói is brought before the king, Hrói is able to turn his opponents' arguments against them and have two of them put to death and the third exiled. Hrói marries Þórgnýr's daughter, returns to Denmark long enough to present many valuable gifts to King Sveinn, and lives out his days in Sweden.

In structure and theme, this pair of þættir closely resembles such texts as *Gautreks saga* and *Auðunar þáttr vestfirzka,* in which *caritas* leads to profits, and spiritual grace bestows secular good luck (for a detailed argument, see Rowe 1998). The juxtaposition of the pagan sacrifices in one þáttr and the metamorphosis of the farmer's foolish son in the other particularly recalls the interlaced narrative threads of *Gautreks saga,* which contrast the cost of gifts from Óðinn with the rewards of the gift of grace. As the first of the added þættir of *Óláfs saga helga,* these þættir also beg to be compared with *Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds* and

Hrómundar þáttr halta, the first texts of the two þættir-cycles added to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar.*

At first glance, these pairs of þættir do not seem to have much in common. *Þorleifs þáttr* and *Hrómundar þáttr* deal with the injustice of Hákon Hlaðajarl and the Norwegian economic oppression of the Icelanders, whereas *Styrbjarnar þáttr* and *Hróa þáttr* deal with conflicts between Swedes and Danes. Salvation history no longer seems to be controlling the action; the two later þættir take place when Denmark is Christian and Sweden is still pagan. However, *Þorleifs þáttr* and *Hróa þáttr* do display a number of parallels. For one thing, the pagan Danish king Sveinn cannot change Þorleifr's bad luck, but the Christian one can change Hrói's. For another, both Þorleifr and Hrói lose their cargos, but Hrói gets his back, and the goods of his enemies to boot. Third — and most important — are the lawspeakers, Miðfjarðar-Skeggi and Þorgnýr. Miðfjarðar-Skeggi does his best to help his compatriots with his knowledge of magic and the law, but in a pagan age little avails. Þorgnýr, although in a pagan country, enjoys better success. Conversely, *Hróa þáttr* points out the geographical limitations of *gipta*, as King Sveinn can't guarantee Hrói's luck in another country. What these texts seem to be saying is that for justice to prevail, both grace and law are necessary. For prosperity to flourish, kings must be generous to their subjects, who will then repay them ten-fold. This, then, is the lesson for the young king of Norway. The þættir added to *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* had emphasized the process of salvation history, the redemption from the burden of sin, the soul's reward in the next world, and the familial relationship between king and Icelander. With the most important issue, the conversion, taken care of, the first two þættir added to *Óláfs saga helga* change their focus to the relationship between king and subject in this world.

Like the depictions of the afterlife and the operation of grace, the depiction of the economic component of this relationship is historically controlled. As argued above, paganism literally takes its toll from the Icelanders. In the age of the new law, however, oppression is converted to its opposite, generosity. While royal officials are still practicing barely disguised theft, the essential goodness or evilness of the kings themselves manifests itself as generosity or niggardliness. For example, the Flateyjarbók version of *Fóstbræðra saga* (another of Jón's additions) contrasts Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld's treatment at the hands of the miserly King Knútr with his reception by St. Olaf, who judges that the poet will not turn out to be an *ógæfumaðr* after all (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 2:296) and rewards his retainers with titles and money. Compare this with the heavenly rewards of Þorsteinn uxafót and Ívarr ljómi; as the "spiritual sons" of Olaf Tryggvason, they certainly benefited materially, but their þættir pass over this aspect of their experience.[13]

13. For a survey of all the þættir in Flateyjarbók and an alternative interpretation of Jón Þórðarson's versions of the sagas of the two Olafs, see Würth 1991.

The suggestion I made that Jón Þórðarson wanted King Olaf to "take a leaf from his namesake's book" was not idle linguistic play; when one considers the precarious position of the Norwegian ruling dynasty, which died out in the male line with Hákon háleggr in 1319 and was to end with the young King Olaf, it is impossible not to draw a connection between the theme of Jón's added þættir — the redemption of the Norwegian father by the Icelandic son — and Jón's own act of saving on vellum the history of the Norwegian kings, which is silently set against the contemporary context of the rule of that non-male, non-Norwegian, Queen Margareta. And this might account for one of the mysteries of Flateyjarbók — the use of *Eiríks saga víðfǫrla* as a preface. It is unlikely that Jón would have identified with one of his warrior protagonists, such as Þorsteinn uxafót or Ormr, but he might have seen himself in the figure of Eiríkr, whose stories about his travels to the earthly paradise enable the message of Christianity to be accepted more quickly by the Norwegians. Eiríkr helps prepare Norway for the process of conversion and thus can be said to prefigure Olaf Tryggvason. Jón, another teller of moral adventure tales *(ævintýr),* might have seen himself as the Icelandic heir of this particular father of Norwegian Christianity.

Appendix

For convenience, synopses of the six þættir added by Jón Þórðarson to his copy of *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* are provided below:

Þorleifs þáttr jarlaskálds (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:228–37) tells how Þorleifr Ásgeirsson, a foster son of Miðfjarðar-Skeggi, was outlawed from Iceland for his part in a killing. The first time he tries to leave Iceland, his boat is driven back by a storm, but the second time he equips himself with trading goods and manages to reach Vík in Norway, where Hákon Hlaðajarl is. The jarl offers to buy his wares, but when Þorleifr wants to set his own prices, the jarl is angered. The next day, when Þorleifr is out at the market, Hákon has all his wares seized, his men hanged, and his ship burned. When Þorleifr discovers what has happened, he travels to Denmark. There his poetry wins him the favor of King Sveinn, who eventually allows him to leave for Trondheim. Þorleifr disguises himself as a beggar and is admitted to Hákon's feast. He pretends to eat greedily (by hiding the food in a bag under his false beard), and afterwards persuades the jarl to listen to some verses. The verses begin by praising Hákon, but soon they cause him to itch, and then they cause the hall to go dark and all the weapons in it to fight by themselves, resulting in the death of many of the jarl's men. Þorleifr escapes, even though the doors are closed. After the mess is cleaned up, Hákon guesses who is responsible. Þorleifr returns to Denmark and tells King Sveinn the whole story. The king gives him the nickname *jarlaskáld* and a ship in which to return to Iceland. Hákon takes his revenge by calling on Þorgerðr Hǫrðabrúðr and her sister Irpa to animate a wooden man. The golem travels to Iceland and kills Þorleifr at the Alþingi. After his death, Þorleifr grants the gift of poetry to a shepherd named Hallbjǫrn who sleeps on his grave-mound. Þorleifr's brothers try to avenge him, but they only succeed in burning some of Hákon's temples.

Þorsteins þáttr uxafóts (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:274–90) begins with a description of how Iceland adopted its first set of laws while the country was still pagan. It then relates the conception of its hero. Ívarr ljómi, a haughty Norwegian of good looks and high estate, comes

to Iceland on a trading voyage. His host for the winter asks his sister to serve their guest, and she becomes pregnant. Ívarr denies that the child is his and returns to Norway. The bastard is named Þorsteinn and is raised by his mother and uncle. During his youth, Þorsteinn dreams that he is invited inside a grave-mound by its friendly, red-clad inhabitant, a man named Brynjarr. Once inside, he sees two groups of men sitting along the walls. The group to his right is Brynjarr's men, who are also pleasant-looking and dressed in red. On the left are the men of Brynjarr's brother Oddr. They and their leader look unpleasant and are dressed in blue. Oddr lords it over the others, demanding payment of some kind from them. Everyone pays up meekly except for Þorsteinn, who rewards Oddr with a blow from his axe. A fight breaks out between the two groups, and Þorsteinn notices that the *jarðbúar* he kills remain dead, but the ones struck by their fellows soon heal. Þorsteinn manages to slay all the blue-clad men, and Brynjarr, left with control of the grave-mound, rewards him and makes prophecies. Þorsteinn must go abroad and accept the change in faith. Brynjarr explains that the new faith is much better for those for whom it is fated, but that it is more difficult for those who were not created for it, such as *jarðbúar* like himself or his brother. He also asks Þorsteinn to have a son of his baptized with the name *Brynjarr.* Eventually Þorsteinn travels to Norway, decides to convert to Christianity, accomplishes such great deeds that Ívarr is forced to acknowledge the paternity claim, and is baptized by Olaf Tryggvason. Later he proves his strength by tearing a leg off a living ox, thus acquiring his nickname. He marries and has a son whom he names Brynjarr, but he returns to Olaf and dies with him on the Long Serpent.

Sǫrla þáttr (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:304–13) falls into three parts. The first describes how Freyja acquires a gold necklace from four dwarves, and how Óðinn commands Loki to steal it. Óðinn's condition for the return of the necklace to Freyja provides the motivation for the second part: she must arrange for two kings with a following of twenty kings each to fight with one another, and the battle must be enchanted in such a way that as soon as a fighter falls, he rises up and fights again. The motivation for the third part is provided by the last of Óðinn's stipulations: the battle will continue until a Christian who is both brave and gifted with the luck of his liege lord slays the fighters with his weapon. The second part of the þáttr describes how Sǫrli the Viking seizes the dragon-ship of King Hálfdan and becomes the sworn brother of Hálfdan's son, Hǫgni. After Sǫrli is killed, Freyja (in disguise) persuades a prince named Heðinn to seek out Hǫgni and test himself against him. The two, who each have a following of twenty kings, become sworn brothers. Freyja gives Heðinn a magic drink and suggests that he kill Hǫgni's queen and steal both his daughter Hildr and the dragon-ship. Heðinn does so, Hǫgni sets off in pursuit, and when he catches up with the younger man, they fight. This battle, known as the slaughter of the Hjaðnings *(Hjaðningavíg),* is the enchanted one required by Óðinn. The third section of the þáttr describes how, one hundred and forty-three years after the Hjaðningavíg began, King Olaf Tryggvason of Norway lands at the island where the battle is taking place. His ship's watchman, Ívarr ljómi, is approached by Heðinn, who asks him to slay the combatants and end the battle. Ívarr does so and returns to the ship, where the king praises the deed.

Hrómundar þáttr halta (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:455–60) tells how an Icelandic family of undistinguished background is taken advantage of by a band of Norwegians. Hrómundr is a large, good-looking man who is lame from a battle wound; he has two sons, Þorbjǫrn and Hallsteinn, and a teenaged grandson. One summer, a shipload of Norwegians arrive to do some trading. They don't get much business, as they appear to be Vikings disposing of their loot, but Þorbjǫrn and his brother-in-law Þórir visit them, and their leader persuades Þórir to put them up for the winter. Þórir is reluctant, and he makes them promise to obey the law. During the winter, the Norwegian persuades Þórir to let him marry his sister. Then five fat

studhorses belonging to Hrómundr disappear, and he suspects that the Norwegians have slaughtered them for food. The Norwegians deny it, and Hrómundr has them summonsed for theft. He doesn't go the the Thing himself; instead, he stays home and fortifies his farm. Miðfjarðar-Skeggi prosecutes the case for him, and the Norwegians are found guilty. They intend to sail away, but they stop at Hrómundr's farm first. Their attack is repulsed by Hrómundr and his sons and grandson, who between them manage to kill six of the Norwegians. Only Hallsteinn and the grandson survive, Hallsteinn to leave Iceland and become Olaf Tryggvason's man, and the grandson to inherit the farm.

Þorsteins þáttr skelks (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 1:462–64) recounts how one night, Olaf Tryggvason orders his men not to go to the outhouse alone. When the need arises, the Icelander Þorsteinn can't awaken a companion, and he goes out to the privy by himself. As he's sitting there, a demon appears through the seat farthest away. Þorsteinn asks the demon about hell and its tortures, and the demon reveals that the hero Sigurðr Fáfnisbani endures his torments most bravely, while Starkaðr endures his the worst. Þorsteinn asks what that sounds like, and the demon emits the most hideous cries. The noise awakens the king, who has the church bells rung, thus driving the demon away. The next day Olaf asks which of his men disobeyed his orders, and Þorsteinn confesses. The king asks if he was afraid. Þorsteinn replies that he doesn't know what it is to be afraid, but that the demon's third cry did cause a shudder *(skelkr)* in his breast. The king gives him this as a nickname, and Þorsteinn becomes his retainer and eventually dies with him on the Long Serpent.

Orms þáttr Stórólfssonar (Nordal et al. 1944–45, 2:1–14) begins with the genealogy of the Icelander Ormr, who is descended from Þorkell Naumdœlajarl and Ketill hœngr from Hrafnista. As a boy, Ormr uses his amazing strength in ways calculated to annoy his father, but eventually their relationship improves. Ormr takes passage to Hǫrðaland when he is thirty, and there he becomes sworn brothers with a Dane named Ásbjǫrn, who is visiting his mother's family. During a trip to Mœrr, they hear of some islands occupied by monsters, but Ormr dissuades Ásbjǫrn from taking them on. Instead they spend several years as Vikings and then amicably part ways, with Ormr returning to Iceland and avenging his father, who had been killed in his absence. Ásbjǫrn returns to the haunted Norwegian islands, where the mother monster easily dispatches him. Ormr learns of this and sets off to avenge his sworn brother. He is aided by the monster's sister, who has been exiled by her half brother to the smaller and less desirable of the two islands. However, he cannot overcome the monster and his mother until he prays to God and St. Peter for victory, swearing that he will undertake a pilgrimage to Rome. After destroying the monsters, he spends the winter in Trondheim and leaves for Rome the next summer. He returns the autumn after the battle of Svǫldr and becomes the guest of Jarl Eiríkr. Ormr is rather quiet, but one day he mentions that it would have taken even more time than it did to clear the deck of the Long Serpent if he had been on it. Eiríkr tests his claim in various ways and judges that the ship never would have been taken if Ormr had been on it. On another occasion, Ormr proves himself to be as mighty a bow-bender as Einarr þambarskelfir, and on a third he manages to carry the mast of the Long Serpent for three feet. (It took sixty men to lift it to shoulder height.) Ormr dies of old age in Iceland, having kept his faith well.

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