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*Morkinskinna*: The Earliest Icelandic Chronicle  
of the Norwegian Kings (1030–1157)

Translated with Introduction and Notes by  
Theodore M. Andersson and Kari Ellen Gade



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*and* KARI ELLEN GADE

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# Contents

Foreword by Patrick J. Stevens	vii
Preface	ix
Abbreviations	xi
Introduction	
The Narrative	1
The Manuscripts	5
The Native Sources	11
The Poetic Corpus of ÆMsk and the Question of Interpolation	25
The Oral Sources	57
Time and Place of Composition	66
Toward a Profile of the Author	72
Contents of <i>Morkinskinna</i>	85
The Text of <i>Morkinskinna</i>	89
Textual Notes	405
Explanatory Notes	418
Notes on Stanzas	466
Appendixes	
A. Concordance of Episodes in <i>Fagrskinna</i> and <i>Heimskringla</i>	497
B. The Latin Compendium of Hákon Ívarsson	512
Maps	516
Bibliography	523
Indexes	533



## Foreword

With this volume of *Islandica*, we note with sadness the death of P. M. Mitchell on 27 March 1999. Mitchell's tenure as series editor of *Islandica* stands among the many enduring contributions that he made to Old Norse and Icelandic studies.

After having served as professor of German and Scandinavian literatures at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Mitchell was appointed curator of the Fiske Icelandic Collection, Cornell University Library, in 1986, relinquishing that position in 1993.

*Bridal-Quest Romance in Medieval Iceland*, by Marianne E. Kalinke, which appeared in 1990, was the first *Islandica* volume to have been published under Mitchell's editorship. Mitchell had earlier written *Halldór Hermannsson* (1978) and co-compiled with Kenneth H. Ober *Bibliography of Modern Icelandic Literature in Translation, Including Works Written by Icelanders in Other Languages* (1975) and, with Marianne E. Kalinke, *Bibliography of Old Norse-Icelandic Romances* (1985).

Kristín Bragadóttir, head of the National Section of the National and University Library of Iceland, became series editor for *Islandica* on 1 January 1998. Kristín Bragadóttir has collaborated closely with colleagues at Cornell University Library, principally during the *SagaNet* project for the creation of an Icelandic National Digital Library of saga manuscript images. She is active in the fields of Old Norse and Icelandic literatures.

PATRICK J. STEVENS  
Curator, Fiske Icelandic Collection  
and Managing Editor, *Islandica*



## Preface

*Morkinskinna* marks the birth of a full-scale royal chronicle in a Scandinavian vernacular. But despite its key position in Norse-Icelandic letters it has suffered surprising neglect over more than a century of intense research in the field of Icelandic literature generally and the kings' sagas in particular. There is no normalized edition or annotated edition, nor is there a translation into any language. We have sought to remedy this deficiency by making the text available in English and providing some initial orientation on the source problems and the literary context of *Morkinskinna*. We hope that this first step may hasten the appearance of a standard edition in Icelandic with the necessary aids.

Our text is eclectic, drawing on alternative manuscripts where the main manuscript defaults, in the interest of producing a complete narrative. At the same time, we have attempted to make clear what precisely is in the main manuscript and where we have supplemented it from cognate redactions. Passages enclosed by asterisks denote illegible passages in the main manuscript, and the reader should consult the "Textual Notes" for details. Our aim has been to serve both the reader who wants a full account of the period covered by the text and the student who needs a discrimination of sources. We have tried as well to provide the necessary background in notes and appendices. Many of the problems are difficult to resolve, and we have not as a rule reached new or rigorous conclusions. We have tried rather to lay out the questions for future scholars. Most particularly we are aware of the preliminary nature of the "Explanatory Notes," which supply a bare minimum of information. In another five or ten years we could probably have worked out a proper commentary, but for the moment we are more interested in promoting some familiarity with the text before another century passes.

The prose in *Morkinskinna* is closely connected with the poetry and in many cases derives directly from the stanzas. The available editions of the verse generally rely on other manuscripts, such as those of *Heimskringla* and *Fagrskinna*, and therefore do not always reveal the basis of the narrative in *Morkinskinna*. To compensate for the missing critical edition we have elected to include the Norse originals of the stanzas in our prose translation. The Old Norse versions of the stanzas are accompanied by Old Norse prose paraphrases and English

translations. The edition of the verse is based on the main manuscript, supplemented by other manuscripts to be discussed below. With respect to the Old Norse texts, our edition reflects the language at the stage when the poetry was composed (ca. 1035–1150) rather than the language of the thirteenth-century manuscript. Thus “er” is rendered “es,” later lengthened forms (e.g., “Úlfr,” “sjálfr”) are given in their earlier nonlengthened versions, and so forth. Stanzas marked with asterisks indicate stanzas that occurred in defective sections of the *Morkinskinna* manuscript and have been added from *Flateyjarbók*. Information about emendations, variant readings, and earlier critical and diplomatic editions is detailed in the section “Notes on Stanzas.”

The project was initiated by Andersson under the generous and convivial auspices of the Stanford Humanities Center in 1992–93. He gratefully acknowledges the leisure provided by this grant and the genial atmosphere created by the director, Wanda Corn, and the associate director, Charlie Junkerman, as well as a number of colleagues, most immediately his partners in *otium*, Michael Fellman and Marleen Rozemond. During that year he finished the translation of the prose text, but despite the ideal working conditions, completion of the project was nowhere in sight. Gade then assumed the responsibility for the verse and provided both the translations and a new edition based on the texts in the *Morkinskinna* manuscript. The remaining work on introduction, notes, and appendixes was carried out collaboratively from the fall of 1994 to the fall of 1996. During this rather extended period we have of course become fond of our text and hope that in its present form it may gain the wider circulation that it surely deserves.

T. M. A.  
K. E. G.

*Bloomington, Indiana*

## Abbreviations

ÅNOH	<i>Aarbøger for nordisk oldkyndighed og historie</i>
Ágrip	See ÍF 29.
ANF	<i>Arkiv för nordisk filologi</i>
APS	<i>Acta Philologica Scandinavica</i>
ASC	<i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel with Supplementary Extracts from the Others.</i> Ed. Charles Plummer. 2 vols. Vol. I: <i>Text, Appendices and Glossary.</i> 1892. Rpt. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952.
Bisk	<i>Biskupa sögur.</i> 2 vols. Copenhagen: S. L. Möller, 1858–78.
Blöndal	Sigfús Blöndal. <i>The Varangians of Byzantium.</i> Trans. and rev. Benedikt A. Benedikz. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
Cleasby/Vigfusson	Richard Cleasby and Gudbrand Vigfusson. <i>An Icelandic-English Dictionary.</i> London: Oxford University Press, 1874; rpt. 1957.
DMA	<i>The Dictionary of the Middle Ages.</i> Ed. Joseph R. Strayer. 13 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1982–89.
EAK	Ernst Albin Kock, ed. <i>Den norsk-isländska skaldediktningen.</i> 2 vols. Vol. I. Lund: Gleerup, 1946.
EHD	<i>English Historical Documents.</i> Vol. II: 1042–1189. Ed. David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1953.
F	<i>Fríssbók: Codex Frisianus. En Samling af norske kongesagaer.</i> Ed. C. R. Unger. Christiania [Oslo]: P. T. Mallings forlagsboghandel, 1871.
Falk <i>Kleiderkunde</i>	Hjalmar Falk. <i>Altnordische Kleiderkunde, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Terminologie.</i> NVAOS. No. 3. Kristiania [Oslo]: Jacob Dybwad, 1918.
Falk "Seewesen"	Hjalmar Falk. "Altnordisches Seewesen." <i>Wörter und Sachen</i> , 4 (1912): 1–122.
Falk <i>Waffenkunde</i>	Hjalmar Falk, <i>Altnordische Waffenkunde.</i> NVAOS. No. 6. Kristiania [Oslo]: Jacob Dybwad, 1914.
FJ	Finnur Jónsson, ed. <i>Morkinskinna.</i> SUGNL 53. Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & Co., 1932.
Flat	<i>Flateyjarbók: En samling af norske kongesagaer med indskudte mindre fortællinger om begivenheder i og udenfor Norge samt annaler.</i> Ed.

- Guðbrandur Vigfússon and C. R. Unger. 3 vols. Oslo: Malling, 1860–68.
- FmS* *Fornmanna sögur eptir gömlum handritum útgefnar að tilhlutun hins norræna fornfræða félags*. 12 vols. Copenhagen: Popp, 1825–37.
- Fritzner Johan Fritzner. *Ordbog over det gamle norske sprog*. 3 vols. Kristiania [Oslo]: Den norske forlagsforening, 1886–96.
- Fsk* *Fagskinna*. See *ÍF* 29.
- Heimskringla* (1991) *Heimskringla*, ed. Bergljót S. Kristjánsdóttir, Bragi Halldórsson, Jón Torfason, Örnólfur Thorsson. 3 vols. Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 1991.
- HH* Henry of Huntingdon: *Henrici Archidiaconi Huntendunensis Historia Anglorum*. Ed. Thomas Arnold. Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages, published by the authority of Her Majesty's Treasury, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. 1879. Rpt. Wiesbaden: Kraus, 1965.
- Hkr* *Heimskringla*: See *ÍF* 26–28.
- HT(N)* *(Norsk) Historisk tidsskrift*
- ÍF* *Íslensk fornrit*. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag. Vol. 1 (pts. 1 and 2): *Íslendingabók; Landnámabók*. Ed. Jakob Benediktsson. 1968. Vol. 2: *Egils saga Skalla-Grimssonar*. Ed. Sigurður Nordal. 1933. Vol. 3: *Borgfirðinga sögur*. Ed. Sigurður Nordal and Guðni Jónsson. 1938. Vol. 4: *Eyrbyggja saga*. Ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Matthías Þórðarson. 1935. Vol. 5: *Laxdæla saga*. Ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson. 1934. Vol. 6: *Vestfirðinga sögur*. Ed. Björn K. Þórólfsson and Guðni Jónsson. 1943. Vol. 7: *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar*. Ed. Guðni Jónsson. 1936. Vol. 8: *Vatnsdæla saga*. Ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson. 1939. Vol. 9: *Eyfirðinga sögur*. Ed. Jónas Kristjánsson. 1956. Vol. 10: *Ljósvetninga saga*. Ed. Björn Sigfússon. 1940. Vol. 11: *Austfirðinga sögur*. Ed. Jón Jóhannesson. 1950. Vol. 12: *Brennu-Njáls saga*. Ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson. 1954. Vol. 13: *Harðar saga*. Ed. Þórhallur Vilmundarson and T. Bjarni Vilhjálmsson. 1991. Vol. 14: *Kjalnesinga saga*. Ed. Jóhannes Halldórsson. 1959. Vols. 26–28: *Heimskringla*. Ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson. 1941–51. Vol. 29: *Fagskinna-Nóregs konunga tal*. Ed. Bjarni Einarsson. 1984. Vol. 34: *Orkneyinga saga*. Ed. Finnboði Guðmundsson. 1965. Vol. 35: *Danakonunga sögur*. Ed. Bjarni Guðnason. 1982.
- Islandske Annaler* Gustav Storm, ed. *Islandske annaler indtil 1578*. Christiania [Oslo]: Grøndahl & søns bogtrykkeri, 1888.
- KLNM* *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder*. Ed. Lis Jacobsen et al. 22 vols. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde & Bagger, 1956–78.
- Litteraturhistorie* Finnur Jónsson. *Den oldnorske og oldislandske litteraturs historie*. 2 vols. Copenhagen: Gad, 1894–1901.

- LM* *Lexikon des Mittelalters*. Ed. Robert Auty et al. Munich: Artemis-Verlag, 1980—.
- MHN* *Monumenta Historica Norvegiae: Latinske kildeskrifter til Norges historie i middelalderen*. Ed. Gustav Storm. 1880. Rpt. Oslo: Aas & Wahl boktrykkeri A.s., 1973.
- MLR* *Modern Language Review*
- MM* *Maal og minne*
- MSE* *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia*. Ed. Phillip Pulsiano. New York: Garland, 1993.
- Neckel/Kuhn *Edda: Die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst verwandten Denkmälern*. Vol. I. Ed. Gustav Neckel. 4th rev. ed. by Hans Kuhn. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1962.
- NGL* *Norges gamle love indtil 1387*. 5 vols. Vol. I: *Norges love ældre end Kong Magnus Haakonssøns regjerings-tiltrædelse i 1263*. Vol. II: *Lovgivning under Kong Magnus Haakonssøns regeringstid fra 1263 til 1280, tilligemed et supplement til første bind*. Ed. R. Keyser and P. A. Munch. Christiania [Oslo]: Chr. Grøndahl, 1846–48.
- NN* Ernst Albin Kock. *Notationes Norroenae: Anteckningar till Edda och skaldediktning*. Lunds universitets årsskrift. N.s., sec. 1. Vols. 19–39. Lund: Gleerup, 1923–44.
- NVAOS* Skrifter utgitt av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo
- Orðtakasafn* Halldór Halldórsson. *Íslenskt orðtakasafn*. 2 vols. Reykjavík: Almenna bókafélagið, 1968–69.
- OV* Ordericus Vitalis. *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*. Ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall. 6 vols. Oxford Medieval Texts. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969–80.
- RH* Roger de Hoveden. *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houedene*. Ed. William Stubbs. 4 vols. Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages, published by the Authority of Her Majesty's Treasury, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. 1868. Rpt. Wiesbaden: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1964. Vols. I–II.
- Riant Paul Riant. *Expéditions et pèlerinages des scandinaves en Terre Sainte au temps des croisades*. Paris: Imprimerie de Ad. Lainé et J. Havard, 1865.
- SkjI-IIA, I-IIB* Finnur Jónsson, ed. *Den norsk-íslandske skjaldedigtning*. Vols. IA-IIA: *Tekst efter håndskrifterne*. Vols. IB-IIB: *Rettet tekst*. 1908–15. Rpt. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde & Bagger, 1967–73.
- SI* *Scripta Islandica*
- SnE* *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar: Edda Snorronis Sturlæi*. Ed. Jón Sigurðsson et al. 3 vols. 1848. Rpt. Osnabrück: Zeller, 1966.
- SS* *Scandinavian Studies*
- Sturlunga saga* (1988) *Sturlunga saga*, ed. Örnólfur Thorsson et al. Reykjavík: Svart á hvítu, 1988.
- SUGNL* Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur
- U* C. R. Unger, ed. *Morkinskinna: Pergamentsbog fra første halvdel af det trettende aarhundrede. Indeholdende en af de ældste optegnelser af norske kongesagaer*. Oslo: Bentzen, 1867.

- UHV* *Untersuchungen zu Handel und Verkehr der vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Zeit in Mittel- und Nordeuropa. Teil I: Methodische Grundlagen und Darstellungen zum Handel in vorgeschichtlicher Zeit und in der Antike: Berichte über die Kolloquien der Kommission für die Altertumskunde Mittel- und Nordeuropas in den Jahren 1980 bis 1983.* Ed. Klaus Düwel, Herbert Jankuhn, Harald Siems, and Dieter Timpe. (= Abhandlungen der Akad. der Wiss. in Göttingen. Philol.-hist. Kl., Ser. 3, No. 143). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987.
- VGT* Ingvald Reichborn-Kjennerud. *Vår gamle trolldomsmedisin.* NVAOS in five parts: (1) 1927, no. 6:1–284; (2) 1933, no. 2: 1–212; (3) 1940, no. 1:5–221; (4) 1944, no. 2:3–263; (5) 1947, no. 1:3–253.
- WJ* William of Jumièges: *The Gesta Normannorum ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni.* Ed. and trans. Elisabeth M. C. Van Houts. 2 vols. Oxford Medieval Texts. Oxford: Clarendon, 1992–95.
- WM I–II* William of Malmesbury: *Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi de gestis regum Anglorum.* Ed. William Stubbs. 2 vols. Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages, published by the authority of Her Majesty's Treasury, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. London, 1887.

*Morkinskinna*



# Introduction

## The Narrative

*Morkinskinna* is the first compendious collection of Norse kings' sagas, covering the period 1030–1157 (originally 1177). Earlier kings' sagas were either in the form of brief epitomes or individual biographies. The epitomes go back about a hundred years to the time of the first Icelandic historians at the beginning of the twelfth century, Ari Þorgilsson and Sæmundr Sigfússon. Ari writes a mysterious passage in his extant *Íslendingabók* (*ÍF* 1, 3) indicating that this book is a revision of an earlier version “minus the genealogies and kings' lives.” The debate on what exactly may have been included in these kings' lives is inconclusive, but they must have been the point of departure for the later tradition of royal biography. At about the same time, Ari's contemporary Sæmundr Sigfússon (1056–1133) must have written a similar epitome, perhaps in Latin. A poem from ca. 1190 (“Nóregs konungatal”; *Skj* IA, 579–89) reviews ten kings from Haraldr hárfagri on “as Sæmundr inn fróði [the Wise] told.” That seems to indicate that Sæmundr gave some account of the Norwegian kings from Haraldr down to Magnús góði (858–1047). The dimensions of this account are no clearer than in Ari's case.

At the end of the century, this Icelandic initiative was supplemented with three short histories written in Norway, two in Latin and one in Norwegian: the *Historia de Antiquitate Regum Norwagiensium* by Theodoricus monachus (ca. 1180), the *Historia Norwegiae* (of uncertain date), and *Ágrip af Nóregs konunga sögum* (ca. 1190). Theodoricus covered the period from Haraldr hárfagri to Haraldr gilli. The *Historia Norwegiae* contains geographical and legendary matters as well as a brief overview of historical kings down to Óláfr Haraldsson († 1030). *Ágrip* tells the story of the kings from the time of Haraldr hárfagri down to the point at which *Morkinskinna* ends (1157), but like *Morkinskinna*, it is defective at the end and may originally have continued down to 1177. In the standard editions, Theodoricus numbers 65 pages and *Ágrip* 50 pages. Exactly how these Norwegian works were connected with the Icelandic tradition is uncertain, but they may well derive in the final analysis from Ari and Sæmundr.

Royal biographies on a larger scale began later. The first, Eiríkr Oddsson's \*Hryggjarstykki, was written in Iceland sometime in the middle of the twelfth century. The most recent investigation, by Bjarni Guðnason (1978), argues that it focused exclusively on Sigurðr slembir († 1139) and cannot therefore have been extensive. It was some time before Eiríkr's model caught on, and it was not until the 1190s that book-length biographies were composed. They singled out the conversion kings Óláfr Tryggvason (995–1000) and Óláfr Haraldsson (1015–1030). Two monks at the monastery of Þingeyrar, Oddr Snorrason and Gunnlaugr Leifsson, composed biographies of Óláfr Tryggvason, and about the same time there was a biography of Óláfr Haraldsson ("The Oldest Saga of St. Óláfr"), of which only six fragments are extant. In the late 1180s and probably again in the first decade of the thirteenth century, the Abbot of Þingeyrar, Karl Jónsson, began—and either he or someone else completed—a biography of King Sverrir Sigurðarson (1177–1202). By 1210 or so, there were thus substantial kings' sagas for the periods 995–1030 and again for 1177–1202. It seems likely that the author of *Morkinskinna* knew these works and that part of his project was to fill in the blank period between 1030 and 1177.

Unlike the earlier epitomes, and unlike Snorri's *Heimskringla* from a decade or so later (ca. 1230), *Morkinskinna* is not a surveyable series of royal biographies, each with a discrete focus on a single monarch. In the first place, very close to 60 percent of the text (through Ch. 52) is devoted to the lives of King Magnús Ólafsson and King Haraldr Sigurðarson; in addition, these lives are intertwined. We are told first of Magnús's succession to the throne and early reign (Chs. 1–8), then of King Haraldr's Mediterranean adventures (Chs. 9–13), then of the shared reign of Magnús and Haraldr down to the time of Magnús's death (Chs. 14–26). Only at this point does the text turn exclusively to Haraldr, relating his Danish and Swedish campaigns and ultimately his ill-fated attempt on England.

But most of the material in these chapters is episodic in nature, often narrating encounters with individual Icelanders (Chs. 30, 34, 36, 38, 40, 41, 43, 46, 47). The proportions are also skewed by the disproportionately long tale of Haraldr's dealings with Hákon Ívarsson (Ch. 42). Roughly 70 percent of the narrative in this section is given over to the *þættir* (episodic stories) of Icelanders and the story of Hákon Ívarsson. What tradition had to tell about Haraldr, aside from these anecdotal digressions, bore on his early adventures, his sometimes tense dealings with his nephew Magnús, his campaigns against King Sveinn Úlfsson of Denmark, and his invasion of England. The nodes of tradition on Magnús were his succession, his military campaigns in Denmark, and his sturdy diplomacy in contending with his aggressive uncle Haraldr.

The author clearly sees these careers not so much in terms of political history as in terms of character study. Haraldr's confrontations with Gyrgir, Magnús, Hákon Ívarsson, Einarr þambarskelfir, a succession of Icelanders (notably

Halldórr Snorrason), and Jarl Tostig profile a particular personality. The same is true of Magnús, though in much less detail and with a contrastive emphasis on the religious auspices of his father, St. Óláfr, Magnús's steady reliability, and his devotion to peace. Despite the paucity of moral commentary, it seems clear that the underlying theme is moral in nature.

In contrast to the abundance of tradition on Haraldr stands a corresponding dearth of information on his son Óláfr kyrri, who is the beneficiary of only two mid-sized chapters despite a reign of twenty-seven years. The second of these two chapters recounts a *páttir*-like incident that seems so uncharacteristic of the sanguine and tranquil Óláfr that the reader may seriously question whether it was originally associated with him or his father. Very little that was deemed "saga-worthy" seems to have been transmitted about Óláfr, certainly nothing that was harmful to his reputation. Adventures, military campaigns, and dynastic struggles, which made up the bulk of the tradition about Magnús and Haraldr, were apparently considered to have been gratifyingly absent from Óláfr's reign. In other literary traditions, such an agreeable respite might have given rise to the biography of a great statesman, but there is very little hint of such a portrait in *Morkinskinna* or in any other source on Óláfr kyrri. This missed opportunity says much about the action-dependence of saga narrative and the limitations of that literary form.

With the advent of Óláfr's son Magnús berfœttr (Chs. 55–59), we return to the man of action and the military and expeditionary narrative that was characteristic of Haraldr Sigurðarson. The stock of motifs is also similar, beginning with Magnús's dynastic contentions, moving to his campaigns in the British Isles and in Gautland, and concluding with his fatal venture in Ireland. The dynastic section relates his uneasy truce with his cousin Hákon, who was accepted by the Þrændir as their king. The situation is reminiscent of the division of the realm between Haraldr and Magnús. On Hákon's death, the realm might be expected to reunite, but the Þrændir persist in their drive for independence by taking a certain Sveinn, son of Haraldr flettir, as their king. Magnús now concedes no claim of kinship or kingship to Sveinn and moves forcefully against the Þrændir by routing their troops and hanging their leaders Steigar-Þórir and Egill of Forland. That part of the narrative is reminiscent of Haraldr harðráði's contention with Einarr þambarskelfir over the fealty of the Þrændir, ending as it does with the murder of Einarr.

The similarities in outline between "Haralds saga" and "Magnúss saga" are obscured because the latter is only 15 percent the length of the former and because the multiple *pættir* in "Haralds saga" tend to obscure the plotline in that story. The only portion of "Magnúss saga" that might be termed a *páttir* is the story of Sveinki Steinarrson, which is told with such verve and wit that it seems to have independent status. Sveinki is the original foster father of Magnús's rival pretender Hákon. He therefore belongs in the context of the dynastic struggles and represents the last impediment to Magnús's sole rule over

Norway. Finally, Magnús's rule concludes on the same note as Haraldr harðráði's—death while on a foreign adventure in the west. Snorri Sturluson recognized the kinship and summed up Magnús in the following words (*ÍF* 28, 218): “He was a bold, warlike, and enterprising man, in every respect more similar in temper to his grandfather Haraldr than to his father.”

The succeeding section of some twenty chapters (60–81) again describes a divided rule shared by Magnús berfœtr's two sons Sigurðr and Eysteinn (after the early death of their younger brother Óláfr). Again, the focus is on contrastive characters, illustrated by Snorri's remark on Magnús's heritage. Sigurðr adheres to the tradition of his great-grandfather Haraldr harðráði, while Eysteinn takes after his grandfather Óláfr. Just as Haraldr received a disproportionate share of the narrative compared to his more peaceable nephew Magnús, so Sigurðr emerges in the spotlight at the expense of his stay-at-home brother Eysteinn. Only four chapters (64, 65, 68, 73) are centrally concerned with Eysteinn, and two others (70–71) are evenly divided between Sigurðr and Eysteinn. Sigurðr has the double advantage of undertaking a great Mediterranean crusade adventure at the beginning of his life and of outliving Eysteinn at the end.

The adventure pattern duplicates the brilliant youth of Haraldr harðráði, and the shared rule duplicates Haraldr's uneasy relationship with Magnús. The uneasiness is summarized in two dramatic narratives at the very center of this section, occupying a bit more than 25 percent of “Magnúsóna saga.” The first, “Þinga saga” (Ch. 70), relates an extended legal battle between the brothers, and the second (Ch. 71), a “flyting,” or verbal joust, in which they compare their achievements. The concluding section after Eysteinn's death is anecdotal but contains none of the *þættir* of Icelanders that characterized Haraldr harðráði's career. Most of the incidents are very brief and serve to illustrate the lapses of mental stability that plagued Sigurðr's mature years.

Sigurðr is succeeded only very briefly by a half-brother of somewhat doubtful lineage, Haraldr gilli, but Haraldr succumbs quickly to a pretender of equally doubtful parentage, Sigurðr slembir. The following narrative on Sigurðr (Chs. 84–93) is not original with the author of *Morkinskinna*. All or large parts of it were narrated in the lost book by Eiríkr Oddsson titled \*Hryggjarstykki. Whether for this reason or because the events were recent enough to be in more proximate memory, this part of the narrative does not subscribe to the patterns of adventure and dynastic tension that dominated earlier sections of the story. Sigurðr's challenge to the infant sons of Haraldr gilli takes the form of raids and killings among their supporters.

When the contending forces finally meet in the Battle of Hólmr inn grái (Holmengrâ), Sigurðr makes a distinguished stand but does not fall in battle like Haraldr harðráði or Magnús berfœtr. Instead, he is captured and dies a martyr's death by torture. The remainder of the story returns to the theme of dynastic conflicts and accounts for the death of two of Haraldr gilli's sons, Eysteinn and Sigurðr. The narrative is clearly aimed at the emergence of Ingi

Haraldsson as sole ruler, but the manuscript breaks off before the succession is stabilized.

## The Manuscripts

### Morkinskinna Manuscript (MskMS)

MskMS is kept in Det kongelige bibliotek in Copenhagen under the signature Gamle kongelige samling 1009 fol. Very little is known about the prehistory of the MS. In 1662 it was sent from Iceland to King Frederick III of Denmark by Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson. The name “Morkinskinna” (“rotten parchment”) was given to it by Þormóður Torfason (Torfæus) who borrowed the MS in 1682 and used it as one of the sources for his *Historia Rerum Norvegiarum* (see FJ iii–iv; Louis-Jensen 1977: 62–63).

In its present form, the MS consists of thirty-seven leaves. It originally contained seven quires: four eight-leaf quires, one nine-leaf quire, and two six-leaf quires (FJ iv–v). The entire seventh quire is missing, and the MS ends abruptly in the middle of Chapter 100 of the “Saga of Ingi and his Brothers.” In addition to the missing seventh quire, MskMS contains the following lacunae:

1. Six leaves: “The Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” (Chs. 1–12; FJ 14.3–70.24; U 7.21);
2. One leaf: “The Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” (Chs. 26–30; FJ 141.16–148.36; U 46.32);
3. One leaf: “The Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” (Chs. 31–35; FJ 169.22–177.39; U 59.21);
4. One leaf: “The Saga of Sigurðr jórsalafari” (Ch. 61; FJ 348.17–19; U 163.12);
5. One leaf: “The Saga of Haraldr gilli and Magnús blindi” (Ch. 82; FJ 400.26–27; U 198.32).

MskMS has been dated to the end of the thirteenth century or a little earlier, and it was copied by two professional scribes who appear to have worked on the MS simultaneously. It has not been established where in Iceland it was written (Louis-Jensen 1977: 63–64). The two hands are distributed as follows in the extant portions of MskMS:

- Hand I: leaves 1–9 (FJ 1–169.27; U 1–59.21);
- Hand II: leaves 10–17 (FJ 178.1–258.13; U 59.22–108.4);
- Hand I: leaves 18–25<sup>r</sup>, l. 11 (FJ 259.1–338.22; U 108.4–157.8);
- Hand II: leaf 25<sup>r</sup>, ll. 11–48 (FJ 338.22–342.2; U 157.8–159.14);
- Hand I: leaf 25<sup>r</sup>, l. 48–leaf 37 (FJ 342.3–462; U 159.14–237).

The sections written by the second hand contain several marginal additions and textual corrections by the first scribe. Hand I is more archaic than hand II,

but the second scribe consistently preserves certain archaic spellings not found in the parts copied by the first hand (for example, the spelling “of” instead of “um”). On the whole, the orthography in MskMS is characterized by archaic features, which has led some scholars to believe that it reflected the conventions of an old archetype dating back to the first third of the thirteenth century (FJ v; but see Louis-Jensen 1977:64). The archaic forms appear to be distributed fairly evenly throughout the MS, and they occur in the *þættir* as well as in the main corpus of the text, although some *þættir* seem to be characterized by a greater number of such forms than others (e.g., “Hreiðars þátrr heimska”; see Jón Helgason 1934:14). We have also observed the tendency that the orthography in the poetry, as well as in direct speeches, is more archaic than the orthography in the main corpus of the text. As of yet, there is no comprehensive study of the orthography in MskMS, but Finnur Jónsson gives a summary and discussion in the introduction to his diplomatic edition (FJ v–viii; see also Foote 1955:67, 71–75).

#### The Later Flateyjarbók (Flat)

During the last half of the fifteenth century, three quires containing the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” were added to the Flateyjarbók compilation (Gamle kongelige samling 1005 fol. from around 1387; for a more detailed discussion, see Louis-Jensen 1969, 1977:65–66). The new addition was apparently commissioned by the then owner of the Flateyjarbók compilation, Þorleifur Björnsson of Reykhólar in northern Iceland. The text of that addition corresponds very closely to that of MskMS, and a comparison between the two shows that most changes in Flat consist of slight expansions of the text, the insertion of alliterating formulas, changes from indirect to direct speech, the replacement of archaic words and phrases, and a simplification and modernization of the syntax. In addition, some of the stanzas contained in MskMS have been left out in Flat.

As Jonna Louis-Jensen has shown (1969; 1977:66), the addition to Flateyjarbók appears to go back to an older MS from the second half of the fourteenth century, of which two fragments have been preserved (AM 325 IV β and AM 325 XI, 3 4<sup>o</sup>). It is unlikely that this MS comprised all the sagas of the Morkinskinna compilation; rather, it seems to have contained the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” only (*ibid.*). In the present work, the text of Flat has been used to fill in the first three lacunae in MskMS (\*MskMS).

#### Hulda (AM 66)

The MS known as “Hulda” (“the hidden MS”) or by its signature, AM 66, contains the sagas of the Norwegian kings from Magnús góði to Magnús Erlingsson (1035–1177). The MS consists of 142 leaves, and the first quire (six leaves)

is lost. AM 66 was written by one hand and has been dated to the last part of the fourteenth century. (For a more comprehensive discussion, see Louis-Jensen 1977:7–10.) According to Louis-Jensen (1977:7), that hand is the same as (or at least is closely related to) a hand found in two diplomas (AM Fasc. III, 5, and III, 6) issued in 1375 at the monastery Munkaþverá in Eyjafjörður in northern Iceland.

### Hrokkinskinna (Hr)

“Hrokkinskinna” (“wrinkled parchment”; Gamle kongelige samling 1010 fol.) consists of ninety-five leaves. The first ninety-one leaves contain the sagas of the Norwegian kings from 1035–1177 and were written at the beginning of the fifteenth century. (For a comprehensive discussion, see Louis-Jensen 1977:10–13.) In the sixteenth century a four-leaf quire was added to the MS that contained an incomplete version of “Hemings þáttur Áslákssonar” (ibid., 10). The main part of the codex appears to have been written by one hand, also found in a diploma issued in 1423 at Lögmannshlíð in Eyjafjörður in northern Iceland. That diploma is a receipt from Ingibjörg Loptsdóttir to Magnús Jónsson, the owner of the farm Grund in Eyjafjörður. Marginal notes in the MS suggest that Hr at one point belonged to Ingunn Arnardóttir († after 1427), the wife of Magnús Jónsson of Grund (ibid., 11–12). Because the scribe of Hr apparently was in the employ of Magnús Jónsson, his wife could have been the first owner of the MS (ibid., 12).

### Earlier MSS and the Relations between MskMS, Flat, AM 66, and Hr

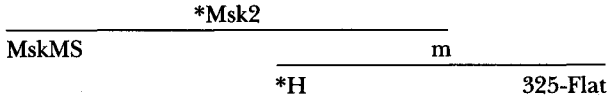
#### \*H

Hr is not a copy of AM 66, but the two MSS go back to a lost exemplar, \*H (see Louis-Jensen 1977:13–15). It is impossible to determine whether \*H was an original or a copy of an earlier MS. The date of AM 66 (the third quarter of the fourteenth century) provides a *terminus ante quem* for \*H, and comments in the texts of Hr and AM 66 suggest that the exemplar must have been compiled after 1268, most likely after 1280 (ibid., 13). The text of the kings’ sagas in \*H (as evidenced by the texts of Hr and AM 66) was ultimately based on Snorri’s *Heimskringla* (see the detailed discussion by Louis-Jensen 1977:16–61), supplemented by prose and poetry from a version of *Morkinskinna* (ibid., 62–94; see below).

#### m and Msk2

As stated above, the text of the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” in the later part of Flat follows that of MskMS fairly closely. But because Flat in places has readings in common with \*H that differ from those of MskMS (see Louis-Jensen 1977:70–72), neither \*H nor Flat can be copies of that MS; rather,

both versions must go back to a common exemplar, m, that again derives from an older MS (Msk2), which also was the exemplar of MskMS. Louis-Jensen (1977:72) envisions those relations as follows:



### The MSS of *Heimskringla*

A comprehensive discussion of the MSS of Snorri's *Heimskringla* and their relations falls outside of the scope of this work (for a more detailed discussion, see Louis-Jensen 1977: 16–43). But because the oldest version of *Morkinskinna* (ÆMsk) served as a source for that work, and because later MSS of *Heimskringla* were interpolated from a later version of *Morkinskinna* and have been used to supplement the text of MskMS in the present work (notably *Fríssbók*), the overview below has been added to clarify the relations between the most important MSS of *Heimskringla* as well as the connections between MskMS and the later MSS of *Heimskringla* (see “The Relations between Msk2 and the *Morkinskinna* Text in Hkr x-y,” below).

#### Kringla (K)

K was destroyed in the fire in The University Library in Copenhagen in 1728. Except for one leaf (Perg. fol. nr. 9, I), preserved in Kungliga biblioteket in Stockholm, Sweden, the MS survives in copies only. The remaining leaf allows for a dating of K to 1260–1280, and the MS was written in Iceland (*ÍF* 28, lxxxiii–lxxxvi; Louis-Jensen 1977: 16–17).

#### AM 39 fol. (39)

This MS consists of forty-three leaves written by one hand. It has been dated to around 1300 and was written in Iceland (*ÍF* 28, lxxxvi–lxxxvii; Louis-Jensen 1977: 18–19).

#### Codex Frisianus or *Fríssbók* (F): AM 45 fol.

This MS contains the sagas in *Hkr* I (*ÍF* 26) and III (*ÍF* 28) plus “*Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*” (see *ÍF* 28, lxxxvii–lxxxviii; Louis-Jensen 1977: 19–21). It has been dated to the beginning of the fourteenth century and seems to have originated in a scriptorium in southern Iceland (possibly the same scriptorium that produced 39). It was apparently brought to Norway at an early date. F contains sections from a version of *Morkinskinna* (after the “*Saga of Haraldr and Magnús*”) and incorporates stanzas, as well as *þættir* and smaller anecdotes, not found in K and 39. For an overview of the material included in F from *Morkinskinna*, see Louis-Jensen 1977: 87–88.

Eirspennill (47): AM 47 fol.

In AM 47 are contained the last chapters of “Óláfs saga helga,” the sagas in *Hkr* III (*ÍF* 28), as well as “Sverris saga,” “Þoglungasögur,” and “Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar” (see *Eirspennill* v–xxiv). It has been dated to the beginning of the fourteenth century (see *ÍF* 28, xc; Louis-Jensen 1977:21–24). Like F, AM 47 contains substantial material from a version of *Morkinskinna* (see the overview in Louis-Jensen 1977:37, 39) and the MS was probably also sent to Norway from Iceland shortly after it was written.

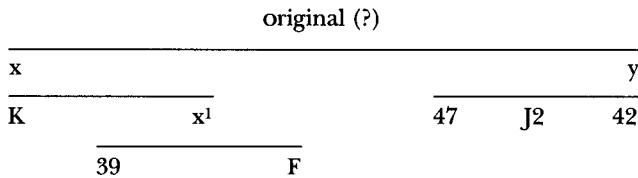
Jöfraskinna (J)

Except for four leaves (Perg. fol. nr. 9, II) and fragments (AM 325 VIII 3d 4<sup>o</sup>; NRA 55A), this MS was lost in the fire of 1728. It was of Icelandic provenance and has been dated to around 1325. Jöfraskinna survives in a copy (J2) from the end of the seventeenth century made by Ásgeir Jónsson (see *ÍF* 28, lxxxviii–lxxxix; Louis-Jensen 1977:24–28). Interpolations from *Morkinskinna* are also found in J (see Louis-Jensen 1977:38).

Gullinskinna (42): AM fol. 42

The entire MS burned in the fire of 1728 and survives in a seventeenth-century copy, also by Ásgeir Jónsson (see *ÍF* 28, xc–xci; Louis-Jensen 1977:28–31). Material from *Morkinskinna* is contained in AM 42.

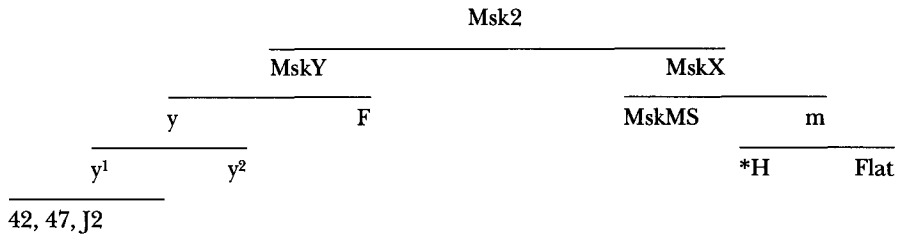
The relations between the MSS of *Heimskringla* discussed above can be schematized as shown (see *ÍF* 28, xciv; Louis-Jensen 1977:35):



The Relations between Msk2 and the *Morkinskinna* Text in Hkr x-y

Both branches of the *Heimskringla* MSS have been interpolated from a version of *Morkinskinna*. The Hkr x branch (F) contains the same series of interpolations from *Morkinskinna* as the y branch (42, 47, J2), but in addition, F (Hkr x) incorporates text from *Morkinskinna* that, in some cases, replaces the text of *Heimskringla* (Louis-Jensen 1977:83). A comparison between the relevant sections of MskMS and F shows that the two manuscripts ultimately must be derived from the same exemplar (Msk2), but because the *Morkinskinna* text of F, as well as that of Hkr y, relies on a shorter version than that of MskMS, the *Morkinskinna* exemplar of Hkr x and y appears to have been an abbreviated

version of Msk2 (ibid., 90). According to Louis-Jensen (1977:93), the relations between the different versions can be schematized as follows:



### Fagrskinna (Fsk)

*Fagrskinna* has been preserved in two versions, Fsk A and B. Both exemplars burned in the fire of 1728, but they have survived in copies from the latter part of the seventeenth century. Whereas the first MS (Fsk A) was completely destroyed, one leaf of the latter (Fsk B), which was removed from the compendium before it was sent to Copenhagen, has been preserved in Riksarkivet, in Oslo, Norway (NRA 51; for a more extensive discussion, see *ÍF* 29, lxi–lxv). Fsk B has been dated to around 1250, and it must have been older than the extant MS of *Morkinskinna* (MskMS). The palaeographic evidence suggests that Fsk B was written in Trondheim, Norway. The copies of Fsk A indicate that the lost exemplar was written during the first half of the fourteenth century in southeastern Norway.

Fsk A and B survive in the following MSS:

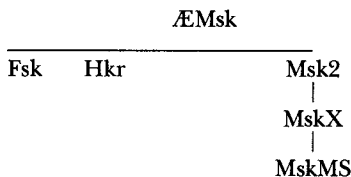
A: AM 52 fol.; AM 301 4<sup>to</sup>; AM 303 4<sup>to</sup> (all copied by Ásgeir Jónsson).

B: NRA 51; UB 371 fol. (copied by Ásgeir Jónsson between 1657 and 1707); AM 51 fol.; AM 302 4<sup>to</sup> (copied by Eyjólfur Björnsson [1666–1746]).

A comparison between the texts of Fsk A and B shows that A contained a fuller text and more skaldic stanzas than B. Furthermore, B has lacunae and the MS apparently ended with our Chapter 87 (*ÍF* 29, 330).

### The Oldest Morkinskinna (ÆMsk)

Scholars now agree that both *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* drew on an older, no longer extant version of *Morkinskinna* (ÆMsk) for the sagas of those Norwegian kings whose lives span the years 1035–1177 (see “The Narrative,” above, and Louis-Jensen 1977: 66–70). The relations between ÆMsk, *Fagrskinna*, *Heimskringla*, and MskMS can be schematized as follows:



Although a comparison between the texts of *Heimskringla*, *Fagrskinna*, and MskMS shows that the three versions in places correspond almost verbatim, both *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* fail to record the many *þættir* and smaller anecdotes that characterize the narrative of MskMS. That is also true of a number of skaldic stanzas (see “The Oral Sources,” below). Because most of these episodes (as well as the stanzas) occur in Hr, AM 66, in those portions of F that follow Msk X, as well as in the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” in Flat, it has been suggested that the text of *Morkinskinna* was heavily interpolated at the stage of Msk2 (see the discussion in Louis-Jensen 1977: 69–70 and the introduction to Finnur Jónsson’s diplomatic edition). According to that opinion, then, the extant version of *Morkinskinna* (MskMS) would bear scant semblance to ÆMsk, which would seem to be better represented by the versions of *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla*. In the present work, the issue of interpolation is addressed in “The Narrative,” “The Poetic Corpus of ÆMsk and the Question of Interpolation,” and “The Oral Sources.”

### The Native Sources

*Morkinskinna* (“rotten parchment”—so named by Torfæus and now used both as a name for the manuscript and as a title of the book) is the least well publicized of the early Icelandic sagas, despite its compendious dimensions. It has been published in two scholarly editions that reproduce the orthography of the manuscript: a nineteenth-century edition by C. R. Unger (1867), and an early twentieth-century edition by Finnur Jónsson (1928–1932). In addition, there is a phototypical edition of the main manuscript (GKS [Den gamle kongelige samling] 1009 fol.) by Jón Helgason (1934), but there is no reader’s edition. *Morkinskinna* has not appeared either in the standard Íslenzk fornrit series or in the popular Íslendingasagnaútgáfur. It was not included among the works translated in the German Thule series, and it has not been translated into a modern Scandinavian language. Under these circumstances, we surmise that the book is not much read except by scholars.

But even scholars have been chary in their attentions to this text. C. R. Unger’s introduction was very brief, while Finnur Jónsson and Jón Helgason confined themselves to about twenty pages on the main points. Only one scholar, Eivind Kválen, developed a central interest in *Morkinskinna*, but his

views gained little favor and are almost never referred to in the current literature. The best work has been done obliquely in books devoted primarily to other texts, for example, in Gustav Indrebø's study of *Fagrskinna* (1917) or Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson's study of a variety of kings' saga problems (1937). The most important recent contribution may be found in Jonna Louis-Jensen's study of two related kings' saga redactions, *Hulda* and *Hrokkinskinna* (1977). We will begin here with a summary of Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson's forty-page review of the main problems.

His point of departure was an analysis of the connection between *Morkinskinna* and *Ágrip af Nóregis konunga sögum*, a brief history of the Norwegian kings from Haraldr hárfagri to Ingi Haraldsson (†1161) or, perhaps, to the accession of King Sverrir (1177); we cannot be certain because the concluding chapters are missing from the only manuscript. The probable date of composition is around 1190. There are numerous verbatim correspondences between *Ágrip* and *Morkinskinna*. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson noted forty-three significant correspondences, but the count will vary somewhat depending on the counter.

A number of explanations have been offered, among them that the author of *Morkinskinna* drew on *Ágrip*, or that both authors used parallel sources, or that *Morkinskinna* was later interpolated from *Ágrip*. The likelihood of common sources seems questionable because the two works date from the dawn of Norse history writing, and it is uncertain what the lost common sources may have been at such an early date. Interpolation from a very brief work like *Ágrip* also seems inherently unlikely because *Morkinskinna*, which provides a fuller history, hardly stands to gain from incorporating passages from the much more cursory *Ágrip*. And yet Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson made a good case for believing that interpolation is the right answer. His analysis shows that the interpolations often produced an awkward text in *Morkinskinna*. One symptomatic instance may suffice to illustrate the case.

*Ágrip* (Ch. 38) tells us that when King Haraldr Sigurðarson returned from his Mediterranean adventures, he approached King Magnús's adviser Úlfr stallari disguised as a messenger. The episode reappears in *Morkinskinna* (Ch. 8) out of context, because it is related before the tale of Haraldr's adventures in the south. The interpolator is obliged to locate the episode at this juncture rather than after Haraldr's return because Úlfr stallari accompanied Haraldr on his campaigns and could not have been attached to the service of King Magnús during that time. The most palpable contradiction in the *Morkinskinna* version occurs when Úlfr addresses King Magnús in the following terms, even before he has engaged in his foreign adventures: "He also said that Haraldr was a wise man with a great following, and that he had accomplished many great deeds abroad, which would be long remembered." That sentence appears to be lifted directly from *Ágrip* because it is foreign to the context in *Morkinskinna*, in which the "great deeds abroad" have not yet been related.

Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson was able to adduce a number of similarly telling ex-

amples. In addition, he pointed out (1937:145–46) that *Morkinskinna* sometimes echoes passages from one of the sources of *Ágrip*—the *Historia de Antiquitate Regum Norwagiensium* of Theodoricus monachus. Since there is no pattern of direct borrowing from Theodoricus, these echoes are best explained as the result of incorporations from *Ágrip*. A further indication of interpolation had already been observed by Gustav Indrebø (1917:22–30). He noted that the author of *Fagrskinna*, who relied heavily on *Morkinskinna*, consistently omits the passages that seem to be derived from *Ágrip* from his account. Indrebø concluded that the author of *Fagrskinna* must have used an uninterpolated redaction of *Morkinskinna*.

Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson also weighed the possibility of lesser interpolations from *Knýtlinga saga* and *Orkneyinga saga*, but despite an extensive narrative parallelism, he did not believe that *Morkinskinna* made direct use of the separate *\*Hákonar saga Ívarssonar* (see below). In the case of a close correspondence with *Ljósvetninga saga*, he judged (in contrast to Jón Helgason 1934:14–15) that *Morkinskinna* was primary. These matters will presently be considered in some detail.

One of the most salient features of *Morkinskinna* is that it includes a large number of semi-independent tales (*þættir*) not found in the related texts of *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla*. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson lists sixteen such *þættir*, which, based on their loose connection with the royal biographies and some tautologous wording, may have existed in separate redactions prior to the composition of *Morkinskinna*. It has generally been assumed that some or many of these *þættir* were interpolated during the period between the original redaction of *Morkinskinna* (ca. 1220) and the extant MS (ca. 1275). But the *þættir* and incidental episodes are so numerous that it seems unlikely that they are supervenient as a rule. We would have to believe that for some reason, interpolation became epidemic in *Morkinskinna* manuscripts but that this epidemic spared the manuscript traditions of *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* during the same period. It seems more likely that *Morkinskinna* was characterized by anecdotal digressions from the outset, although this proclivity may have opened the door to further insertions at a later date.

Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson was cautious in assuming an extensive interpolation of *þættir*, but he did point out (1937:158) that the story of the Norman knight Giffarðr (Ch. 58) is built around an interpolation from *Ágrip* (Ch. 48) and may therefore have been added at the time of the interpolation. He was also open to the idea that six *þættir* not found in *Flateyjarbók* (“Auðunar þátr,” “Sneglu-Halla þátr,” “Halldórs þátr Snorrasonar,” “Hreiðars þátr,” “Brands þátr orva,” and “Íslendinga þátr sögufróða”) were later interpolations in *Morkinskinna*, but Louis-Jensen (1977:77–78) argued that three of them are identically placed in the transmission branches represented by *Morkinskinna* and *Hulda-Hrokkinskinna*. Since it is unlikely that two interpolators would hit on the same order, the placement may go back to the original *Morkinskinna* redac-

tion, and the *þættir* may have been omitted in *Flateyjarbók*. This observation substantially alters the likelihood of wholesale interpolations in *Morkinskinna* and places the onus of proof on those who hold to the idea of interpolation.

Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson's concluding discussion is devoted to the more substantial sources of *Morkinskinna*, notably Eiríkr Oddsson's \*Hryggjarstykki. Since \*Hryggjarstykki is not extant in its original form but only in extracts found in *Morkinskinna*, *Fagrskinna*, and *Heimskringla*, most of the analysis has been devoted to determining the extent of the lost book. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson reviews the arguments for the period 1130–1139 (the death of Magnús blindi and Sigurðr slembir), 1130–1161 (the death of Ingi Haraldsson), or 1130–1177 (a possibility maintained by Eivind Kválen). He finds plausible reasons in support of the first two alternatives but very little to recommend Kválen's extension of the book down to 1177. He also reviews the evidence, argued chiefly by Finnur Jónsson, for prior biographies of individual kings. He concedes the possibility of such lost sagas but considers them to be quite hypothetical.

The reconstruction of \*Hryggjarstykki is a particularly difficult problem, but it is of some moment because this text appears to be the earliest Icelandic "saga" and is one of only three books referred to in *Morkinskinna*. The others are a version of *Knýtlinga saga* (Ch. 53 at note 11) and a work called "jarla sögur" (Ch. 4 at note 1), corresponding to what we now know as *Orkneyinga saga*. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson found the problem sufficiently vexed that he returned to it in the third volume of his *Heimskringla* edition (*ÍF* 28, lxiv–lxvii). Here he reviews both the indications that \*Hryggjarstykki ended with the death of Magnús blindi and Sigurðr slembir and the indications that Eiríkr Oddsson may have carried the story down to the death of Ingi Haraldsson (1161). He tries to harmonize the conflicting evidence by suggesting that the first redaction of \*Hryggjarstykki extended only to the death of Sigurðr slembir but that Eiríkr later composed a continuation to the year 1161. There were thus two redactions in circulation.

Given the problematic nature of the question, we are fortunate to have a particularly thorough and well-balanced reassessment by Bjarni Guðnason (1978), who arrived at rather different conclusions. He argued that \*Hryggjarstykki covered a very short period indeed (1136–1139). There is then a gap in the story until 1142. For the period 1142–1177, Bjarni proposes the interesting hypothesis that there may have been a written narrative in which Abbot Karl Jónsson of Þingeyrar had a hand (1978: 26–28). We may of course ask why the author of *Morkinskinna*, who was so careful to identify Eiríkr Oddsson's \*Hryggjarstykki, would have failed to identify a book by such a prominent writer as Karl Jónsson, but he may well have had other written sources that he failed to identify. The question then is why the author would have singled out Eiríkr Oddsson, among all his sources, for special mention. Perhaps he referred to Eiríkr as the most ancient of his sources, just as Snorri Sturluson

singled out Ari Þorgilsson but failed to mention the authors of *Morkinskinna* and *Fagrskinna*, on which he was substantially more dependent. This surmise is particularly attractive if Bjarni Guðnason (1978:144) is correct in placing the composition of \*Hryggjarstykki as early as 1146–1155.

In any event, Bjarni makes a strong case for believing that the book was exclusively focused on Sigurðr slembir and derived a hagiographic emphasis from its focus on the martyr's death suffered by Sigurðr. This focus is well supported by a closely parallel narrative of Sigurðr's final battle and death in Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta Danorum* (Bjarni Guðnason 1978:65–66). The account is so close that although it has often been assumed to be only an oral variant, Bjarni Guðnason is able to argue persuasively that Saxo had a copy of \*Hryggjarstykki in front of him as he worked. Since Saxo concentrates on the finale of Sigurðr's martyrdom in 1139, that may well have the high point and conclusion of Eiríkr's little book.

The apparent focus on Sigurðr slembir raises the interesting question of the political orientation in *Morkinskinna*. There is evidence, to be reviewed below, that the author was particularly sympathetic toward King Ingi Haraldsson and that this part of the story may have been brought to Iceland by King Ingi's Icelandic followers. Yet Sigurðr slembir, who was intent on dethroning Ingi and his brothers, is given heroic coverage in the text. It seems likely that *Morkinskinna* is not to be regarded as pro-Ingi or as pro-Sigurðr. Both men had their partisans in Iceland, and it is not unusual for Icelandic sagas to give two antagonists their due in equal portions. Sigurðr spent a winter with Þorgils Oddason in Saurboer and had close Icelandic connections (Bjarni Guðnason 1978:119–31), but that would not have diminished Ingi's reputation in Iceland. One of Ingi's special partisans, Þorvarðr Þorgeirsson, in fact married his daughter to Sigurðr slembir's grandson (Bjarni Guðnason 1978:93).

More politically telling are Sigurðr's Danish connections, which seem to have been communicated to Eiríkr Oddsson by a certain Ketill prófastr, for whom we have a Latin life, the *Vita Ketilli*. Bjarni Guðnason speculated that Eiríkr Oddsson could have encountered Ketill while the latter was provost at St. Mary's in Ålborg in 1147–1148 (1978:139). Sigurðr slembir seems to have recruited the Danish kings Erik Emune (1134–1137) and Erik Lam (1137–1146) in his attempts to win Norway—or perhaps the recruitment was reversed. In any case, since Sigurðr made common cause with the Danes, Bjarni Guðnason (1978:137) believes that they would have had good reason to promote his reputation to the point of saintliness. The ultimate inspiration for a hagiographic account of Sigurðr's life could therefore well have been Danish. The author of *Morkinskinna* saw no reason to abandon this seventy-year-old account because it did not square with the pro-Ingi sympathies in his own circle.

Although *Morkinskinna* refers directly only to three texts, there are unresolved connections with several others. Most prominent among these is a \*Hákonar saga Ívarssonar, which survives only in fragments. These fragments

have many points in common with a chapter in *Morkinskinna* titled “Concerning King Haraldr and Hákon” (Ch. 42). The similarities begin, in fact, somewhat earlier (Ch. 35), with the description of the death at King Haraldr’s hands of Einarr þambarskelfir and his son Eindriði. Here there are some verbatim correspondences, which, however, are not such as to convince previous critics of a textual link. After the death of Einarr and Eindriði, the author of *Morkinskinna* tells us that Finnur Árnason went to Denmark and took service with King Sveinn. At this point he inserts a series of *þættir* or *þátr*-like episodes:

1. “Auðunar þátr”
2. the story of King Haraldr and Úlfr auðgi
3. “Brands þátr ǫrva”
4. the story of King Haraldr and Ingibjörg Halldórsdóttir
5. the story of the Icelander who narrated King Haraldr’s adventures
6. “Þorvarðs þátr krákunefs”

Here the story of King Haraldr and Hákon Ívarsson begins. It might be broken down into the following episodes:

1. King Haraldr’s fleet is trapped in Lófufjörðr (Halland) with an inadequate supply of water, but Haraldr uses a snake to locate a source of water on an island.
2. Hákon’s father, Ívarr hvíti, gives the skald Sigvatr a rather reluctant hearing.
3. Ívarr’s son Hákon is introduced.
4. Hákon goes on harrying expeditions with Finnur Árnason.
5. Hákon joins forces with King Haraldr at the Battle of Niz (1062).
6. Haraldr captures Finnur Árnason and provokes him into a memorable exchange of words.
7. King Sveinn, having been defeated in the battle, takes refuge with a poor couple.
8. King Haraldr’s Icelandic follower Þórólfr mostrarskegg tries to cap the victory with a private exploit and suffers a humiliating defeat.
9. King Haraldr offers Hákon marriage to King Magnús’s daughter Ragnhildr and a jarldom.
10. When it becomes clear that Haraldr will not keep his pledge of the jarldom, Hákon departs in anger and kills one of the king’s stewards.
11. In the service of the Danish king, Sveinn Úlfsson Hákon kills the obstreperous Ásmundr Bjarnarson.
12. Hákon receives a jarldom in Halland, is defeated by King Haraldr, but is able to recapture his banner and take some measure of revenge.

A number of these narrative elements (1, 4–5, 7, 9–11) recur in the fragments of *Hákonar saga* (lettered A–D below), but in a different order and with

differing details. There are several breaks in the narrative, but it proceeds as follows:

A. Hákon Ívarsson is described as a brilliant youth comparable only to Einarr þambarskelfir's son Eindriði. He goes on harrying expeditions, on one occasion with Finnur Árnason (as in *Morkinskinna*, episode 4). King Haraldr becomes tyrannical, but Einarr employs his considerable power in defense of the Þrændir. One day Haraldr recites a threatening stanza as he observes Einarr amidst his retinue (echoed in Ch. 33 of *Morkinskinna*).

B. The details are unclear, but the Þrændir seem to have arranged for a meeting between Hákon and King Haraldr, perhaps as part of a peace-making effort. In any event, Finnur Árnason is instrumental in establishing peaceful relations between King Haraldr and Þrændalög. Haraldr urges Ragnhildr to attend him at court. She perceives that there is strong pressure and accedes. Hákon comes to Haraldr's Christmas celebration, as had apparently been planned, and he and Ragnhildr seem a natural match. It is clear that this was the plan, but when Finnur Árnason presses the king, he is evasive (cf. 9–10 above). Haraldr defers to Ragnhildr, and Hákon addresses her in person. In response, she speaks at length about her lineage and the impossibility of marrying beneath her station (Ch. 42 near note 18). Hákon asks Haraldr for the title of jarl but is refused. He goes to Denmark and is welcomed by King Sveinn (cf. 11 above), who is having difficulty with his nephew Ásmundr. The fragment breaks off here, but the story is clearly moving toward the intervention of Hákon against Ásmundr as it is told in *Morkinskinna*.

C. King Haraldr levies troops and summons Hákon for a campaign against the Danes. Since Hákon is referred to in this passage as Haraldr's *mágr* (in-law) and a jarl, it is clear that Haraldr eventually agreed to the marriage with Ragnhildr and to the conferral of a title. Perhaps in this version Hákon angered King Sveinn by killing Ásmundr Bjarnarson and then returned to Norway, where his friends in Þrændalög finally prevailed on King Haraldr to grant the title of jarl, or perhaps Ormr Eilifsson had died, thus making the title available. The preparations for the campaign are described with special attention to the vessels and several stanzas by Þjóðólfr. Haraldr sails his ships into Lófufjörðr and harries. The Battle of Niz appears to begin immediately thereafter, and the author draws on stanzas by Steinn Herdísarson and Þjóðólfr. Hákon is conspicuous in the battle.

D. After the battle the king thanks his troops, in particular Hákon, though many suspect that he is not pleased with the universal praise heaped on Hákon. King Sveinn rewards the poor farmer who gave him shelter after the battle, but punishes the farmer's wife for her hard words. During the following winter the men at Haraldr's court continue to praise Hákon, with the result that the king takes a dislike to him. Hákon returns home well rewarded but has an inkling of the king's envy. After his departure the discussion of his preeminence begins once again. During the course of these discussions it emerges that Hákon saved King Sveinn in the

Battle of Niz. King Haraldr gets wind of this rumor and gathers an expedition against Hákon.

Clearly, the same story is being told in both versions, but with considerable discrepancies. *Morkinskinna* has nothing to say about the diplomatic maneuvers between King Haraldr and the Prœndir, in which the story of Hákon is embedded in the saga version. It begins instead with Hákon's youth and the campaign leading up to the Battle of Niz, picking up the betrothal story only after the battle has been fought. Furthermore, in *Morkinskinna* the episode in Lófufjörðr appears to be separated from the Battle of Niz, to which it is immediately prefatory in the fragments. Whether \*Hákonar saga included the exchange of words between King Haraldr and Finnur Árnason is uncertain. Both texts told of King Sveinn's refuge with a poor couple, but *Morkinskinna* does not make it clear that Hákon was instrumental in Sveinn's escape from the battle. Again, it is not clear whether \*Hákonar saga included Þórólfr mostrarskegg's ill-fated exploit.

Other parts of the story are also less than congruent. In \*Hákonar saga, Hákon's quarrel with King Haraldr over the betrothal to Ragnhildr and his departure for Denmark precede the Battle of Niz. In *Morkinskinna*, Haraldr offers the betrothal and a jarldom as a reward for Hákon's service at the Battle of Niz. That perhaps clarifies why the motif of Hákon's secret complicity in Sveinn's escape from the battle has no place in *Morkinskinna*: there is as yet no link between Sveinn and Hákon and no reason for Hákon to have divided loyalties.

The story of Ásmundr Bjarnarson may have been similar in the two accounts, but there is no suggestion of the campaign in Gautland in \*Hákonar saga. According to *Morkinskinna*, this campaign is part and parcel of the hostilities between King Haraldr and the Gautar, but \*Hákonar saga makes it appear that King Haraldr launched an attack against Hákon in eastern Norway and that the Gautish campaign may have been a result of Hákon's falling back across the border into Gautland.

Until recently, there has been a degree of unanimity to the effect that there is no textual connection between \*Hákonar saga and *Morkinskinna* and that the resemblances are oral in nature. Bjarne Fidjestøl (1982:16–17; also Poole 1991:67–68) questioned this consensus and found it unlikely that two texts in such proximity to each other should be entirely independent. The hypothesis of independence also fails to explain the verbatim correspondences in the opening scenes focused on Einar þambarskelfir, tenuous though these may be. Fidjestøl thought it more likely that the author of \*Hákonar saga knew *Morkinskinna* but did not make extensive use of it because he was engaged in the writing of a fuller saga. If this view is correct, *Morkinskinna* is entirely dependent on oral transmissions.

Fidjestøl's hypothesis makes good sense. It is hard to imagine that the author

of *Morkinskinna* could have referred to \*Hákonar saga and so jumbled the narrative, while leaving few echoes of the text before him. It is more comprehensible that the author of \*Hákonar saga recast the story completely on the basis of a more thorough inquiry into the relevant traditions and a deeper reflection on the logic of the story. He perhaps shaped it as a continuation of \*Hlaðjarla saga (a lost account of the earls of Lade in Þrændalög), connected the incident in Lófuþjóðr with the Battle of Niz, and psychologized at length about envy and good faith in the relationship between Haraldr and Hákon. The differences between his version and what we find in *Morkinskinna*, having to do more with narrative sequence and emphasis than with the substance of the story, are typical of what are often referred to as “oral variants” (cf. Gísli Sigurðsson 1994:30–41).

The term is somewhat misleading because it is clear that the stories were not finally formed in tradition and that the variation has as much or more to do with authorial intervention as with the vagaries of transmission. The author of \*Hákonar saga saw the potential for a heroic biography, but the author of *Morkinskinna*, whose genius is perhaps more episodic than epic, saw the potential for a digression on personalities and values. He seems to have been less interested in the political conflict between King Haraldr and Hákon and more interested in the domestic drama played out between Hákon and Ragnhildr, the conflict between love and status. This interlude is extraordinary because domestic analysis is so rare in saga literature and unparalleled elsewhere in *Morkinskinna*.

The conclusion of Hákon's story appears in *Ljósvetninga saga* (ÍF 10, 103) as well. We must therefore also consider how this passage relates to *Morkinskinna*. Björn Sigfússon once suggested (ÍF 10, xxxvii) that both texts borrowed the episode from a lost section of \*Hákonar saga, but if the case made for believing that \*Hákonar saga postdates *Morkinskinna* is sufficient, *Morkinskinna* must have the original text and *Ljósvetninga saga* may well be the borrower. The parallelism runs as follows:

*Morkinskinna*

It was rumored that King Steinkell would also block the river mouth with a naval blockade. King Haraldr believed these rumors and began to hack away the ice around his ships. As they were at this work, somebody said: “No one does his job like Koðrán's killer.” He was referring to Hallr Ótryggsson, who had killed Koðrán Guðmundarson, and Hallr was there in King

*Ljósvetninga saga*

After that Brandr traveled to the court of King Haraldr Sigurðarson and stayed with him, as did Hallr Ótryggsson. He was in his army east in Gautland when King Haraldr fought Jarl Hákon Ívarsson. When King Haraldr was ready to leave, his ship got frozen in the ice between the ships. King Haraldr said: “Nobody wields a stronger ax than Hallr, Koðrán's killer.” There was

Haraldr's army. Þormóðr Eindriðason jumped up and delivered Hallr's death blow because he could not stand to hear the praise of Koðrán's killing. Þormóðr was distantly related and the nephew of Guðmundr Eyjólfsson, Koðrán's father. When the men crowded about and wanted to kill Þormóðr, the ice broke under them and there was a great tumult because many men were on the point of drowning. King Haraldr's son Magnús came to Þormóðr's aid and asked that he be spared. He offered a settlement because Þormóðr was in his crew, and a reconciliation was reached. Subsequently Þormóðr went south to Denmark and from there to Greece and wanted to take imperial service . . . .

a man named Þormóðr, the son of Ásgeirr and a kinsman of the Møðrvellingar. He was on the ship of Magnús, the king's son, and had recently arrived from Iceland. He was plotting against Hallr's life. And when the king said "Koðrán's killer," Þormóðr rushed at Hallr and delivered his death blow, and then leapt onto Magnús's ship. King Haraldr was furious and ordered an attack on them. But as they crowded in on Þormóðr, the ice broke beneath them, and many drowned. Magnús got away and had Þormóðr ferried abroad. He didn't interrupt his journey until he got to Constantinople, where he took service. The king and his son were later reconciled.

Both the wording and the close correspondence in narrative sequence suggest that there is a direct textual connection. The author of *Ljósvetninga saga* omits certain retrospective details that are clear from his previous narrative, but otherwise follows *Morkinskinna* closely. It is, of course, possible that the direction of the borrowing is the reverse and that *Ljósvetninga saga* has the original text, but the episode forms a natural conclusion to the tale of Hákon in *Morkinskinna* and is in line with the source indications elsewhere in the text. Þormóðr Eindriðason appears as Þormóðr Ásgeirsson in *Ljósvetninga saga*, but Snorri (*ÍF* 28, 165) confirms the patronymic Eindriðason and makes him the grandson of Guðmundr ríki's sister. The information therefore looks as though it originates in Guðmundr's region of Eyjafjörðr, where, as we shall see, the author of *Morkinskinna* is likely to have worked. It is puzzling how the author of *Ljósvetninga saga* arrived at the differing patronymic Ásgeirsson, since that saga too is almost certainly rooted in Eyjafjörðr. In any case, Þormóðr appears to figure in the texts as the ultimate source of the story. The story looks integral in *Morkinskinna* and a little like an afterthought in *Ljósvetninga saga*, where it stands in the close vicinity of another probable literary borrowing from *Þorgils saga ok Haflíða*. In all probability, then, the text in *Morkinskinna* is primary and not a literary loan. The total literary debts incurred by the author of *Morkin-*

*skinna* may therefore amount to no more than \*Hryggjarstykki, very incidentally a version of *Knýtlinga saga*, perhaps *Orkneyinga saga*, and one further text to be discussed below.

The relationship of *Morkinskinna* to *Orkneyinga saga* has not been clearly worked out and may well defy any solution. The reference in *Morkinskinna* is as follows (Ch. 4 at note 1): “King Magnús put Rognvaldr Brúsason in authority to the west in Orkney and gave him the title of jarl. During Magnús’s reign great strife broke out between Rognvaldr jarl and Þorfinnr jarl, his uncle, and there were many history-making events, as is told in the ‘Sagas of the Jarls.’” *Orkneyinga saga*, *Morkinskinna*, and *Heimskringla* show a number of shared phrasings. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (1937:151) pointed out that in most cases, *Heimskringla* probably borrowed from *Morkinskinna* and *Orkneyinga saga* from *Heimskringla*. Where *Morkinskinna* has a separate correspondence with *Orkneyinga saga* not found in *Heimskringla*, it would seem likely that *Morkinskinna* is borrowing from *Orkneyinga saga*, but the situation is complicated by the fact that *Orkneyinga saga* (IF 34, 55) mentions a \*Magnúss saga góða. That may be no more than a reference to the section on Magnús in *Heimskringla*, but it may also be a reference to a lost separate \*Magnúss saga góða. In the latter case, the correspondences in *Orkneyinga saga* and *Morkinskinna* may reflect drafts on a common source.

There is the distinct possibility of one further written source used but not identified by the author of *Morkinskinna*. The bitter legal dispute between King Sigurðr jórsalafari and King Eysteinn is told at some length (Ch. 70). It is referred to in our text as “Þinga saga,” the heading used in MskMS. It has separate status because it is transmitted in this manuscript, as well as in *Hulda* and *Hrokkinskinna*, and in a shorter version (“Þinga þátr”) in four other manuscripts (*Eirspennill*, *Jöfraskinna*, *Gullinskinna*, and *Flateyjarbók*). The relationship of these texts was analyzed by Gustav Storm in 1877 and again by Jonna Louis-Jensen in 1977:94–108. Storm printed the differing versions in adjacent columns so that the differences are easily surveyable in his edition. He believed that “Þinga saga,” as it appears in MskMS and *Hulda-Hrokkinskinna*, was primary, but Louis-Jensen (1977:99–105) argued that this version derives from an older version of “Þinga þátr.”

Both agree that the original version was a separate text composed as early as 1200 and worked into *Morkinskinna*. Storm believed that the original version was Icelandic because of misunderstandings of Norwegian law. Louis-Jensen, however, could find no reason why such a specialized text on Norwegian law should be written in Iceland and therefore located it in Norway. She cautiously suggested (1977:108) a certain Bjarni Marðarson († after 1223) as the possible author. That “Þinga saga” was originally a separate composition is suggested by the redundant introduction at the beginning of Chapter 70, which provides information that has already been given in Chapter 60: “When Jerusalem-

Sigurðr returned to Norway, the three brothers ruled and divided the land among themselves.”

“Þinga saga” does not quite exhaust the list of putative literary sources for *Morkinskinna*. There remains the question of the semi-independent *þættir* that appear in the text. Given that these tales are not always obviously germane to the main narrative, that some seem stylistically or otherwise independent, and that some are missing in cognate redactions, scholars have long suspected that they were not all to be found in the original *Morkinskinna* and may have been interpolated at various stages between 1220 and the date of MskMS. If this is true, the interpolated *þættir*, like *Ágrip*, may be regarded in some sense as literary sources. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (1937:154–55) tabulated sixteen such *þættir*, and Heinrich Gimmler (1976:63–65) added a list of twenty-eight shorter pieces. For the sake of inclusiveness, we may begin with this latter list:

1. “Karls þátrr vesæla” (Ch. 1)
2. Haraldr heals a woman in Constantinople (Ch. 9)
3. “Porkels þátrr dyrðils” (Ch. 15)
4. King Magnús receives three rings from a man who counseled him at the Battle of Hlýrskógshéiðr (Ch. 16)
5. King Magnús bestows a jarldom on Ormr Skoptason (Ch. 17)
6. “Þrándar þátrr upplendinga” (Ch. 18)
7. King Haraldr mocks King Magnús’s brother Þórir (Ch. 19)
8. “Arnórs þátrr jarlaskalds” (Ch. 21)
9. King Haraldr heals a boy’s memory (Ch. 22)
10. King Magnús and Margrét (Ch. 23)
11. An Icelander shares in the discovery of Hákon jarl’s treasure (Ch. 34)
12. King Haraldr tests the loyalty of his district chieftains (Ch. 35)
13. “Úlfs þátrr auðga” (Ch. 37)
14. King Haraldr heals Ingibjörg Halldórsdóttir (Ch. 39)
15. King Haraldr meets a fisherman (Ch. 44)
16. King Haraldr hangs the murderer of King Tryggvi Óláfsson (Ch. 45)
17. King Óláfr kyrri and the crow fellow (Ch. 54)
18. Magnús berfœtrr and Sveinki Steinarsson (Ch. 56)
19. “Þinga saga” (Ch. 70)
20. “Þórarins þátrr stutfeldar” (Ch. 72)
21. King Sigurðr jórsalafari and Óttarr birtingr (Ch. 74)
22. King Sigurðr and Erlendr gapamunnr (Ch. 75)
23. King Sigurðr and Áslákr hani (Ch. 77)
24. King Sigurðr and the whore (Ch. 78)
25. King Sigurðr and Bishop Magni (Ch. 80)
26. Sigurðr slembir’s stay with Þorgils Oddason in Saurbœr (Ch. 85)

- 27. Einarr Skúlason displays his poetic skills (Ch. 97)
- 28. The slaying of Geirsteinn (Ch. 98)

Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson considered most of these episodes to be too slight to have had a separate written existence (1937:158). Most of them focus primarily on the kings whose lives are being told, and with the exception of 11 and 20 (“Þórarins þáttur stuttfeldar”), they lack the defining feature of the *þáttur*—an Icelandic protagonist. Heinrich Gimmler (1976:65–66) disagreed and thought it quite possible that these “borderline cases” already existed in written form when the author of *Morkinskinna* went to work.

Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (1937:154–55) had identified sixteen *þættir* that might have existed as independent entities. Four of them can be found on Gimmler’s list: “Sveinka þáttur Steinarsonar” (Gimmler 18), “Þinga saga” (Gimmler 19), “Þórarins þáttur stuttfeldar” (Gimmler 20), and “Einarrs þáttur Skúlasonar” (Gimmler 27). If the remaining twelve on Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson’s list are added to Gimmler’s twenty-eight, the grand total is a startlingly high forty episodes. If we are prepared to believe that the author had forty ready-made episodes on file, we may wonder to what extent he was obliged to inquire into living tradition at all. He might appear rather in the light of a compiler of written anecdotes.

If, on the other hand, we believe that some of his material must necessarily come from tradition—the same tradition that must underlie any written versions he had—then it becomes questionable why we should assume that the *þáttur* transcriptions were made by someone other than the author himself. Although we can never be certain whether an episode is first- or second-hand, it seems more straightforward to credit the author unless there are strong indications to the contrary. What Gimmler’s supplementary list illustrates most clearly is that the author was given to an episodic mode of composition. That is quite in line with recent thinking on how the family sagas came into existence. They, too, it is surmised, resulted from a concatenation of episodes drawn from tradition (Clover 1986).

The borderline cases singled out by Gimmler are not, however, the focus of the discussion on prior written *þættir*. The crucial cases are the ones listed by Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson:

- 1. “Þorsteins þáttur Hallssonar” (Ch. 20)
- 2. “Hreiðars þáttur heimska” (Ch. 24)
- 3. “Halldórs þáttur Snorrasonar” (Ch. 30)
- 4. “Auðunar þáttur vestfirzka” (Ch. 36)
- 5. “Brands þáttur orva” (Ch. 38)
- 6. “Íslendinga þáttur sögufróða” (Ch. 40)
- 7. “Þorvarðs þáttur krákunefs” (Ch. 41)

8. "Sneglu-Halla þátr" (Ch. 43)
9. "Stúfs þátr blinda" (Ch. 47)
10. "Odds þátr Ófeigssonar" (Ch. 48)
11. "Ívars þátr Ingimundarsonar" (Ch. 65)
12. Ásu-Þórðar þátr" (Ch. 68)

Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson distinguished carefully between the problem of whether these are independent stories initially set down without reference to *Morkinskinna* and the problem of whether they are later interpolations. "Auðunar þátr" and "Sneglu-Halla þátr" exist in separate redactions in *Flateyjarbók*. A separate version of "Stúfs þátr" appeared in *Árbók Háskóla Íslands* (1912), and a separate version of "Ásu-Þórðar þátr" appeared in *Sex söguþættir* (Reykjavik, 1855). Without going into detail, Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson remarks that the versions in *Morkinskinna* are generally abbreviated in relation to the other redactions. This was the conclusion reached by Björn M. Ólsen in his edition of "Stúfs þátr." In other words, these *þættir* seem to have been edited for inclusion in *Morkinskinna*. Bjarni notes (1937: 156) that judging from certain manuscript catalogues, other variant versions beyond these four may exist as well but that they have not been published.

We observed above that six of these *þættir* ("Hreiðars þátr," "Halldórs þátr Snorrasonar," "Auðunar þátr," "Brands þátr orva," "Íslending þátr sögufróða," and "Sneglu-Halla þátr") are missing in *Flateyjarbók*. That led Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (and others) to question whether they were in the original redaction of *Morkinskinna*. Louis-Jensen (1977: 77–78) later argued that they were just as likely to have been omitted in the *Flateyjarbók* redaction. With respect to the other six *þættir*, Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (1937: 157) was completely agnostic on the question of whether they originated with the first redaction or were added later.

Heinrich Gimmler was much less cautious and assumed without much discussion that all twelve *þættir* were likely to be independent compositions and interpolations as well (1976: 61): "Their authors, along with the interpolators who inserted them in *Morkinskinna*, are unknown." That phrasing seems to suggest that all the *þættir* were later interpolations, but Louis-Jensen's argument seems to shift the burden of proof to those who believe in wholesale interpolation. The original author clearly cultivated an episodic style, and strong reasons are needed to demonstrate that any particular episode is not part of his conception. That does not, of course, preclude the possibility that a number of the *þættir* were composed separately by other writers, but there seems no strong reason for believing that they were not included in *Morkinskinna* from the outset. Real evidence has been adduced only in the case of the little story about the knight Giffarðr (in Ch. 58) and "Karls þátr vesæla," which Louis-Jensen (1977: 80–81) regards as an interpolation. But even these cases may be subject to doubt (on the Giffarðr episode see Gade. [forthcoming]).

### The Poetic Corpus of *ÆMsk* and the Question of Interpolation

This section addresses the issue of interpolation and gives an estimate of the extent of the poetic inclusions in *ÆMsk*. The discussion will, we hope, shed some light on the issue of interpolation (prose and poetry) at the various stages of the *Msk* transmission and also on the function of poetry in the prose narrative of the earliest version of *Msk*.

The safest criterion for determining whether a stanza was part of *ÆMsk* is the incorporation of that stanza in approximately the same narrative environment in *Hkr* and *Fsk*. But because both Snorri and the author of *Fsk* demonstrably subscribed to individual editorial policies involving a critical sifting of the poetic corpus of their exemplar, such an approach is certainly not foolproof. Snorri, for example, frequently replaced stanzas from *ÆMsk* that he must have considered unspecific with other and more pertinent stanzas, and sometimes stanzas with “unspecific” content were excluded altogether. Furthermore, both Snorri and the author of *Fsk* almost consistently excluded stanzas in *formyrðislag* for historical verification, although the prose of *Hkr* shows that some of those stanzas must have been part of Snorri’s exemplar. The problem of establishing the poetic corpus of *ÆMsk* based on the stanzas included in *Hkr* and *Fsk* is further compounded by the fact that after the beginning of “Magnúss saga berfœtts,” *Fsk*, with a few exceptions, ceases to incorporate stanzas into the prose narrative, and the presence of such stanzas in the *Fsk* exemplar can only be established by information incorporated into the prose. The stanzas that occur in the *þættir* and smaller anecdotes as intrinsic parts of the narrative are consistently omitted in the main MSS of *Hkr* and in *Fsk*. The following discussion therefore focuses on those sections of *MskMS* that are common to all three versions.

#### The Saga of Haraldr and Magnús (Chs. 1–52)

If we include the stanzas from *Flat* that occur in the lacuna of *MskMS* (\*sts. 1–52, 80–82, 98–99), the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” contains 156 stanzas, twenty-two of which are found in *þættir* and smaller anecdotes (sts. 73–79, 104–5, 119–31). Of the remaining 134 stanzas, ninety (67 percent) have been incorporated in *Hkr* (eighty stanzas; 60 percent) and/or *Fsk* (seventy-four stanzas; 55 percent). *Hkr* cites sixteen stanzas that are not included in *Fsk*, and conversely, *Fsk* gives ten stanzas that were rejected by Snorri. According to that count, *MskMS* contains forty-four stanzas that are not included in the two later compilations. All of those stanzas occur in either *Flat*, *Hr*, or 66 and must have been part of *Msk2*.

The stanzas incorporated into *Fsk* and *Hkr* from *ÆMsk* have one thing in common: they all contain specific information (personal names, place names, numerical or chronological information, “pregnant remarks,” etc.) that serve

to verify similar information in the prose text. Conversely, the stanzas in MskMS that are not included in *Hkr* or *Fsk* are frequently conspicuous for their lack of specific information (sts. 21, 33–34, 40, 51, 53, 138, 155). In four instances, Snorri retains the prose environment but replaces the stanza in question with a stanza that he clearly felt better suited the prose environment (sts. 4, 27, 37, 137), and three times *Hkr* and *Fsk* fail to quote a stanza but incorporate information from the stanza into the prose.

In the episode that details the funeral voyage of Magnús góði from Denmark to Norway, for example, st. 80 describes the Norwegians traveling north with the corpse of Magnús. That stanza is left out in both *Fsk* and *Hkr*, but *Fsk* changes the prose to include the following sentence, derived from st. 80 (*ÍF* 29, 249): “Einarr þambarskelfir með Þrændaher fór með líki Magnúss konungs norðr til Níðaróss [emphasis added]” (Einarr þambarskelfir and the army from Trøndelag traveled north to Nidaros with the corpse of King Magnús). In the description of the aftermath of the Battle of the River Ouse, MskMS adds a stanza (st. 141) to document that the English earls fled to the stronghold York (“dunðu jarlar undan . . . til borgar” [emphasis added]). That information is not included in the prose of MskMS (or *Fsk*), but Snorri adds the following sentence derived from the stanza (*ÍF* 28, 181): “Valþjófr jarl ok þat lið, er undan komsk, flýði upp til borgarinnar Jork” (emphasis added) (Jarl Waltheof and those men who were able to escape, fled to the stronghold York). Similarly, the place name “Hrafnseyrr” (Ravenseer) in st. 154, which describes the point of departure of the Norwegians from England after the Battle of Stamford Bridge, is absent from the prose of MskMS and *Fsk* but was incorporated into the prose of *Hkr* (*ÍF* 28, 197), undoubtedly from st. 154, which consequently must have been part of *ÆMsk*.

A brief look at the stanzas that must have been contained in *ÆMsk* but are omitted or replaced by the author of *Fsk* and Snorri shows that many share features that must reflect the tastes of one specific individual, namely, a delight in battle descriptions involving beasts of battle feasting on corpses. Consider the following examples:

St. 27 (replaced by Snorri):

Later the king launched a weapon storm [battle] that the Wends will remember; the lord scorched rust-red corpses of pirates at Wollin. The bloody wolf pulled the fast-fried body from the fires; the greedy slayer of the hall [fire] flickered on heathen foreheads.

St. 32 (not in *Fsk* or *Hkr*):

King, you caused the Wends distress by the clear Skotborgará [Kongeå]; lord, the fortune you achieved with half the troops was famed. Relative of the stout king, famous among men, there lay a corpse heap higher than the far-traveled family of wolves could climb; you were victorious.

St. 33 (as above):

The courageous king stacked a corpse pile from wolves' food so high—I praise the life of that brave lord of the people—that the steed of the wife of Yggr [Óðinn] of the river bone [“Óðinn of the river bone (stone)” = giant; “wife of the giant” = giantess; “steed of the giantess” = wolf], wandering all night, could not climb over it, even if it wanted; fallen men were spread far and wide.

St. 40 (as above):

The sandy bodies of Sveinn's men drift from the south to the shores; people see where corpses float far and wide off Jótland's [Jylland, Jutland] coast. The wolf drags the corpse pile from the water and tears bodies in the bays; Óláfr's son put an end to the eagles' fast.

St. 87 (as above):

The king gave the brood of eagles Danish blood, Huginn's [raven] banquet [blood], to drink; I heard the lord waged war by Þjólarnes. Far and wide the eagle's kin stalked over the corpses of the fallen; the wolf ate the flesh of the Jótar [people of Jylland, Jutland] as he pleased, may he enjoy that.

St. 138 (as above):

The rain of wounds [blood] fell far and wide on the fields and the vikings waded in warriors' blood; there the wolf got its fill.

Another common characteristic of the stanzas in *MskMS* not found in *Hkr* and *Fsk* is that these stanzas often belong to a sequence of two or more stanzas used to punctuate or to recapitulate a major battle. Such is the case with sts. 32–33 (the Battle of Lyrskovshede); 113–14 (the Battle of the River Niz); 139–40 (the Battle of the River Ouse); 151–53 (the Battle of Stamford Bridge). In all these instances, the course of the battle has already been described in prose and documented in poetry (usually similarly in the three versions). The stanzas provide poetic retrospective views on the previous events and do not add new or specific information. Such stanzas are omitted in *Fsk* as well as in *Hkr*.

Sometimes *MskMS* contains stanzas that would appear to be at odds with the prose environment or are positioned awkwardly in the narrative. Such is the case in the following instances:

St. 24: The prose has just established that Magnús became joint ruler of Norway and Denmark and proceeded to stay the winter in Denmark: the stanza states that Magnús “later” came to rule all Norway and Denmark.

St. 142: The prose describes Haraldr marshaling his army after encountering the English at Stamford Bridge; the poetry belatedly notes that he ordered his men to disembark (at the River Ouse) and that a great army marched against him from the south.



The last two stanzas (sts. 19–20) that allegedly belonged to Sigvatr’s “Bersøglisvísur” are recorded in *Flat* only. St. 18 is quoted in *F* (which includes only this stanza), where it is stated that “Sigvatr then composed that *flokkr* which is called ‘Bersøglisvísur,’ as it is told in ‘Óláfs saga [helga].’ This is the last [stanza]” (*F* 177). According to Louis-Jensen (1977:84), that stanza was interpolated into *F* from *MskY*, and because the prose in *F* states that this is the last stanza of the poem, she suggests that the two last stanzas (our sts. 19–20) were interpolated into *Msk* at a later point. She finds that possibility supported by the content of the two stanzas, which, in her opinion, have a different focus from the other stanzas in the “Bersøglisvísur” because they express Sigvatr’s hope of personal gain.

If we look at sts. 19–20 in the context of the rest of the poem, however, and in particular in the context of the personalized stanzas that were left out in *Fsk* and *Hkr*, they form a natural conclusion to Sigvatr’s plea:

St. 5a: Throughout his lifetime, I stayed with the lord who gave his faithful liegemen gold and the ravens slaughter; he became famous.

St. 6: I followed your father faithfully, that generous king, who wanted my service; now people rejoice in the peace. There was no gap in the ranks where I stood proudly in the midst of his men with the sword; one should make the forest denser with brush.

St. 7: Magnús, with great courage your father forced his way with his company through the throng where men fought. Fiercely he defended the inheritance of kings, and keen hearts quivered at that; thus Óláfr advanced.

St. 10: Young lord, I was with you that autumn when you came from the east; king, you alone can secure the whole country; that will be heard. The countrymen thought they had caught the bright heavens with their hands when you claimed the lands, prince, and were alive.

St. 11: I let Magnús’s father hear the hidden words of the king’s enemies that my ears heard; how they plotted deceit. I carried each message with a candid heart, because I did not betray my liege lord; I knew then there was danger.

St. 18: I thus hope matters will take a good turn for Óláfr’s son; they say that the cautious man’s business must wait until late in the evening; between us two all is well. Magnús, I am well disposed; I wish to live and die with you, generous one; you protect Haraldr’s hawk isle [Norway] with the sword.

St. 19: Óláfr, not lacking in lordly splendor, graced me with rings; the dealings of the stout king were bountiful. Throughout his lifetime, I always bore the gold of the mover of sea-warriors [war king] on both arms, and I was seldom afraid.

St. 20: Sigvatr’s soul will be yonder in Hǫrðaknútr’s hall unless generous King Magnús welcomes the skald with great warmth. I followed the fathers of both; I was still totally beardless then: my tongue brought me gold as a youth.

In sts. 5–7 and 10–11 Sigvatr establishes his credentials, as it were, by recapitulating his service to Magnús's father (sts. 5–7) and to Magnús himself (st. 11), and he emphasizes his role as adviser to Óláfr (st. 10). In st. 18 he expresses the hope that his mission will be received well by Magnús. Sts. 19–20 contain a veiled threat: Óláfr rewarded him lavishly for his role as royal counsellor (st. 11), and Sigvatr was not forced to divide his loyalties between Óláfr and Knútr (to bear arms), but he will not hesitate to do so and to throw in his lot with Knútr's son, Hǫrðaknútr, unless Magnús reacts favorably to his plea (st. 20). There is no reason to assume, then, that sts. 19–20 were not part of the "Bersöglisvísur." The fact that the stanzas may not have been part of the *F*-exemplar (MskY), which, as Louis-Jensen points out (1977:91), has been abbreviated, does not mean that they were not part of Msk2. Furthermore, because these stanzas, as well as sts. 5–7, 10–11, and 18, concern themselves with the personal rather than with the factual aspects of Sigvatr's plea, they could have been at cross purposes with the editorial policies of Snorri and the author of *Fsk*. Hence, we cannot exclude the possibility that all of the sixteen stanzas cited in \*MskMS belonged to Sigvatr's "Bersöglisvísur" and that they were part of *ÆMsk*.

The second sequence of stanzas in MskMS that are not recorded in *Fsk* and *Hkr* are the "Gamanvísur" ("Jesting Verses"; sts. 58–63), which Haraldr Sigurðarson allegedly recited on his way back to Russia from Greece. All of those stanzas (including st. 58) were omitted in *Flat*, but sts. 59–63 are given in Hr and AM 66, ensuring their presence in Msk2. *Fsk* and *Hkr* cite the first stanza of these verses (st. 59) with the following comment (*ÍF* 29, 237; *ÍF* 28, 89): "Í þessum ferðum orti Haraldr gamanvísur ok eru [*Hkr*: saman] sextán ok eitt niðrlag at öllum. Þessi er ein" (During this journey Haraldr composed his jesting verses, sixteen stanzas [in all], with the same ending. Here is one of them). MskMS lists five stanzas, with a slight change in the introductory prose (FJ 85, U 14): "Ok í þessum ferðum orti Haraldr gamanvísur ok eru sextán ok eitt niðrlag at flestum, þó eru hér fáar ritnar. Þessi er ein" (emphasis added) (During this journey Haraldr composed his jesting verses, sixteen stanzas in all, with the same ending in most, though only a few are recorded here. Here is one). The statement in MskMS that most of the "Gamanvísur" had the same ending (not all, as in *Fsk* and *Hkr*) must have been occasioned by the fact that st. 61, which enumerates Haraldr's accomplishments, does not contain the refrain of the other stanzas. The compiler of \*H, faced with the conflicting information of Msk2 and *Hkr*, retained the *Hkr* prose and replaced ll. 7–8 in st. 61 with the refrain, with the result that this stanza, which claimed to list eight of Haraldr's accomplishments (and did so in the MskMS version), only enumerated six in the \*H version. The question is, then, whether MskMS accurately reflects the *ÆMsk* version, which was then abbreviated and slightly changed in *Fsk* and subsequently adopted by Snorri, or whether sts. 59–63 were added in Msk2 by

an interpolator who changed the ÆMsk prose to accommodate the content of st. 61.

A look at the stanzas themselves and their prose environment indicates that the latter must have been the case. First, it is doubtful whether all the stanzas belonged to Haraldr's poem: some of them (or parts of them) are given elsewhere and attributed to other poets (see "Notes to Stanzas"). It appears that whoever added the stanzas was at pains to include as many as possible and drew heavily on oral tradition (not necessarily connected with Haraldr) to do so. Second, the sequence of the stanzas is mixed up: st. 59, which describes Haraldr leaving the scene of battle at Stiklastaðir in 1030, certainly belongs before st. 58, which describes his exploits in Sicily. It is not clear why the author of ÆMsk, if he knew st. 59, would have chosen st. 58 as an example of the "Gamanvísur" rather than st. 59 or, for that matter, st. 62, which addresses the exact moment of composition ("I was born where the Upplendingar [people of Opplandene] bent the bows; now I let my fleet, loathed by farmers, float among the skerries"). Third, in all the versions, including MskMS, st. 58 is accompanied by the prose comment that the poem was dedicated to Elisabeth of Russia (*ÍF* 29, 237–38, *ÍF* 28, 89; FJ 85, U 14). Thus, that statement must have been part of ÆMsk, and it is not clear why, if all the stanzas were included in ÆMsk, this prose insertion followed st. 58 rather than st. 63. Finally, the statement in MskMS to the effect that "only a few are recorded here" ("eru hér fá ritnar") is suspect in itself. The verb "ríta" (to write, record) is otherwise used only three times in MskMS, twice to describe Eiríkr Oddsson's composition of \*Hrygg (FJ 419; U 210) and once in connection with a section that appears to have been interpolated from *Ágrip* (FJ 17: "sem fyrr var ritat" "as was previously mentioned" [written]). We must conclude, then, that sts. 59–63 could have been added in Msk2 by an interpolator who wanted to augment the *Msk* text with as many stanzas of the "Gamanvísur" as possible.

A further instance of possible interpolation into Msk2 is st. 156. That stanza, which is the last stanza in "Haralds saga," is inserted to document that Óláfr kyrri became sole ruler of Norway upon the death of his brother Magnús. It is not recorded in *Hkr* or *Fsk*, but the second half-stanza (st. 158) occurs later in a sequence of stanzas (sts. 158–60) in MskMS as well as in *Fsk* to illustrate that Óláfr defended Norway against Sveinn of Denmark. Curiously enough, a later scribe must have noted the doubling of the stanzas, and in a clumsy attempt to cover up, he changed the first line of st. 158, as well as the prose, by replacing the verb "verr" (defends) with "ferr" (travels). Because *Fsk*, *Hr*, and AM 66 (which give both stanzas) retain the correct wording of st. 158 ("mætr hilmir verr malmi"), that change must have been made at a stage between Msk2 and MskMS (MskX?). Thus it seems that st. 158 was part of ÆMsk and was copied in the same environment into *Fsk*; that st. 156 was added in Msk2 by an interpolator and that both sts. 156 and 158 were copied into \*H; that a later scribe,

who noticed that the second half-stanza had been quoted twice, changed the first line of st. 158, as well as the wording of the accompanying prose, to create the impression that we are dealing with two different stanzas.

The remaining two stanzas in MskMS (sts. 29, 49) not recorded in *Hkr* or *Fsk* contain factual information, and there is no apparent reason why they should have been omitted in these two compilations. St. 29 verifies that the Battle of Lyrskovshede occurred south of the Skotborgará (Kongea), near Hedeby. That information is incorporated verbatim into the \*MskMS prose prior to the Ótta episode and is derived directly from the stanza (FJ 38: “fyr sunnan Skotborgará”; st. 29: “fyr sunnan Skotborgará”). *Fsk* leaves out the place name, but Snorri (*ÍF* 28, 41) retains it and changes the wording to correspond with that of *Ágrip* (*ÍF* 29, 35), which also includes the place name: “við Skotborgará á Hlýrskógsheiði” (by the Kongea at Lyrskovshede); cf. *Ágrip* “á heiði þeiri, er Hlýrskógsheiðr heitir, er liggr við Skotborgará” (at that heath called Lyrskovshede, which is adjacent to the Kongea). Neither *Hkr* nor \*MskMS incorporates the stanza at this point, and the reason for that is clear: in addition to the information about the Kongea, the stanza also states prematurely that Magnús won the battle (“My valiant friend of warriors [king] was victorious south of the Skotborgará [Kongea]”). It could well be that Snorri, then, having documented the place of battle through *Ágrip*, felt it unnecessary to include the stanza at a later point to verify the same information.

St. 49 occurs in a prose section that details Haraldr’s itinerary from Russia to Greece. According to the prose, he went from Russia to Wendland, Saxony, France (the latter documented in st. 49), and from France to Lombardy (documented in the stanza in note 9.7), Rome, and Apulia, where he embarked on the voyage to Greece (st. 50). *Fsk* and *Hkr* omit the detailed itinerary and only mention Haraldr’s departure from Russia and his arrival in Constantinople, which is documented by st. 50 in *Hkr* (that stanza is missing in *Fsk*). The author of *Fsk* must have thought it unnecessary to include stanzas to verify Haraldr’s route to Greece. It could be that Snorri, having no further information about Haraldr’s alleged campaigns in France and Lombardy, decided to exclude these stanzas, as well as the accompanying prose, from his narrative. It is also possible, however, that this section was added in Msk2 by an interpolator.

To sum up: The sections that the MskMS version of the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” have in common with *Fsk* and *Hkr* contain 134 stanzas. Ninety of those stanzas are included in one or both of the latter compilations and must have been part of *ÆMsk*. There is direct evidence that an additional seven stanzas in MskMS belonged to *ÆMsk*; thus 72 percent of the stanzas (minus those that occur in *þettir* and smaller anecdotes) in the extant *Msk* version of the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” must have been present in the oldest version. Common to all the stanzas from *ÆMsk* that were copied into *Fsk* and *Hkr* is that they provide concrete information that support the prose narrative. Thus, none of the stanzas in MskMS with unspecific content is found in those

two compilations. Furthermore, both the author of *Fsk* and Snorri inserted stanzas directly into the narrative to achieve a point-by-point documentation of events, whereas in MskMS, sequences of two or more stanzas tend to be added to the narrative at the conclusion of a battle, giving a poetic and general recapitulation of the events. No such stanzas were incorporated into *Fsk* or *Hkr*. That is also the case with stanzas that provide an insight into the sentiments and opinions of persons extraneous to the main narrative. It is, of course, possible to argue that such stanzas were not part of ÆMsk; rather, they were interpolated into Msk2 by a person with an interest in personal asides (cf. the many *þættir* and anecdotes), who liked to conclude the high points of narrative with a poetic epilogue, and who, as it would appear, was fascinated by the imagery of wolves and eagles feasting on enemy corpses. The fact remains, however, that there is scant evidence to suggest that the *Msk* version of the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” was subject to a large-scale interpolation of stanzas at the stage of Msk2.

#### The Saga of Óláfr kyrri (Chs. 53–54)

The “Saga of Óláfr kyrri” is one of the shortest of the kings’ sagas, and the information about Óláfr must have been scant. Snorri was forced to augment his narrative with interpolations from *Ágrip*, and Msk2 was also interpolated from that compilation. One of the main poetic sources of information about Óláfr was Steinn Herdisarson’s “Óláfsdrápa,” and that poem was apparently well known to the author of ÆMsk (see p. 266) as well as to the later interpolator.

The “Saga of Óláfr kyrri” in MskMS contains fourteen stanzas. One of those stanzas (st. 166) is recorded in the episode about Óláfr and the crow man (Ch. 54) and is included in MskMS, Hr, AM 66, and F. Of the remaining thirteen stanzas (eleven of which come from Steinn’s panegyric), five (38 percent) are recorded in *Hkr* or *Fsk* and must have been copied from ÆMsk (sts. 157–59, 163–64); seven are given in Hr, AM 66 (or F) and must have been part of Msk2 (sts. 161–62, 165–70); and one stanza (st. 160) is given in MskMS only.

One anonymous stanza (st. 165) is recorded in both MskMS and in *Hkr* but in different contexts. Snorri uses the stanza to document that Óláfr mobilized Norwegian troops against Sveinn of Denmark, and he incorporates it prior to our st. 157 (*ÍF* 28, 202). St. 165 is also found in *Ágrip* (*ÍF* 29, 41), and the prose of MskMS shows that this entire section, including the stanza, was lifted from that work. Hr and AM 66 follow *Hkr* at this point, but F cites the stanza twice, once according to *Hkr* (*F* 254) and once in the same prose environment (from *Ágrip*) as in MskMS (*F* 259). Thus, we must be dealing with two independent interpolations from *Ágrip* in *Hkr* and *Msk*, and furthermore, the interpolation in the latter must have taken place at the stage of Msk2.

Sts. 160–62 in MskMS are appended to a sequence of stanzas (sts. 157–59;

also in *Fsk*) from Steinn's "Óláfsdrápa" pertaining to the tension between Norway and Denmark after the death of Haraldr Sigurðarson. Whereas sts. 157–59 simply confirm that Óláfr prepared to defend Norway against Sveinn (all three versions concur), sts. 160–62 document actual hostile encounters between the two forces. No battles between the Danes and the Norwegians are mentioned in other sources, but there is evidence that Snorri must have been familiar with the content of these stanzas. St. 162 states that both Óláfr and his brother, Magnús, took part in the mobilization of the Norwegian forces and the subsequent meeting with Sveinn. However, both *MskMS* and *Fsk* place the unrest after the death of Magnús (see Ch. 51; *ÍF* 29, 290, 297). Snorri, on the other hand, rearranges the narrative, has Magnús participate in the negotiations with Sveinn (*ÍF* 28, 201), and places his death after the peace agreement between Norway and Denmark (*ÍF* 28, 202). Snorri could have made that change independently based on his knowledge of Steinn's poem, but it could also be that one or more of these stanzas were part of his exemplar, and that Snorri, who had no further information about the alleged skirmishes between the Norwegians and the Danes than the sparse details offered by the poetry, decided to omit the stanzas from his narrative (see the comment on st. 49, above).

The remaining stanzas (sts. 167–70) are recorded in *Hr*, *AM* 66 (all stanzas), and *F* (sts. 167–69) and must have been part of *Msk2*. They are variations on the same theme, namely, Óláfr's generosity, and they form a natural sequence to the preceding episode about Óláfr and the crow man (p. 284): "He gave him good gifts and forgave the land taxes for the land he lived on. . . . There are many examples reported on how generous King Óláfr was in his gifts of money. He also bestowed all sorts of treasures, as the skald Steinn mentions." Thus it could well be that the *þáttr* about the crow man and the stanzas were inserted into *Msk* at the same time. Whether that took place in *ÆMsk* or in *Msk2* is impossible to ascertain, but because neither *Fsk* nor *Hkr* makes any reference to Óláfr's generosity, the whole section, including the *þáttr*, could also have been the work of a later interpolator.

We may conclude, then, that there is clear evidence to the effect that "Óláfs saga" in *Msk* was augmented by a later interpolator and, furthermore, that the interpolations took place in *Msk2*. The interpolations consisted of sections of prose and poetry from *Ágrip*, and it is possible that additional stanzas from Steinn Herdísarson's "Óláfsdrápa," as well as the episode about Óláfr and the crow man, were interpolated at that time. Because Snorri apparently rearranged the narrative of *Hkr* to account for the information given in st. 162, however, sts. 160–62 could have been included in *ÆMsk*.

### The Saga of Magnús berfœttr (Chs. 55–59)

This section of *MskMS* contains fifty stanzas. Four of those stanzas (sts. 202–5) occur in the *þáttr* about the Norman knight Giffarðr and do not concern us here. Of the remaining forty-six stanzas, fourteen (30 percent) are given in

*Hkr* (twelve) or *Fsk* (eight) and must have been part of ÆMsk; the other thirty-two stanzas are all given in Hr, AM 66, or F (= Msk2). Twenty of the thirty-two stanzas are composed in the meter *fornyrðislag* and belong to Gísl Illugason's commemorative eulogy to Magnús berfœttr. None of these stanzas is cited in *Hkr* or *Fsk*. (Gísl's panegyric is discussed separately below.)

Chapter 57 of MskMS cites two half-stanzas (sts. 185–86) that are used to corroborate the statement in the prose that Magnús rid Norway of pirates and outlaws. Those stanzas are introduced as follows in MskMS (p. 297; FJ 315; U 142): “Þess getr hann [Björn krepphendí] ok, at Magnús konungr ruddi land sitt víkingum ok illþýðisliði” (He [Björn krepphendí] also mentions that King Magnús rid the land of pirates and rabble). The first half-stanza is misplaced and belongs to a stanza describing the hanging of Steigar-Þórir, which Snorri introduces at its correct place (the whole stanza; *ÍF* 28, 217). As far as Magnús's punitive activities are concerned, the other versions read as follows: “Hann gøðisk maðr ríkr ok refsingasamr, hvárttveggja innan lands, ok þó mest útan lands” (*Fsk*, *ÍF* 29, 306: “He became an imperious man and quick to punish disobedience at home, but more so abroad”); “Hann friðaði vel fyrir landi sínu ok eyddi ǫllum víkingum ok útilegumǫnnum” (*Hkr*, *ÍF* 28, 218: “He maintained peace in the land and suppressed all vikings and outlaws”). A closer look at the text of *Hkr*, however, reveals that this particular passage is taken from *Ágrip* (*ÍF* 29, 45): “ok friðaði vel fyr landi sínu ok eyddi ǫllum víkingum ok útilegumǫnnum” (and maintained peace in the land and suppressed all vikings and outlaws). Thus *Hkr* copies *Ágrip* verbatim, and the half-stanzas in MskMS (sts. 185–86) are not part of the *Hkr* narrative. St. 185 occurs elsewhere, however, in its correct context. The sentence in *Fsk* is taken directly from ÆMsk (*ÍF* 29, 306; FJ 315; U 142): “ríklundaðr maðr ok refsingasamr bæði innanlands ok útanlands” (an imperious man and quick to punish disobedience at home and abroad). The question is whether the section that contains sts. 185–86 in MskMS originally belonged to ÆMsk, too, or whether it was interpolated into Msk2.

The wording of *Hkr* and *Ágrip* on the one hand, and that of MskMS on the other, would seem to suggest a common source. That circumstance leaves us with two possibilities: we must assume either that both Snorri and the interpolator of Msk2 independently decided to copy *Ágrip* at this point, or that the passages in ÆMsk and *Ágrip* go back to a common source, namely, a written account about Magnús (\*Magnúss saga). If the first were the case, it is not clear why the interpolator would incorporate the phrase “ruddi land sitt víkingum ok illþýðisliði” (“rid the land of pirates and rabble”; cf. *Ágrip*, *Hkr* “eyddi ǫllum víkingum ok útilegumǫnnum” “suppressed vikings and outlaws”) and leave out the rest of the sentence (*Ágrip*, *ÍF* 29, 45): “ok var maðr herskár ok roskr ok starfsamr ok líkari í ǫllu Haraldi fōðurfeðr sínum í skaplyndi heldr en fōður sínum” (and he was a warlike man, brave and active and in all respects he was more like his grandfather, Haraldr, in disposition than his father). That information was copied verbatim into *Hkr* (*ÍF* 28, 218), and we would expect that

the interpolator, too, would have included the comparison between Magnús and Haraldr if it were part of his exemplar.

If, however, the comment about Magnús's punitive actions as well as the stanzas were part of *ÆMsk*, it is easy to see why Snorri, who clearly knew Bjørn's "Magnússdrápa" much better than the author of *ÆMsk* (see below), would have changed the narrative. Once he realized that the stanza was both misquoted and misplaced in his exemplar (see "Notes to Stanzas"), he replaced that section with a corresponding section from *Ágrip*. The author of *Fsk*, who at this point abbreviated the text and almost entirely ceased to incorporate stanzas in support of the narrative, retained the comprehensive sentence from *ÆMsk* about Magnús's activities at home and abroad but omitted further elaboration on those issues.

As it emerged from the discussion above, st. 185 from Bjørn's "Magnússdrápa" was not only misplaced but was also misquoted, most likely in *ÆMsk*. Further stanzas from that poem are used to document the sequence of Magnús's harrying in the islands on his first expedition to the west (sts. 188–90). Snorri also documents Magnús's devastations with the relevant stanzas from Bjørn's poem, but a comparison of *Hkr* and *MskMS* again shows that although the author of *ÆMsk* certainly knew Bjørn's poem, his recall of the sequences of stanzas, half-stanzas, and lines was imperfect. Thus Magnús's itinerary in *MskMS* and *Fsk* (= *ÆMsk*) differs slightly from that of *Hkr*. *F* follows *MskMS* rather than *Hkr* at this point. In one instance in *MskMS*, we can detect the "corrective" hand of a later scribe, possibly the same person who changed the first line of st. 158 in the "Saga of Óláfr kyrri." St. 190 describes Magnús harrying in the Mull of Kintyre ("þioð ran mvlsc til mœþi" "the men of Mull fled exhausted"). That information is incorporated into the prose (FJ 317; U 143): "Þa lagþiz M[agnús] konvngr með herin vt a Mvlsc" (Then King Magnús took his army out to "Mulsk"). The corrupt form "mvlsc" was copied into the prose from the poetry, and because *F* retains the correct reading in both cases ("mylsc" and "vt at Myl"; *F* 270), that "correction" must have taken place either in *MskX* or in *MskMS* itself. Thus, textual changes must have been made at two different stages in the *Msk* transmission: once in *Msk2*, where the text was augmented with interpolations from *Ágrip* and with some additional stanzas, and once at a later stage and by an incompetent scribe who must have been particularly concerned with the relations between prose and poetry.

The next stanza in *MskMS* that is not found in *Hkr* (*Fsk* has no stanzas at this point) is st. 187. The content of the stanza is negligible ("The proud-minded feeder of wolves [warrior] embarked on a swift journey to the west; the king disbarred the peace; the stiff prows sliced the wave"). It does not corroborate the information in the preceding prose, namely, that Magnús and Erlingr of Orkney accompanied Magnús on the journey west. The prose of *Fsk* follows *MskMS* (*ÍF* 29, 307 = *ÆMsk*), but Snorri changes the narrative and includes a section on the jarls Páll and Erlendr. There is no evidence that the stanza is a later interpolation.

The last two *dróttkvætt* stanzas that are incorporated into *MskMS* as historical verification are sts. 206 (about the Gautish campaign) and 220 (about the Battle of Ulster). None of these stanzas presents specific information. St. 206 documents that Magnús fought in Gautland and is the first in a sequence of stanzas (sts. 207–10) inserted after the Giffarðr episode to conclude the narrative about the Battle of Fuxerna. It contains the usual imagery of beasts of battle (“the Gautish torso lay beneath the yellow claw of the old eagle”). St. 220 merely states that Magnús ordered his troops to disembark and that he fought a battle; no details about the place of battle or the identity of the enemy are given. Although we cannot ascertain whether the stanzas were part of *ÆMsk*, they have all the characteristics of stanzas that were at cross purposes with Snorri’s editorial policy.

Six stanzas are given as *lausavísur* and are attributed to anonymous Norwegians (sts. 178, 217) or to Magnús berfœttr himself (sts. 212–14, 218). St. 178 recapitulates the conversation between Steigar-Pórir and Sigurðr ullstrengr and is paraphrased in the prose of *Hkr* (*ÍF* 28, 216) and *Fsk* (*ÍF* 29, 304). The execution of Steigar-Pórir and Egill is documented in detail in prose and poetry in all three versions, and because both Snorri and the author of *Fsk* were fond of recording pregnant remarks in poetry (see sts. 23, 106, 108, 149, 181), there is no reason why this stanza should not have been incorporated into their narratives if it were part of their exemplar. The prose is derived verbatim, however, from the poetry (= *ÆMsk*), and it is strange that the author of *ÆMsk* did not record the stanza if he knew it. We are faced with the following two possibilities: (1) the author of *ÆMsk* did not know the stanza, followed a prose narrative that recorded the verbal exchange between Sigurðr and Pórir, and the stanza was added by the interpolator of *Msk2*; (2) the stanza was part of *ÆMsk* but was omitted in *Hkr* and *Fsk*.

Sts. 212–14 come from a love poem allegedly composed by Magnús berfœttr. In *MskMS*, the stanzas follow the section about the peace treaty between Norway and Sweden and the marriage of Magnús to Margréta of Sweden. Thus, the stanzas form a natural appendix to that episode: the information about Magnús’s marriage to the Swedish king’s daughter is followed by a poetic recapitulation of his earlier attachment to the “emperor’s” daughter. If Russell Poole (1985:116–18) is right, st. 219, which is quoted in *Fsk*, also belonged to that poem, and if that were the case, sts. 212–14, too, could have been part of *ÆMsk*. Poole further argues that st. 79, which in *MskMS* is attributed to Magnús góði, actually belonged to Magnús berfœttr’s poem. It is curious that that stanza, which deals with Magnús’s love for the sister of an unknown king (Edgar of Scotland?) is used to introduce the erotic *pátr* about Magnús [góði] and Margrét, whereas sts. 212–14 occur as an appendix to the marriage of Magnús [berfœttr] and Margréta. It could well be that the poetic insertions (and, consequently, also the *pátr* about Magnús and Margrét in Ch. 23), were the work of one person, who took a lively interest in the amorous affairs of kings and their retainers (cf. the triangle Haraldr harðráði–Maria–

Zoë [Chs. 12–13]; Magnús and Margrét [Ch. 23]; Haraldr and Ingibjörg [Ch. 39]; Ívarr Ingimundarson and Oddný [Ch. 65]; Sigurðr jórsalafari and Sigríðr [Ch. 70]; Sigurðr and Cecilia [Chs. 80–81]).

Magnús's love stanza in MskMS is followed by two stanzas (sts. 215–16) whose presence is entirely unmotivated. They describe a sea voyage and are prefaced by the following statement: "The skald recited the following about King Magnús at sea." The only reason for the inclusion of the stanzas must be an interest in nautical imagery. A similar two-stanza insertion occurs in the "Saga of Haraldr and Magnús" (sts. 21–22): "Next we are told that at one time King Magnús was sailing along the coast. . . . Here there is some reference to his campaigns." Neither *Fsk* nor *Hkr* incorporates the stanzas at this point, but because Snorri uses st. 22 in a similar context in the next chapter (*ÍF* 28, 34), at least that stanza must have been part of *ÆMsk*.

We may conclude, then, that there is no direct evidence to suggest that any stanzas in *dróttkvætt* meter in "Magnús saga berfœtts" were interpolated into Msk2, although the absence of st. 178 from the narratives of *Hkr* and *Fsk* is rather conspicuous. The content of sts. 186–87, 206, and 220 is unspecific, and although no evidence can be adduced as to their presence in *ÆMsk*, it could well be that Snorri found them unsuitable as historical verification. That is also the case with sts. 215–16, which have no historical value at all and must have been added for purely personal reasons (reflecting the author's predilection for nautical scenery). As far as sts. 212–14 are concerned, they form an integral part of the *Msk* narrative, and because st. 219 (which most likely belonged to the same poem) demonstrably did belong to *ÆMsk*, it is likely that sts. 212–14 (as well as st. 79?) were added by the same author.

None of the twenty stanzas from Gísl Illugason's "Erfikvæði Magnúss berfœtts" is given in *Hkr* or *Fsk*, and most scholars believe that they are later interpolations. In MskMS (and in Hr, AM 66, and F) these *fornyrðislag* stanzas are distributed as follows:

- Sts. 172–77: Steigar-Þórir's rebellion and Magnús's initial response to that unrest
- Sts. 182–83: Magnús's reconciliation with the people who had supported Þórir
- St. 191: The capture of Lögmaðr on Skye
- Sts. 195–98: Recapitulation of the Battle of Menai Strait
- Sts. 199–201: Description of Magnús's return to Norway ("sailing")
- Sts. 207–10: Recapitulation of the Battle of Fuxerna

Sts. 172–74 refer to Magnús's actions upon hearing about the uprising of Þórir: "When King Magnús learned of this, he gathered troops and ships. Then he traveled north against Þórir and his followers with a great host. Gísl Illugason, who was then with the king, spoke as follows." *Fsk* appears to follow *Ágrip* or a similar source and records only that Magnús encountered Þórir and his men in Trondheimsfjorden (*ÍF* 29, 304): "then Magnús sailed into the fjord."

*Hkr* follows the *Msk* text but omits the stanzas (ÍF 28, 215): “King Magnús learned of these happenings and at once gathered troops and proceeded north to Trondheim.” The only indication that Snorri knew the stanzas is the comment that Magnús went “north to Trondheim” (st. 173 gives Oslo as Magnús’s point of departure).

According to MskMS, Magnús convened an assembly after arriving in Trondheim, proceeded to waste the surrounding countryside by fire, and Egill and his men fled north (sts. 175–77). Snorri here reverts to the narrative of *Fsk* (*Ágrip*) but incorporates the Bjarkøy incident (ÍF 28, 215), which in MskMS and *Fsk* (ÍF 29, 305) follows the capture of Þórir and Egill. After st. 177, MskMS also picks up the *Fsk* (*Ágrip*) text and doubles back to incorporate the events as told in the other versions. Thus it is impossible to know whether or not sts. 175–77 (and the prose, which is clearly derived from the poetry) were part of ÆMsk, or whether ÆMsk read like *Hkr*. (*Fsk* apparently did not follow *Msk* at this point.)

According to MskMS, Magnús became reconciled with his enemies after the execution of Þórir and Egill, and sts. 182–83 are cited as evidence (p. 291; FJ 305; U 136): “Ok eptir þessi verk fór Magnús konungr aptr inn í Brándheim ok refsaði þar mǫrgum mǫnnum, en þeir víkusk til hans miskunnar. Svá segir Gísl” (emphasis added) (After these events King Magnús went back to Trondheim and inflicted penalties on many men, but they threw themselves on his mercy as Gísl says). *Fsk* makes no mention of further actions by Magnús, but *Hkr* includes the following section (ÍF 28, 218): “Magnús konungr helt síðan suðr til Brándheims ok lagði inn í Brándheim, veitti þar stórar refsingar þeim mǫnnum, er sannir váru at landráðum við hann. Drap hann suma, en brenndi fyrir sumum. Svá segir Björn enn krepphendi” (emphasis added) (King Magnús then proceeded south to the Trondheim district and to Trondheim and inflicted heavy penalties on those men who had been found guilty of treason against him. He killed some and burned the houses of others. This is reported by Björn enn krepphendi). There can be no doubt that Snorri at this point adopts the *Msk* prose, but he replaces Gísl’s *fornyrðislag* stanzas with a *dróttkvætt* stanza from Björn krepphendi’s “Magnússdrápa” that provides additional information about killing and burning in Snorri’s version of the event. Thus sts. 182–83 must have been part of ÆMsk.

Both *Hkr* and MskMS contain a *dróttkvætt* stanza by Björn to document that Magnús captured Lögmaðr during his first expedition to the west (st. 190; ÍF 28, 221–22). However, MskMS appends yet another stanza from Gísl’s poem (st. 191a–b), which states that Magnús kept Lögmaðr in his company. That information is repeated in the prose (FJ 318; U 144): “Ok áðr létti, tók Magnús konungr hann hǫndum við skipasögn sína, ok gaf honum grið, ok var hann með konungi nǫkkura hríð” (Before the matter was concluded, King Magnús captured him with his crew, but he spared him and kept him in his company for some time). The prose of *Fsk* repeats the first part of the sentence in

MskMS, but the information from the stanza is omitted (*ÍF* 29, 307): “ok áðr en hann létti [*sic*] tók Magnús konungr hann með skipasókn sína” (and before he [Lögmaðr] concluded his journey [*sic*] King Magnús captured him with his crew). *Hkr*, however, reads as follows (*ÍF* 28, 221): “En at lykðum tóku menn Magnúss konungs hann með skipasögn sína, þá er hann vildi flýja til Írlands. Lét konungr hann í járn setja ok hafa á gæzlu” (But in the end King Magnús’s men captured him with his crew when he prepared to flee to Ireland. The king had him put in irons and kept him under guard). Again, it seems that the information in *Hkr* was derived from Gísl’s stanza, which then must have been part of *ÆMsk*. The prose in *Fsk*, however, indicates that *Fsk* does not follow *ÆMsk* but a common exemplar.

The slaying of Hugh of Shrewsbury (Hugi enn príuði) in Menai Strait is commemorated by *dróttkvætt* stanzas (193–94) in both MskMS and *Hkr*. Snorri reverses the order of the two stanzas. MskMS then adds four stanzas from Gísl’s poem (sts. 195–98) to recapitulate the battle and Hugh’s death. The stanzas fall into the category “stanzas that punctuate a battle,” and they contain no information that is reflected in the prose of *Hkr*.

After the campaign Magnús spent the winter in the Hebrides and, according to MskMS, returned to Norway the next summer: “The next summer he sailed north to his realm in Norway, as Gísl reports.” Then follow three stanzas (sts. 199–201) describing Magnús’s sea voyage. *Fsk* (*ÍF* 29, 309) and *Hkr* (*ÍF* 28, 225) correspond fairly closely to MskMS as far as the prose is concerned, but none of these versions includes the sequence of stanzas in MskMS. It is impossible to ascertain whether the stanzas were part of *ÆMsk*.

In MskMS, the Battle of Fuxerna and the first leg of the Gautish campaign are concluded by a sequence of stanzas, the first of which is in *dróttkvætt* meter (st. 206; see above), whereas the remaining four stanzas belong to Gísl’s “Erfikvæði” (sts. 207–10). Again, there are no indications in the prose of *Fsk* and *Hkr* that the stanzas belonged to *ÆMsk*.

As the discussion above has shown, it is difficult to say when the stanzas from Gísl’s poem were incorporated into the *Msk* narrative. Because the prose of *Hkr* occasionally betrays knowledge of the content of these stanzas, it appears that some of them must have been part of *ÆMsk*. It is equally clear, however, that Snorri did not consider stanzas composed in *fornyrðislag* suitable for the purposes of historical verification, and at one point he retains the prose of *ÆMsk* but replaces the pertinent stanzas with another stanza in *dróttkvætt* meter.

Whereas the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” in *Fsk* incorporated 55 percent of the stanzas found in MskMS and *Hkr* retained 60 percent, the percentages in the “Saga of Magnús berfœtr” are much lower (15 percent and 26 percent, respectively). Even if we omit the twenty stanzas from Gísl’s poem from this count, the percentages in this saga are still considerably below those in the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” (*Fsk* 27 percent, *Hkr* 40 percent). We suggested above that one of the reasons for this low count could have been that many of

the stanzas in *MskMS* that could have been part of *ÆMsk* are unspecific and do not contain information that could be used to verify the content of the narrative. A look at the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús” and the “Saga of Magnús berfœttr” certainly confirms that the narrative of the former relied much more heavily on information from poetry than that of the latter. In *Hkr*, for example, the stanzas in the “Saga of Magnús berfœttr” are used to document Magnús’s harrying in Halland (= *ÆMsk*), the names of the participants in the uprising against Magnús (= *ÆMsk*), Magnús’s reconciliation with his enemies (substitution of stanzas from *ÆMsk*), Magnús’s harrying in the isles (= *ÆMsk*), and the Battle of Menai Strait (= *ÆMsk*). *Fsk* is even more parsimonious. After an initial cluster of stanzas in the episode about Steigar-Þórir’s uprising and death (our sts. 171, 179, 180–81), the remainder of the saga contains only three stanzas.

Even stanzas that must have been part of *ÆMsk* and are included as historical verification in *Hkr* were omitted in *Fsk*, which either leaves out the episodes altogether or summarizes the content in brief prose passages. It is interesting that *Fsk* at this point chooses to incorporate stanzas that are integral parts of the narrative, among them two anonymous stanzas and three *lausavísur*, rather than stanzas that are cited for historical verification. It could well be that the author had access to a written saga about Magnús berfœttr that contained most of the stanzas given in *Fsk* and, furthermore, that that saga also underlay the narratives of *Ágrip* and *ÆMsk*. That would account for the similarities in the wording of the three versions and also explain why *Fsk* suddenly ceases to incorporate stanzas into the prose (assuming that \*Magnúss saga contained few stanzas).

Such a supposition is further strengthened by the fact that the one stanza quoted in all the compilations, namely, Steigar-Þórir’s *lausavísa* (st. 179), contains the same mistake in *Ágrip*, *Fsk*, and *MskMS* (and in *Hr*, *AM* 66, and *F*, securing the same reading for *Msk2*). In all versions, line 2 reads as follows: “foerðum einn við stýri” (“færðum”: *F*, 47, 66; “foerðum”: *MskMS*, *Fsk* B; see *Skj* IA, 434). Only *Hkr* has the correct reading “forðum,” probably owing to Snorri’s familiarity with skaldic poetry. Even if we assume that the reading of *ÆMsk* (“foerðum”) was copied into *Fsk* and *Msk2*, we would be hard put to explain the reading of *Ágrip*. Because *Ágrip* could not have copied *ÆMsk*, and *ÆMsk* did not copy *Ágrip*, the only possible explanation must be that the erroneous wording in the two versions goes back to a common exemplar.

The stanzas in *MskMS* (*Msk2*) fulfilled clearly defined functions. Moreover, unlike the stanzas in the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús,” their function is more literary and structural than historical. If possible, stanzas are used to introduce and to conclude important campaigns and battles (the campaign against Steigar-Þórir: sts. 172, 182–83; the first expedition to the west: sts. 187, 199–201; the Battle of Menai Strait [conclusion only]: sts. 195–98; the Gautish campaign: sts. 206–10; the second expedition to the west [beginning only]:

sts. 217–18). None of these stanzas contains much factual information about the campaigns themselves, and none of them is found in *Hkr*. Their function and content correspond to that of “stanzas punctuating battles” in the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús.” Magnús’s love stanzas (which appear to have been part of *ÆMsk*) and the stanzas about Magnús’s sailing (sts. 215–16) provide asides that must reflect the personal taste of the author. If the author of *ÆMsk* had access to a written narrative about Magnús berfœttr and inserted skaldic stanzas into that narrative to augment and support the story-line, that is, if the choice of stanzas were dictated by the information in an encoded text rather than the text being derived from information culled from the stanzas (as in the “Saga of Haraldr and Magnús”), we would expect to find both an awkward fit between prose and poetry and a certain redundancy (a detailed prose account documented by stanzas of a fairly general content). Indeed, the relationship between prose and poetry in this part of *MskMS* is often both redundant and awkward.

#### The Saga of Sigurðr jórsalafari (Chs. 60–81)

Twenty-two stanzas are incorporated into the extant portions of the “Saga of Sigurðr jórsalafari” in *MskMS*. Eight of those stanzas (sts. 235–42; also recorded in *Hr* and *AM* 66) are found in *þættir* or smaller anecdotes (“Ásu-Þórðr,” Ch. 68; “Þingasaga,” Ch. 70; “Þórarinn stutfeldr,” Ch. 72; “Sigurðr and Ingibjörg,” Ch. 73; “Erlendr gapamunnr,” Ch. 75). *Hkr* cites ten of the remaining fourteen stanzas (71 percent), and *Fsk* one only (our st. 231). The stanzas given in *Hkr* (= *ÆMsk*) all verify the itinerary of Sigurðr’s crusade and contain either place names or factual information.

In addition to the ten stanzas recorded in *Hkr* (sts. 222, 224–29, 231–33), the extant portions of *MskMS* document Sigurðr’s journey with another four stanzas (sts. 221, 223, 230, 234), three of which belong to Þórarinn’s “Stutfeldardrápa.” St. 221 initiates the expedition and describes how people flocked to Sigurðr to join him in his venture, but the stanza is out of place. The prose reads as follows (p. 313): “and when the men were prepared, he had a total of sixty ships, as Þórarinn stutfeldr says.” The stanza that verifies the number of ships (st. 222, from the same poem) is inserted later in the narrative, after Sigurðr’s departure from Norway.

Snorri smoothes out the discrepancy by omitting st. 221 and inserting the information about the sixty ships prior to st. 222 (*ÍF* 28, 239). *Fsk* abbreviates the prose in *Msk* and omits both stanzas (*ÍF* 29, 315). It would appear that the information in the prose must have been derived from st. 222, and because that stanza must have been part of *ÆMsk*, there is no apparent reason why the prose statement about the sixty ships should not have been followed by the stanza from which that information was taken. However, the information